## OLLO VOLUME 30 | SPRING 2018

# Prepared for an Unexpected Turn Page 4











**UPMC** Susquehanna







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SUSQUEHANNA HEALTH FOUNDATION

# KEEPING YOU

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING AT UPMC SUSQUEHANNA



### Susquehanna Health Foundation

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**Skilled, experienced staff and the latest technologies** play vital roles in our patients' positive outcomes. Neither would be possible without the strong philanthropic support you and others in our community consistently provide. As a donor, you are the reason UPMC Susquehanna can deliver exceptional care today that will continue into many future tomorrows. We could not do that without support from friends like you. Because you are key stakeholders in UPMC Susquehanna, we want to answer all of your questions and keep you informed. In this column, we are providing answers to some of the most frequently asked questions we receive. As always, we are happy to meet with you personally to discuss any of your specific interests or questions.

#### Who is running UPMC Susquehanna? Does direction still come from our community?

Steven P. Johnson, president, continues to lead UPMC Susquehanna with the same executive management team that was in place prior to our affiliation with UPMC. Community influence continues to shape and direct our organization through a volunteer board of directors that comprises 16 local business and community members and eight members from within UPMC. The UPMC Susquehanna board is responsible for quality of care, medical staff, and growth initiatives, while the executive team ensures that our organization remains fiscally responsible.

## When will I or my company be able to sign up for the UPMC Health Plan?

UPMC Health Plan has many products available in the market today including Medicare, Individual, and Commercial plans that may meet your individual or company needs. With the introduction of UPMC Health Plan to this area, we are seeing a more competitive environment, which is providing affordable options for local businesses.

UPMC Health Plan is learning the needs of our local business community and is working to craft specialized plans to meet those needs. Over the last year, many health care providers in addition to UPMC Susquehanna have chosen to participate in the UPMC Health Plan, including Evangelical Community Hospital, Family Practice Centers, and Guthrie Health System.

UPMC Health Plan is the #1 rated health plan in Pennsylvania for customer service. In the past year, the employees of UPMC Susquehanna have experienced firsthand the reason for that designation after receiving exceptional support and assistance as new UPMC Health Plan members.

## What are the Foundation's emerging priorities?

We live in a transformative age in health care, with calls to improve health and to provide high-quality care at a reasonable price throughout our 12-county service area. Now that UPMC Susquehanna has identified its top strategic priorities, the Foundation is planning a comprehensive campaign to support this vision. The priorities include a new building to support the addition of quaternary services to achieve Level II Trauma designation in Williamsport. The building will be constructed on the east side of UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport campus and will contain inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, the Joint Center, and a stateof-the-art laboratory to process inpatient and outpatient lab tests.

Additional campaign projects will include renovations at UPMC Lock Haven and UPMC Sunbury and the creation of an endowment for recruitment, retention, and equipment for clinical staff at UPMC Susquehanna. Later this year, we will also reveal details about a planned expansion to meet increased demand at the Cancer Center at UPMC Susquehanna Divine Providence.

## What changes are in store for Susquehanna Health Foundation?

Our name and fundraising role in support of UPMC Susquehanna's mission remains the same. Our experienced staff members are here to serve you and ensure that every contribution you make stays local and is used according to your wishes. When the affiliation took place, UPMC committed to making a \$500 million investment in UPMC Susquehanna to demonstrate its intent to expand services for the people of northcentral Pennsylvania. When is that happening?

The investments in UPMC Susquehanna will occur over the first seven years of the affiliation, and they are based on our continued ability to execute our strategic vision for this region. As a stakeholder committed to accelerating our plans for growth and expansion to serve the region, UPMC looks to us to continue to demonstrate organizational health and strength, just as we did while we were seeking a partner. Sound fiscal decisions, progressive planning, quality initiatives, and excellent care and service — as well as continued financial support from our community - are all essential factors in UPMC's assessment of our success and its determination to make future investments.

The expansion of our services through our new UPMC Outpatient Center in McElhattan in Clinton County, the purchase of Lock Haven and Sunbury hospitals, and the upgrading of our equipment to support our goals to be designated a trauma facility and to build our neurosurgery program are just a few examples of UPMC investments to date. OUNDATION FOCUS | SPRING 2018

SUSQUEHANNA HEALTH FOUNDATION



## **PREPARED FOR AN UNEXPECTED TURN:**

Community Advocates Discover How Far the Region's Medical Care Has Advanced





hrough their professions and passions, **Joy** and **Jerry Walls** of Loyalsock Township have contributed in many ways to better Lycoming County and the surrounding region. They provide support to enhance the arts, improve education, encourage community development, and expand recreation. When they both faced unexpected health problems last year, they also saw just how far the region's medical care has advanced.

