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4 Mind the (care) gap
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Service:
our mission, our DNA

Like health care, military service requires dedicated people on the front lines, plus scores of individuals whose behind-the-scenes work is critical to success. Both fields require discipline, skill and coordination.

Giving back to veterans is a priority for Northwell Health. Besides providing health services that ease the transition to civilian life, we are also a national leader in hiring former members of the military. (See page 6.) Northwell has hired more than 630 veterans in the past two years alone, and our goal is to recruit 1,000 a year moving forward.

Groundbreaking work with wounded soldiers made Florence Nightingale a household name. Huntington Hospital nurses pay her tribute when they helped create the Nightingale Phone, a tool that led to a dramatic jump in patient satisfaction scores. The device is an example of Huntington’s patient-centric nursing, one of many factors that recently helped the hospital achieve Magnet designation for the fourth time in a row. Furthermore, for the second time since 2012, Northern Westchester Hospital has been named a Magnet facility. (See page 22.) In 2016, Cohen Children’s Medical Center became New York State’s only pediatric hospital with this prestigious designation.

Magnet status not only indicates superior patient experiences and outcomes, but also high job satisfaction among nurses. That’s not too surprising: Engaged, empowered staff members are just happier. To help keep this positive cycle going, Northwell offers many staff-exclusive programs and benefits. For example, a health system grant program helps eligible employees buy their first home. (See page 8.)

There have been two impressive new milestones in Northwell’s ongoing efforts to deliver highly specialized care closer to patients’ homes: A local teen underwent Cohen Children’s first pediatric kidney transplant (page 27) and the Sandra Atlas Bass Heart Hospital at North Shore University Hospital has received preliminary approval to establish a Heart Transplant Program (page 9). Previously, these treatments and their follow-up care would’ve required travel to other counties, compounding difficulties for very sick patients and their families.

Improving access to care is central to promoting the health of our community members. So is providing relevant education that is easy to find and consume. Northwell’s latest projects in this area encompass two new podcasts: personal illness-to-wellness narratives in Health Story, and opioid crisis reporting in The Fix, produced with journalists from the GroundTruth Project. (See page 10.)

As always, I thank you for everything you do every day to fulfill our promise to countless patients and family members we serve. I hope you enjoy this latest issue of The New Standard.
Ebony, ivory and breast cancer disparity

By Brian Mulligan

African-American women die from breast cancer more often than Caucasian women, and clinicians at the Northwell Health Cancer Institute are working to find out why.

“We’re trying to figure out where the gaps are and how to address them,” said Janna Andrews, MD, a radiation oncologist at the Cancer Institute.

Despite similar rates of mammography use in the US, black women die from breast cancer at a 10 percent higher rate than white women, according to the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Other studies reveal similar rates of diagnosis, but the diagnoses come at a more advanced stage for black women.

“Some research findings demonstrate that African American women have more delays in follow-up care after an abnormal mammogram than white women,” Dr. Andrews said. “Those delays likely play a pivotal role in the lower survival rates.”

Implicit bias, lack of access to care and cultural nuances influence those delays, she added. “It’s no longer acceptable to assume a patient was diagnosed later because they were in denial or afraid to have a mammogram,” Dr. Andrews said. “We have to take a look at the role implicit bias plays among physicians and why there are such disparities.”

Many challenges

Education and socio-economic standing affect follow-up care for mammograms for all races, Dr. Andrews said. Other factors contribute to higher mortality rates. One of the most prominent — access to care — can be hard to quantify.

“Many things limit access to care,” said Dr. Andrews. “Transportation is often an issue: ‘Do I need a car?’ Does public transportation make it easy or more difficult? In addition, some patients can’t afford to take time off work or have child-care concerns. These issues all qualify as lack of access, but they are not easily tracked.”

Health literacy is a common challenge, but is an even greater barrier for patients with limited English fluency. “Physicians must take the time to ensure that patients understand what is being communicated about their health,” Dr. Andrews said. “Frankly, many times this is often one of the more significant challenges.” (See “About health literacy” on page 5)

Many providers are expressing concern that the new political climate will build new barriers to care. Undocumented residents can worry that a screening
may reveal their immigration status and trigger deportation. And regardless of background, patients sometimes avoid doctor visits because they fear a diagnosis. “When people put off care, they come to us sicker and in need of more services. That puts additional costs and stress on the health care field,” Dr. Andrews said.

Not-too-distant memories of discriminatory practices elicit reluctance among some African Americans. Some community members still feel mistrust, according to Dr. Andrews. Northwell Health is working to reverse those perceptions through outreach events like screenings and health talks, with follow-up care whenever necessary.

“We are looking at ways to provide better screening and care by making sure individuals follow through on subsequent appointments,” Dr. Andrews said. She added that previously, patients who didn’t follow up on care just had “no-show” or “noncompliant” noted in their file. “Now we ask why they didn’t show, reaching out to see how we can help make sure that they do.”

Health literacy is the capacity to obtain, understand, process and communicate basic information and services in order to make appropriate decisions about care, according to the Affordable Care Act.

Individual education is very different from health literacy, according to Dr. Andrews. “You can be highly educated and still not fully comprehend health issues,” she said. “A host of factors help or hinder someone’s understanding of how to access and achieve the appropriate level of care.” Challenges may include unfamiliar medical jargon; stress levels due to a diagnosis or personal situation; or hard-to-navigate processes at hospitals and health care facilities, she added.

An unexpected barrier to health literacy can be language translation services, which have their own limitations. Context, location and shared or different experiences can cloud the meaning of translated and interpreted words, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). “The intended meaning may be lost,” the CDC website says, “causing confusion even when everyone involved in the communication exchange believes they understand what is being said.”

Health literacy extends beyond episodes of illness, Dr. Andrews said. “We need to understand our diets, exercise, medications and interactions with medical professionals. Understanding health and wellness is important in our day-to-day lives.”

Patient navigators chart the course

Cancer treatment can include years of monitoring and follow-up. “It requires commitment from caregivers and patients,” Dr. Andrews said.

That’s where Northwell patient navigators come in. Patient navigators keep in touch with patients to understand and assess individual needs, such as access to care. They ensure patients keep appointments, follow up with them after a doctor’s visit, and connect patients with resources, such as translators who help them understand the cancer treatment process ahead of them.

Any clinic or provider can refer any patient for the service, according to Sara Parise, breast cancer patient navigator at the Monter Cancer Center of Northwell’s Cancer Institute. “Patients anywhere on the breast cancer continuum can come to us. It can be someone who just got an initial abnormal mammogram result, someone who is newly diagnosed, or someone with Stage Four disease,” she said.

Patient navigators track patient progress. “We can keep an eye on them throughout their cancer care journey,” she said. “If someone misses an appointment, I reach out to the doctor to see why. Has the appointment been rescheduled? We don’t want patients slipping through the cracks. Patient navigators advocate for patients. We have grant money to alleviate nonmedical issues like transportation, child care, food cards or a host of things that may impede access.”

In four years, Ms. Parise has served about 1,600 patients. “Without this service, half of those would have fallen through the cracks,” she said. “The patient navigator model works.”

Call 516-881-7000 to connect with the Northwell Health Center for Equity of Care.
Roll call: Veterans launch new careers at Northwell

By Chris Gasiewski

Paul Khan, RN, and Kuan-Yin Timothee served in different branches of the military during separate decades.

Their experiences are quite different, yet they’re connected by a desire to serve — and to succeed. The two are among the thousand-plus veterans who are now establishing careers at Northwell Health.

The health system hired 417 veterans in 2016 — including Mr. Khan and Ms. Timothee — nearly doubling 2015’s total (220). Hiring veterans has been a priority for Northwell, as is providing clinical and professional resources to active duty members of the military and their families.

Northwell Health ranks as the No. 2 nonprofit employer of military veterans in the nation, according to Military Friendly.

