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THE REGION'S MONTHLY NEWSPAPER FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS & PHYSICIANS

OUR 18TH YEAR SERVING THE HEALTHCARE COMMUNITY!

Salute to Nursing



Maggie Hansen

Growth and Development Are the Keys to Retaining Specialized Nurses

BY MAGGIE HANSEN, RN, MHSC, BSN

COVID-19 didn't cause one of the largest nursing shortages in our industry's history, but it certainly made it significantly worse.

More than two years of arduous and high-volume patient care in previously unimaginable circumstances has resulted in a generation of nurses taking earlier retirement or transitioning into other careers. That's made what was already a challenging situation for healthcare leaders into a critical fight to continue to deliver safe and effective care. Nothing less than the current and future health of our patients hangs in the balance.

We must get creative to respond to the challenges of the workforce and that begins with narrowing the knowledge gap, the chasm between the increasingly complex patient care needs and the shrinking number of nurses who possess the necessary knowledge and ability to provide such care. In this journey, we must embrace innovation – not only in technology, but also improvements in

Continued on page 34

Nursing Consortium of Florida: Bringing Nursing's Future into Focus

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Even through the height of the pandemic, the Nursing Consortium of Florida has been busy convening its growing membership to assess the effects of the COVID pandemic on nursing and develop strategies for moving the nurse workforce forward.

"The COVID experience and the sharp rise in the cost of housing accelerated a generational shift that was already underway," says Maria A. Suarez, DNP, MSN, APRN, ACNP-BC, Assistant Vice President, Nursing Administration at Baptist Health Miami Cancer Institute and President of the Nursing Consortium of Florida. "During the last two years, many nurses moved up retirement plans, and others have chosen to work less or work differently. The result is that hospital nursing in the next decade will look very different than the nursing we've been familiar with."

Jean Seaver, MSN, RN, Associate Vice President, Learning & Development for Broward Health and President-elect of

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Jean Seaver



Maria A. Suarez



Ralph Egües, Jr.



David Zambrana

UM School of Nursing and Health Studies Celebrates Alumnus David Zambrana

BY ROBIN SHEAR

David Zambrana, Ph.D., D.N.P., M.B.A., R.N., started his career as a staff nurse at Jackson Memorial Hospital. Today, he is executive vice president and chief operating officer for Jackson Health System, one of the nation's largest public health systems. Recently, over 100 of Zambrana's peers gathered to celebrate his recognition as the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies 2022 Alumnus of Distinction.

In her opening remarks, the School's Dean, Cindy L. Munro, called Zambrana "a true leader in nursing and health care," adding, "I am so proud that you are one of our own, with two doctoral degrees from us."

Zambrana, who earned doctor of nursing practice and Ph.D. degrees from the School of Nursing and Health Studies, and teaches a health management course there each Fall, exemplifies the potential for nurses to be transformational leaders in their communities.

"As a leader and influencer, I don't see

Continued on page 32

South University: A Look at Flourishing Nursing Education from Both Sides

BY BARBARA R. FALLON

Pre-pandemic approximately two thousand students and their faculty took advantage of the South University, Florida campus academic portfolio - a full range of on-site, online, and remote learning undergraduate and postgraduate degree classes. So, when COVID-19 obstacles threatened campus life and learning, South was prepared to adapt their methods of teaching and not only survived but flourished.

Most importantly however, administrators and faculty recognized - before, during and after the pandemic - that it takes more than books and simulation labs and virtual programs to instill the 'art and science' of nursing in students. Faculty with clinical excel-



Susan Hamley



Dr. Sharon Ramjohn

Continued on page 36

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Health Care Heroes 2022 Official Program

Kindred Hospital South Florida

Specializing in Medically Complex Patients

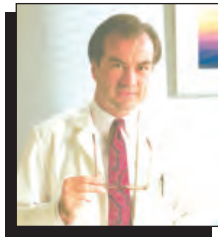


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Publisher's Note

*There Is a superhero
in all of us, we just need
the courage
to put on the cape ...*

Of all our issues each year, it seems inevitable that around mid-April Carol will gleefully break the news to me that she can barely fit my Publisher's Note into May — let alone waste space so I can relate my latest escapade or electronics purchase. So once again, consider me downsized in favor of all the amazing nurses and Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Health Care Heroes profiled in this extraordinary May issue.

As we all welcome the light peeking through the end of our pandemic tunnels and endure the boomeranging mask confusion, please take some time to read about and honor the individuals highlighted in our May publication.

Congratulations and thank you all! You are the glue that keeps our South Florida community resilient, compassionate and moving forward.

Charles Felix



*You can reach Charles Felix at
Charles@southfloridahospitalnews.com*

**FREE
MED MAL
EXPERT REVIEW**



HOW HARD WILL YOUR MED MAL CARRIER FIGHT FOR YOU?

It's no longer just a matter of signs hinting at a hardening market. Indisputable evidence is now at the forefront. Malpractice rates are going up across the board. Weaker malpractice carriers are being placed into receivership or sold. Juries in Florida are making shockingly high awards. And this is only the beginning.

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These are just a few of the questions you should be asking in this volatile market. It's not too late for a no-obligation medical malpractice insurance review, just contact Risk Strategies at **800.966.2120** or matt@dannagracey.com.

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Celebrating Our Nurses

During National Nurses Week, May 6-12, we want to take the time to recognize and celebrate all nurses, but especially the ones at Baptist Health. Our nurses prove time and again how vital they are to their patients and their patients' loved ones, as well as to the entire Baptist Health Community.

Their dedication to their profession and their resilience continue to be on display, and we are grateful to have some of the most caring and skilled nurses on our team.



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ACO and MIPS Practices Get Extra Benefit from Next Gen CCM

Medical practices have an opportunity to significantly increase income by participating in Medicare Chronic Care Management (CCM), especially given the large 2022 increase in payments (up to 52%) for these services.

Additionally, Your Doctor In Touch (YDIT) provides a Next Gen CCM program offering an innovative value-added service to help ensure practices participating in a Medicare value-based payment program, such as an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) or the Merit-Based Payment System (MIPS), to receive maximum incentive payments.

Although the financial success of most ACOs makes a compelling case for practices to participate in one of these programs, many primary care practices in an ACO are challenged by the burden to meet required quality measures (QMs). Similarly, many primary care practices participating in the Medicare Incentive Payment System (MIPS) program are challenged to meet and report quality measures that earn sufficient points to receive incentive payments.

Medicare CCM Value

Participation in Medicare Chronic Care Management (CCM) provides a golden opportunity for all medical practices to generate greater income, improve patient outcomes, and increase patient engagement. These positive results will in turn enhance the patient care experience, improve the enrolled population's health, increase physician satisfaction, and reduce utilization of expensive health care services, thereby meeting the Quadruple Aim. However, most medical practices lack the resources and capabilities required to deliver Medicare CCM on their own and



BY RICHARD GROSSO, CEO, AND SCOTT RICE, MD, PHD, MBA, MS

must therefore outsource CCM services.

Next Gen CCM Innovation

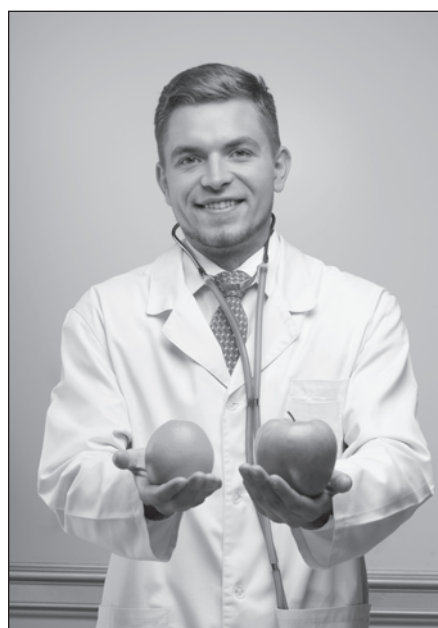
The YDIT Next Gen CCM program not only delivers traditional CCM services, but also tracks and monitors required QMs for both ACO-affiliated and MIPS-participating practices. This value-added service therefore mitigates the challenges related to meeting required quality measures, one of the greatest barriers to participation and retention of practices in a Medicare value-based payment program intended to help practices provide high value care.

Summary

Medical practices participating in both a Medicare value-based payment program and Next Gen CCM will increase income through reimbursement for delivered CCM and enhanced incentive payments, while reducing physician challenges. More importantly, enrolled patients receive significant health and financial benefits, and increase engagement in their care.

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When It Comes to Patient Care, Perform a Culture Check-Up

Funny, we see it everywhere. So many different companies stuck somewhere between COVID and post-COVID protocols. Don't know what I am referring to? Go to any hotel, restaurant, bank or grocery store. You can see these businesses trying to find the balance between what they were doing at the height of the pandemic and what to do now. The interactions are sometimes awkward as both the customer and the staff try to navigate the appropriate social norms. Slowly but surely, things will get back to normal.

Here is a gut check for everyone. How did all these COVID-19 procedures for your team and clients negatively impact your culture. It's hard for many of us to think back two plus years, but how did it feel to be part of your organization back then? What was it like to be part of your team? What was it like for patients and their families?

For all the right reasons, many in the health care world had to sacrifice certain aspects of the culture they had built in the name of safety, infection prevention, patient load, staffing shortages and a host of other very good reasons. The question is, how do you quickly and responsibly get back to pre-COVID levels of patient care, staff engagement and core values. We must also consider that many of the folks on your current team, joined during COVID and have no idea what the organization's culture may really be like because they have never actually seen it. Get a small team who knows what your pre-COVID culture was actually like. Then develop a game plan to reengage the team and the culture. The companies that do this quickly will win as we emerge from the pandemic.

Jay Juffre is Executive Vice President, ImageFIRST. For more information on ImageFIRST, call 1-800-932-7472 or visit www.imagefirst.com.



BY JAY JUFFRE

Four Ways to Reduce the Impact of High Administrative Expenses

Providers nationwide are greatly impacted by the nursing shortage. Administrative expenses for staffing — such as benefits, insurance, retention bonuses, hiring bonuses and headhunter fees — are soaring. At the same time, many nurses are leaving the profession as burnout reaches new heights. As a result, 81% of healthcare

CFOs — based on the 2022 BDO Healthcare CFO Outlook Survey — say the talent shortage poses a risk to their business in 2022. With reimbursement rates remaining static, providers need a way to manage the increasing administrative expenses.

Fortunately, providers have options for reducing the financial burden of these increasing costs, including:

1. Switch to defined-contribution plans.

In the past, many healthcare providers offered a defined-benefit plan, which is a type of pension plan that offers a pension payment or lump sum upon an employee's retirement. By contrast, in a defined-contribution plan, the employee and the employer both regularly contribute to the employee's retirement fund over time. Many providers have already switched to a defined-contribution plan, but those who have not should consider doing so now, as these plans can rein in the upfront administrative costs associated with employment.

2. Re-evaluate discretionary investments.

Recently, we've seen significant investment in innovation and research and development, particularly in larger health systems. While these investments are crucial to the development of more durable medical equipment, new pharmaceuticals and more, it may be necessary to temporarily reduce such investments to make up for increased administrative costs. Once hiring and staffing returns to a more stable state, these investments can be increased once again.



BY STEVEN SHILL

3. Evaluate your M&A opportunities.

For smaller independent providers, like standalone hospitals in rural areas, high administrative costs can be debilitating and threaten the organization's future. The best solution to this problem may be to join a larger system that can afford to take on the administrative burden. For providers that are seeking to acquire organizations this year, it's important that they try to keep the overall number of vendors they work with low so they can access group purchasing discounts and possibly negotiate better acquisition terms.

4. Review your insurance coverage strategy.

While it often feels daunting to providers, now is the time to review insurance plans. One possible consideration is self-insurance. By offering employees self-insurance plans, providers can save money on premiums. To determine whether this is the right move, providers need to use an actuarial calculation of covered lives to determine what their collective costs will be. From there, providers can determine if they have the funding to offer self-insurance. Self-insurance isn't the right move for every organization, but it's worth exploring, especially for providers whose insurance premiums are a significant financial burden right now.

Nearly all providers are struggling under the weight of high administrative costs. Finding creative solutions to mitigate their impact on the financial viability of your organization will set you apart from the competition and allow you to maintain continuity of care.

Steven Shill, Partner and National Leader, The BDO Center for Healthcare Excellence & Innovation, can be reached at sshill@bdo.com or (714) 668-7370.

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The Business of Health Care

The University of Miami Center for Health Management and Policy, housed in the Miami Herbert Business School, held its 11th annual Business of Health Care Conference. The theme this year was "Technology, Access and the New Normal." With more than 1,000 registrants from the region, as well as nationally and globally, the audience reflected the geographic and sector diversity of the panels themselves.

One of the highlights of this conference series is representation of, and discussion among the various professional sectors of the health care industry. C-suite representation included the American Hospital Association, America's Health Insurance Plans, the Health Care Financial Management Association, the National Medical Association and the American Nurses Association. Given the theme of the conference, significant discussion and insights came from the participants as moderated by Pat Geraghty, the President and CEO of GuideWell – Florida Blue, the conference's presenting sponsor since its inception. The panel focused on many of the issues affecting us in our local health care community. Specific focus included the work force shortage that is affecting the ability of health systems and



BY STEVEN G. ULLMANN, PHD

physician groups to provide adequate, high-quality care. The impact on the labor costs and resultant overall costs of facilities and clinical practices, and the impact on profits/net-revenues and financial viability of providers was discussed. Methods to mitigate the issue associated with workforce shortage including the high skill level required in this day and age were discussed as well. Training through state-of-the-art simulation (as exists at the hospital simulation facility at UM's School of Nursing and Health Sciences), cross-training of skills among clinical staff, and use of Artificial Intelligence to bolster provision of care were seen as ways of enhancing the ability to provide adequate clinical care in the wake of current and ongoing clinical shortages. Telehealth was also discussed as a process that gained huge acceptance at the height of the pandemic, especially for primary care and behavioral health, and demonstrated the opportunities to extend service to underrepresented minorities, lower income communities and rural areas. Having said that, several concerns regarding telehealth were discussed. Concerns included whether individuals in lower income or rural communities had video access or only audio access, whether due to web access or the individual technical knowledge to link

visually. Additionally, reimbursement as allowed by the federal government is to expire on December 31, 2022, and the question remains as to whether the current policy of reimbursement will continue.

Specific technologies were discussed in a second panel that focused on aspects of lifestyle and health with platforms and apps allowing for moderating and implementing healthy eating patterns and behavioral health support. Access with greater convenience, focusing on access points, i.e., where the patient/client is, in terms of location, psychological status, and social demographics were discussed. The goal is to give the patient/client better control of his/her health status with proper real time support.

The concept of access was brought to the fore in a discussion with Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar. Former Secretaries of Health and Human Services Azar and Donna Shalala both are on the faculty in the University of Miami's Department of Health Management and Policy. Perhaps the most critical medical issue of our lifetime, the pandemic, occurred under Secretary Azar's watch. Given Secretary Azar's background in the C-suite of one of the major pharmaceutical companies nationally, Secretary Azar discussed how his understanding of risk associated with pharmaceutical and vaccine development, an understanding of new methodologies such as mRNA vaccines, and the significant issue associated with ade-

quate production, storage, transportation, and distribution, as well as the issue of distributional justice associated with an initially scarce supply with huge demand required an interdisciplinary team of experts to effectively put into effect Operation Warp Speed ... rolling out a new vaccine for this killer disease within a year ... truly a remarkable feat. With the realization that hundreds of thousands have died, one can only imagine the multiples of hospitalizations and deaths that would have occurred in the absence of Operation Warp Speed. Secretary Azar, in his discussion with Professor Karoline Mortensen, also focused on several of his other areas of policy (until the pandemic required renewed focus). These other areas of discussion included medical record portability, price transparency and value-based purchasing.

As this conference came to a close, planning was already underway for next year's Business of Health Care Conference. We look forward to being totally in-person again in the years to come, discussing major areas of interaction going forward.

Dr. Steven G. Ullmann, Professor and Chair, Department of Health Management and Policy, Director, Center for Health Management and Policy, and Special Assistant to the Provost at Miami Herbert Business School, University of Miami, can be reached at (305) 284-9920 or Sullmann@miami.edu.

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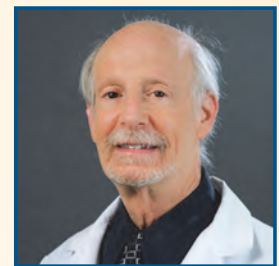
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Blood and Marrow Transplantation Program at Nicklaus Children's Hospital: Exceeding Patient Care Standards and Predicted Outcomes

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

The Blood and Marrow Transplantation Program at Nicklaus Children's Hospital is South Florida's first and most experienced care provider for children requiring blood or bone marrow transplantation.

As one of only two pediatric blood and marrow transplant centers in South Florida, they perform more than 30 blood and marrow transplants per year and a total of 400 since its inception in 1991. Bone marrow transplant is now commonly referred to as stem cell transplant because they are using other sources of stem cells, and not only bone marrow, such as cord blood.

"We treat children under the age of 21 years old for several conditions, such as leukemia and lymphoma and other types of tumors and malignancies," says Jorge Galvez-Silva, M.D., director of the Blood and Marrow Transplant Program at Nicklaus Children's Hospital, and member of the KIDZ Medical Services team, a physician-owned multispecialty group that provides neonatal, pediatric and obstetrical healthcare throughout South Florida. The KIDZ team of dedicated pediatric subspecialists, advanced practice providers, nursing and hearing professionals works in more than a dozen hospitals, including Nicklaus Children's Hospital.

The Blood and Marrow Transplant Program's experience and dedication to quality and in-depth staff training continues to drive outcomes that well exceed predicted outcomes. It was originally accredited in 2003 by the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapies (FACT) for all aspects of blood or marrow transplan-



Dr. Jorge Galvez-Silva

tation (cellular therapy). The program continues to meet the rigorous FACT standards, having achieved its most recent reaccreditation in 2020. FACT accreditation is given to organizations that exceed standards in patient care and laboratory practices.

"Another issue that differentiates us from other programs is that we are located in a fully dedicated, freestanding children's hospital with a multidisciplinary group of experts, each offering specialties that are really relevant to the wellbeing of the kids undergoing bone marrow transplants," Dr. Galvez says.

At Nicklaus Children's Hospital, the KIDZ Medical team provides state-of-the-art intervention and therapies with a level of clinical experience and patient-focused support that is unparalleled in the region. KIDZ Medical is instrumental in the hematology/oncology, pulmonary, and genetics programs at the hospital.

What makes the program so successful can be summed up in one word, notes Dr. Galvez.



Dr. Ossama Maher

"Collaboration. We have strong teamwork and collaboration," he says. "The main reason we work well together is because we put the patients and their family needs first. Every program puts their patients first, of course. But bone marrow transplant is so complex that you need to have an open collaboration with different specialties on your team, and with the patients and family. That translates into great outcomes."

The key measure of success for any bone marrow transplant program is the survival of the patients, according to Ossama Maher, M.D., co-director of the Blood and Marrow Transplant Program and also a member of the KIDZ Medical Services team.

"Over the last three years, we've been averaging between 95 to 100 percent survival," he says. "The national average for a program our size is 75 percent. So, our program is doing exceedingly well."

The program has continued to expand over the past few years.

"When Dr. Galvez and I joined KIDZ Medical, we had the dream and ambi-

tion to expand the program by offering transplant options for other medical conditions. Historically, transplants were only for kids who had leukemia. The scope of pediatric diseases treatable by stem cell transplant-bone marrow transplant now includes, in addition to malignant disorders such as high-risk acute leukemias and solid tumors, a wide range of hereditary conditions, including storage and metabolic disorders, hemoglobinopathies, and immune deficiencies."

Dr. Maher notes that Florida Blue and several insurance companies have recognized the program with the Blue Distinction Center® designation and Center of Excellence for transplantation for delivering high-quality bone marrow transplant care. This designation is based on the delivery of quality specialty care based on objective, transparent measures for patient safety and health outcomes developed with input from the medical community. In addition, it has been recognized as a center of excellence by Blue Cross, Aetna, Simply, Optum, and Humana.

