

Amazing

Clinicians share new advances in cancer care.

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FOUNDATION NEWS



Northwest
Community
Hospital
Foundation

Fall/Winter 2023

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP

Northwest Community Hospital Foundation was honored to welcome five new members to its Board of Trustees this year.

Jason Asper



Jason is a Partner with Bain & Company in Chicago and has more than 25 years of consulting and corporate leadership experience in Healthcare & Life Sciences. He is passionate about improving healthcare and the positive impact that it can have on the community

and individuals. He earned an MBA from the University Chicago Booth School of Business and a BA, with honors, from Indiana University.

Jason and his family are active in the local community and with charitable organizations. Prior to his role on the NCH Board of Trustees, Jason served on the Board of Directors of The Cradle, a nonprofit, licensed child welfare agency headquartered in Evanston; where he participated on the Finance and Risk Committee for many years.

Jason and his wife, Kelly, and their 2 children reside in Barrington; and he and his family have strong personal ties to NCH. He remarks "I was born at Northwest Community Hospital and look to the NCH network for my personal and family care. I am excited about what NCH offers to our community and further about our plans ahead."

Rich Casey, M.S., FACHE



Rich has been the Vice President of Hospital Operations at Northwest Community Hospital since 2015. He has more than 30 years of experience in hospital and healthcare operations and previously held positions at Vanderbilt University Medical Center,

Rush North Shore Medical Center and NorthShore University HealthSystem.

Rich is an alum of Bradley University and holds a graduate degree in Health Systems Management from Rush University. Rich is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives, serves on the board of CSJ Initiatives, a faith-based senior living organization, and is an appointed member of the Village of Arlington Heights Economic Alliance Commission. He has previously served as Board President and board member of St. Raymond de Peñafort School Advisory Commission and as board member at Hopeful Beginnings.

Healthcare has always been a part of Rich's life; his mother was a nurse and his wife Dana is a Nurse Practitioner. Rich and Dana reside in Mount Prospect and have three children.

"NCH has been my family hospital for over 25 years and has provided care for my neighbors and friends in times of need," says Rich. "I'm excited about the opportunity to serve on the Foundation board and look forward to working with the board and our community to continue the fundraising journey that has supported NCH since the 1950s."

Anu George



Anu, a business and digital transformation executive, has held executive leadership positions with GE, Morningstar and AIG as well as board memberships with several for-profit and non-profit organizations including the Chicago Literacy Alliance and Innovative International

Acquisition Corp.

Anu has an MBA from the University of Mumbai and was included in Crain's Chicago Business 2020 List of Notable Women Executives.

An avid nature lover and bird photographer, Anu is a committed supporter of many animal welfare agencies. She, along with her husband George Albert, have been residents of the Barrington area for 25 years.

While relatively new to NCH as a patient, Anu remarks how everyone she encounters from reception to the nursing teams are "very nice, all so sweet." She looks forward to her time on the board. With excitement she remarks, "I am impressed by what I see at NCH, the commitment to technology and the commitment to care."

James W. Pfeiffer, J.D.



Jim is Division Counsel at Northrop Grumman Corporation in Rolling Meadows and a licensed attorney for 29 years. He received his MBA and Juris Doctorate from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and his undergraduate degree from Illinois Wesleyan.

He believes in helping valued organizations in the community. Jim is a member of the Harper College Foundation Board where he is involved with both the Finance and Scholarship Committees. He also serves on the board of Serenity House, an organization that provides

halfway houses, recovery homes and treatment for individuals fighting substance abuse.

Jim and his wife Suzanne reside in Mount Prospect and their three grown children all attended schools in Arlington Heights. They are excited to see NCH continue to grow and remain at the forefront of medicine. Jim remarks, "In my short time here on the board, I've begun to see all the amazing things NCH does in the community and look forward to seeing many more."

Michele Wells, J.D.



Michele is the System Senior Director and Assistant General Counsel, People, at NorthShore - Edward-Elmhurst. She joined NCH in 2014 and held several positions prior to her current role serving the entire system.

Michele has more than 25 years of law experience with a focus on healthcare, labor and employment law. She previously worked as a labor and employment attorney representing nonprofit organizations, litigating cases in Federal and State Court, the EEOC, IDHR and the Federal and State Labor Relations Boards.