“We were evaluated not just for the number of people we hire, but the overall organization,” said Juan Serrano, director of Northwell’s military and veterans liaison services. “They took a close look at each of our programs. We succeeded at every level.” The health system exceeded the Military Friendly standards for hiring and onboarding; opportunity and advancement; culture and commitment; support and retention; policies and compliance; and recruiting and sourcing.

Unemployment among veterans has dropped significantly since 2010, when 8.7 percent were out of work. As a national leader in veterans’ services and employment, Northwell significantly contributes to reduced unemployment among former military members. The unemployment rate for veterans fell to 3.9 percent in March 2017, lower than the national unemployment rate of 4.5 percent, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

From IT to RN

Mr. Khan served in the Air Force from 2003 to 2007. He was initially stationed at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska — culture shock for the Barbados native — and then Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida. Throughout his service, his information technology work rotated between the Help Desk, various offices and network administration.

Something was missing.

“I always had this thing about taking care of people,” he said. “Nursing is the perfect job. I can go into work and provide the best patient care and bedside manner. That human element was missing from IT.”

Upon discharge, Mr. Khan began pursuing a nursing career. “It was one of the most challenging things I’ve ever done,” he said. “Military training is a handful, but nursing school is ‘all hands on deck.’”

After graduating from LaGuardia Community College, he found resume assistance at a Northwell-sponsored Barracks to Business event in Harlem, where he met Antonio Silvera, who was then a veterans specialist with the health system. Within a few weeks,
Mr. Khan got an offer for a position as a registered nurse at the Stern Family Center for Rehabilitation.

“I thought I wouldn’t hear from him for six months,” Mr. Khan said. “Within a week I had my first interview. It was so fast. I never had an experience like that.”

Now, he relishes his career and appreciates the opportunity to care for patients. For instance, a woman who spent two months at the Stern Center expressed her gratitude when she was discharged.

“She thanked me profusely. She said ‘I hope you have a good life and wish you the best,’” Mr. Khan said. “Just hearing that from someone had a deep impact. It made my week…my month.”

Realized dreams

Already married with children, Ms. Timothee enlisted in the Army because she wanted to further her education. She had three stateside duty assignments as a medical lab technician, and was primarily tasked with training newcomers. Each session required 18 months of exclusive attention.

Ms. Timothee didn’t have time to pursue an education and her service ended abruptly in West Point in 1995 after she was T-boned in a car crash and temporarily disabled.

“The accident was ultimately a blessing in disguise. “I ended up getting out of the Army and completed my bachelor’s degree in three years,” she said. “I needed to fulfill my dreams.”

Ms. Timothee became an analyst at Deutsche Bank and landed in Georgia, where she earned her master’s and law degrees. She returned to New York in 2011 and is now manager of procurement contract negotiations at Northwell.

“I was not concerned about the title I had when I arrived,” she said. “I was concerned about my involvement on a day-to-day basis. I wanted to make an impact and work on the beginning stages of an agreement for a vendor to have access to this large organization.”

Developing talent

Mr. Silvera and Mr. Serrano have first-hand experience with Northwell’s continual fostering of employee talent and skills. Both vets play key roles in working with that population at Northwell.

Mr. Silvera now heads the Northwell Health NYServes Coordination Center in New York City, a recent undertaking that connects veterans and transitioning service members to a network of 60-plus service providers. A partnership between Northwell Health Solutions and the health system’s Patient Access Services Center in Melville, NYServes opened in January.

“Northwell is a leading example of how employers should treat veterans,” Mr. Serrano said. “We aren’t providing jobs, we are providing careers.”

Mr. Khan, right, relishes helping patients at the Stern Family Center for Rehabilitation.
Between managing piles of paperwork and seeing your life savings drain away, buying a home is notoriously stressful.

Wary of these challenges, Elaine Cella, endoscopy coordinator for Huntington Hospital, delayed becoming a homeowner for decades. She just wasn’t ready, not as the single mother who put two children, Peter and Kristen (29 and 24), through college.

Now that her children are in the workforce, Ms. Cella made the leap and purchased her first house last year with help from Northwell Health’s Employee Housing Assistance Program. She said it’s “a dream come true.”

“It took me a little while to find a home,” said Ms. Cella, who bought a ranch in South Huntington. “When I finally did, the rest went really smoothly.

“It’s been wonderful. This is truly a great program and I’m proud to be an employee of Northwell and Huntington Hospital.”

Ms. Cella, a 22-year Huntington staff member, was one of 22 Northwell employees to receive a housing grant in 2016. A collaboration with the Long Island Housing Partnership (LIHP), the program allows eligible employees to apply for as much as $5,000 in financial assistance to purchase a home on Long Island. Northwell issued $130,000 through the program in 2016.

“Last year was the most active year that we’ve had,” said Christina Skoch, tuition programs team lead in the health system’s Human Resources Service Center. “The program can certainly help someone looking for help on their down payment. Participants are also eligible for rehabilitation grants.”

LIHP’s partnership with Northwell began in 2006. Since then, the program has evolved to include rehabilitation grants, which help cover renovations such as a new roof or hot water heater and matching grants. LIHP secures the grants, which are in addition to Northwell’s contribution.

“Northwell’s Employee Housing Assistance Program is a true public-private partnership that assists employers with retaining and recruiting employees,” said James Britz, LIHP executive vice president. “Funding is provided from not only the employer, but also from various federal, New York State and local sources that allow the staff member to secure the stability of home ownership.”

In 2016, the program offered $5,000 for all employees for up to 40 participants. While 22 employees utilized the program, Ms. Skoch hopes more staff members apply this year.

“I love seeing the program grow,” she said, adding that she hoped the program could help as many as 40 people in 2017.

Call the HR Service Center at (516) 734-7000 to learn more about Northwell Health’s Employee Housing Assistance Program, including eligibility requirements and the application process.

Ms. Cella, house-proud.
The Sandra Atlas Bass Heart Hospital recently opened at North Shore University Hospital (NSUH), thanks to the generosity of Northwell Health life trustee Sandra Atlas Bass. A long-time supporter, Ms. Bass has touched innumerable lives with her extraordinary tradition of philanthropy.

With a staff of more than 700, the Sandra Atlas Bass Heart Hospital has combined the cardiac expertise of North Shore University Hospital and Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Medical Center in one place. It is the site of one of New York State’s largest cardiovascular programs, performing more than 1,500 open-heart surgeries and 3,000 cardiac interventions per year. Clinicians consistently achieve some of New York State’s best outcomes for open-heart surgeries and coronary interventions, according to the Department of Health.

The patient-friendly facility includes a 22-bed Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit, five operating rooms and eight cardiac catheterization/electrophysiology labs. Heart Hospital patients have separate parking and arrive via a dedicated entrance with curbside registration and personal concierge. Due to growing demand for services, patients can soon schedule a cardiac catheterization procedure on a weekend. LIJ continues to offer interventional cardiology services at its New Hyde Park campus.

**Access for all**

“Unlike other cardiac programs in the region, the Heart Hospital accepts any patient, 24/7, without regard to the severity of illness or socioeconomic level,” said Alan Hartman, MD, Northwell’s senior vice president, executive director and chair of cardiothoracic surgery. “We are committed to helping all patients, no matter their risk.”

Alexander Mullery, a 76-year-old Ridge resident, underwent aortic valve replacement by Dr. Hartman more than 20 years ago. Last year, Dr. Hartman repaired Mr. Mullery’s aortic dissection.

“It is difficult for me to adequately express my appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Hartman for saving my life — not once, but twice,” Mr. Mullery said.

A life-threatening condition, an aortic dissection is a tear in the wall of the aorta, the major artery that carries blood out of the heart. Heart Hospital clinicians treat more aortic dissections than any other program in the region, according to Dr. Hartman.

**Heart transplantation on the horizon**

Achieving superlative ratings for cardiac outcomes, especially while serving many patients with complex conditions that other providers will not treat, is a testament to the Heart Hospital’s clinical and operational excellence.

These are valuable traits for a proposed transplant center at the Heart Hospital, which received recommended approval in June from the New York State Public Health and Health Planning Council. Currently, the nearest heart transplant program for Long Island and Queens residents is at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, making follow-up care particularly difficult.