Looking ahead, Dr. Galvez's hopes for the future of the field is that they will be able to cure all children with cancers.

"Stem cell therapy is a rapidly evolving field. We've come a long way from our first attempts to cure various severe conditions, and as we get more successful at it, the community of stem cell therapists want to achieve survivability with less toxicities, so every child can live a normal life," he adds.

For more information, visit www.kidzmedical.com/pediatric-services/hematology-oncology/.

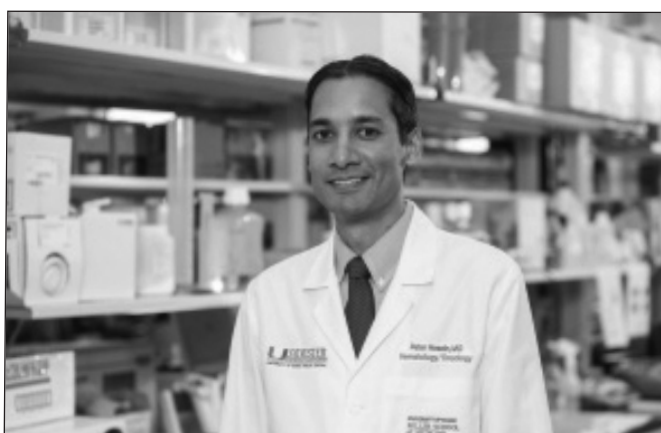
Immunotherapy Study Offers Hope for Pancreatic Cancer Patients

In a research letter to the journal JAMA Oncology, clinical researchers at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center in the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine showed that immunotherapy can be an option for at least one subgroup of pancreatic cancer patients. The study found that patients with inherited BRCA and other similar mutations can achieve complete responses — in some cases going from near death to durable recoveries.

"This is a highly selected subpopulation of patients with pancreatic cancer who carry specific mutations, most commonly in their BRCA gene," said Peter Hosein, M.D., co-leader of Sylvester's Gastrointestinal Cancers Site Disease Group, associate professor of clinical medicine in the Division of Hematology/Oncology and senior author of the study. "Their cancers respond to immunotherapy when most pancreatic tumors do not."

Tumors often evade immune system surveillance by sending false signals, essentially telling immune cells they are normal tissue and not cancer. Some immunotherapies thwart this mechanism by blocking these signals and unleashing the immune response. While this approach has been effective in several cancers, it has failed often in pancreatic cancer.

However, in 2017, a single patient with relapsed pancreatic cancer was successfully



Dr. Peter Hosein

treated in a large clinical trial called ASCO TAPUR. The patient was selected because of their inherited BRCA mutation, which led to a relatively high tumor mutational burden and other changes that made immunotherapies effective.

"BRCA and RAD51C mutations make tumors genetically unstable, creating abnormal proteins called neoantigens that sensitize the immune system," said Dr. Hosein. "Pancreas cancer is usually immunologically cold — it doesn't generate an immune response. But these mutations, which appear in about 5% of pancreatic cancers, make the tumors immunologically lukewarm and more likely to respond to immunotherapies."

Seeing this success, Dr. Hosein and colleagues embarked on their own small study of 12 patients with BRCA, RAD51C and similar mutations. The

drugs were on the market but had not been approved to treat pancreatic cancer, so the researchers had to use them off-label.

All the patients in the study had been treated with chemotherapy and other drugs but had developed resistance. After receiving two different immunotherapies (ipilimumab and nivolumab), four patients had complete responses, one had a partial response, and two had stable disease — an incredible success rate for patients with advanced, treatment-resistant pancreatic cancer.

E-mail Your Editorial Submissions to editorial@southfloridahospitalnews.com

Annual Fire Door Inspections

Answers to Some of Facility Managers Most Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we have to have our fire doors inspected?

Because it is part of the Fire Prevention Codes and is a requirement of AHCA, CMS, TJC, and the LAW

Isn't checking fire doors included in the Annual Fire Prevention Inspection by the Fire Department?

It was in the past before the Fire Prevention Code was changed, making Annual Inspections the responsibility of the building operators.

That doesn't seem fair. Aren't fire inspections (including doors) why we pay our taxes and assessments for Fire Protection? Why should the burden of fire door inspections and maintenance be on us?

It has always been the obligation of the people responsible for the operation of the building to maintain the building's fire, smoke and egress doors in code compliant working order.

Why was it changed to call for mandatory Annual Fire Door Inspections?

The importance of code-compliant fire, smoke and egress doors to protect the public has become very apparent. There also was a problem in that Building Operators were not maintaining their "life-safety" doors.

Why has inspecting "life-safety" doors become a problem to fire departments?

Fire Prevention Inspections by local Fire Departments have to cover so many different fire protection elements. The number of fire doors, in some facilities (thousands of doors are not uncommon), make inspecting every door virtually impossible.

What does AHJ stand for?

AHJ stands for the Authority Having Jurisdiction - it can be a Fire Marshal or ACHA, CMS, TJC, Surveyor, etc. It is anyone who has the right to enforce the fire code on your facility.

Why are they making such a big deal over the fire doors? Ours have been here for more than 30 years with no problems. Why now?

In the life of the building, it only takes one fire door to fail to do its job. It would be best to have ALL your fire, smoke and egress doors working. If even one doesn't perform its function, people may die or get injured, or property is unnecessarily damaged because the fire doors failed to do their job and didn't confine the fire or smoke to the starting area, and it spreads. A minor fire that a closed door could easily contain could turn into an inferno. It's better to be "safe than sorry."

Have Annual Inspections proven their value?

Very much so. Investigations of building fires - especially over the years in high rise structures, show that noncompliance with fire safety doors is a major contributing factor in the loss of lives and property.



BY DAN ARCE

What does it take to be an Inspector? Can we inspect our doors?

Yes, keep in mind the AHJ and the Fire and Life Safety Codes require Inspectors to know about the construction of fire, smoke and egress doors. Inspectors must be familiar with fire-rated door hardware, Fire Code requirements, materials, installation, locking, and latching capabilities. They also must be capable of compiling the ITM report.

Who is responsible for inspecting the building's fire doors?

Owners, property managers, Association board members, etc. Anyone, if they are responsible for operating or managing a building.

How much does the inspection cost?

To determine the exact cost, National FireDoor (NFD) would meet and discuss your service needs. Next, NFD would survey your property and build a complete "Door Schedule," - which includes a count of every fire, smoke and egress door. Following this survey, you would be given a proposal.

What can the AHJs do to us?

These Authorities can levy fines, bring charges in court, and in some severe cases, order Suspension of Operations. Insurance companies can raise premiums, deny claims, or refuse coverage. State, city, or civil lawyers can charge or sue the responsible parties for neglect because they didn't follow the fire code. This can be very costly. If there is NO ITM book, it sets the stage for the legal action.

What is included in a Full Service Inspection package from National FireDoor?

A full-service package includes a complete survey of all of the Facility's fire, smoke and egress doors; ALL doors are ID (QR - barcoded) with a label, and the preparation of the ITM report and individual door inspections is commenced.

- All fire doors in the facility are "professionally" inspected.
- Each door's inspection results are compiled in the database for inclusion in the final ITM report.
- If desired, supervision of any repairs and replacements resulting from the inspections to bring each door up to full compliance.
- If some doors have unreadable "painted over" manufacturer's labels that have been inspected and are considered compliant, they can be field relabeled.
- Delivery of the ITM report to the client, either in printed or data format.

NFD can ensure your buildings conform to the inspection requirements for your facility. For a no-obligation consultation, contact NFD at (305) 233-1477 or info@Nationalfiredoor.com. We can make your buildings compliant now and in the future.

Malpractice Insurance

EXPERT ADVICE

Recent Court Decision Results in Chilling Effect on Reporting of Medical Mistakes

BY VANESSA ORR

When a mistake is made in a healthcare setting, doctors and nurses are encouraged to report it immediately as a way to mitigate the problem and to ensure that it doesn't happen again. Unfortunately, a recent court case is showing that sharing this information might not always be in healthcare providers' best interests.

In 2017, Vanderbilt University Medical Center nurse RaDonda Vaught mistakenly injected patient Charlene Murphey with the wrong drug. Murphey went into a coma and later died, and Vaught was charged with criminally negligent homicide.

"Vaught was using Vanderbilt's drug dispensing system to get Versed for the patient, a sedative that is used when patients get an MRI," said Tom Murphy, producer, National Health Care Practice Danna-Gracey, a Division of Risk Strategies. "When the dispensing system didn't work, she overrode it and instead received Vecuronium, a paralytic that caused Ms. Murphey to stop breathing."

"These systems often don't work, and they are overridden all the time," he added. "But after review, prosecutors decided to charge her because she was grossly negligent, saying that she missed a number of red flags that she should have caught prior to injecting the patient."

Vaught was convicted in 2022, which sent a chilling effect throughout the healthcare community.

"This conviction brought a huge outcry from the American Nursing Association (ANA) and nurses around the country and the world," said Murphy. "Mistakes are made in healthcare all the time, and in this case, the mistake wasn't caught and the patient died. The ANA believes that this sets a dangerous precedent, as honest reporting of mistakes can now get criminalized."

"Medical providers believe that this verdict could create a negative impact that could last for years," he added. "If providers can be criminalized for reporting mistakes, the less likely it is that they will report them."

In this particular case, the district attorney said that the charges were brought against Vaught because she missed a number of opportunities to catch her mistake. "He argued that it's a



Tom Murphy

case about patient safety—specific to this one nurse's actions—and she should not be practicing medicine because she allowed this to happen," said Murphy.

Part of the outcry in this case is that Vanderbilt University Medical System was not brought up on criminal charges, despite the fact that its dispensing system was malfunctioning.

Vanderbilt settled with the family early in the process yet took no responsibility to defend Vaught from her charges.

"This is why we tell our clients to check their malpractice insurance to make sure that they have enough insurance and that it is with a good company," said Murphy. "We all know how expensive a legal defense can be, especially in a criminal case."

While most policies exclude coverage for intentional criminal acts, professional liability policies will provide a defense for policyholders charged with malpractice or criminal malpractice as long as the act was not intentional.

"While her insurance company should defend her through the trial and pay legal fees, Vanderbilt is not commenting on anything; they basically threw her under the bus," said Murphy, noting that Vaught has been raising funds via a GoFundMe page. "This is why we advise healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, PAs, and nurse practitioners, to have their own insurance instead of being covered by a hospital."

"The shareholders or C-suite of the hospital is going to do what is in the best interests of the hospital and not the provider," he added. "In this case, they settled with the family right away, when the right thing to do was to defend Vaught throughout the trial."

He added that no matter how much time Vaught, who will be sentenced in May, receives, the case will have a chilling effect on healthcare professionals for years to come.

"The bottom line is that we're already experiencing staffing shortages, which the pandemic hasn't helped, and now this is telling nurses working long hours saving lives that they could be criminally charged for making a mistake," he said. "It's a real issue."

For more information, call Tom Murphy or Matt Gracey at 800-966-2120 or visit www.dannagracey.com.



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Let's Connect: ACHE of South Florida Spotlight



ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Jessica Miller, BSN, MBA

BY VANESSA ORR

Jessica Miller, BSN, MBA, is passionate about the healthcare industry. She is not only committed to making sure that patients receive the best possible care today in her role as the chief nursing officer at St. Mary's Medical Center and Palm Beach Children's Hospital, but to ensuring that the industry moves forward as well.



Jessica Miller

"As a nurse, you take care of individual patients, but as chief nursing officer, I am responsible for taking care of many patients and my nurses," said Miller. "I love the fact that as an administrator, I can have an impact on their quality of care from where I sit. While it's been challenging throughout the pandemic to retain nurses who are feeling burned out, my job is to keep them engaged and passionate about patient care while trying to provide optimal resources," she added.

Miller, whose parents were both nurses, knew from an early age that she wanted to pursue a healthcare career. "My mother is a hard-core, bedside clinical nurse, and my father took the administrative route," she explained. "This was what we talked about at the dinner table while I was growing up.

"My decision to enter healthcare was reinforced when I worked in retail during college to get pocket money," she added. "I hated it. Every hour seemed like a day, and every minute seemed like an hour. I knew then that I was definitely made to take care of people."

Miller graduated from Miami Dade College with an associate degree and went on to earn her MBA and BSN at Florida International University. She served as group CNO at Miami Dade Tenet and Florida Medical Center before taking her

present position in December 2021.

In 2018, Miller joined the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) on the advice of board member Madison Workman, FACHE. "He said, 'Jess, we're young leaders, so we have to get involved and get active,'" explained Miller. "And I'm so glad that I did."

As a member of ACHE, Miller recently took part in the 2022 ACHE-SF Health-

care Leadership Development Case Competition, judging the work of college students who hope to be healthcare's next generation of leaders. She also attends many of the organization's educational events and takes part in networking events as well.

"What's interesting is that you see that everyone is going through the same struggles, even in different parts of the nation," she said. "When we all share information about things that work and don't work, it makes us all better. I often bring back PowerPoint presentations and ideas from educational events for us to try.

"It's also exciting to get to meet so many different people in healthcare, which I believe helps the industry as a whole become stronger," she added. "There are rockstar leaders out there and meeting them can help you learn why they're so successful."

Miller, who will sit for her fellowship this year, believes that it is important to fully commit to the profession. "Becoming a fellow means that you're passionate about healthcare leadership, and that you're aligned with the vision that it's not one company versus the next, but that you are all responsible for getting healthcare to a better place," she said.

Despite COVID-19 ... Mission Accomplished

A year has passed since I took the responsibility as President of the Dade County Medical Association. While it has been a year of challenges due to the adaptations that physicians, the community, and the healthcare system have lived through due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been a rewarding year thanks to the way we have responded to those challenges.



BY JOSE DAVID
SUAREZ, MD

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the DCMA has been busy working for the benefit of the Physicians, the Community, and the patients. We put together a program to offer free PPE for physicians' members and their families. We also worked with the Lt. Governor, Jeannette Nunez, and the Miami-Dade Department of Health to facilitate access to vaccines, especially for community physicians.

The DCMA continues to educate our members (MD & DO) through webinars, such as "How to Manage Burnout" and "How to Manage Economics During the Pandemic," as well as the mandatory CMEs, which are part of the membership benefits. Through our Community Outreach, we organized an alliance with CABA (Cuban American Bar Association), by offering an online seminar on How to Cope with Burnout Caused by the Pandemic.

In addition to working with the Pandemic issues, we carried out our Residents and Medical Students Research Competition event. With a record of fifty-six submissions, ten finalists had the opportunity to present their research before a panel of seven physicians who acted as judges for the event. Out of the 10 finalists, three papers were awarded. In addition to the competition winners a Special Honorary Mention was awarded to the youngest participating contestant in the Residents Research Competition, Noah Cohen a 16-year-old high school student who presented research on the Microbiome of the Miami Metrorail Before and During the COVID Pandemic.

On the advocacy side, we visited the Florida Legislature during Legislative Session in Tallahassee. A DCMA delegation of eight physicians plus staff went there to promote DCMA legislative priorities that our leadership considered will benefit our members and patients in the county. Members of the Board of Directors and staff

had the opportunity to meet with several Senators, Representatives, and legislative staff to discuss our institutional priorities. A total of 20 meetings were held in Tallahassee and we are pleased to announce that a number of our initiatives passed and have been signed into law by the Governor. These legislative priorities include: COVID-19 Related Claims Against Health Care

Providers by Senator Burgess; Loan Forgiveness for Physicians Practicing in Areas of Critical Need as a Budgetary Request; Telehealth by Senator Diaz; Step-Therapy Protocols by Representative Willhite; Emergency Medical Care and Treatment to Minors Without Parental Consent by Representative Masullo; and Living Organ Donors in Insurance Policies by Representative Latvala.

Also, during our visit to Tallahassee, Rafael Fernandez, M.D., President-Elect and Antonio Mesa, D.O., Past-President, were sponsored as Doctor of the Day at the Florida Senate and the House of Representatives.

We also received a grant from New York Life Foundation to implement the DCMA Wellness program for its members as a benefit that will be launched in the upcoming months, among other projects that we keep working on for the benefit of the physicians and patients in Miami-Dade County.

I am proud of the milestones we have achieved this past year, which would not have been possible without the support and leadership of Rudolph Moise, D.O., Immediate Past-President and Rafael Fernandez, M.D., President-Elect; as well as the Executive Committee which includes Carmel Barrau, M.D., Vice-President and Patricia Ares-Romero, M.D., Secretary and Treasurer and all Members of the Board of Directors. I would also like to recognize the many contributions of Fraser Cobbe, Executive Director and Angel Bosch, Managing Director of the DCMA.

While I am stepping down as the DCMA President, my commitment to promoting leadership opportunities, health care management education, and seeking more primary care doctors for the underserved will continue in the years to come.

Dr. Jose David Suarez is President, Dade County Medical Association, Inc.

What's Next?

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Accountants and Advisors

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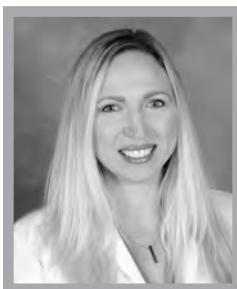
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National Nurses Week: May 6-12

Nurses Week is celebrated from May 6-12, 2022, and "South Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report" would like to salute nurses across the U.S. and the world. The following nurses are some of South Florida's best!

HOLY CROSS HEALTH**Crystal Caruthers MSN, RN**

Crystal Caruthers, M.S.N., R.N., began her career at Holy Cross Health in 2008 and participated in the first nurse residency program offered in Broward County. Today she is the Nurse Resident Development Specialist and has developed Holy Cross Health's long-standing Nurse Residency Program, which plays an integral part in the training and development of graduate nurses transitioning to competent nurses. Caruthers also serves as a mentor for graduate nurses. Her love for the profession and clinical experience has driven her to make the Nurse Residency Program a solid framework for the growth and success of all nurses. Caruthers has also spent over 10 years working at the bedside in the critical care setting, case management, care transitions and outpatient surgery. She has worked on initiatives that pertain to nurse retention and a healthy work environment and has served on numerous quality councils. Caruthers earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Barry University in Miami and her Master of Science in Nursing from Western Governor's University in Millcreek, Utah.

**MORSELIFE HEALTH SYSTEM****Onika Sears, MSN**

Onika Sears, M.S.N., is director of education for the MorseLife Health System where her responsibilities include providing clinical education to caregivers who provide short term rehabilitation, long term care, memory care, hospice, independent and assisted living. Sears joined MorseLife in 2011 and oversees updates to new protocols and developments, provides hands-on training to nurses that includes CNA certifications and ensuring nursing competency. At the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, Sears arranged infectious control and vaccine awareness for the entire staff including those in housekeeping, administration and all other departments on campus. She received her RN degree in Guyana and her MSN degree from Chamberlain University.

**Jessee Evan Simbulan, RN, BSN**

Jessee Evan Simbulan, R.N., B.S.N., joined MorseLife in 2018 and is a nurse manager in short term rehab and the post-acute unit. He manages 45 employees, 24-hour floor operations and patient customer care. During the first year of the pandemic, he managed a COVID unit which involved educating and supporting his staff. Under his guidance there were zero COVID deaths in the unit. Prior to joining MorseLife, he served as a private nurse in Maryland, New York and South Florida. Born and raised in the Philippines, Simbulan received his education and certifications at Our Lady of Fatima University in Manila.



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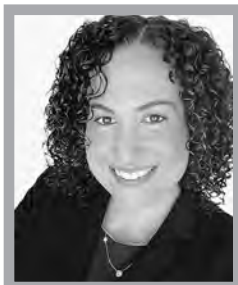
HEALTH CARE DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

C. L. BRUMBACK PRIMARY CARE CLINICS

Yamilet Burk, RN

Yamilet Burk, R.N., is a Senior Clinical Nurse with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County's C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers serving all patients regardless of their ability to pay. Burk has 13 years of nursing experience in hospital and clinical settings. Prior to joining the Health Care District, Burk worked at the Bethesda Health Physician Group Urology Practice. She has provided nursing care for inmates at Armor Correctional Health Center at the Monroe County Detention Center in Key West and was a Charge Nurse at Baptist Health Doctors Hospital in Coral Gables where she also worked in the Medical/Surgical Telemetry Unit.