Michele received her law degree from DePaul University and her undergrad from Arizona State University where she was a Leadership Scholar. She is a member of the American Health Lawyers Association and Illinois Association of Health Attorneys. Michele is a former officer and active member of the parent teacher organization of her daughters' school district and is training to become a Court Appointed Special Advocate ("CASA") for Cook County.

Michele and her husband Steve Rausch are members of the President's Circle and reside in Western Springs, along with their two daughters.

"I am incredibly proud to be a member of the NCH family," says Michele. "Its dedication to both its community and to its staff is second to none. I am honored for the opportunity to serve on the NCH Foundation Board."

SERIES SHOWCASES VISIONARY CANCER PROGRAM

In October, the President's Circle Amazing Series was back at "home" in NCH's auditorium for the first time in five years. As NCH continues to attract top clinicians and expand services, a highly accomplished panel of speakers wowed the audience as they described recent advances in Northwest Community's Cancer Program. Here is a small glimpse of the outstanding presenters and their presentations.



Stephen Nigh, MD

Medical Director, Cancer Services



"People, process and technology are three very important parts of any successful business and the people, to me, are the biggest part," said Dr. Nigh as he started out the night as moderator of our esteemed panel of presenters. He recalled how our community identified their top priorities in a cancer program during the NCH Foundation "Listening Tours" a few years back. The community's response was physician expertise, multidisciplinary care, and one point of contact. This Amazing Series was assembled with those priorities in mind; an exceptional cross-section of what NCH is doing to bring cancer care to a whole new level in our community.

Marc Roy, MD
Director, Breast Imaging



Dr. Marc Roy has been practicing for over 30 years at NCH and spoke with pride regarding the art and science of breast imaging. NCH has 10 tomographic (3D) mammography units across 5 locations and employs the latest in ultrasound, MRI

and computer assisted detection. The “art” is the outstanding level of service our teams provide with next day appointments, immediate results, and patient navigators. These navigators guide patients step-by-step for further diagnostics, follow-up, and treatment.

Dr. Roy explained that NCH was part of a national study of 350 hospitals and how it confirmed that our service is at the highest of standards. Of the 350 hospitals studied, NCH ranked third (1.25 days) in the time it took from getting a screening mammogram to diagnostic and 11th in the time measured from diagnostic mammogram to biopsy (3.25 days). This incredible timeliness not only gets patients to treatment quicker but it also helps lessen the worry and anxiety that comes from

waiting for next steps. This is just one example of the excellence of our program and the breast care team putting patients first.

Rhea Trbojevic, RN, MS
Director, Cancer Services



Rhea Trbojevic presented a high-level overview of the Cancer Program which continues to impress with its amazing breadth and depth of patient services. More than 1,500 patients with cancer were diagnosed or treated at NCH in

2022. Of those treated at NCH, nearly 26% had breast cancer with other prevalent cancers being lung, prostate, pancreas, and colon/rectal.

Rhea shared, “We want to be that quality care center, close to home and also innovative. We look to programs that the community needs. The next program we are looking at is for patients where cancer has spread (metastasis) to the brain and spine.” It will be the first program of its kind in the region using the clinical expertise we have assembled here at NCH.

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In addition, NCH's longstanding patient navigator program is a remarkable resource to patients and their families. They provide education, support resources, coordinate care, create survivorship plans, and everything in-between. NCH currently has six patient navigators who specialize in breast, colorectal, lung, pancreatic and prostate cancers.

Jennifer Aversano, MSN, RN, OCN, ONN-CG
Lung Patient Navigator



Lung Patient Navigator Jennifer Aversano spoke about the impressive results of the NCH lung screening program aimed at detecting lung cancers early. Currently only about 7% of eligible patients are being screened in Illinois. At NCH, we

expect to screen nearly 1,400 patients in 2023. This special low-dose CT scan is aimed to help identify cancers for people most at risk: 50-80 years old, 20 packs a year history of smoking, and currently smoking or quit within the last 15 years. The difference between early and late stage detection of lung cancer in the general population versus when detected by this screening is dramatic. At NCH more than 70% of the lung cancers detected in the screening are found in early stage versus less than 30% nationally without the screening.