To qualify as a transplant center, the Sandra Atlas Bass Heart Hospital had to meet strict eligibility requirements for clinical staffing levels, integrated infection control to curtail post-transplant complications, and formalized communication protocols with organ procurement organizations. The Heart Hospital would also be subject to site visits and review of survey data and patient records by the New York State Department of Health.

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**For youth at risk**

Adolescents and young adults are getting help in preventing HIV infection at a new clinic in Queens. Northwell Health established the Center for Young Adult, Adolescent and Pediatric HIV Care with a $1 million, five-year grant from the New York State Department of Health.

Teens and young adults are a high risk group for HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases, and there’s a higher incidence of the virus in Far Rockaway, Jackson Heights and Astoria than the rest of Queens County, according to David Rosenthal, DO, PhD, medical director for the clinic.

Patients can access HIV testing and services at 37-03 92nd Street in Jackson Heights. The clinic is open Tuesday afternoons, with expanded hours coming soon. For more information, call (718) 484-2005.
Northwell joins forces with journalists

The Fix podcasts put the opioid epidemic under a microscope

By Brian Mulligan

Impartial, deeply researched journalism is invaluable. It provides the opportunity to make positive, sometimes remarkable, changes.

Esteemed for its coverage of global issues, the GroundTruth Project is investigating opioid and heroin addiction — a health care crisis that touches families and communities in the metro New York region and throughout the country — with support from Northwell Health.

In the spirit of unbiased journalism, Northwell exerts no influence over the editorial it is underwriting.

“We entered an agreement with GroundTruth to develop podcasts that focus on opioid addiction and the health system’s efforts to re-orient physicians’ painkiller prescribing practices,” said Terry Lynam, Northwell’s senior vice president and chief public relations officer. “Public Relations routinely works with news media outlets, but in this case, we were navigating uncharted waters.”

The nonprofit media organization is based in Boston at WGBH, the flagship PBS TV station. Charles Sennott, GroundTruth’s founder and executive director, built his reputation covering international developments at the New York Daily News and as the Boston Globe’s Middle East bureau chief. He launched the organization in 2014 to foster the next generation of international correspondents to cover human rights, freedom of expression, emerging democracies, the environment, religious affairs and global health. GroundTruth fellows work in such far-flung locations as Afghanistan, Antarctica, Indonesia, Kenya and Myanmar.

Scrutiny, risk, payoff

“We agreed to provide GroundTruth reporters with extensive access to our addiction psychiatrists and counselors, emergency medicine physicians, patients who had fallen victim to addiction, their family members and our medical students,” Mr. Lynam said. He added that Northwell’s culture of innovation and transparency made the GroundTruth project possible.

“You never know what will happen when you open yourself up to scrutiny,” Mr. Lynam said, “but we saw this as an opportunity to highlight the painstaking work of our opioid task force.”

In addition to creating standardized practices for prescribing pain medications, Northwell’s opioid task force is educating clinicians and patients about the dangers of opioids, and promoting the increased use of pain management alternatives, screening, intervention and community outreach.

“No other health system has a task force like this,” Mr. Lynam said. “It’s a massive undertaking, and a great example of how we differentiate ourselves from other health care providers.”

GroundTruth assembled a team of reporters and editors to produce the five episodes of The Fix. “We’re using storytelling to assess how overprescribed opioids, often first prescribed in an emergency department or an urgent care office, have created an addicted class that has ‘graduated’ to illegal drugs,” Mr. Sennott said. “Our reporters looked at a complex set of questions around the issue by focusing on the stories of providers and patients, and the steps being taken to correct the gaps in the US health care system.”

Readers pull back the curtain on an “addicted class”

The pressure on emergency department clinicians to treat people quickly and effectively can contribute unintentional complications for patients and society as a whole. More than 110,000 New Yorkers receive treatment for addiction on any given day, according to the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services, which monitors nearly 1,600 prevention, treatment and recovery programs. This includes 12 inpatient addiction treatment centers, which serve more than 10,000 people annually. Last year, Northwell alone admitted 6,240 patients for substance abuse treatment. These numbers do not even take into account those who seek or receive outpatient services.

Unbiased understanding

“The opioid addiction epidemic is complex,” Mr. Lynam said. “While the GroundTruth project will inform our communities and beyond, I think we will learn from their reporting as well.”

Journalism graduates of the City University of New York interviewed Northwell Health clinicians and patients, medical students at the Hofstra Northwell School of Medicine, plus other providers, community leaders,
law enforcement personnel and family members in an objective, wide-ranging examination of the crisis.

“We shared Northwell’s strategic approach to the opioid crisis with reporters,” said Sandeep Kapoor, MD, one of the podcast’s advisors. “But perhaps more importantly, the series provides a learning opportunity for us. Its variety of voices — patient, provider, family — provide wide-ranging, unbiased perspectives that a true journalistic approach can bring. The podcasts provide an invaluable look at the many facets of this serious healthcare issue as we look to establish potential solutions.”

Meet the faces behind the opioid outbreak. Tune in at bit.ly/the-fix-podcast.

In their own words

When everyday people meet medical progress, it’s a Health Story — the new podcast series from Northwell Health.

“Our gifted doctors and researchers heal real people every day by adapting the latest medical advances,” said Terry Lynam, the health system’s senior vice president and chief public relations officer. “Health Story journeys with patients as they progress from illness to wellness.”

TV and radio broadcaster David North hosts and narrates the monthly series, which opens with the tale of Dan Lasko, a former Marine who lost his left leg below the knee in 2004. Though an advanced athlete, he struggled to swim. Northwell’s 3D printing experts changed that in collaboration with two local firms that created a solution for Mr. Lasko — and eventually, for amputees everywhere. The next episode features Northwell nurses sharing bedside influences and inspiration, and more podcasts are on the way.

Listen to Health Story at bit.ly/health-podcast.

Meet the faces behind the opioid outbreak. Tune in at bit.ly/the-fix-podcast.
Quite the feat

Football star and podiatric resident welcome twins.

By Jason Molinet

On a sunny April afternoon, Ashley Boccio, DPM, and Chris Hogan cradled their month-old twins. An animated discussion about who’s the better athlete ensued.

“I’m the better athlete,” said Dr. Boccio, refusing to concede an inch.

Dr. Boccio, a surgery resident in podiatric medicine at Long Island Jewish Medical Center, was a former All-American women’s lacrosse player at Penn State University. Her sports credentials are unquestioned.

Her longtime partner? Mr. Hogan, a bona fide sports hero in Boston. The wide receiver played a key role in New England’s latest Super Bowl run, setting a franchise playoff record with nine catches for 180 yards and two touchdowns in the AFC Championship Game win over Pittsburgh on January 22.

One thing they agreed on: each have enjoyed a memorable year so far. Mr. Hogan wrapped up the first season of a three-year, $12 million deal with a Super Bowl ring. Dr. Boccio, who has another year of her residency left, gave birth to Chase and Parker on March 21 at the same hospital where she works.

“It was different being a patient on the opposite side of that interaction,” said Dr. Boccio. “I’ve always been the doctor in the room. It was an amazing experience.”

That’s not the only way the personal and professional intersect.

“We’re trying to keep our priorities straight,” said Mr. Hogan. “She has a career she wants to pursue and I have a career that I want to pursue. And we’re going to do that — and we’re able to do it. These guys came along, which was nice. [The twins and I] support her 110 percent to finish what she started.”

Dr. Boccio spent her teenage years watching orthopedic procedures at the breakfast table, learning as her dad pored over surgical video tape.

“It was corn flakes and anatomical dissection of the ankle,” said Dr. Boccio, whose interests gradually shifted from lacrosse — where she met Mr. Hogan — to the OR.

She never imagined that, more than a decade after those impromptu medical sessions, Richard Boccio would not be the only orthopedic surgeon in the family.