Burk earned her Associates of Science in Nursing at Miami Dade College. Burk enjoys being involved in her patients' care to help them resolve their health issues.



Jennifer Rodriguez Gomez, RN

Jennifer Rodriguez Gomez, R.N., is a Primary Care and Medication Assisted Treatment Nurse with the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics, which provide medical, dental, behavioral health and pharmacy services to adults and children with or without insurance. Gomez has nearly ten years of nursing experience working with pediatric, geriatric and adult populations including the homeless and patients with substance use disorders.

Prior to joining the Health Care District's Brumback Clinics, Gomez was an Employee Health Nurse at St. Mary's Medical Center. Before that, she served as a Senior Licensed Practical Nurse at a substance use disorder treatment center and as a home health LPN. Gomez attended the Academy for Nursing and Health Occupations and is currently attending Palm Beach State College to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Her greatest satisfaction is educating patients and improving their health.



EDWARD J. HEALEY REHABILITATION & NURSING CENTER

Nicole R. McKenzie, RN

Nicole R. McKenzie, R.N., is the Infection Preventionist at the Edward J. Healey Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Riviera Beach, a skilled nursing facility owned and operated by the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, McKenzie took on extra supervisory shifts to address a shortage of nurses, worked weekends and served as a facility liaison with Florida's health agencies.

McKenzie has over 20 years of experience in nursing home, rehabilitation centers, home health, primary care and specialist settings. Prior to joining the Healey Center in 2018, McKenzie worked as the head nurse at an allergy, asthma and sinus center. McKenzie earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Chamberlain College of Nursing in Addison, IL. She was named Salutatorian upon earning her Associate in Nursing at the Academy for Nursing and Health Occupations in West Palm Beach.



Susanne Harrell

Susanne Harrell is the Nurse Systems Administrator at the Edward J. Rehabilitation and Nursing Center. Harrell has 12 years of experience in acute nursing and rehabilitation centers. She works closely with IT staff and is responsible for maintaining system updates, system testing and user training for the EHR systems. As a member of the Healey Center's COVID Ad-Hoc team, she helped implement infection control efforts through new COVID policies and procedures. Harrell helped maintain regulatory requirements, conducted COVID testing twice a week for employees and residents, and supported supervisory needs, filling in when there were nursing absences during the height of the pandemic.

Harrell earned her Associate in Science from Care Hope College in Boynton Beach and her Associate in Arts from Broward College in Pembroke Pines.



LAKESIDE MEDICAL CENTER

Sharon Beckford-Douglas, RN, BSN

Sharon Beckford-Douglas, R.N., B.S.N., is the Assistant Nurse Manager for adult inpatients at Lakeside Medical Center, a rural, acute care teaching hospital owned and operated by the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. Over the past decade, Beckford-Douglas has advanced from a floor nurse to a charge nurse and an ICU nurse. As Assistant Nurse Manager, she currently oversees Lakeside Medical Center's Telemetry, Medical Surgical, Critical Care and Dialysis areas. Her leadership was key during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to joining the Health Care District, Beckford-Douglas worked in various health care settings, providing skilled nursing, long term acute care and hospice care. She also worked in the Medical Surgical department at Palms West Hospital.

Beckford-Douglas earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from South University. Nursing is Beckford-Douglas' second career. Before relocating to Florida from Connecticut in 2004, she was a travel agent for what she calls "16 glorious years."



Bonita Hughes, RN

Bonita Hughes, R.N., is the Operating Charge Nurse and member of the Vascular Access Team at Lakeside Medical Center. Since joining the hospital in 2007, Hughes has served as a Surgical, PACU and PICC nurse, is a preceptor to new nurses, and has played a key role during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hughes has over 15 years of experience in hospital, home health, and primary care environments. In 2017, Hughes was named a "Nurse of the Year" by Palm Healthcare Foundation. Called a "warrior" by her colleagues, she was recognized for her work ethic while receiving treatment for breast cancer that was detected following an annual mammogram at Lakeside Medical Center.

Hughes earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Chamberlain University in Chicago, Illinois.

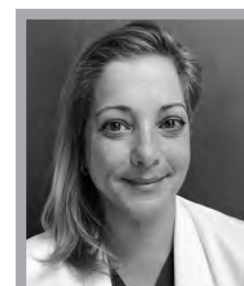


SCHOOL HEALTH

Dalmys Gouthmann, RN

Dalmys Gouthmann, R.N., is a School Nurse with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County where she keeps students healthy and ready to learn, orients new school nurses and precepts Palm Beach Atlantic University students. Gouthmann has 26 years of pediatric nursing experience in Florida. Prior to joining the Health Care District in 2014, Gouthmann worked at West Boca Medical Center in the PICU, NICU, nursery, pediatric ER and pediatric floor. While there, she served as an Assistant Nurse Manager and a preceptor for nursing students. Her experience includes working in the ER at Palmetto General Hospital and St. Mary's Medical Center.

Gouthmann graduated from a five-year degree program at the University of Medical Sciences of Havana. She worked in a hospital in Cuba for two years before coming to the U.S. and passing the nursing board exam.



Lindsay Thomas, RN

Lindsay Thomas, R.N., is a School Nurse with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County who says it's always been her dream to be a school nurse. Thomas has 18 years of experience as a pediatric nurse in acute care, clinical and school health settings. Prior to joining the Health Care District in 2018, Thomas was a pediatric nurse at a primary care center in Wellington, FL. She served in the pediatric intensive care unit at both McLeod Regional Medical Center in South Carolina and Johnson City Medical Center in Tennessee and as a labor and delivery nurse at Columbus Regional Medical Center in Georgia.

Thomas earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing with a minor in Military Science from western Kentucky University.



VITAS® HEALTHCARE IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

Eunide Chery, RN

Eunide Chery, R.N., became a nurse 10 years ago and has served in hospice care for VITAS® Healthcare for six years. “In hospice care, when you meet a patient, you are a stranger,” she says. “[But] after spending time with them, holding and caring for them, you are family.” “When I leave at the end of the day, I can be happy that my patient is comfortable and well cared for,” she adds.

Chery appreciates taking the time to enhance her patient’s quality of life. “A 103-year-old man came into hospice. He was in and out of hospice over the next two years,” she tells us. “He asked for me every time. He had no children and his wife had passed. ‘Promise you are not going to leave me,’ he said. He wanted me to choose his outfit for when he died. He had blue pants but not a white shirt. After work, I bought him a white shirt. I set everything up for him. He said: ‘Now I can go.’ The next day he passed.”



Omayra Caro Roman, RN

Omayra Caro Roman, R.N., has been a nurse for 28 years. She began her career in home care and later transitioned to hospice care, where she feels she was born to serve as a hospice caregiver. “I love to build trusting relationships with patients and families,” she says.

Caro Roman speaks Spanish and works with the Spanish-speaking population within hospice. “Through some of life’s hardest times, I am with the patient in his or her final journey,” she says. “I find this job extremely rewarding.”

Her bond with patient families does not end when the patient dies, though. “I maintain a friendship with a couple of the families I served,” she says. “We keep in touch, and they invite me to their homes for dinner or special occasions.” This continuing connection extends Roman’s passion for hospice nursing.



VITAS® HEALTHCARE IN BROWARD COUNTY

Meredith Glassman, RN, BSN

As a nurse for 15 years, Meredith Glassman, R.N., B.S.N., found her calling when she moved into the hospice niche eight years ago. “Every patient leaves an imprint on my heart,” says Glassman. “A short time ago, I met with a Holocaust survivor and reminded her that the Jewish holiday of Passover was upon us. She lit up with hope and excitement in remembering the holiday of the redemption of the slaves out of Egypt. Bringing her the special matzah (unleavened bread) was pivotal for her in her journey to love optimally!”

Glassman then stepped away from the acute care bedside when she took on the role of a shift supervisor for inpatient hospice. “This was defining in discovering my passion for hospice and palliative care,” she says.

Now with VITAS® Healthcare for five years, Glassman says teamwork is a delight. “I love having the support of the entire team, including the chaplain, social worker, doctor, manager, aides, and all ancillary resources, to collaboratively plan coordinated care for each patient. I also call upon my Rabbi for perspective and support,” says Glassman.



Helen Walton, RN

Hospice nurse Helen Walton, R.N., finds it meaningful to make a difference in the lives of those she cares for. She says, “I was working at a patient’s bedside as his family rallied around him. He was near death. His wife asked me: ‘What shall I do? I love him so much.’ I encouraged her and asked if she had spoken to him one-on-one and given him permission to go. She hadn’t. After arranging for them to be alone, the door opens after about thirty minutes, and she is tearful yet appears happy. She hugged me and said thank you. In turn, I thanked her for allowing me to share this moment. The family returned to the bedside. Within 30 minutes, the man passed away peacefully.”

It is significant moments like these that make Walton’s seven-year nursing career so satisfying. As a VITAS employee for 22 years, she was drawn to hospice care through a patient’s daughter.

“I look forward to coming to work because I love being a team player,” says Walton. “I am always willing to learn new things, no matter how challenging they may be.”



VITAS® HEALTHCARE IN DADE COUNTY

Anamarys Armenteros Careaga, RN

Anamarys Armenteros Careaga, R.N., knows that clinical care for patients in hospice provides a valuable service. “Hearing a family member say, ‘We couldn’t have done this without you,’ makes all the hard work worth it,” she says. “Hospice is not an easy profession yet guiding people through what is often the most challenging time of their life is incredibly fulfilling.”

With four years of experience as a nurse, Careaga believes every day as a hospice nurse is a unique experience filled with teachable moments.

“I remember taking care of a patient in his last moments of life,” she tells us. “His daughter was inconsolable. I sat next to her as she told me about her childhood memories with her father. She said goodbye to him little by little. I listened to her as he passed away. She thanked me and said this would not have been the same without my support.”

Careaga often reflects on her experience in providing compassionate care: “Helping patients transition with dignity, on their own terms, is very rewarding for hospice nurses,” she says.



Heydi Arauz, RN

Heydi Arauz’s pathway to nursing began when she worked as a medical assistant, then earned her LPN, and later became an RN. She feels hospice offers a special type of care. “While working in hospice, you develop empathy,” she says. “This is an incredibly hard time in the individual and family’s life, and I support them as we make the adjustments to carry on.” Arauz recognizes the unique role she has and finds fulfillment in it. “I am the last person to provide the most peaceful, professional, comfortable, and respectful support to the family and patient in the last moments of life,” she says.

She recalls a patient who remains memorable to her: “As I made my visits, I noticed he was a dance instructor. Due to his condition, he was unable to dance anymore. I played his favorite melodies and pretended I was his student as I moved around. I asked him if I was doing it right and he would smile so vividly. For that moment, he forgot about his illness. My goal was to make him laugh every time. That became our routine until he passed.”



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MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MIRAMAR

Barbara Williams, RN, BSN

After more than 52 years as a nurse in the Memorial Healthcare System, Barbara Williams plans on transitioning into a much-deserved retirement later this year.

Starting in 1969 as a nurses aid in the emergency department at the then Memorial Hospital, Williams' hard work and dedication earned her many promotions, from clinical manager to interim director of the department. She currently works as quality nurse, striving to provide excellent care and have patients leave the hospital better than they came.

Williams was one of the first African-American Leaders in her department and credits the many mentors and supporters throughout the years for her growth within the system. She grew up attending segregated schools and says, "it's important for me to be a role model for other nurses, to make sure they aren't frightened, and help them be their best."

In retirement, she'll continue to have impact by mentoring young women to become confident leaders and is already thankful for the many colleagues and friends at Memorial for many wonderful years.



Kristine Orta-Crespo, RN

It would be accurate to call Kristine Orta-Crespo a "lifer" at Memorial Hospital Miramar, since she started working there before the facility opened its doors in 2005. "I've seen kids in the community grow up, from newborn to adolescent. They're like our family and we treat them that way."

The pediatric emergency room clinical manager was initially hesitant to work with children, but embraced Memorial's patient and family-centered approach and now considers pediatrics her calling. "Children are innocent, resilient, and general happy, despite whatever brought them to the hospital. I feel like I can really make a difference for them," said Orta-Crespo, a nurse for more than 30 years.

To that end, Orta-Crespo and the pediatric team actively participate in the annual Tour de Broward fundraiser for Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital. They raised \$4,500 selling Valentine's Day baskets this year alone, part of the overall effort that made Memorial Miramar the event's top fundraising hospital.



JOE DIMAGGIO CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Blaire Teeters, BSN, RN IV, CPHON

Having some medical issues as a child and feeling 'seen' by the nurses that provided care is likely what set Blaire Teeters on the journey to being the professional she is today.

"Blaire consistently finds ways to provide the most gentle and compassionate care to the pediatric patients she attends to," said Nayda Boehm, nursing director at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital. "Her irrepressible spirit shines 4Central with joy that shines through challenging times."

A hematology/oncology nurse that has been part of Memorial Healthcare System since 2016, Teeters takes pride in being a good leader that is also a good teammate. "We hold each other up and everyone assists with patients and families during their darkest times. Tough challenges make better nurses."

The impact we can have on a child can last a lifetime," said Teeters.



Juan Mesa, RN IV

Juan Mesa has been part of the Memorial Healthcare System for 24 years, working as both a nurse and respiratory therapist, but it's his current position in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) that he calls his 'dream job.'

"The babies are super critical," said Mesa about micro preemies that can be born to mothers that are only six months pregnant and weigh as little as 500 grams. "It's rewarding that after they leave I can follow their progress in a Facebook group and know I helped that child and family."

While the patient bonds are strong, Mesa is also an asset to his fellow nurses and NICU leadership. His roles include transport nurse, preceptor for the highest level of competencies, educator, charge and resource nurse. "Juan is the first one to stand up to present opportunities for improvement and the first one to volunteer to be part of the solution," said NICU Director Janessa Alonso. "His years of experience, strong work ethic, and commitment to patient safety make him an invaluable team member and an absolute pleasure to work with."



MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL SOUTH

Catherine Michel, RN, BSN

An acute care nurse at her hospital's med surge tele unit, Catherine Michel sees all types of patients. "It's a mixed population. We get ER patients, those who dealing with the effects of strokes, COPD, dialysis, heart failures, and surgery."

The work is challenging, she says, but made easier by fellow nurses who are like a family that trusts and helps one another. It's an environment Michel is accustomed to, having grown up attending to a disabled sibling and a grandmother that suffered with Alzheimer's disease. "My mom was in the medical field and showed us how to provide care."

Michel has been part of Memorial Healthcare System since 2016 and values the patient interactions, sometimes going as far as singing to those in her care (she was a vocal major in college) to create a happier environment.



Daniela Tivda, RN, BSN

Beginning her nursing career three decades ago under communist rule in her native Romania, Daniela Tivda learned to provide care with very limited resources. "We reused glass syringes and I made a foley catheter out of IV tubing. I was seven years into my career and already an ER manager when I first saw as defibrillator."

The opportunity to learn, grow, and practice nursing with high standards were part of what motivated her to immigrate to the United States in 2004. She joined Memorial Healthcare System nearly six years ago and quickly advanced to charge nurse and clinical manager positions.

Currently overseeing PACU at Memorial Regional Hospital South, Tivda credits her husband and 16-year-old son for much of what she has accomplished. "They are both understanding and supportive of what it has taken for me to become a nurse leader. I came to the U.S. to become somebody and now we're living the American dream."



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WEST

Emily M. Cartin, RN-III, BSN

COVID-19 changed the lives of everyone in healthcare, perhaps none more so than Emily Cartin. Her father succumbed during the first surge of the coronavirus, in the same hospital where she continued to come to work each day.

Despite her grief, Cartin shined during the pandemic, becoming an interim clinical manager and then interim nurse manager for makeshift units that were created as the hospital's patient census swelled. "We all rolled up our sleeves to get these non-traditional bedsides up to speed," said Cartin about attending to the sick in an auditorium. "It was step up or step out."

Currently a nursing coordinator for the bariatric program, it was during the dark days of COVID that Cartin could hear her father's voice. "He pushed me to continue to follow the passion in my heart. Being a nurse practitioner was his goal for me."



Zainab Makhani, MBA, BSN

An administrative officer at Memorial Hospital West since 2013, Zainab Makhani is, in the words of Chief Nursing Officer Denise Reynolds, "the nurse that takes care of the nurse so the nurse can take care of the patient."

The role requires big picture thinking, the ability to make decisions, and expertise in staffing, critical capacity, risk management, quality management, patient and family concerns, facilities, food service, and infection control. "The AO is the first phone call for all issues," said Makhani. "We have to communicate in a way that lets those affected feel confident we'll bring a creative approach to minimizing chaos."

COVID-19 complicated things for all healthcare workers but Reynolds says Makhani "faced each shift with a calm that infiltrated Memorial Hospital West. Her voice, on the daily huddle call, immediately set the tone for peace, regardless of whatever else was happening within the walls of the hospital."



MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Fabiana Peixoto, RN, BSN

Some of the highest praise a nurse can receive is to be described as an “exceptional leader” having “selfless dedication,” “passion,” and a “commitment to patients and team.” Within Memorial Healthcare System, saying someone “embodies our culture of deeper caring and smarter healthcare” is an even larger compliment.

All those words were recently written to describe the daily performance of Float Pool Clinical Manager Fabiana Peixoto.

“Fabi doesn’t realize how impactful her optimism, passion, persistence, resilience, and leadership are on the department’s morale because this is who she is as a person,” said Stephanie Paultre, nurse manager of Float Pool & Staffing. “Her light never fizzled during the pandemic; it only shined brighter with each challenge she faced.”

Peixoto was a zoologist in her native Brazil before realizing nursing was her true calling. “I like to influence people, help them heal, and lead our staff by example. The connections we can make are powerful,” she said.



Sharon Terry, RN IV, MSN, PCCN

While Sharon Terry is always quick to share knowledge with fellow nurses, she’s now taking her outreach to the next level. The relief charge nurse has established a “Test Your Knowledge Corner” on 6 Central where each month she posts information on a new and interesting medical topic for nurses to review.

“Sharon is a leader that has the ability to motivate others to learn and be better practitioners,” said Senior Clinical Nurse Educator Diana Villada. “She has a strong sense of dedication, accountability, and responsibility to her team and the patients they care for.”

Villada says Terry is respected by both peers and managers, and her work as a preceptor has drawn raves as well. Nurse residents have commented about her patience, caring, and willingness to go out of her way to ensure they grasp new concepts and skills



MEMORIAL PRIMARY CARE

Heather Gibson, LPN

The patients Heather Gibson works with in her role as a case manager have chronic conditions, including HIV/AIDS, hypertension, lupus, cancer, and diabetes, to name just a few. Given their ongoing health issues, it’s critical they get the appropriate care at the right time.

“I help them navigate a system they often don’t understand,” said Gibson, a member of the Memorial Healthcare System for three years. “That means making appointments with specialists, scheduling labs, and caring for them like members of my own family.”

It’s her unique style of ‘hand-holding’ that inspires those she helps to send letters thanking her for being someone they can trust. “The follow-up care we provide makes a difference in their lives. I believe what we do keeps these individuals from falling through the cracks.

Its also helped me find my place and understand this work is my calling,” said Gibson.



Laura London-Weaver, RN, BSN

Laura London-Weaver has been a nurse for more than three decades, first at the bedside, then in case management, and now as director of quality that focuses on preventative care for the community.

“There is a gap in health equity, and we look at the social disparities that affect why that is,” said London-Weaver, who also manages Broward County’s grant program for uninsured populations. “Sometime there is a lack of knowledge about healthy lifestyles, but it can also be lack of access to resources, transportation to where care is provided, or trust in the system.”