The Walls fell in love with Lycoming County when they moved here in 1970. Before retiring, Joy, 76, was a teacher in the Loyalsock School District, and Jerry, 75, was the director of Lycoming County Planning & Community Development. Giving back to the community, including making annual contributions to Susquehanna Health Foundation, has always been important to them.

"It's very satisfying to be able to make a difference," says Joy, who coached Odyssey of the Mind teams as part of an educational program that offers creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten through college. "We have seen so many great changes over the years." Joy also serves on the executive board of Lycoming Arts and chairs the organization's Cultural Trails committee.

"We love this community, and we just want to make it better," says Jerry, who chairs the board of the 22-county Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, an organization helping to develop an extensive network of trail-and-bike paths along the Susquehanna River while also organizing river-town revitalizations.

When they're not volunteering or working out at the East Lycoming YMCA, Jerry and Joy are often outdoors, either kayaking or enjoying the trails they're helping to develop.

"Biking and hiking make us feel alive," Jerry says. "They help us keep our weight under control and just make us feel better."

Last April, Jerry and Joy were completing a 21-mile bicycle ride in Montoursville when Jerry was hit by a vehicle. The impact caused his body to skid some 20 feet along the road. He had several x-rays taken at the Emergency Department at UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport.

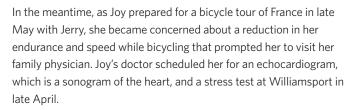
Jerry went home that night, but while he tried to keep up with his training over the next few weeks, he limped because of hip pain. He made an appointment with **Dr. Patrick Carey**, the UPMC Susquehanna orthopaedic surgeon who had repaired his shoulder several years earlier.





We are grateful for the excellent care we received and where we are with our recoveries. We are back to doing all the things from before our diagnoses."

– Joy Walls



"I never thought they would find a problem with my heart," Joy says. "I knew I was slowing down, but I just didn't think anything of it."

Following Joy's echocardiogram, **Dr. Mohammed Shafique**, a cardiologist with UPMC Susquehanna's Heart & Vascular Institute, met with Joy to explain that her heart's mitral and tricuspid valves were leaking. These critical valves send oxygen-rich blood from the heart out into the body. Joy's valves were allowing some of her blood to flow back into her heart, causing strain on her heart muscle and stealing her energy. Dr. Shafique scheduled Joy for a heart catheterization with cardiologist **Dr. Donald Nardone** to evaluate and potentially treat the leaking valves.

Only a few days later on May 1, Jerry and Joy both received bad news.

After a follow-up visit, Dr. Carey found that Jerry had a hip fracture, which was located in a more obscure area of the hip than near the usual ball and socket where doctors would expect to see it. While Jerry's injury didn't require surgical treatment, Dr. Carey told him to cut back on his strenuous workouts and to avoid bicycling until later in the summer. Joy's news came when Dr. Nardone determined she needed a surgical valve repair. He recommended **Dr. Michael Lazar**, a cardiothoracic surgeon who could perform the open-heart procedure at Williamsport.

Under doctors' orders to abandon their vacation plans, Jerry and Joy prepared for a different journey. They met with Dr. Lazar to review details of Joy's surgery and were pleased that he was personable and upbeat about her procedure.

"He took his time with us and clearly wanted to make sure he answered our questions satisfactorily," Jerry says.

When they told their daughter Denise about Joy's need for surgery, Denise urged Joy to go to a larger medical center in Philadelphia, closer to where Denise lives.

"I told her I wanted to stay here, where my extended support system is," Joy says. "I felt very confident about the hospital, Dr. Lazar, and the cardiologists, many of whom I knew from teaching their children. When Denise did her own research, she was impressed with the positive reviews and information she found about Dr. Lazar. She even called and spoke with his staff in Williamsport."

On May 18, Dr. Lazar and his team from the Heart & Vascular Institute performed a five-hour procedure to repair Joy's heart valves. During her five-day inpatient hospitalization, her first since having children, both Joy and Jerry and their daughters were impressed by the high quality of care at Williamsport.



Since Joy was being treated in Williamsport, Jerry could stop in to see her at different times of the day while also keeping up with his volunteer commitments. He even visited while Dr. Lazar was checking on Joy.

"It was great to be able to talk to the doctor and hear his analysis of her progress," Jerry says. "Everyone there was really attentive, positive, and friendly. We were both very pleased with her care and the degree of specialization that was available. Even though I knew about all the changes happening at UPMC Susquehanna and their work to bring in specialists, it brought it close to home when Joy needed those services."