“As a resident, Ashley is bright, personable, intelligent and most of all a team player,” said Russell Caprioli, DPM, program director for the Podiatry Medicine and Surgery Residency Program. “She’s about to enter her third year of residency training and has excelled at all tasks. She’s a pleasure to work with and teach. She has managed her pregnancy and new obligations as a mother of twins with both grace and professionalism. As her program director, I sincerely feel like a proud ‘uncle.’”

Dr. Boccio and Mr. Hogan are enjoying career years. But the game is just beginning.
Pharma Ventures raises Northwell’s profile
Tapping the potential of clinical trial partnerships

By Chris Gasiewski

Capitalizing on new marketplace dynamics, Northwell Health is partnering with pharmaceutical companies via Northwell Pharma Ventures.

Established in 2015, Pharma Ventures develops relationships with pharmaceutical manufacturers and positions Northwell as a premier destination for collaboration for clinical trials.

“Northwell is a closed system with no access to [pharmaceutical] sales reps, and we support that policy. Pharma Ventures works with pharmaceutical companies at an enterprise level, focusing on clinical research, education initiatives, population health, innovative contracting and the specialty pharmacy,” said Elaine Brennan, Pharma Ventures’ managing director. Ms. Brennan has experience as a research scientist, plus sales and marketing roles with Roche, BMS and AbbVie.

Patients can benefit from participating in clinical studies, but not all have had opportunities. A 2013 analysis by Research!America found that fewer than 1 percent of the U.S. population participates in clinical trials, yet 72 percent would if their doctor recommended it.

Clinical trials are significantly valuable for physicians because they afford opportunities to develop new therapies, learn new treatment options and improve the patient experience. They also boost an organization’s reputation and provide valuable resources to advance translational and clinical research strategies.

Industry-sponsored trials in the U.S. increased 43 percent from 2006 to 2014, and newly-registered National Institutes of Health-funded trials decreased 24 percent over the same period, according to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Facilitating and expediting

Communication challenges such as physician or study team unresponsiveness can hamper health systems’ relations with pharmaceutical firms, as can issues with contracting and patient enrollment. Pharma Ventures overcomes such obstacles by serving as the point of contact to present opportunities and triage concerns. The team also facilitates project management and accountability and works to improve processes and efficiency, while reducing burdens on principal investigators and study teams.

“Many stakeholders are involved, so each step has the possibility of delays, reputational damage and loss of revenue potential,” said Jennifer Scanlon, director of Pharma Ventures. She added that Northwell significantly improved its infrastructure by establishing a Clinical Trials Office. The health system’s considerable depth in clinical and research expertise is additionally appealing.

“We communicate the advantages of working with Northwell to potential pharmaceutical partners, so they

Pharma Ventures recently initiated a strategic alliance with Boehringer Ingelheim, one of the top 20 pharmaceutical companies worldwide, to drive clinical studies and collaborate on process development. Ten clinical trials soon got underway, with potential for more opportunities.

Legend: clinical trial area

- Oncology (3 trials)
- Endocrinology (2 trials)
- Cardiology (2 trials)
- Pulmonology (2 trials)
- Gastroenterology (1 trial)
- Hepatology (1 trial)
- Pediatric Type 2 diabetes
- Acute myelogenous leukemia
- Non-small-cell lung cancer
- Ulcerative colitis
- Heart failure
- Diabetic nephropathy
- Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Leukemia
understand the value of collaborating with our large, integrated health system,” Ms. Scanlon said. “We are working to change the conversation, so if a pharma company has a new oncology clinical trial, they know we are as capable as [specialty hospitals]. What differentiates Northwell is that we can be that go-to site for so many disease areas.”

Driving enrollment

Pharma Ventures helped elevate the health system’s status by securing an “innovation partner” designation from Merck, Fortune magazine’s fifth fastest-growing pharma company. Northwell is the only health system among Merck’s top five US accounts with the honor.

Stressing quality and capability over volume, Pharma Ventures has driven 88 new clinical trials to Northwell clinical teams for evaluation since 2016.

“It’s not about taking on all studies presented,” Ms. Brennan said. “It’s just as important to say ‘no’ in a timely manner if we don’t believe we can execute effectively and enroll patients. The ability to enroll patients is a primary indicator of success when a pharma company evaluates a site for selection. While we have pockets of excellence at Northwell, we’re working to make consistently high enrollment numbers the norm.”

The team first built a foundation by collaborating with Christina Brennan, MD, vice president for clinical research, plus Northwell’s Clinical Trials Office and administrators to standardize intake and review processes and create dashboards to track and report metrics. Furthermore, a cross-functional trials committee addresses challenges and accelerates the program.

Pharma Ventures is also working with the Feinstein Institute’s Center for Research Informatics and Innovation to evaluate third-party technologies to assist with identifying potential patients to participate. Located at the Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, the new center assists Pharma Ventures by providing patient and population data analysis, support and custom database options.

“There is no point in overloading the health system with hundreds of opportunities, spending time and resources to get those studies opened, but then not enrolling enough patients,” Ms. Brennan said. “So while Pharma Ventures would ideally like to be 100 percent in on business development and generating more opportunities, we recognize the need to get the foundational elements right first. We must walk before we can run.”

Treating very sick patients on their own turf

*Community paramedics* team up with patients and clinicians

By Spencer Rumsey

Even when they feel very sick, people sometimes hesitate to call 911 because they don’t want to “end up” in the hospital. Now, Northwell Health *community paramedics* offer an alternative to the established treat-and-transport approach.

“*Community paramedics* can treat people with very complex diseases, reassess their condition and potentially let the patient stay home,” said Michael Guttenberg, MD, medical director of Northwell’s Center for Emergency Medical Services (CEMS). “It’s a significant shift from their traditional role.”

When responding to a 911 call, paramedics’ standard practice has been to avoid risk by persuading patients to go to the hospital. *Community paramedics*, however, share decision-making with the patient or caregiver, plus a telemedicine-connected clinician.

“Northwell was the first in our region to do this,” Dr. Guttenberg said. “Now we have the largest program in New York State.”

The health system’s first trainees were selected because they routinely made the most hospital transfers, primarily of elderly patients on Medicare. Of CEMS’s 150 full-time and per-diem paramedics, 55 have now completed the additional instruction requirements to earn designation as a *community paramedic*. Jonathan Washko, EMT-P, assistant vice president of operations for CEMS, started and oversees the program. He expects to offer more training throughout the year.

“*Community paramedics* require significant training in addition to standard paramedic education,” said Mr. Washko. Coursework comprises 40 hours of geriatrics, hospice care, advanced physical exams...
and diagnostics, a refresher course in cardiology, plus a primer on the Affordable Care Act and value-based care.

CEMS community paramedics work with House Calls, Northwell’s home-based primary care program, nurses from the health system’s Nurse Clinical Call Center and Northwell physicians.

A two-year pilot began in 2013, first focusing on geriatric members of House Calls, and then expanding to serve hospice patients. When the system went live, the Nurses Clinical Call Center received requests in the first hour. With 1,500 patient enrollees, the center now gets three or four community paramedic calls a day, according to Mr. Washko.

Community paramedics complete significant training beyond standard EMT-P education.

“People go to emergency departments as the last resort,” said Karen Abrashkin, MD, medical director of the Nurse Clinical Call Center. Dr. Abrashkin published her study of the pilot program in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. “But we found that when our community paramedics respond to an emergency call, House Calls patients can receive treatment safely at home about 80 percent of the time.” Generally, community paramedics’ response time is 21 minutes, and time spent on-site is about 70 minutes, she added.

The program has surpassed the Institute for Healthcare’s Triple Aim campaign to improve patient health, patient satisfaction and lower the cost of care, according to Mr. Washko.

“Being able to take care of people and make them happy is especially rewarding,” he said. “A lot of people don’t want to go to the hospital — they’d rather stay home.”

That’s where community paramedics come in, right through the front door.