To overcome these and other obstacles, Memorial has taken the lead in actively managing their patient’s healthcare journeys, providing a medical home that includes education, connections to internal and/or community resources, and, in some situations, taking mobile units to where groups of people are. “We know the different communities and cultures,” said London-Weaver. “It’s rewarding to break down barriers and provide the access to services everyone should have.”



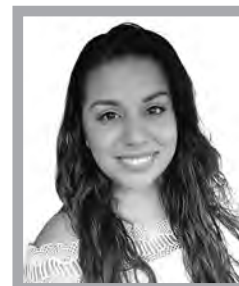
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PEMBROKE

Krystal Caisapanta, RN, BSN

Krystal Caisapanta doesn’t think it’s a coincidence that she’s on duty when patients come into her hospital’s 24/7 Emergency Care Center. “I feel like I’m destined to be there at that moment, to walk them through the emergency department experience, managing expectations, and helping them understand what resources are available moving forward.”

A nurse for nearly four years, with half that time spent with in Memorial Healthcare System, Caisapanta enjoys using her skills to assess the variety of injuries and illnesses that come through the door. Some of that involves recognizing a true emergency and having the ability to act and help people during their most trying times.

Caisapanta grew up as the oldest of six siblings and says she always wanted to be of service, so nursing was a natural next step in her life. While she’s thankful to be recognized by MHS leadership, her desire is for all the nurses she works with to be applauded, especially given the last two years of COVID-19. “I wouldn’t have succeeded without them,” she says.



MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

La Tanya Forbes, RN, MSN, CNOR

As the director of safety and compliance for Memorial Healthcare System, La Tanya Forbes preaches to those she trains to ‘see it, say it, and fix it.’ “We talk about being aware, keeping your eyes open, head in the game, and trusting your gut instincts,” said the longtime patient advocate.

Having started a (‘not on my watch’) campaign to empower staff to act when they sense things aren’t right, Forbes was gratified to hear that two Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital security guards recently prevented a possible rape while at Fort Lauderdale beach during spring break. The women heard someone screaming and acted as if the stranger was their lost friend to extract her from the situation.

“Being a parent, you’d want someone to help your family member in difficult circumstances,” said Forbes. “That’s what we’ve established at Memorial. A culture where we look out for each other, communicate, and use teamwork to improve outcomes.”



MEMORIAL REHABILITATION INSTITUTE

Laura Francis, RN, BSN

The patients Laura Francis works with as an acute rehab/telemetry nurse have had life-altering medical procedures, including surgeries to remove cancers, kidney and heart transplants, LVADs, and peritoneal dialysis. Being one of their caregivers is, literally, a one-day-at-a-time journey. “They have to learn to live in a different way and find their path back into society. A nurse’s patience and understanding is critical to the progress they can make,” she said.

An RN for nearly seven years that has been with Memorial more than half that time, Francis always wanted to be a caregiver. She was inspired by a nurse in Jamaica (coincidentally also named Francis) that was helpful and respected in the community.

Today, Francis is the one leading the way at MRI, taking on the role of charge nurse, co-chairing the clinical ladder committee, and mentoring younger colleagues. “I encourage my colleagues to let their personalities shine and ask questions when clarification is needed. It’s our job to provide knowledge that will make them more comfortable and competent.”



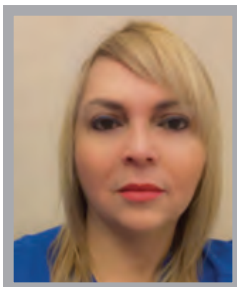
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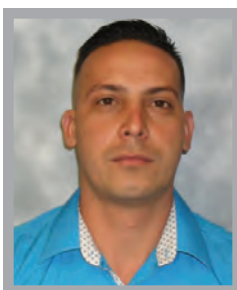
Elizabeth Leon Rodriguez, RN, BSN

Elizabeth Leon Rodriguez was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico. She obtained her Nursing bachelor's degree and graduated from Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. She held several healthcare positions in Puerto Rico as a RN in ER, Telemetry Unit, Post Open Heart Unit, Hospice and as a Nurse Coordinator at Ponce School of Medicine. In Florida she worked as a Nurse Manager at Florida Center for Allergies & Asthma Care. She has been working with Catholic Hospice for five years as the Case Manager for the Pearl Team in Broward County. She recently received the 2021 Registered Nurse of the Year Award at the Annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony. "As a Hospice Nurse, I can help patients feel more comfortable and improve their overall quality of life by providing physical, emotional, social, and spiritual support for patients and their families and I Love It!" said Rodriguez.



Ronyd Sanchez Fernandez, RN

Ronyd Sanchez Fernandez is an Admissions Registered Nurse and works in Miami-Dade and Broward. He received his education from the International Institute for Healthcare Professionals and a Doctor of Medicine from the University of Guantanamo, Cuba. Born in Cuba and raised in South Florida, Ronyd comes with vast experience as a Registered Nurse. Ronyd has clinical experience from Integral Home Health and was a physician at the Diagnostic and Treatment Center in Caracas, Venezuela. He also has wound care expertise and has worked as an Admissions Nurse for five years. Ronyd was recently recognized as the 2021 Best of the Best Admissions Nurse of the Year Award at the Annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony.



Fritzner Polynice, LPN

Fritzner Polynice has been a Licensed Practical Nurse for twenty-two years at Catholic Hospice. He graduated from Sheridan Technical School, worked as a continuous care nurse, and is currently an On-call Night Nurse. Fritzner is dedicated to serving the terminally ill, and he takes pride in answering emergency calls, providing pain management, and assisting families with the dying process. He said, "Hospice is the most wonderful thing that can happen to anyone; hospice is the best care that one could have at the end-of-life if they have the right nurse and clinical team." Fritzner was recently recognized as the 2021 Best of the Best Licensed Practical Nurse of the Year Award at the Annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony.



CATHOLIC PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

Yusneisy Caraballoso, ARPN

Yusneisy Caraballoso is a family nurse practitioner working at Aventura Hospital and Medical Center under the leadership of Sanaz Kashan, M.D., Associate Medical Director, Catholic Palliative Care Services. Completing her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2011 and her Master of Science in 2015 at Barry University, Caraballoso has dedicated her work to the hospice field both locally and nationally. She is known for the vital role she plays in helping patients and families connect with services throughout the course of their diseases. Her helping and guiding of others with difficult end of life choices and decisions for loved ones is unparalleled. She has been recognized by the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Miguel de Cervantes Awards in 2020, and the 2021 Nurse Practitioner of the Year Award at the Annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony.





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BROWARD HEALTH NORTH

Henry Herzog, RN

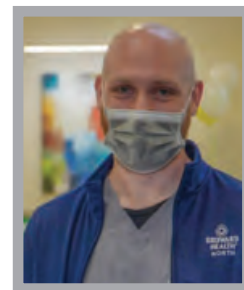
Henry Herzog, R.N., didn't start his healthcare career as a nurse. His first role at Broward Health North was as an X-ray technician in the Operating and Emergency Departments.

In 2021, during the COVID pandemic, he became a nurse and helped care for patients needing neurology, telemetry or stroke care.

His commitment to patients was recently recognized by the hospital's leadership with a DAISY Award. The national award celebrates nurses who demonstrate clinical excellence and extraordinary compassionate care.

"I am dedicated to helping people," Herzog said. "I try to do everything I can to make our patients feel safe. It's important to me that I always strive to do better than the previous day."

Herzog, who now provides care in the Critical Care Unit, is already working on his next professional goal to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA).



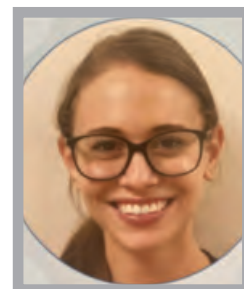
BROWARD HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Juliann DeSiato, RN

As one of only eight fresh-out-of-nursing-school graduates to secure a coveted spot in Broward Health's first-ever graduate internship program, Juliann DeSiato, R.N., quickly proved herself to be indispensable.

Trained with the fundamental basics, but without any prior real-life clinical experience, DeSiato skillfully navigated her way through the strenuous, 30-week instructional program.

During the pandemic's most challenging times, she worked tirelessly in both Broward Health Medical Center's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Trauma ICU. It was her compassionate nature at the bedside of critically ill patients that caught the attention of her supervisors, along with her organized and detail-oriented approach to her job.



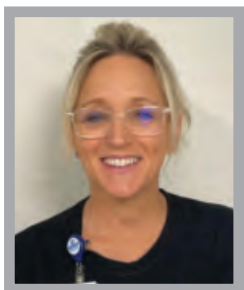
BROWARD HEALTH CORAL SPRINGS

Terri West, RN

A trauma nurse who worked in Broward Health's Emergency Department for over 17 years, Terri West's newest role at the Broward Health Coral Springs cardiac catheterization lab revealed the added value of her essential, emergency-honed ability to address immediate and medical-ly technical needs of sudden situations that can arise while caring for complex cardiac patients.

West recently was lauded by one family for her compassion in gaining them more time together as a family after their mother coded during an emergency procedure. West came to work an hour early each day to educate the mother about her condition so she would feel more open to deciding to allow a cardiac catheter (AICD) implant — timely advice that ultimately saved the patient's life.

The family called West's gift of her time and empathy "priceless." Once the patient recovered, she even joined the hospital's Patient and Family Advisory Council in tribute to West's care.



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Honoring Conviva's "Care Coaches" During National Nurses Week

In the Spotlight: Care Facilitation Manager Mayrolis "May" Davila

From her childhood in Cuba to today in Miami where she lives and works as a Conviva Care Coach leader, Mayrolis "May" Davila's nursing career has been steered by her fundamental sense of community.

"At a very young age, I already knew I wanted to devote my life to helping people, especially during difficult times when they are most vulnerable," says Davila, R.N., C.C.M., and the care facilitation manager for Conviva Care Centers, a physician-led company with a network of centers in Florida and Texas.

In commemoration of National Nurses Week, May 6-12, Conviva pays tribute to Davila and all nurses for their dedication to their patients and commitment to their health and wellbeing.

Davila's nursing career is burnished by distinctions. After relocating with her family to Miami from Cuba in 2007, she enrolled at Florida International University and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. She went on to co-develop a curriculum to educate freshmen students at Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences. Davila also completed her case management certification, and is recognized as a Certified Case Manager by the National Commission for Case Management Certification.

In 2012, she joined Conviva as a Care Coach in the Facilitation Department, only to be promoted five years later to Lead Care Manager for Conviva's Care Facilitation team in Miami. In this position she serves as a clinical nurse and care facilitation resource point person, working closely with the market leadership on goals and healthcare initiatives in Miami-Dade County.



Vital Patient Interaction

Conviva RN "Care Coaches" comprise a group of nurses and coordinators as well as one social worker – working together to serve the special needs of patients with previous hospitalizations. "Our nurses shadow each patient every step of the way to meet their personal needs," explains Davila. "This creates a strong nurse-patient bond, which is the core of Conviva care."

Under Davila's leadership, these care coaches deliver comprehensive care to at-risk seniors, maintaining contact with them for up to 30 days after discharge. "We keep the lines of communication open, ensuring we are available to answer all of our patients' questions and continuing to be an accessible resource for their ongoing healthcare needs," Davila says.

The coaches work hand-in-hand with each patient to explore his/her health care options, including caretaker services at home or at an assisted living facility. "Throughout the process, Conviva's nursing team makes sure that no patient feels alone," she adds. "The bond is mutually rewarding. They have confidence in our nursing team, and count on us to help them lead better lives. And we, in turn, draw strength and encouragement from their trust in us."

A Rewarding Profession

Spanning clinical observations to socio-economic support and issues in between, Conviva's care coaches take pride in their personalized, holistic and inclusive approach to care for senior patients. Davila and her team collaborate to curate short- and long-term goals built around Conviva's vision and ample resources.

"The passionate care of our team is on display every day for the benefit of our patients," she says. "We're invested in our patients because we value the importance of making an impact in their lives. That is what it means to be a nurse. Nursing is not just a profession, it's a vocation."

Are you a nurse looking for a rewarding career experience? Join Conviva! Explore opportunities on our website at ConvivaCareers.com OR visit a Conviva Care Center near you. For more information, contact Conviva at (833) CONVIVA.



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TO HEALTH CARE HEROES SUPPORTERS:

South Florida is becoming a global destination for top-quality healthcare, and the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce has been at the forefront of the industry's evolution. Our annual Health Care Heroes celebration recognizes the leaders who have fueled that growth and continue powering our best future. For more than two decades, Health Care Heroes has been the premier

community gathering where our local outstanding professionals are honored by top leaders from hospital systems, physician groups, managed care providers, biomedical innovators, goods and services suppliers, and other pillars of the healthcare economy.

There may be no industry changing as quickly, and no local economy better positioned to harness the power of that change. South Florida is also uniquely vulnerable to business and regulatory movement due to our unique population. That's why it's more important than ever for the healthcare leaders of Miami-Dade County to find common ground and work together in ways that benefit all our neighbors. That work starts with close, collaborative relationships that celebrate our shared success at events like Health Care Heroes.

This 23rd Health Care Heroes luncheon will be a special edition of our annual program that was postponed when our world changed in March 2020. The Chamber and its healthcare Committee felt strongly that we would wait and host the event once conditions allowed for us to be together in a room to celebrate the tremendous efforts, dedication, and achievements of our healthcare professionals and first responders.

This special edition of the Health Care Heroes® Awards program will feature video tributes, "Reflection & Recognition of All First Responders for COVID and Surfside". We also will be honoring the achievements of physicians, nurses, researchers, institutions, volunteers, and others who have contributed to the health care delivery system and overall welfare of South Florida and its residents. We are excited to announce that Equitable Advisors will be the Chamber's partner in this program for the 23rd consecutive year. Consistent partners like Equitable are the foundation for us to strengthen and grow our healthcare community.

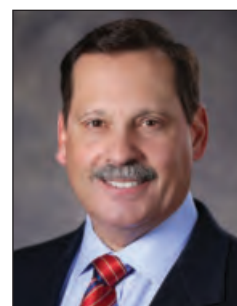
Every year the number and strength of our Health Care Heroes nominees grows, making it more difficult for judges to pick just one recipient from each category. This is a testament to the relentless pursuit of excellence that defines this honor and, indeed, the mission of healthcare in South Florida and around the world.

Sincerely,



Bryan Stewart, PhD
Chairman, Healthcare Committee
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

Luis G. Chiappy, CFP, CLU, ChFC, LUTCF
President, Southeast Complex
Senior Manager, South Florida Branch, Equitable Advisors, LLC
Founding Sponsor, Health Care Heroes®



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23RD ANNUAL HEALTH CARE HEROES AWARDS LUNCHEON

Jungle Island | 11:15 a.m. Registration | 12:00 p.m. Luncheon

SAVE
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19



Join us for a special tribute

Reflection & Recognition of All First Responders for COVID and Surfside
and to present the Health Care Heroes® Awards in the categories of:
*Lifetime Achievement, Health Care Professional, Individual of Merit,
Organization/Program, Nurse, First Responder and Youth Volunteer*

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EQUITABLE ADVISORS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

ROBERTO C. HEROS, MD, FACS

Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Administrative Officer
Jackson Health System
Professor of Neurosurgery
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

For more than 50 years, Dr. Roberto Heros has dedicated his career to giving hope and the gift of a second chance in life to patients with complex and life-threatening brain conditions. His early experiences paved the way to what his life would be like as a man of service in the medical field.

As a former paratrooper in the Bay of Pigs invasion, Dr. Heros spent two years in prison in his native Cuba before settling in Miami, a result of the prisoners-for-goods exchange between the United States and Cuba. Once he was released as a prisoner of war, Dr. Heros began his journey as a physician, which led him to a lifetime achievement of saving lives, making significant contributions to science, and educating and mentoring future neurosurgeons.

Dr. Heros was an early leader in the U.S. promoting the phrase "brain attack" to help increase public awareness and highlight the urgency of getting immediate medical attention during a stroke. To this end, he was the first chair of the Brain Attack Coalition, a multidisciplinary organization that continues to thrive today under the auspices of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS).

Dr. Heros has authored or co-authored four textbooks and has published more than 200 refereed articles and approximately 70 textbook chapters on topics such as cerebral aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations, experimental cerebral ischemia, and skull base surgical approaches. His research has focused on cerebral protection from ischemia, particularly with hemodilution; he held National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding as primary investigator in this area for 15 years and served the NIH in study sections as a full member of the National Advisory Council of the NINDS.

As a professor, Dr. Heros has mentored and shaped the paths of hundreds of neurosurgeons. A former student describes Dr. Heros as someone who has been academically prolific, a superb and dedicated teacher, and a master surgeon of impeccable technique and judgment. His commitment to patients is exemplified by both direct care and as an advocate for the general advancement of stroke care.

Dr. Heros has been a visiting professor at more than 70 institutions in the U.S. and abroad, and he has given more than 500 national and international presentations. He has served as president of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), the World Congress of Neurological Surgery and the American Academy of Neurological Surgeons. Prior to his return to Miami, he was also a professor of neurosurgery at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, as well as professor and chairman of neurosurgery at the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Heros has been honored with hundreds of awards, including the Harvey Cushing Medal, the highest honor given to a neurosurgeon by the AANS, the American Heart Association's Cor Vitae Award for his contributions to stroke care, and the coveted Parker J. Palmer Courage to Teach Award of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.



"Dr. Heros is a man of honor and sacrifice. He has a strong disposition, and his passion for his beloved Cuba and stellar career in neurosurgery took him on a lifetime journey that will continue to touch and benefit many lives."

Carlos A. Migoya
Chief Executive Officer
Jackson Health System

"It is in Dr. Heros' DNA to be a man of service and to help others."

Dipen J. Parekh, MD
Chief Operating Officer, University of
Miami Health System
Founding Director, Desai Sethi
Urology Institute
University of Miami Miller
School of Medicine

Miami Jewish Health congratulates
our colleagues at Florida PACE Centers
for being nominated for the
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Health Care Heroes Award.



Florida PACE
Centers

at Miami Jewish Health



Your devotion to our participants is
an inspiration to us all.



Miami Jewish Health

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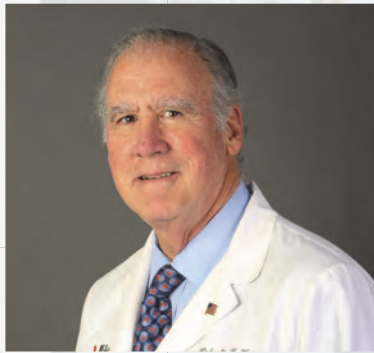


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CELEBRATING

2022 HONOREES

EQUITABLE ADVISORS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT



ROBERTO C. HEROS, MD, FACS

Senior Vice President
Chief Medical Administrative Officer
Jackson Health System
Professor of Neurosurgery
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL

JOSEPH LAMELAS, MD

Chief, Cardiothoracic Surgery
University of Miami Health System

ORGANIZATION/PROGRAM

FLORIDA PACE CENTERS

Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly
Miami Jewish Health



OUR HEROES

FIRST RESPONDER

KEITH TYSON

Florida State Director 2009-Present

Vice President, Education

Research and Outreach 2013-2021

Firefighter Cancer Support Network

INDIVIDUAL OF MERIT

TIFFANY FIELD, PHD

Director, Touch Research Institute

Professor of Pediatrics

Psychology and Psychiatry

University of Miami Health System

NURSE

BRIDGET PELAEZ MA, BSN, RN, EMT-P, CEM®

Assistant Director

Division of Operations and Safety

Florida International University

YOUTH VOLUNTEER

JUSTICE GARCIA

Alum

American Senior High School



HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL

JOSEPH LAMELAS, MD

Chief, Cardiothoracic Surgery
University of Miami Health System

In 2006, Dr. Joseph Lamelas created 'The Miami Method' minimally invasive cardiac surgery approach, which involves a less than two-inch incision on the right side of the chest—a procedure that does not require surgeons to open the chest cavity or break ribs as had previously been the approach to cardiac surgery.