For Joy, recovery was easier with the support of nearby friends and family. She even discovered some former Odyssey of the Mind students among her nursing care team.

After discharge and several weeks of restricted activity, Joy was energized by her valve repair and participated in the cardiac rehabilitation program at Williamsport. The team developed a personalized plan for her that incorporated aspects of her normal routine at the Y.

"In terms of recovery, we were quite blessed," Joy says. "I did a lot of walking at first, and at cardiac rehab, they constantly encouraged me to do more. They said because I was in good shape before my surgery, I had a relatively quick recovery." To continue his recovery, Jerry worked with a physical therapist at a UPMC Susquehanna outpatient facility two times a week.

"It was an outstanding experience that helped me work through muscle tightness and soreness resulting from my injury," Jerry says. "Everyone there was very supportive."

By late July, just 10 weeks after Joy's lifesaving surgery, Jerry and Joy were back to bicycling together.

"We are grateful for the excellent care we received and where we are with our recoveries," Joy says. "We're back to doing all the things from before our diagnoses."

For both Jerry and Joy, their experiences reaffirmed their efforts to enhance their community, including helping to raise the level of health care services available.

"I can say for certain it's important to attract specialists here so medical treatment doesn't have to include the disruption and expense of travel to another city," Jerry says. "On more than one occasion, I've heard from UPMC Susquehanna leadership that the quality of the community — including a whole range of assets, from the arts to the trails to the variety of specialty restaurants and good school districts — is critically important in helping physicians and their families feel comfortable relocating here. We stay involved to continue making the region more livable, and to attract visitors and professionals. And that, in turn, helps our local businesses and the overall economy."

## THE REPORT

A note to our donors: If your name has been omitted or misprinted, please notify us and accept our sincere apology.

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Melissa Davis, vice president and chief operating officer of UPMC Susquehanna's employed medical groups, talks with medical oncologist Ajay Kumar, MD, who recently joined the medical staff.

## **RECRUITING THE BEST**

Physicians and Medical Staff to Northcentral Pennsylvania



Ianned growth at UPMC Susquehanna keeps members of the health system's physician and medical staff recruitment team on the go. They recruit physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurse midwives, behavioral health professionals, and PhD neurophysiologists to ensure high-quality, accessible care is available in our 12-county region.

Competition to attract quality physicians and other medical staff is fierce across the United States. The UPMC name helps with recognition when recruiting candidates.

We know this is a huge decision," says **Nicole Nardi**, director of medical staff recruitment, who, with physician and medical staff recruiters **Mary P. Grieco**, BSN, FASPR, and **Tracy M. Manning**, FASPR, comprise the threemember recruitment team. "Our physicians spend 10 to 15 years of their lives training to prepare for this job. Deciding where they want to practice is a big deal, and our role is to help them see UPMC Susquehanna and our community as a place where they can contribute and thrive, and their spouse and families can, too."

UPMC Susquehanna's track record of measured growth, renovations, investment in technology, and support from the community are appealing to candidates and help set the organization apart. Recruiters remain current with the organization's strategic planning and are careful not to make unrealistic promises.

"We need to be very forward-thinking and stay involved to know the direction of the entire organization," says **Melissa Davis**, vice president and chief operating officer of the employed medical groups serving UPMC Susquehanna. "Good-quality physicians will always ask how they will be contributing to the organization's growth and improvement of care, and we need to be ready with those answers."

Another differentiating factor is UPMC Susquehanna's opportunities for training, from physician mentoring to working with a chief medical information officer to learn how to use technology and maximize efficiency.

"Younger physicians are also very interested in maintaining a good work-life balance, and we address that with our staffing plans and generous vacation package," Nicole says.

To determine what physicians and medical staff the health system needs to complement existing staff, complete a service, or help create a new service line, physician recruiters imbed themselves in their assigned



departments and gather input from the lead physician and service line leader. They determine the prerequisites a candidate must have, including the level of clinical expertise needed for the position whether the candidate can be a new grad or a medical professional who may need some mentorship, or whether the position calls for a physician with many years of experience.

"By the time a position is posted, the recruiter has a very detailed understanding of the work environment, the population the department serves, and the role the physician or advanced practice professional will play," Melissa says. "During an initial interview, our recruitment team is equipped to speak on behalf of the department they represent and are armed with information they've received about the service from the clinical and leadership team."

A physician doesn't become a preferred candidate unless a recruiter believes he or she is a strong fit. Candidates invited to UPMC Susquehanna have an opportunity to meet all of the players who will be involved in their everyday lives — potential clinical co-workers, the leadership team, and the support staff. They also tour any associated clinics or hospital departments where they likely will work.