Cohen Children’s first kidney transplant patient

Once afflicted with a disease that attacked his kidneys, Matthew Francis, right, is now back on the court, and the new Pediatric Kidney Transplant Program at Cohen Children’s Medical Center made it possible. The 14-year-old basketball fan was the first to benefit from the program — led by Pamela Singer, MD, medical director, and Ernesto Molmenti, MD, surgical director — so the hospital celebrated with a news conference. Knicks legend John Starks, left, made a surprise appearance and gave the Rockaway Beach teen an autographed basketball. “Training for a sport is a lot like what Matthew had to overcome in the hospital, which is why he did such a great job,” said Mr. Starks. “He’s going to be fine. He knows what he wants and he’s working on getting better.”
Donors help shape health care’s future
Charitable support funds Northwell’s mission

By Kerri Tortorella

Giving to Northwell Health has supported advances in patient care throughout our history as a nonprofit, and continues to fuel innovation today.

Last year, more than 16,000 supporters donated $130 million to the health system. This sum came from individuals, support from employees, fundraising events like the annual Northwell Health Walk and Constellation Gala, plus estates and contributions from corporations and foundations.

Gifts enable Northwell to improve facilities, patient care and ultimately outcomes. Charitable giving also supports clinical education and research into new medical discoveries and treatments. “Really caring about people is at the core of what we do,” said Brian Lally, senior vice president and chief development officer at Northwell Health. “Our health system is nonprofit, so the revenue we generate, alone, will never be enough to let us do all we need to do and can do. Donors make the difference. It’s individuals making the decision to help others in our communities.”

Despite its $11 billion annual revenue, Northwell operates on a narrow margin and invests funds back into the health system. Every year, two million patients come to Northwell for treatment. Giving supports our mission to care for our communities and helps fund areas of need throughout our regional footprint. “Northwell’s philanthropic spirit starts right here, with our colleagues,” said Michael Dowling, the health system’s president and CEO. “Until all the people in our communities are healthy, until we’ve discovered all of the cures, there’s always more work to do — more areas to support. I appreciate that Northwell employees help advance our mission to save and change lives.”

Visit bit.ly/support-northwell to lend your support.
Rapidly becoming the regional medical center for the East End, Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) has received approval from the New York State Department of Health to establish two cardiac catheterization laboratories/electrophysiology suites and construct a rooftop helipad.

The first facilities of their kind in eastern Suffolk, the new cath labs can save hundreds of lives each year. They will be central to the Kanas Regional Heart Center, to be housed in a new $60 million critical care tower on PBMC's Riverhead campus. A $5 million gift from the John and Elaine Kanas Family Foundation supports the hospital's advanced cardiac care.

“East End residents have had to travel farther for advanced cardiac services than anyone else in the Tri-State area,” said Andrew Mitchell, PBMC’s president and CEO. “Heart ailments require quick diagnosis and treatment, so this facility will make a real difference. It will save lives.”

Stanley Katz, MD, PBMC’s chair of cardiology and chief of interventional cardiology, is instrumental in the planning and design of the cardiac facilities. As Northwell’s long-time senior vice president, executive director and chair of cardiology, Dr. Katz helped develop Northwell’s regional heart health network. He is now focusing on providing the East End with expanded cardiology services.
Say hello to Arthur Seidman
A 100-year-old who gives 100 percent

By Ray Roel

Arthur Seidman recently celebrated his 100th birthday with family, friends and Northwell Health comrades-in-arms. Encounters from his 22 years of volunteering at North Shore University Hospital (NSUH) are among his favorite memories.

“Time is precious,” said Mr. Seidman. “It’s a good feeling to help someone.”

It sure is. And Mr. Seidman realized that soon after he began his post-retirement volunteer career in 1995. “My son, Steven [an obstetrician/gynecologist at NSUH], suggested I give volunteering a try. I’ve always been a very active person, so I did a lot of things until I found my current niche. I applied myself very conscientiously.”

Mr. Seidman started helping in the NSUH surgical waiting room 18 years ago. Considering the space an important reflection of the entire hospital, he still volunteers there to reassure people as they await the outcome of their loved one’s operation.

**Tension Tamer**

“It’s very stressful for some people,” Mr. Seidman said. “You can see and feel their tension. So I try to alleviate that tension by talking with them and telling them that we have a very fine staff of doctors.”

“This is a very fine hospital,” he said. “I’ve been a patient here, so I know.” Mr. Seidman broke his shoulder years ago, and recovered fully under the care of an NSUH surgeon. “When the doc sees me in the halls, he lifts his arms up. He’s proud of what he did for me.”

Chemotherapy patients at the Monter Cancer Center in New Hyde Park also benefit from Mr. Seidman’s attention. “It’s a special service, because my wife died of cancer and I feel that I’m giving back. The patients are so appreciative of what we do. We speak to them, listen to them. We help by offering them something to drink or a snack, and offer them good conversation.”

Besides his son, who volunteered at NSUH as a teen, Mr. Seidman also has a daughter, and two granddaughters and a grandson who live in Manhattan. He still drives, and wears glasses only to read. “I’m blessed with mental capacity and good health. I hardly miss a day. If it’s a heavy snowfall, my daughter calls me to say I can’t go in. But I don’t live that far away. It’s a commitment.”

He continued, “I’m doing something I want to do. I don’t have to do it — there’s a big difference. I tell my fellow veterans that the hospital can certainly use their help. Older people should use the wisdom of their years.

“It’s been a long life. I’m 100. I don’t think I’m special; we’re all special. Have I had tragedy in my life? We all do. I never knew my mother [the 1919 influenza pandemic claimed her when he was two]. But my father was a role model.”

Certainly, Mr. Seidman has been a role model for countless others. “I’ve made it my business to be very friendly to as many people as I meet. And I always say to them, ‘When you see me in the halls here, always say hello.’”

His birthday wish? “That my kids will be happy and have the long, healthy years that I have had.”

Family, friends, NSUH staff and network reporters surprised Mr. Seidman with a party for his 100th birthday.
More than a fair-weather friend

When this longtime Northwell librarian retired, she didn’t really retire

By Ray Roel

With a penetrating gaze and a quick smile, multitalented Lillian “Libby” Buller has a history with Northwell Health of more than half a century.

She has volunteered at Cohen Children’s Medical Center since 2014, and that’s just her latest chapter. Ms. Buller began her career in 1964 as a medical library assistant at Zucker Hillside Hospital after a summer spent interning in the facility’s controller’s office.

“Libby is a feisty woman with a great sense of humor,” said Christine Hauff, volunteer coordinator at Cohen Children’s. Ms. Buller serves in the Cohen Children’s gift shop and at the hospital’s quarterly blood drives.

Debbie Rand, corporate director of libraries at Northwell Health, remembers Ms. Buller as a “totally dedicated employee, detail oriented, helpful, eager to learn new things” as library resources began to shift to the digital realm. Ms. Buller helped maintain the books, journals and research papers in what became the Zucker Hillside Hospital library. The Electronic Medical Information Library (EMIL) now integrates these materials on Northwell’s Intranet.

Libraries and laughs

While raising her son, Ms. Buller worked four days a week and earned a Bachelor’s degree in sociology from Queens College. She fondly recalls their daily routine of doing their homework at the kitchen table. After Ms. Buller’s husband passed away, a friend encouraged her to go back to school. She was up to the challenge, and completed her Master’s degree in library science from Queens College at 65.

The same year, Ms. Buller embarked on a new discipline: becoming a clown. Inspired by a newspaper article, she joined a local clown group and took lessons in face painting and creating balloon animals. She even went to clown conventions. Ms. Buller performed as “Freckles” at Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Medical Center’s annual children’s holiday party until she was 75.

In her 80s when Zucker Hillside’s library closed, Ms. Buller was not ready to retire. She worked at LIJ’s library until a staffing restructure, then for a stint at Katz Women’s Hospital. During her final stretch as an employee, Michael Dowling, Northwell’s president and CEO, honored Ms. Buller as the health system’s longest-tenured employee during the annual meeting of trustees.

Ms. Buller is getting ready to celebrate her 90th birthday in August. Her advice: “Keep busy, and learn anything and everything you can. And the most important thing in life is to have a sense of humor.”