Zehra Jaffery, MD, FACC
Director, Cardio-Oncology Clinic



"Cardio-Oncology for me is a bit personal," said Dr. Zehra Jaffery as she described that both of her parents were cancer patients themselves. "I know firsthand what it feels like for your loved one to go through these treatments." To help

explain what cardio-oncology is, Dr. Jaffery shared the story of a young man who was healthy overall but undergoing chemotherapy for cancer. He presented with a heart attack that upon further study was linked to a large blood clot that formed as a result of the chemotherapy drug. It was treated with medication but the question remained: whether or not to continue treatment?

Enter Cardio-Oncology and the idea that a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians are needed to navigate this rapidly growing and complex field of cancer therapies, pharmacology and their effects on the heart. NCH launched a cardio-oncology program this year to screen and monitor those patients at risk of heart disease or complications related to chemotherapy or radiation therapy to the chest area. Since launching the program there have been 85+ Cardio-Oncology Clinic visits.

Melanie B. Fukui, MD
VP Quality, Neurosciences
Neuroradiologist



I feel very fortunate to be here at NCH, said Dr. Melanie Fukui. "I am part of an incredible team and we are in an environment that is incredibly supportive and engaged." Dr. Fukui is a neuroradiologist, a subspecialist focused on imaging

of the brain and spine. She is embedded in our neurosciences integrated care model, working alongside neurosurgeons, ENT surgeons, neuro-oncologists, radiation oncologists, advanced practice providers and nurses to help guide care. Using advanced brain imaging, she creates a brain map including billions of white matter fibers using state-of-the-art surgical planning and navigation software to craft the safest trajectory through the brain so that surgeons can carefully preserve a patient's normal brain function while removing a tumor using minimally invasive techniques. As she says tongue-in-cheek, "I get to tell surgeons where to go."

Her examples relating to cancer are just one aspect of the care she and the neuroscience team provide. She is also involved in similarly impressive imaging and brain mapping as it relates to stroke intervention. Dr. Amin Kassam, Chairman of Neurosciences at NCH, and neurologist and neurointensivist Dr. Rehan Sajjad, presented on the future of stroke care at our spring Amazing Series event.

Russ P. Nockels, MD, FAANS

Surgeon-In-Chief, Vice Chair, Neurosciences



Dr. Nockels comes to NCH from Loyola University Medical Center where he was Vice Chair and Professor of Neurosurgery and Orthopedic Surgery. While his expertise includes treatment of a vast array of diseases and deformities

of the spine, he focused this presentation on spinal tumors. Dr. Nockels helped develop a non-metal spine stabilization technology called the PEEK Rod System that has been implanted in millions of patients world-wide. Besides being more comfortable for patients, the polyetheretherketone material provides radiolucency and artifact-free imaging so that patients with, or at risk of, spinal tumors or metastases can still be followed using traditional imaging such as X-rays and MRI.



NCH President Michael Hartke chats with donors Jim and Mary Mayer after the Amazing Series

Artificial Intelligence/machine learning is a hot topic and Dr. Nockels shared one of the good aspects of this technology - using data modeling and forecasting techniques to capture important trends to help predict future events in spinal oncology occurrence. While each patient's circumstances are unique, this can be one more tool to help determine when surgery is most appropriate and effective.

Continuing on the technology front, Dr. Nockels also shared how the HoloLens augmented reality headset is helping surgeons see the patient's imaging in 3D and in real-time in the operating room. This helps expand the surgeons often limited view and brings about better patient outcomes.

"I've been in academic (medical centers) my entire career and have trained probably 80 neurosurgeons, practicing 35 years but for me (the reason I came to NCH) is standing in front of a group of people like yourselves and saying this is worth your support because this is the future. It is where academics and personalized care - where the rubber meets the road. It is such a great feeling to be a part of this and your support makes it happen. Thank you." - Russ Nockels, MD

SCHOLARSHIPS HELP ADVANCE EDUCATION AT NCH



Cecilia Tancun

As part of the community's ongoing support of education and training, Northwest Community Hospital Foundation recently announced that 95 Northwest Community Healthcare team members will be receiving a total of \$160,000 in donor-funded scholarships. These funds provide opportunities for nurses, technicians, therapists and those who support them a chance to enhance their formal education, receive advanced certifications, or attend seminars and conferences.