"Everyone here is very generous with their time to ensure it is a good experience, and candidates can have a sense of how life will be if they choose to come here," Melissa says. "We are fortunate to have a medical staff that is committed to helping with the recruitment process."

Candidates also receive guided tours of the community to experience some of the hidden gems — restaurants, theaters, shopping, museums, and trails — that they might not find on their own. They can meet with school principals or investigate any other aspect of the community that is important to them and their families.

"We want to make it the best overall experience for them, because it's not just our health system we're promoting, it's life in northcentral Pa.," Nicole says.

Unlike headhunters living far from the employers they assist, UPMC Susquehanna recruiters work and live in the communities they represent. They have a vested interest in bringing the very best medical professionals to the region. "We recruit well for selfish reasons," Nicole says, "If we get sick or our children get sick, these medical professionals are the people who will be taking care of them. For us, it goes beyond finding a provider to take care of a patient population. We are potentially bringing in a family that will contribute to and benefit the whole community with involvement in school, sports, the arts, and beyond."

Relationship-building is another key to recruiting and retaining the best physicians. That effort begins with students in programs like the Williamsport Family Medicine Residency, with whom recruiters meet to share tips and assist with job searches.

"Right now, with medical students, we are planting seeds that may not come to fruition for 7 to 10 years," Nicole says. "We take a similar approach with all of our active recruits. We may not win in the first round, but it's common to receive a call a couple of years later when that recruit is looking to move and remembers how well we treated him or her."



Iorthcentral Pennsylvania's lush surroundings and family-friendly atmosphere are helping to draw physicians and advance practice professionals and their families to the region. In addition to UPMC Susquehanna's world-class health care, other benefits include rolling hills, small towns, quaint main streets, educational institutions, and unique opportunities for dining and shopping as well as the arts, culture, sports, fitness, and outdoor recreation.

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#### **Recruitment and Retention Successes**

Since July 2017, UPMC Susquehanna's physician and medical staff recruitment team has hired 59 physicians and advanced practice professionals (APP). In addition, 20 new providers are under contract and are set to join UPMC Susquehanna between May 2018 and September 2019.

Nationally, the rate of turnover among staff physicians ranges from 12-20 percent. UPMC Susquehanna is at the lower end of that range at 12 percent. To help retain physicians and advanced practice professionals, UPMC Susquehanna has established a Physician/ APP Wellness Committee. Led by **Dr. Bill McCauley**, the committee strives to help providers maintain a clear mind, energized focus, and healthy work-life balance through sponsored events and activities, such as speaking engagements and workshops.

Nationwide, competition for physicians is greater than ever, with many specialties such as dermatology, urology, and neurology having more open positions than graduating residents and fellows. Even traditionally easy-to-fill positions, such as those in primary care, have become more challenging for recruiters to fill, as more physicians opt to remain in the major metropolitan areas in which many of them train.



## CORNERSTONE SOCIETY The Cornerstone Society recognizes

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## **Teaching Children to Save. Share. Spend.**

We live in a region where giving, sharing, and caring are practically second nature. In addition to making generous financial gifts, many of the Foundation's donors give their time as well. They've told us that volunteering is a value their families instilled in them from an early age.

If you'd like to share this tradition with your family, here are some ideas for helping your children or grandchildren learn to give back and become a part of the next generation of helpers:

#### Hold the Door:

When your child is old enough, encourage her to help hold doors open for others. The practice is a great metaphor for life.

#### Lend a Hand:

Have your child help you make and deliver a meal, rake leaves, or pick up sticks for a neighbor. Older children can cut grass or shovel snow.

**Save. Share. Spend:** Include lessons on charitable giving for your child's early financial education. Label three mason jars with \$ave, \$pend, and \$hare. Have your child split each allowance or monetary gift evenly among the three jars.

#### **Donate Diligently:**

Every few months, help your child identify clothing that no longer fits and gather toys and books that he isn't using any more. Together, take the items to a donation center.

#### Celebrate with Charity:

In advance of your child's next birthday party, have her choose a local organization to help. Ask guests to bring a donation for that charity instead of a gift. Later, deliver the gifts to the charity together.

As funds accumulate, take your child to deposit the \$ave jar money in the bank. Let him use the money in the \$pend jar any way he likes. For the \$hare jar, help your child choose an organization or cause he wants to help.





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## CADUCEUS SOCIETY

The Caduceus Society recognizes physicians who

made a commitment of \$2,500 or greater to Susquehanna Health Foundation. Donors are listed

through **December 31, 2017.** 

#### \$500,000+

Dr. and Mrs. Francis M. Powers Jr.