In the Cohen Children’s gift shop, a smile is Ms. Buller’s umbrella.
Huntington Hospital and Northern Westchester Hospital have again achieved Magnet status for nursing excellence.

This is the fourth consecutive designation at Huntington, only the second hospital in New York State and one of just 36 in the country to achieve the feat. Northern Westchester also received the honor in 2012.

Only seven percent of hospitals worldwide earn four-year Magnet status — the gold standard for nursing excellence — from the American Nurses’ Credentialing Center. The designation influences facility rankings in the annual U.S. News & World Report’s “America’s Best Hospitals” issue.

“Our nurses deliver the highest standard of compassionate, patient-centered care to tens of thousands of patients every year,” said Susan Knoepfller, RN, vice president for nursing at Huntington Hospital. “We know how imperative it is to put the patient and family at the center of our care.”

There are more than 6,300 health care organizations in the US, but the American Nurses Credentialing Center recognizes only 448 as Magnet facilities. Nurses must maintain strict standards for superior patient care, professionalism and teamwork for the designation.

Magnet recognition comes on the heels of other achievements at Northern Westchester, noted Lauraine Spano-Szekely, RN, DNP, the facility’s senior vice president of patient care services and chief nursing officer.

Northern Westchester has earned its fourth consecutive Leapfrog Hospital for Grade A patient safety. Furthermore, it is one of nine hospitals worldwide to receive Planetree Designation with Distinction for patient/family caregiving and engagement. Only five hospitals have the Planetree Designation with Distinction and Magnet recognitions.

“Around the system: Huntington Hospital and Northern Westchester Hospital

Two gold standards
Nursing at its finest

Nurses on Huntington Hospital’s Hematology/Oncology Unit helped to create the Nightingale Phone, which facilitates patient/nurse communication and has increased patient satisfaction rates. Here, the team discusses implementing Nightingale Phones in other parts of the hospital. Such patient-centered care is at the heart of Magnet designation.
Around the System: Staten Island University Hospital

Gaming systems give sick kids a break

Young patients are getting their game faces on at Staten Island University Hospital (SIUH). Video game faces, that is.

The hospital’s Pediatric Unit and Children’s Ambulatory Cancer Treatment Center each got new X Box systems with dozens of age-appropriate games.

“Video games let children escape the hospital walls and feel like kids again,” said Jim Weller, project manager of patient and customer experience at SIUH. He added: “Two years ago, we began fundraising to purchase video game carts for our pediatric oncology patients.”

Charity Gaming raised $4,000 to cover one cart and hospital board member Laura Lauria, RN, donated the second.

Around the System: Zucker Hillside Hospital

New crisis center for behavioral health

Metro New York residents can receive immediate psychiatric care when they need it at Zucker Hillside Hospital’s new Adult Behavioral Health Crisis Center. The service bypasses the need to visit an emergency department for urgent behavioral or psychiatric concerns.

Walk-in evaluation and treatment are available for a wide range of diagnoses and issues, said Michael Dwyer, associate executive director at Zucker Hillside Hospital. A multidisciplinary team offers a broad range of care, evaluation, referrals, and linkage to follow-up care.

Open weekdays from 9am to 7pm, the Adult Behavioral Health Crisis Center is one element in Northwell’s participation in the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Program of New York State. DSRIP increases access to behavioral health services so vulnerable patients have alternatives to the Emergency Department.

“We are taking a giant step forward in caring for the most vulnerable members of our community,” Mr. Dwyer said.
A new seascape with cavorting children is brightening the entry to Glen Cove Hospital’s Family Medicine Program. CA Technologies employees created the mural with the help from the nonprofit Splashes of Hope.

“This mural brightens everyone’s day,” said Barbara Keber, MD, chair of family medicine at the Glen Cove. “It’s wonderful to see the smiles on people’s faces as they pass by.”

The Glen Cove Family Medicine Program is one of the oldest in the country. Every year, it provides about 13,000 community members with primary care plus behavioral health, prenatal and pediatric care.

The Phelps Hospital SurgiCenter has acquired the da Vinci Xi. Specialists can use the robotic surgery system to perform minimally invasive gynecological, urological, thoracic, cardiac and general surgical procedures.

“Surgeons trained on the robot can do more complex operations minimally invasively with the da Vinci Xi,” said Darren Rohan, MD, regional director of thoracic surgery for Northwell Health Physician Partners. Dr. Rohan leads the robotic-assisted thoracic surgery team at Phelps and has been performing robotic surgery for four years.

Instrumentation on the Xi is smaller than previous versions, which makes the surgical tools easier to maneuver, Dr. Rohan added. The expandable unit can accommodate updates as they develop.
Around the system: Long Island Jewish Valley Stream

For sight at LIJ Valley Stream

There’s a place in the north wing of Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Valley Stream that helps blind people see again.

“The Lions Eye Bank for Long Island restores sight through corneal donation,” said Marsha Wynter, director of the eye bank. “There were five donors when we started 30 years ago. Last year, we had 238.”

Before the Lions founded the service with LIJ Valley Stream surgeons, the closest eye bank was in Manhattan, according to Lorraine Lo Re, RN. “Doctors on Long Island got whatever corneas were left over,” she said.

Ms. Lo Re was there when the service started to take shape. She worked for 10 years at the Lions Eye Bank, which her late husband, Stephen Lo Re, MD, cofounded. Always a proponent of organ and tissue donation, Dr. Lo Re devoted much of his life to the Lions Eye Bank for Long Island. When he passed away in 2015, he became an eye and tissue donor.

“To me, it just completes the circle of life,” said Ms. Lo Re. “I feel that his essence, his goodness, and his humanitarianism live on in the two people who can see now because he was an eye donor. His goodness lives on in the two people who got his bone transplants, too.”

For people who can’t see, receiving a corneal transplant is “like having a new windshield wiper installed on your car,” she said. “Corneal donations change lives so much.”

See video and archive images at bit.ly/eyebank17.

Looking forward, looking back

Northwell Health emerged during a critical time in medicine. The organization is thriving because it has anticipated and adapted to changes in health care. Northwell Health: Shaping the Future of Health Care gives perspective on the people and circumstances that incubated the health system and set the stage for its growth and success. For a free copy, email Bhernstat@northwell.edu.
Making room for mothers

Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Forest Hills is adding space to care for pregnant women. The $4 million Maternity Unit expansion will take about six months.

The New York State Department of Health (DoH) has approved the Queens hospital’s request to convert three underutilized pediatric beds to accommodate mothers. LIJ Forest Hills has also submitted a Pediatric Unit closure plan to the DoH. If approved, the hospital’s Department of Obstetrics/Gynecology would offer 11 single-occupancy and six double-occupancy rooms for maternity patients.

The proposed plan will not disrupt the care that LIJ Forest Hills provides to its young patients, according to Susan Browning, the hospital’s executive director. LIJ Forest Hills will continue to operate a nursery and a Level 2 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. The hospital’s Emergency Department will continue to treat thousands of children every year, Ms. Browning said, adding, “Children who need inpatient care will go to Cohen Children’s Medical Center, as they do now.”

The cost of converting the pediatric space is part of an $8.2 million expansion of OB/gyn and radiology services at LIJ Forest Hills. The hospital is a satellite campus of LIJ Medical Center, where Cohen Children’s is also located.
A resource for expecting parents

Northwell Health has teamed up with The Bump, a leading digital platform that offers advice, tools and lifestyle content tailored to parents and parents-to-be.

Expecting mothers will appreciate Planner+ — a new app feature that helps them get ready for each prenatal doctor visit with details about what to expect. The app lets users schedule doctor appointments and sync them on iOS calendars and now also provides access to Northwell clinicians. Furthermore, users nationwide now benefit from advice and guidance from the health system’s obstetrics, fertility and pediatric specialists via The Bump’s “Real Answers.”