At the time, the tools to access the heart via this approach did not exist, so Dr. Lamelas collaborated with a patient of his who was an engineer to create them. These tools, which result in quicker recovery and better long-term outcomes, are now used around the world by other cardiac surgeons. Dr. Lamelas now applies the techniques he developed and the surgical instruments he invented to facilitate intricate procedures for almost all cardiac surgeries, and he is the only surgeon in the world who uses a minimally invasive method to replace or repair an ascending aorta.

Dr. Lamelas performs more than 350 mitral valve surgeries a year—the average heart surgeon performs five. Dr. Lamelas has performed more than 17,000 cardiac surgeries throughout his 28-year career; more than 7,000 of which have employed a minimally invasive approach. He consistently ranks among the best cardiac surgery outcomes in Florida and performs the highest volume of cardiac surgeries in the state with more than 700 cases annually. Dr. Lamelas has also trained more than 1,000 surgeons from around the world in this approach.



"Joseph Lamelas, M.D., is an internationally recognized expert cardiac surgeon who helped pioneer a minimally invasive approach to cardiac surgery that is now widely used all over the world, resulting in quicker recovery and better long-term outcomes."

Omaida C. Velazquez, MD, FACS
Chair, DeWitt Daughtry Family
Department of Surgery
University Of Miami Miller
School of Medicine

INDIVIDUAL OF MERIT

TIFFANY FIELD, PhD

Director, Touch Research Institute &
Professor of Pediatrics, Psychology
and Psychiatry
University of Miami Health System

In 1977, premature babies were placed in neonatal intensive care units with "hands off" nursing policies to reduce the risk of infection. Having seen the calming effects of massage on her own daughter born a month prematurely, Dr. Tiffany Field began conducting research into the beneficial effects of healthy touch long before massage was accepted by either physicians or the public.

Dr. Field started her research program at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital in 1982, and in a groundbreaking 1988 study, found that massage helped premature infants gain more weight than non-massaged peers, thereby improving the infants' health and medical outcomes. In 1992, she established the Touch Research Institute, the first such organization focused only on the study of touch.

Through the years, her research has focused on the impact of massage therapy on various medical and psychological conditions including preventing prematurity, reducing depression, attentional disorders and pain syndromes, and increasing immune function in cancer, HIV and other chronic illnesses. Her advocacy has had a national and global impact, as massage therapy is now used by close to 40 percent of NIU's nationwide, reducing infant mortality and shortening their hospital stays by nearly a week. Since one out of eight infants in the U.S. is born prematurely, Dr. Field's approach is estimated to save about \$10,000 per infant with nationwide savings of \$4.7 billion. In recognition of her worldwide impact, Miller School leaders opened the Tiffany M. Field, Ph.D. Suite for Innovation at the Mailman Center for Child Development.



"Dr. Tiffany Field is a global crusader for the healing power of touch. Her studies have changed the delivery of care to premature babies and expanded understanding of the healing power of human contact to patients of all ages."

Daniel Armstrong, PhD
Director, Mailman Center
for Child Development
University of Miami Miller
School of Medicine

NURSE

BRIDGET A. PELAEZ, MA,
BSN, RN, EMT-P, CEM®

Assistant Director – Division of
Operations and Safety
Florida International University

Bridget Pelaez's passion and objective in life is serving as a public health disaster response professional. The director of volunteer disaster response team FIU-Florida, she led a team of eight clinicians to Huehuetenango, Guatemala to assist the United States Southern Command, U.S. Army, and Guatemalan military with a large humanitarian mission, serving a daily patient count of 750 patients and a total of 4,000 patients in one week.

Pelaez is an American College of Surgeons Stop the Bleed Instructor and has trained all 10,000 faculty and staff members of the university; she also developed a Stop the Bleed digital education media training video that was disseminated to all 56,000 students. In partnership with Baptist Health South Florida, she designed, developed, and deployed a robust disaster response pharmaceutical cart to support community events and disasters.

Additionally, she refurbished a traditional F-350 into a mass-casualty response vehicle capable of triaging and treating over 300 patients. In 2019, Pelaez traveled to Tel Aviv, Israel, where she educated healthcare delegates from more than 15 countries on the importance of community outreach, education, and training. She was recently promoted by the National Disaster Medical System and is now the Deputy Commander for the HHS Trauma Critical Care Team, responsible for overseeing a team of 200 critical care clinicians.

Throughout the pandemic, Pelaez worked with various FIU colleges and FIU Miami Beach Urban Studios to develop innovative 3-D printed face shields to assist with the supply shortages first responders were facing. In partnership with the Florida Department of Health, she was the incident commander of the Tamiami test site, which was responsible for testing more than 433,000 Miami-Dade residents. She also worked at the FIU-Closed POD vaccination site which administered over 19,000 vaccines.



"Bridget's achievements and contributions to South Florida are vast and yet she remains selfless and passionate, empowering other healthcare workers in their professions. Her devotion, responsibility, and leadership allow our community to be better prepared and capable to respond to health emergencies and disasters in South Florida."

Javier I. Marqués, MBA, MS
Vice President for Operations and
Safety & Chief of Staff
Executive Director, Academy
for International
Disaster Preparedness
Florida International University



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ORGANIZATION/PROGRAM



Florida PACE Centers

at Miami Jewish Health

Florida PACE Centers (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) is a comprehensive, fully integrated health program for the frailest and costliest members of society—those unable to care for themselves physically and financially. Over the past two decades, Florida PACE Centers has provided comprehensive medical and social services to more than 4,200 low-income seniors aged 55 years and older in declining health by providing an interdisciplinary support system of healthcare, allowing them to safely live in their communities rather than be placed in nursing homes.

Florida PACE Centers was the FIRST PACE program in Florida, opening in January 2003. Florida PACE Centers has four locations throughout Miami-Dade and Broward counties, where participants receive a continuum of primary and specialty medical care, ongoing behavioral health management, and other services, including prescription drugs, specialty care, respite care, in-home assistance, transportation, adult day services, and hospital and nursing home care, when necessary.

As a result of individual attention, participants are less likely to be hospitalized or depressed than other elders in similar situations. Florida PACE Centers data shows that participants experience fewer falls, minimized hospital and emergency department stays, and reduced stays at skilled nursing centers for rehabilitation services. Florida PACE Centers also assumes full risk to deliver primary and acute long-term care and non-acute medical services. In return, elderly residents in the program have been able to retain some control over their lives without financial burdens. The latest Vital Research survey on caregiver burden found that nearly 97 percent of family members are satisfied with the support they receive through PACE programs, and 97.5 percent of family caregivers would recommend PACE to someone in a similar situation.

"Florida PACE Centers is at the forefront of innovative population health management with interventions that have helped the low-income elderly enjoy a better quality of life despite chronic conditions."

Edilia (Marley) Alzugaray, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Florida PACE Centers

YOUTH VOLUNTEER

JUSTICE GARCIA

Alum

American Senior High School

Since the age of 9, Justice Garcia has been improving the mental health of youth in her community, most notably young girls, through her program Sierra Camp. As developer and CEO, she has led and facilitated workshops to address self-esteem, cyberbullying, pre-teen/teen sex, and adolescent suicide. Partnering with Florida International University, Honeyshine Inc. and the Department of Health Planned Parenthood of Miami-Dade County, she has conducted workshops related to youth mental health for more than 900 participants in South Florida, and pre- and post-self-esteem surveys found that 90 percent of the surveyed participants exhibited increased self-esteem by the end of the workshop.

After losing two schoolmates to suicide, Garcia made mental health care and research her primary focus; through her studies, she found that females of Hispanic and Black ethnicities are more likely to have lower self-esteem and higher suicide ideation and suicide attempts than their male counterparts in Miami-Dade County. She presented this research at the Miami Dade County Public Schools STEM Expo, and won the Superior Category in Psychology in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

She has since expanded Sierra Camp to partner with Christian-based organizations in Texas, California and the Republic of Kenya, and through her community service and volunteerism, has positively enhanced the mental health of more than 1,200 minority youth since 2012. Garcia is currently in the process of developing a software application to connect adolescents with community behavioral health providers.



"Justice's scope of community and public service goes far beyond the average 16-year-old in Miami-Dade, and her acts of heroism in the area of adolescent mental health not only display dedication to excellence but a commitment to increase the health of the community."

Ora Strickland, PHD, DSc
(Hon), RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
Nicole Wertheim College of
Nursing and Health Sciences
Florida International University

FIRST RESPONDER

KEITH TYSON

Florida State Director 2009-Present
Vice President, Education, Research
and Outreach 2013-2021

Firefighter Cancer Support Network



Keith Tyson worked as a paramedic/firefighter for 34 years with Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, in addition to participating in multiple domestic and overseas missions as part of the department's Urban Search and Rescue Team. Six months after retiring, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer at the age of 55. Tyson sought and received medical attention, and today he is cancer-free.

However, in the process of researching his own situation, he learned that firefighters had a much higher incidence of, and mortality rate from, certain cancers than the general public, and that the problem was not well understood. Tyson began to work with other firefighters to develop an educational program for firefighters and fire departments on cancer awareness, prevention and treatment, and today, that program is delivered through the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN), a national organization of firefighters who have had some form of cancer and who volunteer to assist and mentor others.

This program has not only reached firefighters throughout Florida, but also in departments across the country and in Canada. Tyson helped to prepare the FCSN's 2013 white paper entitled "Taking Action Against Cancer in the Fire Service," which has been recognized as one of the decade's most important documents on firefighter cancer and has written numerous articles on the issues of firefighter cancer.

The awareness and research promoted by the Support Network has supported policy change at the local, state and national levels, including the recent firefighter cancer benefits bill, improved cleaning and storage of personal protective equipment in fire stations, as well as improved station designs for health and safety. Tyson has also helped to build a network of organizations dedicated to supporting firefighters with cancer, including developing strong relationships with the Sylvester Cancer Center, the Moffitt Cancer Center, the MD Anderson Cancer Center and Cancer Treatment Centers of America.

"As a retired firefighter and cancer survivor, Keith might be expected to lead an entirely private life. However, he has chosen instead to spend his time and energy in service to the cause of fighting the epidemic of firefighter cancer. In addition, the research and advocacy he has helped to promote on a state and national scale will have benefits for the future health and well-being of local firefighters."

Santiago Leon
CEO
SGL Insurance, Inc.



Congratulations

To our very own
2022 Healthcare Heroes Award Honorees:

Roberto C. Heros, M.D., F.A.C.S. - *Lifetime Achievement*

Professor of Neurosurgery, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Senior VP and Chief Medical Administrative Officer

Tiffany M. Field, Ph.D. - *Individual Merit*

Research Professor, Pediatrics and Psychiatry
University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

Joseph Lamelas, M.D. - *Health Care Professional*

Professor of Surgery, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
Chief and Program Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery



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Hospice Nurses: Resilient, Remarkable, and Appreciated



BY KATHLEEN
CORONADO

Challenges over the past two years during the COVID-19 pandemic have revealed the grit and resilience of our valued nurses, especially those who provide hospice services. As end-of-life caregivers, hospice already commands an extra level of sensitivity. Add in changing patient access, visitor restrictions, and mask guidance, and we saw just how much day-to-day nuances shifted our care delivery.

Throughout it all, our nurses remained resolved. As committed, compassionate clinicians with a can-do attitude, they have navigated these changes with grace. Always keeping the patients and their families first, they served in ways most never anticipated.

Our nurses stood in for families who could not be by their loved one's side as their condition worsened. They facilitated video visits to maintain a connection that would soon become a vital memory. They used technology as a substitute for in-person contact, which would never be their chosen option but was the only one they had. Nurses learned to be strategic and innovative, using VITAS devices to link loved ones, whether they were working with COVID-19 patients or not.

Bravery is a term used to describe firefighters, police officers, and soldiers; our nurses have earned this distinction, too. Aware of the possibility of acquiring the virus themselves or passing it on to their family members at home, they entered patient rooms courageously to provide the hospice care needed as patients neared the end of their life. As best as they could, our nurses upheld the VITAS mission of enhancing the quality of life for those in the end stages of their diseases.

As a nurse myself, with 23 years of experience, I see 2020-2022 as a watershed phase in the healthcare industry. I witnessed our caregivers serve with their whole hearts while also experiencing the drain that comes with special restrictions and increased volume. They knew nothing was more meaningful than serving patients as they entered the end-of-life phase.

Like many of them, I was drawn to work with the terminally ill more than 16 years ago and would not change my career path to any other niche. Now as a general manager, I feel both a duty and an honor to provide leadership and support to our field staff.

In the field, I see you as you withstand the rigors of our tumultuous times. I praise you for serving as educators, mentors, patient advocates and, when needed, hand-holders. I encourage you as we enter a newly open phase to find ways to recover and revitalize.

To our nurses, YOU are the heartbeat of VITAS. As you bond with your patients, your presence is a significant gift. From all of us at VITAS, we thank you and salute you for all you do each day, every day.

To all of those considering the nursing profession, we need you. When you look in the eyes of a loved one as he or she thanks you for showing empathy to their mother, father, sibling, spouse or other loved one, you experience the value of your role beyond measure.

Hospice is a calling. In a culture that seldom speaks of death, you will have the privilege of sharing your expert guidance with grieving families. You will also listen, patiently and quietly, as the days go by and patients review their life, leaning on your compassion and care.

So many avenues will open to you as you draw on your clinical skills and pursue resourceful ways to use them. As a hospice nurse, you can offer in-person or virtual contact, or move to an administrative role. You can lead other nurses and be an example to those who ask how you cope and manage during uncertainty. Because as we have seen, our skilled and talented nurses have coped and managed.

Your expertise will always hold value. Your ability to connect with patients and bond with families will always resonate as a memory of thoughtfulness and dignity. Never forget the unmistakable influence this calling gives you.

*Kathleen Coronado is VITAS® Healthcare General Manager, Broward.
For more information about VITAS, go to [VITAS.com](https://www.vitas.com).
To learn about nursing opportunities, visit [careers.VITAS.com](https://careers.vitas.com)*

Holding the Hearts of All You Serve

Saluting Hospice Nurses and the Compassionate Care They Provide

For National Nurses Week, VITAS® Healthcare recognizes the vital role hospice nurses serve on our interdisciplinary teams. As clinicians, comfort givers, patient supporters, and coordinated care providers, we honor you.

Thank you for enhancing the quality of life of our patients and their families.

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Cover Story: UM School of Nursing and Health Studies Celebrates Alumnus David Zambrana

Continued from page 1

my role as molding people into what I think they should be, but instead supporting them to mold themselves to the strongest, smartest, and most honest versions of themselves," said Zambrana.

He described UM as "a challenging crucible that forces students and professors alike to think differently about learning. The School of Nursing and Health Studies in particular approaches the discipline of caregiving through the lens of developing leaders who will transform the lives of others and in so doing transform the world. I am not the same person I was before stepping foot on this campus, and that's very much the point of this kind of education."

Nurse anesthesia student Kaylene Baugh introduced Zambrana, who also holds a master's degree in business administration from another institution, as "a man of service, a man of valor, a leader who has an understanding and appreciation for paying it forward."

"It is surreal for me to stand as an honoree of this distinction before so many people I so deeply admire, Zambrana responded, going on to thank each of the many colleagues, mentors, educators, and family members who have supported him along his personal and professional journey, including current bosses at Jackson, CEO Carlos Migoya and president Don Steigman, both of whom were in attendance.

"I started at Jackson Memorial Hospital as a staff nurse 32 years ago, and it's there that I learned the power nurses have to impact the lives of their patients and their families by solely the manner in which they care for them," said Zambrana. "Returning to Jackson

has been full circle for me because it has given me the opportunity to advocate support for our teams in unique and different ways."

The pandemic only strengthened Zambrana's commitment to those teams and the communities they serve. He identified being authentic, courageous, and loving as "three ways I choose and strive to be the version of David who's a mentor and partner to colleagues, a servant leader to institutions, an *hombre de bien*, as my mother urged me to become."

The first characteristic, authenticity, builds trust and connection, he explained, "both of which are the basis for successful personal and professional relationships," while love is "the birthplace of compassion, patience, and tolerance, especially in health care. Our success depends often upon the ability to commit ourselves to someone else's outcome. That could be a patient's physical recovery, in some cases their mortality, a subordinate's expanding capacity, or a peer's interpersonal growth."

Of course, concluded Zambrana, "These concepts of leadership are a bell unrung without the disciplined setting and tracking of goals and the accountability to meet them. But these three ideas are for me the forces that make it possible for teams to unite and individuals to be empowered. It's about expecting the best in people, not by focusing only on the individual's results and outcomes, but instead seeing each other and recognizing our shared commitment to our mutual success."

The School of Nursing and Health Studies is proud of Dr. Zambrana's accomplishments.

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www.southfloridahospitalnews.com

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National Nurses Week,
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Nurses Week and Health Care Week



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We have never been more proud to be a part of this organization. We are humbled by you and your dedication.

On behalf of the entire leadership team: YOU are remarkable. Thank you.

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Join the Nursing Consortium of Florida for a review of the strategies being adopted to build what's next for nursing; more resilient and higher performing teams. Learn about new onboarding experiences, reconfigured nurse teams, evolving leadership roles, and more. In addition to the keynote presentations the agenda will include three moderated panel presentations by leaders implementing initiatives to move their organizations towards what's next for nursing. The panel topics will be:

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- **Innovations at Work;** Building for Resilience and Performance.
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Morning Keynote Speaker



Ramón Lavandero, RN, MA, MSN, FAAN
Senior Director of Communications and Strategic Alliances
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses

Afternoon Keynote Speaker



Rich Bluni, RN
Author of the *Inspired Nurse* and Speaker
Huron

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Cover Story: Growth and Development Are the Keys to Retaining Specialized Nurses

Continued from page 1

delivery of care methodologies. This will help us reap the greatest benefits for patients while helping satisfy frontline nurses and leaders, now and in the future.

Growing Our Own

I believe the catalyst for positive impact must start by focusing on employee development. Growth and advancement are key to attracting, retaining, nurturing, and positioning RNs to succeed in difficult to recruit nursing positions. Last year, Memorial Healthcare System created an RN Fellowship Program – a formalized professional development opportunity and retention incentive for RNs desiring a transition into specialty practice.

Our initial offering in the nursing fellowship included three high demand specialties: critical care, emergency services, and oncology. The immense response from many nurses confirmed we were on the right path. We discovered common ground where participants had a strong desire to learn a new specialty and develop their abilities.

Today, the fellowship has grown to include 13 specialty practice areas, including NICU, PICU, adult and pediatric cardiovascular procedural areas, interventional radiology, surgical services, and family birthplace specialties. Our nurse residents are introduced to the program as a formal career pathway during their professional development seminar and are eligible to apply once they have graduated and completed their first year of practice.

Nurses come into the RN Fellowship program with a wide range of experiences that contribute to their success and that of the program. A prime example of this is Chastity Bartram, one of our very first RN Fellowship cohort nurses, whom I had the privilege to connect with recently. Chastity has been a nurse for 10 years. She worked on a stepdown unit for

four years and then a mother-baby unit for 5+ years before applying to our RN Fellowship for Oncology nursing. Chastity was hired and serves as an Oncology nurse at the Memorial Cancer Institute Outpatient Infusion Center at Memorial Regional Hospital. She delivers compassionate and highly skilled care to our patients who require chemotherapy and other infusions. Like Chastity, all the nurses in the fellowship program have unique career paths, abilities, and perspectives to share.

Residency Options

In addition to the fellowship program, Memorial also offers an RN Residency program for graduated registered nurses who want to continue developing their nursing skills and later specialize in a clinical area through the fellowship. Both nurse residency and fellowship programs focus on leadership, patient outcomes, and professional roles that will enable nurses to have fulfilling careers. Our nurses utilize their skills at six hospitals, each offering diverse learning opportunities that actively contribute to the delivery of the patient and family-centered care that has been a critical part of our success.