#### \$100,000-\$499,999

Anesthesia Associates of Williamsport Dr. and Mrs. Rodwan and Zokaa Rajjoub Dr. Hani and Eiman Tuffaha

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*In Memory of Joseph R. Calder, MD* Susquehanna Urologic Associates Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence Tama

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Anonymous (6) Dr. and Mrs. Carl R. Albright Dr. and Mrs. David N. Ambrose Charles and Karla Anderson In Memory of Albert Confer Dr. Elizabeth and Eric Anderson Karen and Michael Belenko Drs. David and Susan Borys Dr. Karen M. Brady Dr. and Mrs. John V. Calce Dr. William Cicio Cornerstone Family Health, P.C. Dr. T.E. Cullen and Bronwen Cullen Joseph Daoko, MD Dr. and Mrs. Gary M. Dincher Dr. Sabrina Dowd Dr. and Mrs. Donald C. Dworek Drs. Dilip Elangbam and Subadani Angom Dr. and Mrs. Joseph G. English Durriya S. Esaa, MD Dr. and Mrs. Todd W. Fausnaught James R. Fick, MD Mr. David and Dr. Lisa Galloway Dr. and Mrs. Steven W. Geise Dr. Kenneth I. Glaser Dr. and Mrs. Russell Gombosi Dr. Judith Gouldin and Mr. Anthony Parente

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## CADUCEUS SOCIETY

spottight

Dr. Michael and Cheryl Marceau at Alabaster Coffee Roaster & Tea Company in downtown Williamsport.

#### CADUCEUS SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT // DR. MICHAEL AND CHERYL MARCEAU

ou could say divine providence brought **Dr. Michael** and **Cheryl Marceau** together. UPMC Susquehanna Divine Providence is where they met a little more than four years ago. It's a place where their story of hope begins, where their lives have been saved, and where they continue to serve others. Each year since their marriage in 2015, their Christmas gift to each other includes a generous contribution to support the Cancer Center at Divine Providence. Their story and its connection to the hospital goes back a long way.

Cheryl was born at Divine Providence, when the maternity unit was on the fifth floor. Forty-six years later, in 2008, Divine Providence is where she received lifesaving radiation treatment to destroy her thyroid gland when Graves disease, a thyroid condition, caused her blood pressure to skyrocket, pushing her to the brink of a massive stroke.

Dr. Marceau received lifesaving treatments at Divine Providence, too. Twice. He was diagnosed with lymphoma for the first time in December 1997, less than a year after coming to Williamsport to work as a behavioral health physician. From September 1998 to February 1999, he received chemotherapy treatments, which put him in remission for nearly 10 years, in the old Cancer Center located in the Divine Providence basement.

His cancer returned in June 2008, just a few years, after his first wife passed away in 2003. His co-workers and the staff at the Cancer Center made sure he wouldn't face his second cancer battle alone. Because his office was also in Divine Providence, his co-workers could visit with him while he received his treatments once a week for four weeks at six-month intervals over the next 18 months. The extra support kept his spirits up.

"A positive attitude helps your immune system, and that's a boost to get you through the side effects of chemotherapy. Support from others also helps you look forward to the day when you will be finished with treatments," says Dr. Marceau, who appreciated how renovations transformed the Cancer Center into a healing environment.

"While the medicine made me pretty sleepy, the windows with a view of the healing garden and comfortable chairs made it a much nicer treatment center than before," Dr. Marceau says. "The care was outstanding, too, from the nurses and staff and **Dr. [Warren] Robinson**. They were very kind and professional, and when I had a reaction to my first treatment, they were right on top of things."

In 2013, about four years after Dr. Marceau beat cancer for the second time, Cheryl started a new job at Divine Providence after

<sup>66</sup>We received world-class treatment right here at home. Divine Providence saved my life once and saved Mike's twice. We are so thankful and grateful for that hospital."

- Cheryl Marceau



transferring from the Emergency Department at UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport, where she was a unit clerk-patient liaison.

As Cheryl greeted Dr. Marceau for the first time, a lightbulb went on for him.

"She introduced herself, and I just recognized her voice," he says.

In fact, they had spoken many times before when he was an on-call specialist for the Behavioral Health Department. Cheryl's voice was the one on the telephone waking him up at all hours of the night when a patient in the Emergency Department needed his help.

After many casual conversations over nine months, Cheryl asked Dr. Marceau if he'd like to meet for coffee. Their three-hour conversation on that first date led to a six-month courtship and marriage in 2015. In addition to helping him find love again, Cheryl helped Dr. Marceau find his way back to his faith. Recognizing their good fortune as a couple, they have set family goals to serve the Lord and others with their gifts and talents.