“As a leading platform for expectant mothers and parents, The Bump helps to further extend Northwell’s reach,” said Michael Nimaroff, MD, the health system’s executive director of ob/gyn. Northwell Health’s 11 maternity programs deliver 17 percent of all babies in New York State and one percent nationwide — far surpassing any metro-New York hospital network.

Around the system: Huntington Hospital

Early bonding with couplet care

Fran Shayowitz, RN, tended to Deborah Magnani and her newborn Gabriel, beneficiaries of “couplet care” at Huntington Hospital. Couplet care is a departure from monitoring and tending to multiple babies in one nursery while postpartum mothers recover in separate rooms. It lets newborns get much of their care, including tests, in their mother’s patient room. This surrounds newborns with the comfort of familiar voices and helps them remain calm. Couplet care not only fosters bonding, but also decreases the potential effects of postpartum depression and boosts parents’ confidence in caring for the baby. Huntington Hospitals offers services from obstetrical and midwifery specialists, and its nursery remains available.
Hofstra Northwell School of Medicine’s commencement ceremony recently welcomed the class of 2017 into the practice of medicine. The new doctors, including 72 MDs and two PhDs, celebrated their graduation at the John Cranford Adams Playhouse on the Hempstead campus of Hofstra University.

Among the newly minted physicians was Patricia Driscoll, MD, of East Hills. A mother of two children, ages 6 and 5, she was one of a dozen class members elected to the Gold Humanism Honor Society.

“I started out in data science research, but as I got further along in my career, it became more important to honor my commitment to social justice,” said Dr. Driscoll. “I’m so grateful to be able to share this moment with my kids.”

Presiding over the commencement were Lawrence Smith, MD, dean of the School of Medicine; Stuart Rabinowitz, president of Hofstra University; and Michael Dowling, president and CEO of Northwell Health.

Howard Dean, MD, former chair of the Democratic National Committee and 79th governor of Vermont, gave the keynote address. “You are in the middle of tremendous change without even realizing it,” he told the graduates. “The valuable training that happens here is being copied by major universities in the country.”

In July, class members will begin their residencies at institutions such as Stanford University, Baylor College of Medicine, Vanderbilt University, and Harvard University’s Brigham and Women’s Hospital. More than half will remain in the eastern region for residency, including over 20 percent at Northwell facilities.

“I’m heading to the Bronx for a residency in primary care and social internal medicine at Einstein-Montefiore,” said Dr. Driscoll, flanked by her children. “We’re ready to get started.”

Dr. Driscoll’s children escorted her on the way to accept her diploma.
Partial refund for science camp

Northwell Health employees can get a 20 percent refund on tuition when their child attends science camp at the DNA Learning Center West (DNALC West).

A Northwell/Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory collaboration, DNALC West is open to students entering sixth through 12th grade.

Weeklong DNALC West camps take place at 5 Delaware Drive, Suite 5 in Lake Success — the same building as Northwell Health Laboratories. (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory also hosts DNA Learning Center camps, but employee refunds are available only for the Lake Success site.)

Find class dates, details and an application form at summercamps.dnalc.org. Follow instructions and remember to choose a camp at DNALC West to be eligible for the 20 percent employee refund. You must pay tuition in full before requesting the refund, and the refund request deadline is September 8. For more information, call Mary Lamont at DNALC West (516) 719-1296.

Partners in opportunities

Young adults protect the environment and help positive causes via the Opportunities Day Habilitation Program, a joint effort between Northwell Health Physician Partners (NHPP) and ACDS, a local agency that serves children and adults with developmental disabilities. NHPP cardiology practices in Seaford and Massapequa welcome participants weekly so they can collect and redeem recyclables. Proceeds benefit local charities.

Any Northwell entity that wants to participate can call Elizabeth Razukiewicz at (516) 933-4700, ext. 220.
The challenge featured culinary masters from 17 Northwell facilities in a cook off at Glen Cove Hospital. Chefs James Liquori of North Shore University Hospital (NSUH), John Geoghan of Stern Family Center for Extended Care and Rehabilitation (CECR) and Christopher Amabile of Staten Island University Hospital (SIUH) joined forces to cook up the winning menu: shaved asparagus and fennel salad with lemon vinaigrette, coffee-encrusted ostrich steak with sautéed asparagus and avocado chocolate mousse.

“Northwell chefs and dietary staff create more than eight million meals annually for patients, staff and visitors, which is quite a feat,” said Eric Sieden, director of nutrition and food services at Glen Cove, Plainview and Syosset hospitals. “In this competition, chefs focus their creativity on an original three-course menu that showcases their talent for creating appealing, healthy dishes.” Mr. Sieden organizes, emcees and cojudges the event, which coincides with National Nutrition Month.

Six teams of three chefs faced off in Glen Cove’s Pratt Auditorium, which was outfitted with kitchen equipment, a pantry and a cornucopia of fresh ingredients. Working with Northwell registered dieticians and dietary interns, the gourmets had 60 minutes to create an appetizer and dessert with fewer than 250 calories and an entrée under 450 calories. Each course had strict sodium and fat limitations. Fennel was the teams’ mystery ingredient.

“The Ultimate Chef Challenge highlights how our chefs can create delicious and nutritious meals, not only for our patients but for ourselves,” said Sven Gierlinger, vice president and chief experience officer at Northwell. Mr. Gierlinger was on the the judging team with Joseph Moscola, the health system’s chief people officer, Michael Kaufman, a member of the Astor Group and trustee emeritus of the Culinary Institute of America, and Mr. Sieden.

“Northwell is investing in a health-and-wellness culture that supports a healthy work place and workforce, and it starts with food,” Mr. Gierlinger said. “Patient meals are more than nourishment. We want to provide innovative recipes that will enhance the patient experience.”

A healthy taste of victory
By Betty Olt

Ostrich meat is sometimes called the “other red meat.” Because it is low-fat and high-protein, it’s no surprise ostrich was part of the winning menu for Northwell Health’s sixth annual Ultimate Chef Healthy Cooking Challenge.

From left: Christopher Amabile, James Liquori, and John Geoghan.
$10M suite for pint-sized diagnostics

New spaces

Kids will remember their experience at the Children’s Medical Fund Center for Diagnostic Studies for all the right reasons.

Located on the fourth floor of the Cohen Children’s Medical Center pavilion, the new suite offers immersive, outer space-themed decor and imaging equipment designed and scaled just for children. Kids can wear special goggles to view movies during an imaging test.

Besides two magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) units, the center has life-sized a model of scanner that Child Life specialists use to show apprehensive patients what to expect.

A $10 million donation from the Children’s Medical Fund of New York made the 5,500-square-foot center possible. The hospital anticipates serving more than 4,500 pediatric cases a year.

Olivia Macchio, 9, recently helped to open the Children’s Medical Fund Center for Diagnostic Studies. Treated at Cohen Children’s for Burkitt’s lymphoma two years ago, the 9-year-old Garden City girl is now thriving and serves as an ambassador for the hospital.

More new patient care sites

The new $53 million Emergency Department (ED) at Huntington Hospital has been significantly expanded to meet the community’s growing needs. With 47 treatment areas and 12 private waiting stations spread across 28,000 square feet, the remodeled ED features dedicated areas for ob/gyn, behavioral health, trauma and pediatric patients, and houses a radiology section that includes a 128-slice, low-dose CT (computed tomography) scanner. The expanded, remodeled ED can accommodate 64,000 patient visits annually, compared to 54,000 patients per year previously. Philanthropic supporters include New York Islanders legend Clark Gillies; Patricia Petersen of Daniel Gale Sotheby’s International Realty and Stanley Gale of Gale International; Charles and Helen Reichert; and Jim and Yvette Loughlin.

Northwell Health Imaging opened a $12.8 million, 10,000-square-foot radiology center at 226 Middle Country Road in Smithtown. The facility offers extended hours to undergo magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), low-dose CT, ultrasound, image-guided biopsies, bone densitometry and digital X-rays in a spa-like setting. Breast imaging services include 3D mammograms, ultrasounds, MRIs and biopsy.