Generous patients, community members, physicians and NCH employees contribute to these scholarship programs. Providing access to continuous education converts to cutting-edge skills that are put to work in providing the best possible care for patients.

Cecilia Tancun, a nurse in Cardiopulmonary Health and Rehabilitation, is among the scholarship recipients. A dedicated NCH team member for more than 30 years, Cecilia received one of the 19 Kathy Reno and John Jartz Endowed Scholarships awarded in 2023. She will use the funds to attend a conference where she will learn about the latest developments in her field. Kathy

Reno, who established the scholarship along with her husband John Jartz, was Chief Nursing Officer at NCH in the 1990's and early 2000's. "I am very grateful," remarks Cecilia. "Empowering patients and growing strong nurses is something I saw Ms. Reno actively do when she was a nursing leader at NCH. I am happy to be doing my small part to emulate the practices I saw Kathy carry out."

The scholarships are part of nearly \$300,000 in educational and training initiatives made possible through donor support, giving advanced learning opportunities to hundreds of team members each year.

In addition to the Kathy Reno and John Jartz Endowment, other named scholarships include: the Dr. René and Ellen Pecson Nursing Excellence Fund; the William and Mary White Endowed Nursing Education Fund; the ADVANCE Scholarship; John M. Boler Scholars; Phyllis E. Gustafson Nursing Scholarship; the Don and Joyce Fett Scholarship; and the Physician Society Scholarship that was established by NCH physicians and also receives community contributions in celebration of Doctors' Day every spring.

"When our selection committee meets to review applications, the first thing we often hear is that the amazing talent, drive, and energy of our staff is awe-inspiring; it jumps off the page of each application," says Gret Luhrs, Assistant Executive Director at NCH Foundation.

To contribute to NCH Foundation's scholarship programs, visit nch.org/donate. To learn more about annual and endowed scholarship opportunities, contact Gret Luhrs at 847-618-4260.

FIREFIGHTERS' GENEROSITY SUPPORTS CANCER PATIENTS IN NEED

Schaumburg Firefighter-Paramedics made a special visit in September to Northwest Community Healthcare's Cancer Services Department to present a check for \$20,000 to help patients served by the NCH Cancer Patient Assistance Fund. The grant was made possible by the outstanding fundraising efforts from Local 4092's Schaumburg Firefighters' 2023 Pink Tie Ball.

Oncology Social Worker Kim Jensen, who administers the fund, expressed the tremendous gratitude of the patients and explained the critical nature of the emergency assistance to those gathered.

"The goal of the Cancer Patient Assistance fund is to accompany patients in need during treatment and help allay their fears about how they will pay their household expenses," said Jensen. "We want the patient to focus on getting well and this fund allows that by providing assistance with utility bills, rent or mortgage, or even gas and food."

Lieutenant Jenna Werdell, chairperson of the event, as well as Firefighter-Paramedics Mike Whelan, Jeanine Liska, Monique DeAvilla, Eric Vitols, Nick Rivera, Kyle Marcussen (pictured above) and members of the Schaumburg Firefighters Fighting Cancer Committee were on hand to present the grant and reflected on the hard work and dedication of hundreds of people who helped make the Pink Tie Ball another resounding success.



"Since we have decided to work with the NCH Foundation, we have been beyond pleased to know that our funds raised go directly to those local community members that desperately need financial and emotional support during their times of need," said Werdell. "That was always the goal of the Schaumburg Firefighters and that is the joint mission with the team at NCH."

Accepting the check on behalf of NCH were the Director of Cancer Services, Rhea Trbojevic, NCH Foundation Executive Director, David Ungurean, and Medical Director for Cancer Services, Stephen Nigh, M.D.

For more information on the Firefighters' Pink Tie Ball and their next event being planned for April 5, 2024, visit pinktieball4092.com or email pinktieball4092@gmail.com.

OCTOBER IS ALL TIED UP WITH A (PINK!) BOW



For 60 years, NCH has put community at the center of all its efforts. Our mission is to help everyone in our communities be their best. We know that our community feels and appreciates the empathy, integrity, quality and accountability NCH maintains because, when they have the opportunity - our community members give back generously.