"That is what we have focused our lives on. We are at a point in our lives where we don't need anything. We would really just like to bless others," Dr. Marceau says.

One way they share that blessing is through their financial support of the Cancer Center.

"We received world-class treatment right here at home," Cheryl says. "Divine Providence saved my life once and saved Mike's twice. We are so thankful and grateful for that hospital."

A ministry of service is another way they bless others. In addition to serving their church together as Eucharistic ministers, Cheryl volunteers twice a week in the Cancer Center doing what she can to provide comfort and support for patients and their families. She offers to pray with them, brings them refreshments and meals, cleans up, and also helps refill carts for the nurses. Her favorite thing is bringing a warm blanket to a patient or sitting with a patient who is alone, just as many staff members did for her husband.

"It is such a blessing to be there and give to others. You receive so much more in return," Cheryl says. "Mike's work is his life's ministry. Mine is to give back to the patients at the Cancer Center, because I am grateful for the care we received there, and we want others to know that if there is hope for us, there is hope for them, too."

## KEYSTONE SOCIETY The Keystone Society lists those who make a

Ann M. Hocker

Harold and Karen Hoose

Kenneth and Ann Hoover

commitment to contribute \$250 or more annually to Susquehanna Health Foundation. Listed below are all Keystone Society members through **December 31, 2017.** 

#### \$1,000-\$9,999

2016-17 WAHS Women's Soccer Team David and Rita Alexyn American Legion Bitner-Bechdel Post #623 American Legion Riders Post #36 Helen L. Antrim Bank of America Charitable Foundation. Inc. Dean and Joy Barto Dr. and Mrs. John Becker Ronald F. Beckman Jr. Gerald and Patricia Biorkman John and Karen Blaschak Drs. David and Susan Borys Bernard and Eva Bredbenner Fund at the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania Cathy T. Brendle Amy R. Brent Joseph and Cheryl Bubacz Estate of Betty J. Burris Carol M. Cacchione Nicholas and Carol Catino Julie A. Cook Todd and Melissa Coolidge Lois O. Cox Patrick Daly Brandon Davis Melissa and Robert Davis Howard Dean Annette M. DiEugenio Carl and Lorraine DiParlo Barbara Dolan Kelly Douglass, CRNP John and Shirley Eck Emmanuel Lutheran Church Eric Stashak Photography Chaplain Dave and Carol Fishel Florence Crittenton Service, Inc. Greg and Marilyn Frailey Ron and Judy Frick Matt and Nichole Frye Kathy L. Gee Gesang Verein Harmonia Crystal Gilbert Juliann W. Gombosi The Family of Richard and Carol Greene Paul S. Hager Estate Darla Hardy Harry Hefty

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\$500-\$999 Continued

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#### \$250-\$499 Continued

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## **2017 Foundation Impact Report**

What started as a single hospital 145 years ago has grown into an advanced network of world-class care, with six locations across our 12-county region. This would not be possible without the philanthropic support of generous donors like you, our dedicated employees, and the commitment of our community. Together, we are instrumental in advancing our mission to extend God's healing love by providing outstanding patient care while shaping tomorrow's health care through clinical and technological innovation and education. Thank you for the impact you are making on our patients' lives every day.

## **Foundation Contributions**









individuals, organizations, and foundations supported us









UPMC Susquehanna Employees and Medical Staff contributions

## **Contributions by Fund**



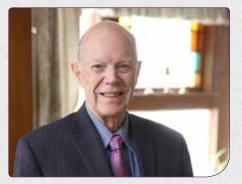
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UPMCSusquehanna.org/Giving

## 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award Honorees

On May 18, UPMC Susquehanna will honor Dr. F. Ardell Thomas, George and Shirley Durrwachter, and Tim and Ruthanne Crotty with Lifetime Achievement Awards for their tremendous impact on health care, our community, and our health system.

#### **PHYSICIAN AWARD**



#### F. Ardell Thomas, MD

In 1974, Dr. F. Ardell Thomas joined the medical staff of UPMC Susquehanna Soldiers + Sailors hospital. He was the very first internal medicine physician in Tioga County and served as the cornerstone of the medical staff until his retirement in 2007. During his time at Soldiers + Sailors, Dr. Thomas guided the hospital through the rapidly evolving world of health care from his multiple leadership roles, including president of the medical staff, chief of internal medicine, and chief of the Intensive Care Unit. He is described by his longtime friend and colleague, Ron Butler, past president of Laurel Health System, as being "faithful and trustworthy" and "an excellent physician, a lifelong learner, and a pillar of the Wellsboro community."