Our profession faces many challenges, and many more will come. We must continue to innovate, focus on meeting the needs of caregivers, and proactively inspire the current and future generation of healers. If we do this together, we can transform nursing and continue to appropriately care for our communities in the years to come.

Maggie Hansen is senior vice president and chief nursing executive at the Hollywood-based Memorial Healthcare System (www.mhs.net), one of the largest public healthcare systems in the U.S. and a national leader in quality care and patient, physician, and employee satisfaction. She currently chairs the State of Florida's Nursing Board.



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Cover Story: South University: A Look at Flourishing Nursing Education from Both Sides

Continued from page 1

lence, didactic skills, and research insight are a vital ingredient to mentor students and guide them on their educational paths.

Faculty Engagement

Susan Hamley, Ph.D., R.N., is a model of her South faculty colleagues' attributes. She is an Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing BSN Program who started on her professional career in a small community college as a homeless mother of two small children. Throughout the years she earned a BSN (cum laude) from Florida Gulf Coast University and Master of Science in Health Law (magna cum laude) from Nova Southeastern University. After the tragic loss of one of her daughters, she returned to her clinical roots and expanded her educational experience with a Doctor of Science in Nursing from Barry University.

Hamley came to South University after her oldest daughter graduated from the School of Nursing, because her experience in the local health care environment led her to appreciate the respect the university held among area health care professionals.



Shayna Adaniel

She has been a faculty member for three years and the culture of inclusive and integrated learning is what keeps her there.

"Because of its mission and size, South offers the rigor of a larger university and the intimacy and personal attention of a community-sized program with highly integrated engagement among students, different cohorts, and the faculty,"

Hamley explained.

"I can match a face with any student name I've engaged with and can help my students recognize how their personal interests and strengths match with a variety of career options that will satisfy their intellectual, professional and human-interest needs," she said. "I always share my experiences as a working mom, a pediatric nurse, a school nurse caring for hi-risk students, managing eldercare, and providing in-the-field care for homebound patients, to expose them to the variety of clinical specialties within our profession, no matter what their life experiences have been. In addition, there are administrative and academic options to explore. In fact, nursing chose me ... not vice versa," she said.

Theory and Practice Learning

And that engagement and rigor with faculty/student is what intrigues South's 8-year tenured Professor, Sharon Ramjohn, PhD, MSN, RN, CNE, who loves the satisfaction of mentoring students but can't imagine giving up her bedside nursing passion. As a continuing practicing nurse, she brings not only the academic credentials to her students but the currency of technology and realism that on-going bedside nursing brings to the profession. Her philosophy is that by sharing her clinical and academic competency she can connect theory with practice for her students.

"Most of our students are technically savvy, particularly having survived the rigors of virtual learning during the pandemic," she explained, "so my fundamental value-add advice is never stop learning during your hands-on nursing experience after graduation."

"My students love to hear my personal stories of work but also need to learn not only how to care for patients, but also how to balance work/school and family life. Many are recent high school graduates, but our diverse student body includes career transitioning and return-to-school parent/students," she said.

Holding an array of undergraduate and graduate nursing degrees, Dr. Ramjohn's doctoral dissertation focused on the value of mentoring novice students, practitioners and faculty and the resilience of nursing educators. Experienced in medical-surgical, research, simulation and public health, rehabilitative and academic nursing she not only instills her work ethic in her students, but obviously in her own children having raised a son and daughter who entered the legal and teaching professions.

A Career Transition

Shayna Adaniel, a career transitioning student, has studied with both professors in her South experience. Raised in a health career-oriented family, she planned to be a nurse but switched and earned her initial Bachelor degree in social work. She enjoyed client engagement with youth and seniors recovering and enduring eating or

memory disorders and dealing with health needs during the aging process. That experience plus her advocacy for Alzheimer's, home-bound seniors and COVID vaccinations for healthcare workers, prompted her to return to nursing school so that she could increase engagement in direct patient care. South offered her an accelerated opportunity in the initial prerequisite studies to speed her educational nursing journey.

Excited after her first day of clinicals, she values the mutual benefits of brightening the day of patients who had limited to no visiting privileges during the pandemic to observing and participating with staff in the fulfillment of her own career dreams and goals. While her clinicals will provide opportunities to shadow in public health, women's health, psychiatry and med-surg nursing, currently during her second quarter at South she is still leaning toward geriatric specialty care.

"I appreciate the personal interaction between faculty members and students both within my own cohort and with other students. In fact, my best friend is enrolled here and is six months ahead of me, so we share experiences, likes and dislikes, practical and personal advice to build morale and knowledge to succeed in our goals."

An extremely low attrition rate among faculty (mostly due to retirement) is proof that South's culture works. Both Ramjohn and Hamley, agree "Impacting lives at the bedside and in the classroom doesn't feel like work."

Ramjohn has experienced fulfillment watching her former students succeed in passing boards, working as charge nurses in local hospitals and populating the pipeline of the nursing profession on clinical, academic and administrative paths. Hamley relates to her students' uncertainties and enjoys helping them erase those doubts by sharing her own professional history and satisfaction with personal choices. And, Adaniel has found her niche as an advocate for the aging Florida population, and; is anxious to convert her professional experiences in the allied health community to direct patient care, thanks to her South education.

Palm Health Foundation Salutes Nurses Striving Toward Their Dreams

"If not for The Debra Coffman Howe Nursing Scholarship Fund at Palm Health Foundation, I could not have afforded to continue my education. Through the grace of God, I will help others through her generous support."

-Sarah Baldeo, FNP

Sarah knew at age five she wanted to be a nurse. Living in Guyana, and later as an immigrant in Palm Beach County, she did not know what that dream would look like. But with a scholarship from nurse Debra Coffman Howe's fund at Palm Health Foundation, Sarah's dream became a reality. Sarah is now providing compassionate care, studying toward her doctorate, and looking ahead to her goal to open a family practice clinic for those in need with her brother David and sister-in-law Emily, also scholarship recipients.

Debra Coffman Howe is giving back by removing the financial barriers to nursing education for Palm Beach County RN and LPN students seeking careers as bedside caregivers. Learn how you can support nursing scholars, too.

Contact Carrie Browne at CarrieB@phfpbc.org.



MAY 2022

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Cover Story: Nursing Consortium of Florida: Bringing Nursing's Future into Focus

Continued from page 1

the Nursing Consortium of Florida, adds, "Our goal is nursing teams that are more resilient and higher performing, and to get there we need to embrace a new generation of nurses with stronger programming that begins with better and longer onboarding experiences, that includes reconfigured nurse teams to enable greater opportunities for teaching, learning, and bonding, and that is sustained through better and broader leveraging of technology and evolved leadership roles that are better able to support the new teams being formed."

Member organizations are already implementing a number of the recommended strategies and the Consortium is busy exploring sources of funding to help accelerate and broaden the adoption of recommended initiatives and to conduct research on their effectiveness, according to Ralph Egües, Jr., Executive Director of the Nursing Consortium of Florida.

"The challenges of meeting the needs of our aging boomers and the opportunity to more fully realize our potential as a healthcare destination requires investments to elevate nursing care," he says. "There is no turning back to what was.

We need to embrace and realize a better future for nursing and healthcare."

In good times and bad, nurse leaders in the member organizations know that they get better together, adds Suarez.

"I'm not surprised that our association has experienced such impressive growth during the last couple of years," she says. "We have a long tradition of sharing best practices, fostering strategies to build upon those, and developing relevant programming. That's what makes Consortium membership attractive and relevant to long-standing and new member organizations alike."

The work that the Consortium has done to define what's next for nursing and how to get there, is work that has attracted attention throughout the state and beyond.

"It seems that leaders everywhere realize that there is a critical nursing shortage, but it's the Consortium that has defined the contributing factors to the present challenges and proposed specific initiatives to establish a nursing workforce that is more resilient and able to achieve better patient outcomes," explains Seaver. "We invite all those interested in making a difference, those who wish to address the nursing shortage and

build what's next for nursing to contact us."

The organization recently changed its name (from Nursing Consortium of South Florida) to express openness to those beyond the traditional South Florida region who are welcome to join in the great collaboration that is the Nursing Consortium of Florida, notes Egües.

The Nursing Consortium of Florida is a Florida chartered not for profit corporation recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization whose principal mission is to identify and address matters of concern to the nursing profession. Today, it has more than 70 dues-paying member organizations including schools of nursing, and hospitals and other providers of nursing services.

Members are currently based throughout the southern half of the Florida peninsula, from Monroe to Highlands County and from Fort Lauderdale to Fort Myers. Each member organization pays annual dues of \$1,200.00.

"Members collaborate to improve the public perception of nursing, support increased funding for nursing education, and implement strategic interventions and research aimed at establishing best practices in the recruitment, develop-

ment, and retention of a quality nursing workforce well suited to our rich cultural diversity," says Seaver.

Meanwhile, Egües notes that there are numerous programs offered throughout the year for the membership that help further the Consortium's mission. Members collaborate through participation in the Conference Planning committee, the Community Engagement committee which promotes and facilitates the participation of nurse leaders on community and foundation boards, the Youth Outreach committee which organizes programming to enlighten middle and high school students on the many career options available to those who pursue a career in nursing, and the Advocacy committee which educates elected officials and others on matters of importance to the nursing profession; including nursing education, scope of practice, and patient care.

The Consortium also administers the CCPS in Florida, a leading web based centralized clinical placement system which facilitates the scheduling of clinical experiences for student nurses and allied health professionals that is attracting wide attention from those recognizing the need to expand nursing programs.

UM School of Nursing and Health Studies Ranks Among the Top 30 Nursing Schools

The newly released *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Graduate Schools 2023 places the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) among the Top 30 nursing schools in the United States for both its Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree programs.

"This is great news for the University of Miami," said SONHS Dean and Professor Cindy L. Munro, PhD, RN, ANP-BC, FAAN, FAANP, FAAS. "I am extremely proud of our school's strong record of evaluation in *U.S. News & World Report*. Our increasingly positive rankings are testament to growing recognition from peer institutions and health care professionals for the rigorous work our faculty and students do to transform lives and health care through education, research, innovation, and service across the hemisphere."

The school's MSN program is No. 1 in Florida, according to the 2023 Best Nursing Schools Master's Programs guide. Ranked No. 29 nationally, the MSN program is up 5 spots from last year (No. 34) and up 9 from 2018 (No. 38). The MSN degree at SONHS offers a wide range of advanced educational and clinical experience, with first-time pass rates on nurse practitioner certification exams well above the national average.

The DNP program at SONHS ranks No. 27 among the 2023 Best Nursing Schools DNP Programs—its highest-ever placement on this list and an 11-spot leap from 2022 (No. 38). SONHS first launched a DNP degree program in 2009, established Florida's first-ever BSN-to-DNP Nurse Anesthesia track in 2014, and announced three new BSN-to-DNP tracks this year. Graduates of these programs are prepared to be innovators in advanced practice nursing and health care leadership.

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On National Healthcare Decisions Day, Americans' Momentum for End-of-Life Planning Slows As Pandemic Wanes

Although more Americans are reporting that they have documented their wishes and values for end-of-life care, there are signals that this upward trend could reverse. As fears and restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic ease, and as the death toll declines, Americans are also reporting they are now less likely to discuss or document their plan for end-of-life care, compared to a year ago. The findings come from a new nationwide study commissioned by VITAS Healthcare.

The poll reveals new insights on trends among different generations and ethnic/racial groups, as well as the current – and potential – role healthcare professionals play in discussing and documenting one's wishes and values for end-of-life care.

"The pandemic has, unfortunately, brought death to the doorsteps of many Americans. Compared to 2021, we see that more people report having documented their end-of-life wishes, which is a positive sign," said Dr. Joseph Shega, VITAS executive vice president and chief medical officer. "However, we are also seeing a decline in indication that those who have not yet documented their plans will do so, possibly tied to a COVID-19 reprieve on the horizon.

Seeing this, I can't overstate the importance of advance care planning (ACP) and advance directives. ACP allows patients to make their preferences known early, and knowing a patient's wishes for end-of-life care ensures care aligns with their goals and values while also relieving the burden on families to make critical medical decisions on behalf of their loved ones."

Among the survey's key highlights is the increased openness to advance care planning reported by Black Americans, the undeniable role of healthcare professionals in initiating end-of-life conversations, and the need for more open and frank discussions about patients' wishes concerning their care.

The survey's findings include:

- An increase in the number of people documenting their wishes, which corresponds to last year's uptick in openness to advance care planning. But waning interest in advance care planning may mean that upward trend will vanish.

- However, the trend may not be vanishing across the board. Interest in advance care planning has risen among Black Americans, who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

- Healthcare professionals (HCPs) continue to be imperative in starting

advance care planning conversations. Americans report, however, that HCPs are not raising the issue.

Research published by the American Geriatrics Society in 2018 showed that 99% of physicians believe it is important to have end-of-life care conversations, yet only 29% report having formal training to equip them. To educate and empower healthcare professionals, such as nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians to have conversations with patients about their end-of-life care, VITAS is launching a preceptorship and certificate program. To be introduced at the upcoming National Black Nurses Association Annual Conference in July, the program includes education modules on a variety of topics, such as prognostication, hospice basics, and how to start the advance care planning conversation sensitively and respectfully with open-ended questions. It also includes practice scenarios where participants can get feedback on actual conversations with patients.

Patients and families can download Thinking About Hospice, a discussion guide for families, available in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Tagalog at www.vitas.com.

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A message from our President

When You Wake Up Tomorrow, What Will Healthcare Look Like?

Usually, once every year, I take a few minutes to see what others are saying and writing about the future of healthcare. I had a few minutes last week and I looked.

I have written before on this same subject and there are many similarities between then and now. Two or three years ago, I remember writing about how AI (artificial intelligence) would benefit healthcare. I seem to remember the concerns back then were that AI would not displace workers, rather, that AI would be a supplement allowing workers to be more productive and to concentrate on duties that don't lend themselves to an AI intervention. I also seem to remember that there was concern that we aren't graduating workers with the skill set that they will need to coexist in an AI world.

Well, this year's review of the literature captured even more discussion about the use of AI and blockchain in healthcare along with repeated concerns about the human interactions with technology. So, what might we be looking at in the near future?

Clinical mobility ranks near the top in terms of our future. "The digital hospital of the future won't just be more efficient, but it will also deliver better care, be more affordable and more deeply engage patients in their treatment and recovery." All the players in healthcare will be electronically connected, leading to a reduction in cost, improvement in quality, improvement in patient safety (reduced medication administration errors), and more providers will be using this technology to access predictive analytics to assist in the improvement of care.

The customers (patients) are part of this equation. Growing numbers of customers (77 percent) are comfortable with their healthcare providers using mobile devices in their care. There are also growing numbers of customers tracking their own health metrics through either their mobile phones or wearable devices. Perhaps even more important in this discussion, 95 percent of customers will be willing to share their health metrics with their providers.



Jaime Caldwell

Pharmaceuticals will also play a significant role in this evolution. As we continue to refine the analytics used to analyze the mountains of health data we are collecting, trends will guide healthcare providers in the optimal use of pharmaceuticals to treat various diseases. "Researchers have trained machines to recognize distinct patterns that indicate how a person will metabolize drugs, enabling them to more accurately predict how effective medication will be. Using AI to determine if someone will respond positively to a given treatment is particularly useful in oncology and neurology, where researchers can help doctors select treatments specific to a patient's needs."

If you want to see change in healthcare, wait a day! Genomic analysis, robotics, AI in medical decision support, and, maybe, 3D printed tissues and blood vessels are right around the corner. So, what are people saying about the next couple of decades? The Economist brought together a panel of experts to look at just those long-range change issues. The results are regionalized (U.S., EU, Asia, and Other) and I will mention just a few. Some make perfect sense and others invoke concern. I think that most can see 3D printing as an up-and-coming technology with 3D printers able to create needed replacement organs. I think that nanotechnology also makes sense with devices and treatments delivered through that route. How about brain/computer interfaces? It seems to me that we are already proceeding along this path.

How about hospital redesign? We are clearly seeing that evolve even today. It won't be long before hospitals will only treat the sickest of the sick, needing reduced patient room space and more space for the growing use of robotics and streamlined treatment processes with high use of technology.

With so many aging over the next couple of decades, more research will be focused on the aging process and how to create aging situations that incorporate increased monitoring and personal accountability.

Lastly, and one that creates some concern, in three of the four geographic areas, designer babies are identified by significant percentages as a focus of research. I guess that this is inevitable as our understanding of the data becomes better and better.

Change is inevitable and we will continue to live it every day!

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HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital Welcomes George Makhoul as New Chief Operating Officer

HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital recently announced the appointment of George Makhoul as chief operating officer (COO).

Makhoul previously served as vice president of operations at HCA Florida Brandon Hospital, where he supervised security, environmental, dietary and transport services. Prior to his promotion to vice president of operations, he served as an associate administrator and was selected for the HCA Healthcare COO Executive Development Program, through which Wicker served as his mentor. Makhoul also held previous positions with Parallon, an HCA Healthcare revenue cycle affiliate, HCA Florida Largo Hospital, Sentara Healthcare and Marsh and McLennan Companies.

George received his Master's degree in Health Care Administration and Management from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and his bachelor's degree from William and Mary University in Virginia.



George Makhoul

University of Miami SONHS Names Inaugural Chambreau Endowed Chair in Nursing

The University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) is happy to announce that Hudson P. Santos Jr., Ph.D., R.N., has been hired as a full professor to fill the Dolores J. Chambreau, RN Endowed Chair in Nursing.

Dr. Santos joins SONHS from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), where he was the Beerstecher-Blackwell Distinguished Term Scholar and an associate professor at the School of Nursing. He was also director of UNC's Biobehavioral Laboratory, and founder and director of the Health Resilience and Omics Science (HEROS) Hub for identifying protective and risk factors and genetic/genomic mechanisms affecting child neurodevelopmental trajectories.

His research evaluates how early life stressors interact with the genome and affect perinatal health and child developmental outcomes in high-risk populations, as well as across socioeconomic status levels, and racially and ethnically diverse communities. Growing up in Brazil, Dr. Santos discovered his passion for nursing early, through his mother, an LPN, and his uncle, a hospital director. He completed his LPN at Bahia State College of Health and his BSN at the State University of Paraiba in Campina Grande in Brazil.

He maintains his RN license in Brazil and the U.S. and is an adjunct associate professor at the Federal University of Bahia School of Nursing. After working clinically for a time, Dr. Santos earned his PhD in nursing, summa cum laude, from the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil. He was a Visiting Scholar at UNC-CH and the University of British Columbia before completing his postdoctoral fellowship at Duke University School of Nursing.



Dr. Hudson P. Santos, Jr.

Erica Whitfield Joins Health Care District Board as Newly-Appointed Commissioner

The Health Care District of Palm Beach County's Board of Commissioners recently welcomed its newest member, Erica Whitfield. Whitfield was officially sworn in by Commissioner Leslie B. Daniels, Board Chair, following her recent appointment by the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners to serve a four-year-term.

Whitfield serves as a member of the Palm Beach County School Board representing District 4. Prior to her service on the School Board, Whitfield's work at the Palm Beach County Health Department focused on chronic disease education and community partnerships. During her career at the School District of Palm Beach County, Whitfield served as the project coordinator for the Robert Wood Johnson, "Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities" grant and as a wellness coordinator for the School Food Service department. The native Floridian is passionate about the community as well as the health, achievement and success of children.

"We are pleased to welcome Ms. Whitfield to the Health Care District Board," said Darcy J. Davis, Health Care District CEO. "Her leadership on the School Board, her accomplishments in public health, and her advocacy for a healthier community make her an asset to governance and the residents we serve."



Leslie Daniels swears in Erica Whitfield

MAKINGROUNDS...MAKINGROUNDS...

General Surgeon Asad Chaudhary, MD, Joins Cleveland Clinic Martin Health

Cleveland Clinic Martin Health welcomes general surgeon Asad Chaudhary, M.D. Dr. Chaudhary earned his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, and completed the General Surgery Residency Program at Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown, New York.