This October, five local organizations diligently raised funds and awareness in support of NCH during National Breast Cancer Awareness month. Thank you to everyone who helped make their efforts a success - you are saving lives! Take a look at the creativity they employed to help women in need.

PREP Hockey Hosts PINK at the Rink



PREP, the combined hockey club representing Prospect, Rolling Meadows, and Elk Grove High Schools held its annual Pink at the Rink fundraiser and festivities again this year. Coach Nick Panos says this event has been a "PREP hockey tradition for over a decade. As a club we feel it's important for our players to understand what it means to give back, and this disease has almost always touched someone everyone knows."

PREP Hockey has donated thousands of dollars to the NCH Gift-a-Mammogram program. "We love that NCH is part of the community that we play in. We feel like this is a perfect partnership and the players can see first-hand how (their support) can impact a community," says Coach Panos. "We have

had many survivors in our club. I have also lost a sister to breast cancer so what our club is able to donate to the mammogram program at Northwest Community Hospital means the world to me."

Matt Oates, Arlington Heights Firefighter of Local 3105, Honors His Mother

Matt Oates chose NCH's Gift-A-Mammogram to be the recipient of his fundraising efforts after getting introduced to the program through his NCH Paramedic Clinical Coordinator, Jen Dyer.

"My Mom was diagnosed with breast cancer 8 years ago. We were very fortunate as she was diagnosed early. Due to mammograms and access to early diagnostic procedures, she was able to receive treatment right away. We knew we wanted to contribute funds locally. When we found the



Gift-a-Mammogram program, it was the perfect fit for us to start our own efforts to help other women."

Matt sold t-shirts at several events, such as the Village of Arlington Heights Open House, and throughout the hospital as well.

Prospect Pink Power is Powerful



Students Cathryn Wascher and Riley Carroll are partners in the DECA business club at Prospect High School. When they both discovered they had aunts diagnosed with breast cancer, they decided this cause would become their project. The activities kicked off with a 2-mile walk through Mt. Prospect.

They also asked NCH to share critical information on Breast Cancer and the Gift-A-Mammogram program with the student body. The students

learned "why October is such an important month for breast cancer" says Carroll. Wascher adds, "A benefit of working with NCH was providing an educational component to our project - which was awesome! Students were able to learn the staggering statistics of people impacted by Breast Cancer."

St. Raymond de Peñafort Volleys for the Cure

St. Raymond School in Mt. Prospect held its Volley for the Cure event on Friday, October 20 - which has been named Mammography Day in Illinois. How appropriate!

Mike Aldworth, a parent volunteer has led this fundraiser for the last two years. "Partnering with NCH, a local non-profit hospital and healthcare system, right here in our community, has really been inspiring for St. Raymond families. We are delighted to support the Gift-A-Mammogram program for a second year."



Brighton Collectibles, Woodfield Mall, Knows the Power of Pink

Brighton Collectibles - Woodfield, chose to support the oncology Wig Boutique at NCH with Brighton's annual Power of Pink Campaign. The Wig Boutique, staffed by volunteers and funded exclusively with donations, provides individual consultations for patients experiencing hair loss due to cancer.

"Every year Brighton allows each store to pick a charity to raise money for during breast cancer month. Our customers are mostly women and we see many come through our doors who have suffered, are suffering and, we miss those who have lost their battle to this terrible disease. Our goal is to raise funds to make a difference for women in our community," says store manager, Krista Migdal.



Northwest
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NEW LOOK COMING SOON!

Beginning in 2024, Northwest Community Hospital Foundation will have a new look. One thing that will not change is that NCH Foundation remains an independent 501c3 charitable organization; your donations will continue go to the program or service you choose to designate your gift to at NCH, and all undesignated gifts will stay right here to support local healthcare in our community - just as they have for decades.

We look forward to sharing our new look soon! Thank you for all that you do to support and provide world-class healthcare for our families, friends and neighbors.

To make a special year-end gift, please visit NCH.org/donate.

COMING SOON



Northwest Community Hospital is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, dedicated to meeting the needs of the community. If you do not want to receive future fundraising requests supporting NCH Foundation, please email us at foundation@nch.org or call 847-618-4260.