Ever dedicated to improving his community, Dr. Thomas currently serves as a member of the Wellsboro Rotary Club and has taught Sunday school to adults for more than 30 years. He is also a prior board chair of Eastern University. A man of faith with a passion for health care, Dr. Thomas performs mission work in the Dominican Republic, where he has been leading a team of medical professionals and construction workers to provide aid since 1985.

To recognize his dedication to his patients and commitment to providing care to our community, UPMC Susquehanna will honor Dr. Thomas with the Physician Award.

#### PHILANTHROPIST AWARD



#### **George and Shirley Durrwachter**

Sweethearts since their days at Jersey Shore High School, George and Shirley Durrwachter have made a profound impact on the lives of others in the greater Williamsport community. George, a retired orthodontist, and Shirley, a former nurse and volunteer at UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport, were first inspired to give back after a personal tragedy - the loss of their young son. Using money received through an insurance settlement, the Durrwachters made their first philanthropic donation to the Pine Creek Recreation Association toward a baseball field in their son's memory and established an athletic award fund for a student scholar.

Believers in the importance of education, they have donated more than \$1 million to Lock Haven University, where Dr. Durrwachter is chair of the council of trustees and has served as past president of the LHU Foundation. As Signature Donors to Susquehanna Health Foundation, the Durrwachters recently purchased a Victoria Simulator for The Birthplace at UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport, providing nurses with hands-on birth training using the most realistic and interactive birthing simulator in the industry. George and Shirley also have played an active role by donating to the Foundation's capital campaigns to support projects like The Tower addition at UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport.

To recognize their generous support, UPMC Susquehanna will honor George and Shirley Durrwachter with the Philanthropist Award.

#### PRESIDENT'S AWARD



#### **Tim and Ruthanne Crotty**

Longtime local business owners Tim and Ruthanne Crotty know the importance of bridging the gap between business and philanthropy. As owners of Susquehanna Supply Company, a bridge builder and roadwork company, the Crottys give back to the community where they work and live.

As Signature Donors, the Crottys chaired the Signature Gift Committee in 2012, raising more than \$8.5 million of the total \$15.5 million raised. They attribute the success of the campaign to how they brought together local couples to unite for the cause, providing a unique bond of friendship and support to each other along the way. In addition to their fundraising efforts, the couple played a direct role in supporting the health system. Tim served on the Susquehanna Health Foundation board of directors from 1990 - 2015 and was a member of the Susquehanna Health Investment committee from 2003 -2016. Ruthanne also volunteered at UPMC Susquehanna Divine Providence.

Actively involved in the community, Tim and Ruthanne participate in many local organizations. Ruthanne has served as part of The Williamsport Home for more than 20 years, including her tenure as president of the board. She is a longtime member of the Women's Club and a parishioner at Lady of Lourdes. She also supports Preservation Williamsport. Tim previously served as board chair of the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania and served for many years on the board of Associated Pennsylvania Constructors.

To recognize their efforts, UPMC Susquehanna will honor Tim and Ruthanne Crotty with the President's Award. 25

## **National Health Care Consultant Chooses UPMC Susquehanna:** Travels 2,000 Miles to Ensure Best Outcome

om Olivo, 60, could have gone anywhere for hip-replacement surgery, and he chose UPMC Susquehanna. This elite athlete is also a health care consultant who studies performance data from hundreds of health systems across the country. When he searched for the medical center with the best odds of returning him to peak performance, UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport came out on top.

"I am in the business of measuring the outcomes that health care systems achieve, and a unique part of what we measure is the causal links between leadership effectiveness, a healthy culture, and consistent patient outcomes," says Tom, who is a founding partner of Health Performance Solutions and president of Success Profiles, Inc. "I chose to have an elective joint-replacement surgery 2,000 miles away from home because UPMC Susquehanna is in the top 10 percent for those measures."

A competitor and former coach who has worked with Olympic athletes, Tom places a premium on his mobility. With the vigor of a 30-year-old, he exercises about 90 minutes a day in a variety of activities, including trail running, cycling, climbing, and his lifelong passion — fly fishing. Tom's left hip problem developed suddenly last spring following a right leg Achilles tendon tear. An alignment issue combined with serious wear and tear from thousands of demanding miles logged on his legs required prompt treatment if he was going to continue at the pace he enjoyed.

"I'm more than recreationally active, and if you'd told me a year ago that I was headed for hip replacement I wouldn't have believed it," Tom says. "But my injury set things in motion, and once I recognized that I needed the procedure to maintain functionality, I was going to make sure I stacked the odds in my favor."