Prior to joining Cleveland Clinic Martin Health, Dr. Chaudhary completed the Advanced GI/MIS/Bariatric Surgery Fellowship Program at Cleveland Clinic Florida in Weston. He holds memberships in the American College of Surgeons and the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons.



Dr. Asad Chaudhary

Dr. Mark Roh Joins Lee Health as Chief Physician Executive of Oncology Services

With more than 35 years of medical leadership experience in cancer care, Dr. Mark Roh was recruited to serve as Lee Health's new chief physician executive of oncology services.

Before joining Lee Health, Dr. Roh most recently served as president of Orlando Health University of Florida Health Cancer Center. Dr. Roh has also served in leadership roles at MD Anderson Cancer Center Orlando, Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh, PA, and the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX.

Dr. Roh earned his medical degree at the Ohio State University College of Medicine in Columbus, OH, and his Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry from Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, OH.



Dr. Mark Roh



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Mercy Ships - Transcending Borders Changing Lives



BY ALLY JONES

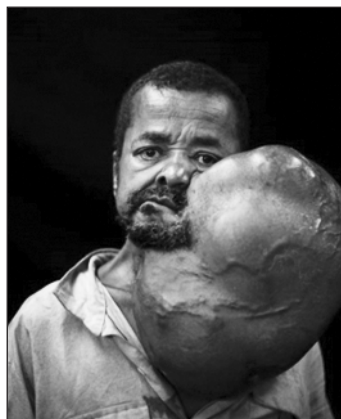
I was working in an administrative role on board, working on plans for increasing access to our services for more people in Madagascar where the ship was docked, when a patient arrived unannounced at our gangway. On his face was the largest tumor our surgeons had ever seen, and he was near death. After hearing about Mercy Ships and the hospital ship on the radio, desperate for help, Sambany sold a rice field to pay for transportation and travelled for two days to reach the port. With the help of friends who carried him from his village to the main road, he was able to reach the ship in time.

Sambany was swept up immediately by our hospital team who assessed him, realizing that they needed to act quickly. After multiple scans, diagnostic tests, and a lot of questions, it was decided that the choice to perform the risky surgery should be made by Sambany himself. When he was presented the facts and risks of surgery, including the risk of death, Sambany responded, "I'm already a dead man."

During the 14-hour long surgery, Sambany lost a lot of blood. Thankfully for him, the ship has a walking, talking blood bank! Our laboratory team was quickly mobilized to find any crew who had the same blood type who was registered to be a donor. I received a message on my pager asking me to go to the hospital immediately. I sat down, was prepped, and before I knew it my blood was flowing into a bag. That bag was taken straight to the operating room, as warm as when it came out.

In all, Sambany received 17 units of blood from 17 different crew members. Those crew members worked all over the ship in different positions and different roles. Sambany's surgery was successful, thanks not only to the medical team who treated him and performed his surgery, but it couldn't have been done without the wider community of the ship. I felt honored to be included in saving his life and sending him back to his village in good health. Months later, after his recovery, he managed to walk all the way back to his village unaided ready to live a new life, tumor free.

Ally Jones will be at FIME 2022, where Mercy Ships (www.mercyships.org) will have a presence in the FIME Charity Zone. Attendance is free for The Florida International Medical Expo held at the Miami Beach Convention Center - July 27-29th 2022. Register for free at <https://fimeshow.info/3vx6Rat> Contact Carol.Prokap@Informa.com for more information about Mercy and the exhibitors, speakers, conferences and events scheduled for FIME 2022.



Sambany before



Sambany after



Blood donors

Conviva Care Centers Opens New Location at Dania Pointe Outdoor Shopping Destination

Conviva, a physician-led network dedicated to providing primary care to seniors, is expanding with a new 8,000-square-foot health and wellness center at Dania Pointe, one of South Florida's most attractive lifestyle destinations.

"We are extremely excited to offer high-quality care to seniors in Dania Beach and the surrounding area," said Isabel Souffront, M.D., lead physician of Conviva Dania Pointe. "Our obligation to the community is to deliver the best-in-class care our patients expect and deserve, and we're accomplishing that with our easily accessible healthcare services and our strong doctor-patient relationships."

Conviva Dania Pointe features on-site cardiac ultrasound and echocardiogram capabilities in addition to having nephrology, cardiology, and pain management services in-house. Embracing comfort and style, the center has ergonomic exam room tables for patients and ergonomic desks in all physician areas. The facility includes a large designated area for conducting personalized and confidential tele-psych services. For patients who are experiencing non-life-threatening, but urgent medical issues and would like to address their concerns right away, Conviva's new center offers dedicated on-call doctors, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. "On-demand" care options include, scheduling same day telehealth appointments or in-person visits.

"The goal is to eliminate as much wait time as possible—and help avoid unnecessary visits to the emergency room," explained Dr. Souffront. "We are working to change that culture and mindset. We are calling patients who routinely go to ERs but may not have to, and ensuring they are able to receive the proper care they really need without having to call or visit an ER."



The new facility also includes one of the network's largest on-site wellness centers. The Conviva Dania Pointe Wellness Center provides various workshops and classes – from yoga, tai-chi and Zumba to arts-and-crafts projects and holiday celebrations. Conviva has also aligned with specialists for presentations on COPD, diabetes, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other topics relevant to seniors. And free shuttle transportation to the center is available to patients in need.

"Part of our seniors' mental and physical health comes from getting out and socializing," Dr. Souffront said. "Our new Conviva Dania Pointe Wellness Center makes that possible."

Dania Pointe is a premier South Florida family destination and the perfect location for Conviva's latest expansion. Situated on 102 acres, the site offers ample parking plus one million square feet of retail shops, entertainment venues, quality restaurants, luxury apartments, full-service hotels and more.

WHAT'S NEW... WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...

Health Care District's Clinics Offer Patients Free Grab-and-Go Narcan to Save Lives from an Overdose

To combat the rising number of overdose deaths this year in Palm Beach County, the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics are offering free Narcan Display- MAT Clinic 4-11-22_smallcanisters of Narcan nasal spray without a prescription to adult patients at its network of clinics countywide. Patients and their families no longer need to ask for Narcan; they can grab it and take it on the go. The nasal spray is safe, easy to administer and has no side effects. The two-dose box of Narcan was first offered to patients receiving outpatient care for substance use disorders at the Health Care District's Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Clinic in West Palm Beach. Within a few days, a clinic patient reported using the Narcan to save a man's life.



Narcan, the brand name for the prescription nasal spray Naloxone, rapidly reverses an opioid overdose from prescription painkillers, heroin, and fentanyl. First responders carry it and 911 should be called when Narcan is used. Signs that someone is overdosing include unresponsiveness, blue or gray skin and lips, choking or gurgling sounds, slow or shallow breathing, or no breathing at all.

"Narcan saves lives," said Belma Andrić, M.D., MPH, the Health Care District's Chief Medical Officer. "Through the Florida Department of Children and Families, Narcan is free to our patients without a prescription, eliminating barriers for patients and families to carry this important harm-reduction medication. This month we're offering the nasal spray in all of our 10 clinics, pharmacies and mobile clinics for patients to grab and go so they have it on hand in the event of an emergency. We hope to help normalize using Narcan for those who suffer from opioid use disorders the same way people carry and know how to use EpiPens for loved ones who suffer from severe allergies."

Lakeside Medical Center Named the Most Racially Inclusive Hospital Nationwide

The Health Care District of Palm Beach County's teaching hospital, Lakeside Medical Center, is the most racially inclusive hospital in the country, according to a recent report by the Lown Institute. Of the more than 2,800 hospitals assessed using the Lown Institute Hospitals Index for Social Responsibility, Lakeside Medical Center placed number one in the nation for its equitable care in serving the agricultural communities in rural, western Palm Beach County.

"As a safety net healthcare system, the Health Care District of Palm Beach County is committed to a racially inclusive environment at our acute care, rural teaching hospital as well as in our skilled nursing home, public school health rooms and primary care clinics, which are located in areas of need," said Darcy J. Davis, Health Care District CEO. "We encourage the understanding of diverse perspectives, language, ideas and people. In fact, diversity as an organization and among those we serve is one of our biggest strengths." Jupiter Medical Center Earns Blue Distinction® Centers+ Designation for Quality and Cost-Efficiency in Bariatric Surgery

Jupiter Medical Center has earned the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) designation as a Blue Distinction® Centers+ for Bariatric Surgery. Blue Distinction Centers are nationally designated healthcare facilities that show a commitment to high-quality patient safety and improved health outcomes, based on objective measures developed with input from the medical community and leading accreditation and quality organizations. The Blue Distinction Centers for Bariatric Surgery program recognizes excellence across a full range of bariatric surgery services, including surgical care, post-operative care, outpatient follow-up care, and patient education. It is part of the organization's Blue Distinction Specialty Care program.

West Palm Beach VA Launches New Robotics Program

The West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System (WPBVAHCS) is advancing its surgical program with the introduction of surgical robotics.

West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System is pleased to announce the launch of its surgical robotics program and successful completion of the first procedure on April 20, 2022. This announcement comes following a concerted effort to expand state of the art care offered through recruitment of highly skilled physicians including Urologic Robotic Surgeon Dr. John Carlucci.

The Da Vinci system offers advanced instrumentation to perform prostatectomies, cystectomies, partial nephrectomies, pyeloplasties, and procedures for other surgical conditions. The improvement in diagnostic and therapeutic capabilities will allow for complete and comprehensive care in one location. Additionally, these less invasive procedures will significantly benefit Veterans who will enjoy a return to daily lifestyle with minimal healing time.

Marla Schaefer and Steve Weishoff Make \$1 Million Gift to Boca Raton Regional Hospital's Keeping the Promise Capital Campaign

Boca Raton residents Marla Schaefer and Steve Weishoff have made a \$1 million gift to Keeping the Promise ... The Campaign for Boca Raton Regional Hospital ... their second significant contribution to the historic fund-raising effort. Marla and Steve's generosity brings the total funds raised through the Keeping the Promise Campaign to more than \$225 million toward its goal of \$250 million. "Steve and I are strong supporters of the hospital and we have seen the challenges the entire staff has faced since the start of the pandemic,"



Steve Weishoff and Marla Schaefer

explained Ms. Schaefer. "This just seemed like the ideal time to give back to Boca Regional and make a second donation. We want our gift to be an example to others in the community – it has never been more important to ensure the future of the hospital for generations to come." The need to modernize the hospital campus has been further emboldened by the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the value that private patient rooms bring to the health and wellbeing of patients. Smart technology for efficient and effective communication can also help minimize the spread of infection and disease. In addition, the currently under construction Toby and Leon Cooperman Medical Arts Pavilion will offer brand new outpatient treatment and ambulatory surgery options – reducing hospital traffic.

South Florida Community Raises Record-Breaking \$3 Million at Diamond Ball

Hundreds of South Florida philanthropists gathered at the Loews Miami Beach recently, raising a record \$3 million to support pediatric healthcare at Nicklaus Children's Hospital. The funds are to be dedicated to the construction of a five-story, 116,000-square-foot pediatric surgical tower to rise above the hospital's Emergency Department. The tower will include state-of-the-art operating suites and welcoming spaces for patient families, supporting surgical care to benefit the next generation.



Jack and Barbara Nicklaus present Excellence in Pediatric Medicine Award to Dr. Marcelo Laufer

During the Havana Nights-themed gala, presented by Ensemble Health Partners, attendees made record donations during the live auction and "Bid from the Heart," which featured the heart-warming story of Nicklaus Children's patient Graceston. The event also honored Dr. Marcelo Laufer, infectious diseases specialist and the recipient of the hospital's Excellence in Pediatric Medicine award, as well as hospital supporters Vivian and Juan Carlos (JC) Mas, who were inducted into the Ambassador David M. Walters International Pediatric Hall of Fame and honored for their decades of service and support of Nicklaus Children's.

"We were honored to celebrate together with our friends, supporters and the South Florida community," said Matthew A. Love, President and CEO of Nicklaus Children's Health System. "Vivian and Juan Carlos (JC) Mas are true champions for children's health and their passion is reflected in the support we received from our community this past weekend. This generosity will support our commitment of advancing surgical care and creating a healthier future for all children."

Lee Health Announces Alliance with Cleveland Clinic's Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute

Lee Health has entered an affiliation agreement with Cleveland Clinic and is now an alliance member of Cleveland Clinic's Sydell and Arnold Miller Family Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute, uniting Southwest Florida's leading health care provider with the top-ranked cardiac program in the U.S. to elevate patient care in Southwest Florida. This latest announcement follows the previously established strategic alliance between Cleveland Clinic and Lee Health in November 2020 to enhance and improve care in Southwest Florida by exploring opportunities for service line affiliations and strategic initiatives to improve quality and efficiency of care through clinical and operational enhancements. This alliance through a new affiliation agreement with Cleveland Clinic's Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute makes Lee Health the exclusive Cleveland Clinic heart alliance member in Southwest Florida. It allows for the sharing of best practices, enhancing opportunities to provide new treatments and therapies to patients, as well as exploring cutting-edge technologies and techniques in cardiovascular care that will accelerate advances in treatments.

WHAT'S NEW... WHAT'S NEW...

West Palm Beach VA Completes the First Ever PCI Surgery

The West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System (WPBVAHCS) is expanding services to include Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI)/cardiac stent surgery.

The very first PCI was recently completed in the Cardiac Cath Lab at the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center.

Several years in the making, interventional cardiology services are now available through state-of-the-art equipment and highly experienced team members. This accomplishment serves as an example of VA's purpose to provide Veterans the care they need, when and where they need it. Previously, Veterans requiring cardiac intervention needed to be transferred to neighboring hospitals for care. WPBVAHCS is now able to provide these services under one roof, allowing for seamless treatment and recovery.

"The future of care is here and now. We are proud to be a part of it," stated Ronald K. Williams, D.O., Chief of Staff.



The PCI Team at the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center

Steward Health Care Acquires Adult-Care Hospital Property from Nicklaus Children's, Further Expanding Its Commitment in Florida

Steward Health Care, LLC (Steward), recently announced the purchase of the former Miami Medical Center property from Nicklaus Children's Health System.

"We are thrilled to grow our South Florida commitment to patients through the reopening of a hospital once critical to the city of Miami and its residents," said Marisela Marrero, M.D., Steward Regional President for South Florida. "We are resolved to providing better, more accessible care, and further engaging with Miami's wholly diverse communities, including patients in nearby Coral Gables - which has been without easily accessible, high-quality care for years."

This latest Steward acquisition further expands the company's commitment to bringing high-quality care to more communities in the Florida market and increases its South Florida network to six hospitals. Steward acquired five area hospitals in August 2021, including North Shore Medical Center, Coral Gables Hospital, Hialeah Hospital, Palmetto General Hospital, all in Miami-Dade County, as well as Florida Medical Center in Broward County.

"After a thorough process which included the review of multiple options for the sale of the property, Nicklaus Children's decided to sell to Steward Health," said Matthew A. Love, President and CEO of Nicklaus Children's. "We look forward to continue serving children in South Florida and collaborating with Steward, as we do with other health systems in our community," he said.

The hospital facility, located at 5959 NW 7th St in Miami, was initially acquired in 2014 and refurbished as part of a joint venture involving 60 physician investors, Children's Health Ventures, Inc., a subsidiary of Nicklaus Children's Health System, and Nuetera, a global organization with expertise in collaborating with physicians and health systems to fund, build and manage healthcare facilities. When the joint venture did not meet expectations, the hospital closed in 2017 and Nicklaus Children's later acquired the hospital and associated properties.

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DocMJ Values - We're big believers in the virtues we live and work by — empathy, compassion, and kindness. We're here to support patients in getting the help they deserve as quickly as possible. We strive to accomplish that in the most effective way possible. **Our Mission** - We aim to bring affordable medical marijuana recommendations to qualified patients across the state of Florida. We work tirelessly to be the most convenient, streamlined, and cost-effective solution for Floridians, and our mission is to provide the highest quality of care in the process. Check us out at www.DOCMJ.com or call (888) 908-0143



Visit us online at www.cannabisnewsflorida.com



Florida Medical Marijuana Physicians Group

ZOOM Meetings



Wednesday, May 11 & Tuesday, May 24

6:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)



A bimonthly Zoom meeting exclusively for Certified Medical Marijuana Physicians and MMTC Medical Directors in the State of Florida

Purpose: to discuss current medical, legal and business issues facing the Medical Marijuana industry.

Registration in advance is required.

Registration is **FREE**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information to join the Zoom meeting.

For registration information, contact charles@cannabisnewsflorida.com



Trulieve Opening Medical Marijuana Dispensary in Zephyrhills, Florida



Trulieve Cannabis Corp. announced the opening of a new medical cannabis dispensary in Zephyrhills, Florida.

"Trulieve is excited to expand access to medical to more patients in Florida and build strong relationships in the Zephyrhills community," said Kim Rivers, CEO of Trulieve. "We are driven by our commitment to providing tailored, high-quality patient care in a safe and comfortable environment."

As the state's leading medical cannabis provider, Trulieve's retail employees are trained to provide personalized patient care and support individuals at every stage of their cannabis journey. Trulieve dispensaries throughout Florida offer on-site consultations to help patients obtain appropriate medical products and dosages to ensure optimal cannabis experiences.

Trulieve patients across Florida can choose from the largest selection of THC and CBD products available in a variety of consumption methods, including smokable flower, concentrates, edibles, capsules, syringes, tinctures, topical creams, vaporizers, and more. Patients have access to nationally-beloved brands such as Bellamy Brothers, Bhang, Binske, Blue River, Black Tuna, Love's Oven, O.pen, and Sunshine Cannabis, all available exclusively at Trulieve in Florida.

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Back Cover Story: Cannabis Spotlight

Continued from back cover

slogan to describe our modern system in the U.S. My motivation comes from breaking free from those lies and finding ways to return the autonomy of care to the patient. I focus on all patients but have a special place in my work for Veterans and do collaborate with vet organizations in advancing access, reducing costs, and removing barriers that prevent our military members from using these options in treatment.

After having to retire from the bedside after injury and burnout, I found my passion in legislative advocacy. I have been working toward a law degree, Juris Master, with a focus in Healthcare Regulation and am set to graduate later this year. As a Change Agent, it is my intention to help guide the regulatory framework to better serve our communities and improve the overall health outcomes of our country.

What field are you in within the cannabis space?

I am a disabled Veteran and Nurse with a focus in Legislative Advocacy and Healthcare Regulation. It is my hope to help change the legal landscape surrounding cannabis and other earth medicines through advocacy, regulation, policy, and education. Part of the nursing job is to educate the public on how to improve or maintain their health. While I do not provide direct patient education anymore, I do still educate. I have been advocating change from a top-down approach and do my best to educate our legislators and those in positions of power about the science supporting the use of earth and entheogenic medicines. Within the regulatory and legislative space, we have the opportunity to change the laws that govern the health of our country for the better.

How can people in Florida benefit from the company you represent?

I created NurseDebb, LLC (a veteran and woman owned business) to focus on

legislation, advocacy, ethics, and policy development. I am a seasoned registered nurse and public health advocate who actively lobbies for change on federal and state levels surrounding earth and entheogenic medicines.

I am a passionate and driven advocate for earth and entheogenic medicines. The choice of treatment should be made between the provider and patient. I stay informed on relevant legislation, regulation, and evidenced-based research surrounding these alternative modalities.

How did you get started within the cannabis industry?

I was reintroduced to cannabis in my mid 30's. Having been a D.A.R.E kid, I steered clear of all taboo and illegal substances. To have the literal veil lifted after 30 years of propaganda made me furious! I could not believe the LIES we were sold and how we had been manipulated into adapting these false values.

I was doing my undergrad at this time and had access to all the professional research databases, which I took full advantage of. I was also fortunate enough to live in the Northern Virginia area for over 20 years, with Washington D.C. sitting in my "backyard." I attended my first lobbying event with VaNorml in January of 2019 to support the "Let Doctors Decide" legislation. This allowed the provider and patient to decide if cannabinoid therapeutics was right for them. We were successful in passing that bill, but the takeaway for me was how my visit changed the perspective of my local representative. He ended up voting yes to this legislation as a Republican. That was powerful to me and really called to me to continue to do advocacy work. In a way, you can say the bug bit me in Richmond.