The new, $1.5 million Northwell Health Physician Partners Orthopedic Institute at Huntington (155 East Main St.) specializes in general foot and ankle surgeries. The 5,000-square-foot facility features a digital Carestream imaging system and is one of Northwell’s 11 orthopedic offices on Long Island.

Keep up with all of Northwell’s new sites at bit.ly/NWnewspaces.
There are few surprises left for someone who’s spent 40 years in health care. Yet Sister Linda Vdorick, RN, was gob-smacked when Michael Dowling, Northwell Health’s president and CEO, stopped to chat about her Northwell career, which began in 1977 at Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Medical Center’s Emergency Department. Among many memorable experiences, Sister Linda’s proudest accomplishment is trekking to Manhattan on 9/11 to save lives with LIJ clinical colleagues. Times change, but Sister Linda’s drive to help patients find the right care in a timely manner remains the same. She does that to a T in Northwell’s Employee Health Services. Find out more about Sister Linda and see the moment Mr. Dowling surprised her at bit.ly/sister-linda.

From left, bone marrow recipient Christopher Court recently met bone marrow donor Harvey Creasey for the first time. The project manager from Farmingdale resident thanked the Virginia Tech junior for donating bone marrow that helped Mr. Court battle acute myeloid leukemia. The setting for their special occasion was the Don Monti Memorial Research Foundation’s Celebration of Life Dinner. Hosted by the Crest Hollow Country Club in Woodbury, the annual event welcomes bone marrow recipients and donors, family members, health care professionals and supporters. “We have the same bone marrow now,” Mr. Court said said. “That means we are connected in a very special way.”
Crouse Health in Syracuse, NY, has entered a clinical affiliation agreement with Northwell Health. The health systems will jointly develop new programs and services for residents in the 15-county area served by Crouse in central and upstate New York.

Established in 1887, the 506-bed community hospital is among the top 10 employers in the region. Crouse Health will continue to operate as an independent, separately licensed community hospital and maintain its existing board governance structure. Its agreement with Northwell will enhance its affiliation with Community Memorial Hospital in Hamilton, NY.

“Over the past two years, we have worked to keep Crouse strong and strategically positioned for our dynamic environment,” said Crouse Health CEO and President Kimberly Boynton. “We engaged in numerous discussions with multiple organizations, and were steadfast that whatever partner we chose had to be in sync not only with our mission, but also with our core values. We have that in Northwell.”

“This collaboration creates a key strategic alliance in a major upstate hub with a high-quality, financially stable, mission-focused provider that has relationships with numerous other hospitals in the region,” said Michael Dowling, Northwell’s president and CEO. “Working together, our goal is to provide Crouse with the expertise to prosper in this incredibly complex health care environment.”

As part of this new relationship, Northwell will assist Crouse in expanding its primary care network, and help develop care management programs and other services to address the challenges of population health. The health system will also assist Crouse with group purchasing, physician recruitment, quality initiatives, the sharing of other best practices to increase clinical and operational efficiencies, and improve patient safety and the overall patient experience.

“Our partnership with Northwell only helps strengthen Crouse’s clinically integrated health network,” said Seth Kronenberg, MD, Crouse’s chief medical officer. He added that Northwell and Crouse will be evaluating telemedicine and population health among other critical areas.

The Rothman Institute, one of the largest orthopedic practices in the US, has entered a strategic affiliation with Northwell Health. Headquartered in Philadelphia, the Rothman Institute provides care at 25-plus locations throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The Northwell Health Orthopedic Institute is working with the organization to develop centers of excellence in metro New York, including Manhattan.

“This agreement expands our footprint into New York City and its surrounding suburbs,” said Alexander Vaccaro, MD, PhD, president of Rothman Institute, professor and chair of orthopedics, and professor of neurosurgery at Thomas Jefferson University and Hospitals. “We look forward to bringing care to Northwell Health’s communities and patients now and for years to come.”

“Our affiliation with the Rothman Institute brings together two nimble, forward-thinking organizations that emphasize high-quality care,” said Nicholas Sgaglione, MD, Northwell’s chair of orthopedics. He added that the organizations will collaborate on cobranded initiatives, recruiting top-level physicians, joint research and tracking/measuring patient outcomes.
Sleep problems are exceedingly common — so common that everyone should have access to a sleep center,” said Steven Feinsilver, MD, Lenox Hill’s director of sleep medicine and leader of the new center. Up to 70 million Americans suffer from some type of sleep disorder, and more than 40 million do not get a proper diagnosis or treatment, according to the journal *Sleep Medicine*.

Specialists at Lenox Hill’s Center for Sleep Medicine evaluate and treat sleep apnea, snoring, excessive drowsiness, insomnia and restless leg syndrome, plus less common disorders. Seven hotel-like patient rooms and the latest diagnostic equipment allow overnight and daytime sleep studies. Those with suspected sleep-disordered breathing can initially undergo sleep testing at home.

Getting help for persistent sleep problems can significantly improve your quality of life, Dr. Feinsilver said.
Around the system: Long Island Jewish Forest Hills

ACT for wellness

There’s a fresh take on psychological support for weight loss at the Northwell Health Center for Weight Management at Syosset Hospital.

Much of the new approach hinges on ACT (acceptance and commitment therapy), along with standard behavioral weight loss strategies. ACT teaches patients to accept uncomfortable thoughts or feelings rather than resist them, and to behave in a way that reflects their values, according to Dina Hirsch, PhD, the center’s new psychologist.

“This type of therapy also teaches patients to identify their weight loss motivation and work toward that important goal,” she said.

Also the senior psychologist at Northwell Centers for Weight Management in Great Neck and Manhattan, Dr. Hirsch began her career with the health system at Cohen Children’s Medical Center. She and Christine Santori, RD, program manager, each host weight-loss support groups at Syosset, or patients can also choose a 12-class series to help as they turn over a new leaf.

Learn more at (516) 496-2662.

Ms. Santori, left, coaches a client at the Center for Weight Management.

Around the system: Syosset Hospital

Dancing, fun, food and friendship were on the agenda for the Third Annual International Cultural Celebration and Pageant at Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Forest Hills. The event lets evening and daytime employees enjoy each other’s company and home-cooked dishes. Staff members walked a red carpet wearing clothing from their land of origin — or their parents’ or grandparents’ — like Colombia, Guyana, the Caribbean, India, Mongolia, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia and Tibet — and a DJ kept the music pumping. “LIJ Forest Hills is one of the most diverse hospitals in Northwell Health,” said Miriam Chapman, RN, assistant director of nursing at LIJ Forest Hills. “We are a reflection of our borough.”
Happy employees make happy patients

Northwell Health is a top employer, according to staff members and professional standard-bearers.

Response to the health system’s employee engagement survey places Northwell Health in the 85th percentile nationally for 2017 — a significant boost since ranking in the 45th percentile in 2014.

Employees reported satisfaction with benefits, recognition, career development opportunities, staffing levels and more. Press Ganey independently administers the annual surveys, which help drive Northwell efforts to provide the best experience for staff members and patients.

Furthermore, Becker’s Hospital Review recently ranked the health system in its 150 Great Places to Work in Health Care list. Northwell is one of only four “great places” in New York State and the only one on Long Island. CareConnect Insurance Company, part of the health system, is also on the 2017 list.

For the third consecutive year, Northwell is one of the Ethisphere Institute’s World’s Most Ethical Companies. The designation recognizes organizations that promote a culture of ethics, compliance and transparency in day-to-day business. Just six other hospitals or health systems nationwide have received the designation. Northwell is the only New York health system that is an honoree.

In another encore, DiversityInc has recognized Northwell as a top hospital/health system for the fifth consecutive year. Northwell moved up to third place on the national list for its commitment to diversity and inclusion.

“Northwell must maintain the highest principles as we provide our patients with the best possible care,” said Michael Dowling, the health system’s president and CEO. “Key to these efforts is providing staff members with an engaged culture, outstanding benefits and an array of professional and personal opportunities. Simply put, happy employees make happy patients.”

See more about the Becker’s list at bit.ly/1greatplace.