Since then, I have met and connected with some amazing individuals. With more than 25 years of healthcare experience, I found that my expertise was sought after in the advocacy and legislative space. I found my niche. As part of the most trusted profession for 20 years running, nurses are poised to be at the

forefront of this movement. We have the connection to our communities and have the ability to bridge the gap between professional and patient. It is an exciting time to be a nurse during this revolution in healthcare.

Are you personally a MJ card holder?

I am a medical marijuana card holder here in the state of Florida. I am exercising my right to choose what medicine works best for me. I was diagnosed with left temporal lobe epilepsy while on active duty, a diagnosis that subsequently ended my military career. For years I was on pharmaceuticals, and I was fortunate that they did their job and kept my epilepsy at bay. It wasn't until I was seeking entrance into a Nurse Practitioner program that my eyes were really opened. Where pharmaceuticals did their job and kept me seizure free, I was unaware of the cognitive complications that arose from their use. I have taken pretty much all the different types of epileptic medications, the last being Phenobarbital. With the permission of my neurologist, I tapered off my pills and onto cannabis.

Things were going great, I was doing well in school, was a more attentive partner and mother, and I was losing weight! It wasn't until I decided to taper back onto my meds in order to pass the drug test for that NP graduate school program, I was interested in that things changed. I had restarted my meds without telling my husband, who at one point came to me and asked me what I changed, and said I was acting "stupid." It just so happens that I was experiencing some serious cognitive delays and was finding it difficult to put things into eloquent words. I had no idea that the medication I had been taking for years was causing such a brain fog, among other issues. I tapered back off the Phenobarbital for the last time in 2018 and haven't looked back since.

I am transparent in my choice of medication and do my best to advocate for

other patients who desires to utilize cannabinoid therapeutics. Moving forward, I would love to see home grow as an option for the patients of Florida.

Do you see Florida moving forward with recreational marijuana/cannabis and how will that affect your business?

I do see Florida eventually moving toward adult use. I do think this will take some time as change is needed in our legislature to secure those changes. Due to the nature of my business, I am excited to be part of this reality. I am looking forward to the day when we no longer criminalize, stigmatize, or continue to lie to the citizens of Florida about the benefits of using earth and entheogenic medicines. Much like the military, they are not for everyone, and that decision should be made between the provider and patient. Together they can decide whether or not these modalities are a fit in their healthcare plan.

To contact Deborah McCauley, email nursedeb@t3thys.com

Back Cover Story: Stress and Anxiety Disorders: Medical Marijuana Can Help

Continued from back cover

large portion of our patients at DocMJ have achieved great success using medical cannabis to treat their stress and anxiety disorders, allowing them to function in activities of daily living. This treatment success is supported by multiple studies. A recent study out of Washington State University and published in the Journal of Affective Disorders, found that medical cannabis can significantly reduce levels of anxiety, stress, and even depression.

Additionally, our patients at DocMJ have found that when they use medical marijuana to help relieve stress, they often experience a variety of additional benefits such as pain relief, improved overall relaxation, and improved sleeping quality. Although medical marijuana is not a cure for a patient's stress and anxiety, our patients report it absolutely does help with their overall stress levels.

Contact DocMJ by visiting our website at www.docmj.com or call us at 888-908-0143 and learn more about the benefits of medical marijuana and how we can help get you a recommendation if you qualify.



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When Will Retailers Catch Up With Hemp Laws?

The Federal Farm Bill legalized hemp in 2018. It was a huge deal for those in the hemp space but most retailers, those not in the smoke shop world at least stayed oblivious. Creating products that are not the standard oils, creams and gummies was the logical next step in an industry that is expected to grow into the billions. However, large chain retailers are hesitant to accept any hemp products with any THC delta 9. Consumers are hesitant to try hemp products, especially those that have routine drug tests, are hesitant due to the trace amounts of THC delta 9. Lastly, Amazon remains bi-polar in their rules, allowing then not allowing, then allowing, and then allowing advertising, and then throttling it.

It's time for the FDA to step up and give guidance on low dose cannabinoids and low-level THC products.

The FDA to its credit has been hesitant to pass rules without the science. And with a pandemic taking up most of the oxygen in the agency, the science has been slow. Our industry is also a bit bi-polar. We have GRAS (generally regarded as safe), fiber and cannabinoid products. Fiber is not being ingested so it is not subject to the same regulations as food. Alas, drug products, making medical claims, are facing their own challenges with an FDA that is racing to catch up with the science. And the traditional barriers to prevent new products in the building industry are slowly crumbling, with hemp-based wood and hemp-based insulation slowly gaining acceptance.

Smoke shops are tending toward the legal psychotropic products rather than the healthier wellness products. That tracks, but it has definitely slowed the additional products that are coming out.

Smoke shops have been hesitant to



BY JEFF GREENE

bring products that focus on the minor cannabinoids because it requires salespeople to actually educate their customers. For many smoke shops, getting their employees to do anything other than make change can be challenging (and sometimes that is a challenge).

Over the next few years, the industry will continue to go through a consolidation. The big

CBD companies are getting gobbled up by publicly traded companies, out of necessity more than anything. Scale is expensive. Growing into a brand is expensive. Growing a category is very expensive. All of these things are required for a good portion of the hemp industry.

The transition from smoke shop products to consumer-packaged goods has begun. We are seeing better packaging, better advertising, better products. The farmers have been the hardest hit. For those large companies that didn't find a publicly traded company, bankruptcy occurred, both in Kentucky and Colorado. And the farmers in those states were the victims of visions gone amiss.

Trying to create products with long term strategy on pricing and demand continues to prove challenging because of the wide swings in biomass prices and the lack of readily accepted distribution and retail. The expectation is that this is temporary, and prices will eventually normalize at a level that farmers can accept, and manufacturers can rely on. Regulators will start to allow low levels of THC in blood and urine tests so that the health benefits of hemp can be realized by pilots and truckers and the like. It's insane that a pilot can go out and drink the night before a flight and not have any issues, but if he takes a full spectrum hemp product he can be

fired. This also applies to the trucking industry. These are the rules that are changing the slowest because public safety is perceived to be endangered. I would argue that public safety is actually better if truckers can ease their back pain or pilots can relax and focus on his controls.

Being a pioneer in any industry is a challenge, nobody ever said it would be easy and no industry that I have been in has been as inclusive and entertaining. Public opinion has shifted substantially on cannabis and arguably even the higher doses of THC should be Federally legalized and regulated now that we have exceeded 25 states that have legalized it. This country was founded on states' experimentation and once that can be studied, the best results from each state are adopted and a Federal regulation is born. This is the standard way to do things, but cannabis has never been standard. This is apparent from the 1930s when it was used as a tool for racism and protectionism. And throughout the 1960s and 1970s, when it was used as a tool for search and seizure. And even today, the industry struggles with communication with law enforcement because it is a perceived vs them dynamic. In general, most good hemp and cannabis companies reach out to law enforcement early and often to avoid any misunderstandings.

Finally, products are getting better. Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) is

becoming the baseline, and medical claims are not as prevalent in advertising because the industry is educating itself on what the FDA will allow and what it won't. This does get more difficult due to the apparent civil war within the FDA, with one side feeling like the plant should have never been legalized and one side wanting to actually regulate it.

When will retailers and distributors catch up ... when consumers demand it. Stress is at an all-time high in this country and the population is aging. Tobacco is killing them. There will come a time when truckers stand up to the Department of Transportation and demand change. Professional sports have already started changing and both the NFL and MLB have eliminated THC from their bevy of tests. If you are thinking about getting into the business, it's not too late but it will be soon. Consolidation will increase the barrier to entry and costs will continue to rise due to inflation and the supply issues that are a reality due to the pandemic and will remain an issue for years. Hopefully, our Federal government will incentivize manufacturing not just in hemp but in every sector. If we have learned nothing from the last two years, it is obvious that we need to bring back American manufacturing.

Visit the Florida Hemp Council at www.TheFLHC.org for more info.



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Back Cover Story: Florida Consortium for Medical Marijuana Clinical Outcomes Research: A Beneficial Program

Continued from back cover

*Florida Memorial University
*Florida State University
*University of Central Florida
*University of Florida
*University of Miami

The need for research in this area driven by our flagship institutions is supported by the more than 650,000 Floridians now holding medical marijuana cards. Since its inception, the Consortium grants program has awarded 30 researchers from 7 of the 9 member institutions a total of over \$2 million. Recent awarded projects have studied the acceptance of medical marijuana and CBD as a form of palliative care, characterizing adverse drug events reported with cannabis use, cannabis and its role with acute and chronic pain, inflammation, neuropathies, and fibrosis to name a few. Specific conditions being studied have included Crohn's disease, diabetes, anxiety, anorexia nervosa, and headaches.

The Consortium provides resources for patients, practitioners, researchers,

and industry. This includes a quarterly newsletter and an annual report that share many nuggets of information for all stakeholders. As noted in the "Winter 2021 Medicament" newsletter published by the Consortium, "a lack of cannabis use assessments contributes to under-documenting cannabis use, unprepared clinicians, low quality health record data, and limited research on a wide array of cannabis-related health outcomes."

On May 19th – 20th of 2022 the Cannabis Clinical Outcomes Research Conference will be held in Orlando and will serve as a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas, findings, and potential for future collaborative work. This year's keynote speakers will include Dr. Staci Gruber from McLean Hospital in Massachusetts who heads up the Marijuana Investigations for Neuroscience Discovery (MIND) program, Dr. Samer Narouze who serves as the President of the American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine who is a professor in the College of Med-

icine at Ohio State University, and Dr. Kent Hutchison, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

There are many more programs sponsored by the Consortium that have rapidly developed as reputable statewide offerings. To learn more about these programs you can visit the website <https://mmjoutcomes.org/>

Dr. Jeff G. Konin is a Clinical Professor in the Department of Athletic Training in the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Florida International University (FIU) where he directs the Global Initiative for Cannabinoid Research and Education.

To learn more about FIU's cannabinoid research and education initiative you can visit their website at <https://go.fiu.edu/GlobalCannabis>.

Views represented in this column do not reflect that of Florida International University and are solely attributed to Dr. Jeff G. Konin.

Ayr Wellness Launches Premium Flower Brand, Kynd in Florida

Ayr Wellness announced it has expanded its extensive product portfolio available at Liberty Health Sciences ("Liberty") dispensaries statewide with the addition of its, premium flower brand, Kynd.

Kynd's artisanal whole flower is crafted in small batches under highly-trained and passionate specialists. All 45 Liberty dispensaries across Florida will initially carry the meticulously developed strains Blueberry Headband, Extraterrestrial Bananas, and True OG, with Purple Trainwreck, Polyjuice #4, and Lemon Haze following in the coming days and weeks. Kynd was previously only available in Nevada for discerning consumers. "Kynd delivers world-class strains that are pure, potent, and consistent," said Katie Sutton, vice president of retail at Ayr Wellness. "Florida patients deserve high-quality whole flower experiences and will have a variety of Kynd offerings ahead of the 4/20 holiday."

For more information about Ayr Wellness or to locate your nearest dispensary, please visit ayrwellness.com.



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AE Global Announces Earth Day Beach Cleanup Initiative

*Leading CPG and cannabis packaging design and development company
takes charge in addressing the 100,000-metric ton plastic elephant in the room*

In honor of Earth Day, AE Global (AEG), a custom packaging design company and supply chain solution provider, announced it is joining 4G Recycling, its joint venture and event sponsor Ocean Recovery Group (ORG), and Clean Miami Beach for a beach cleanup. Together with 100 volunteers, they will clean one of the dirtiest stretches of public waterways along Interstate 195 in the heart of Miami.

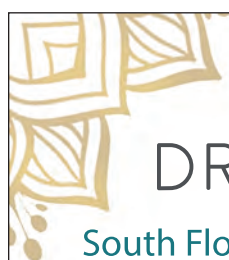
Plastic waste in the cannabis industry is a growing problem, and AE Global has estimated that in North America in 2021, the sector created 100,000 metric tons of plastic waste in purchased products alone – or roughly 50,000 cars stacked on top of each other. To combat the global plastic problem, AEG recently partnered with 4G Recycling to form the joint venture, Ocean Recovery Group. ORG is a social-business enterprise that leverages over 100 years of recycling-industry experience to better collect, clean, and recycle ocean-bound plastics.

“As a CPG packaging design and development company, we are acutely aware of the growing plastic problem, both on land and in the ocean,” said AE Global Managing Partner Mike Forenza. “We want to be good stewards of sustainable practices and walk the walk. This beach cleanup with 4G Recycling, Ocean Recovery Group, and Clean Miami Beach ensures we keep our beautiful, shared beaches in our backyard pristine for everyone to enjoy.”

The inaugural beach cleanup was held on Friday, April 22, 2022, at 3 PM EST at Julia Tuttle Causeway, 195 E, Miami, FL 33140. Volunteers can reach out to info@aegpkg.com to learn more or join.



L to R: Ocean Recovery Group President, Zachary Kirstein; Ocean Recovery Group Head of Opps, Robbie Klein; Miami-Dade Mayor, Daniella Levine Cava; AE Global Managing Partner, Jeff Davimoss; 4G Recycling President, Brent Kirstein



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Back Cover Story: Trulieve Announces Exclusive Partnership with DeLisioso Cannabis

Continued from back cover

and he makes a high-quality product that our patients in Florida are going to enjoy.”

DeLisioso products join the extensive portfolio of medical products offered by Trulieve. Each product uses the most advanced technology, ensuring the highest quality product available on the market, as well as independent third-party testing.

As the leading medical cannabis provider in Florida, Trulieve offers the largest selection of THC and CBD products in a variety of delivery methods, including edibles, smokable flower, concentrates, tinctures, topical creams, vaporizers, and more.

Trulieve also offers statewide home delivery, convenient online ordering, and in-store pickup. The Company’s products are hand-grown and specially cultivated in state-approved, climate-controlled environments to ensure purity and safety.

“We offer a wide range of premium cannabis solutions that have been fine-tuned to meet even the most specific of patient’s needs,” says Coryat. “We take pride in empowering our consumers to live their lives without limits.”

In the fall, Trulieve announced the launch of a new line of premium cannabis live concentrates made through a hydrocarbon extraction.

“A Live product means that the extract or concentrate in question was created using flower that was frozen immediately after being harvested,” explains Coryat. “Few extraction methods can process true ‘Live’ material as well as hydrocarbon extraction.”

Typically, “Live” products show themselves to be higher in terpenes as well as more diverse due to the nature of using fresh-frozen flower. Terpenes are sensitive and tend to evaporate over time; during the process of drying and curing cannabis, some of the most sensitive terpenes may be lost to evaporation.

“This is a normal part of the curing process and is why freezing the fresh flower



immediately after harvest is so important; the extremely cold temperatures help to keep all the delicate aromatic properties of the living plant preserved,” adds Coryat. “The capturing of these extra sensitive terpenes is one of the major reasons for the increase in flavor and effects experienced with “Live” medicines.”

New to CBD? Coryat offers some advice. CBD products require specific delivery methods, which means each of them provides different bioavailability and some can act faster than others.

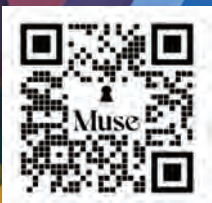
“There are topicals, edibles, tinctures and many more; pick the one that best fits your needs,” she said. “CBD products also come in different concentrations, with some containing higher amounts of cannabidiol than others. If you are new to CBD, the general rule of thumb is to start with a low dose, gradually increasing it until desired effects take place.”

For more information, visit www.trulieve.com.



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Follow us to stay up to date on all the latest Muse products





CANNABIS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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Trulieve Opening Medical Marijuana Dispensary in Zephyrhills, Florida

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May 2022

CANNABIS NEWS FLORIDA™

FLORIDA'S RESOURCE
FOR MEDICAL & BUSINESS
CANNABIS DEVELOPMENTS

2019 Cannabis Business Award's Publication of the Year



Deborah McCauley

Cannabis Spotlight

Deborah McCauley, BSN
NurseDebb, LLC

What benefits do you see for patients throughout Florida within this space?

We have a legal medical cannabis program here in Florida and that should be a benefit, but it is sadly cost prohibitive for most. Those who could benefit from cannabinoid therapeutics, plainly, can't afford it. From the rampant stigma to the out-of-pocket costs, I would be hard pressed to call it a medical cannabis program. We have to see a physician (who may or may not know enough about the Endocannabinoid System or cannabis as medicine) and when we go to get our actual medication, we have to buy it with cash from non-medical professionals. Our dispensaries are retail stores run by some really awesome people, but they have no background or foundation in medical education that enables them to safely guide patients in this area. I joke and call our program a legal cartel, but how far off am I in reality?

What motivates you to be a part of the cannabis industry?

I recognized a long time ago that our healthcare system was broken, and I have been trying to see how I could help make the most impact. Earth and entheogenic medicines are tools much like traditional western medicines, just misunderstood and misrepresented. It is time we move on from the prohibitionist thinking and fear-based healthcare. Profit over patient has been a long-used

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Trulieve Announces Exclusive Partnership with DeLisioso Cannabis in Florida

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Trulieve launched an exclusive partnership in Florida on April 20 with DeLisioso, a cannabis company specializing in high-end adult use and medical cannabis products. Through the agreement, Trulieve became the exclusive producer, processor and retailer of DeLisioso branded products throughout the state, beginning with Flamingo Kush by DeLisioso pre-rolls.

DeLisioso was founded by Richard DeLisi and his son Rick. Richard DeLisi is one of the longest-serving nonviolent cannabis prisoners in United States history having served 32 years of a 90-year sentence.

"Richard gained back his freedom after being severely sentenced for a non-violent cannabis offense with the help of the Last Prisoner Project," says Valda Coryat, Trulieve's Chief Marketing Officer. "Now he is using his products and his journey to fight for the freedoms of those still incarcerated for unjust cannabis prosecutions. We partnered with DeLisioso because we believe in Richard, we support his cause,



Live Suga



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Jackie Rothman

Stress and Anxiety Disorders: Medical Marijuana Can Help

BY JACKIE ROTHMAN

Do you, or someone you know, suffer from some type of stress or anxiety disorder? Many people don't handle stress and anxiety well. Managing stress is essential to a patient's overall well-being. If left untreated, patients may deal with increased anxiety, depression, and in severe cases, even heart disease. Stress and anxiety may not be a disease, but as a disorder, patients need to manage levels to avoid further potential health problems. Using medical marijuana offers our patients a solution that also reduces the risk of substance abuse and self-medication.

During the past 2 years, the effect of COVID has greatly increased the number of patients who report suffering from stress and anxiety disorders. Patients are having difficulty coping with normal daily functions and getting a good night's sleep. At DocMJ, we are proud to be able to provide recommendations to qualified patients so they can receive the relief they need from their stress and anxiety disorders.

Over the past few years, there has been an increasing amount of research specifically focused on how medical cannabis may be an excellent treatment for a variety of stress and anxiety disorders. In fact, a

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Florida Consortium for Medical Marijuana Clinical Outcomes Research: A Beneficial Program

BY DR. JEFF G. KONIN

As the landscape for marijuana in Florida is changing at warp speed, this is a good time to put a plug in for a program that only began in 2019. The Consortium focuses on conducting, sharing, and supporting research on the effects of medical marijuana on health conditions and symptoms. Medical marijuana clinical outcomes research is accomplished through 5 identified pillars:

1. Grants program
2. Medical Marijuana Clinical Outcomes Repository (MEMORY)
3. Clinical Research Core
4. Scientific Expert Group
5. Outreach program

The Consortium is housed at the University of Florida and is comprised of 9 member Universities:

- *Florida Atlantic University
- *Florida A & M University
- *Florida Gulf Coast University
- *Florida International University



Dr. Jeff G. Konin

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