For Tom, stacking the odds began with selecting the right surgeon and location for his procedure. Based on his research, Tom wanted a surgeon who would use the anterior approach, a relatively new, tissue-sparing technique for hip replacement that allows the surgeon to work between the hip muscles and leave them relatively undisturbed. This method, which is offered at UPMC Susquehanna using equipment purchased through the Foundation, can be used for patients who meet certain criteria and typically has a faster recovery time with fewer restrictions and less pain and scarring.

**Dr. Ronald DiSimone**, FACS, of UPMC Susquehanna Orthopaedics, was Tom's student in a year-long physician leadership academy. Tom respected Dr. DiSimone's leadership skills and work style, and he also knew Dr. DiSimone performed hundreds of hip replacements using the anterior approach with excellent results. Additional data pointed Tom to UPMC Susquehanna's joint-replacement program, including results of a rigorous review of care standards and requirements that Tom Olivo lands a 16-pound brown trout in upstate New York eight weeks after his surgery.



recently earned the program the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Total Hip and Total Knee Joint Replacement Certification — a symbol of quality reflecting UPMC Susquehanna's commitment to provide safe and effective patient care.

Determining the best place to have his hip replacement satisfied what Tom considers to be the first third of the ingredients needed for success. He placed responsibility for the other twothirds — preparation and rehabilitation — largely on himself.

<sup>ff</sup> My priority was to get the best care possible, and this is where the data pointed me. If the people who live in this region had the information I had, they wouldn't think of going anywhere else.<sup>33</sup>

– Tom Olivo



Although he was in significant pain, Tom dedicated the two months prior to his procedure to building and maintaining his strength and mobility. Because he doesn't live in northcentral Pennsylvania, he did not participate in the Joint Center's presurgical seminar, but he strongly recommends that patients in the area who are having hip-replacement surgery do whatever they can to prepare for their procedures, including attending the class.

The final third began the day Dr. DiSimone replaced Tom's hip joint, and then when Tom took his first steps using his new hip. Although he believed he was prepared for the level of demand he could place on his new joint, Tom appreciated and was moved by the focus his caregivers provided as he began his rehabilitation.

"I noticed it right away during my first physical therapy session," Tom says. "My caregivers were acutely aware of all of the indicators and carefully monitored my balance, my gait, and my facial expressions, so they could immediately detect any problems and prevent me from doing anything that would have a negative impact on my outcomes."

At first, the level of attention made him uncomfortable, until he recognized it as a staple of the Joint Center's exceptional care.

"The focus that every care provider gave — asking questions and truly listening and watching me for cues — made an impression. Typically, doctors and nurses have so much on their plate, but that didn't feel like the case at all. The eye contact, observing my body language — that really stood out," Tom says.

With his procedure taking place in August, Tom's goal was to recover in time to go fly fishing six weeks later at Yellowstone National Park, which he was able to do thanks to his laser focus on recovery.

"Now, after five months of post-surgery rehab, I can't even feel a difference between my left and right hip," he says.

#### WRMC Earns Gold Seal of Approval®

UPMC Susquehanna's Williamsport Regional Medical Center recently became the region's only hospital to earn The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Total Hip and Total Knee Joint Replacement Certification. The Gold Seal of Approval® is a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to providing safe and effective patient care.

To earn the Gold Seal, Williamsport underwent a rigorous on-site review as Joint Commission experts evaluated the hospital's compliance with national, disease-specific care standards as well as with hip-and-knee replacement-specific requirements. The review also included an assessment of clinical practice guidelines and performance measures.

Williamsport's joint-replacement program offers patients specialized care from therapists, nurses, and physicians who dedicate their talents and expertise to providing the best hip- and knee-replacement care available. The team of physicians, nurses, and therapists uses the latest scientific approaches to carefully plan every stage of care.

"I have to stop and think that there is a foreign body attached to the largest bone in my body, because there's absolutely no difference."

Hoping to put off replacement of his other hip for a couple of years, Tom is fairly certain he will return to UPMC Susquehanna for his care.

"There are plenty of people I spoke to who couldn't believe I was travelling 2,000 miles to Pennsylvania for this surgery," Tom says. "My priority was to get the best care possible, and this is where the data pointed me. If the people who live in this region had the information I had, they wouldn't think of going anywhere else."

## **Donate to Make a Wish Come True**

Susquehanna Health Foundation asked our patient-care managers to share their wish lists—items that operational funding cannot cover this year. The Foundation is asking the community to provide the necessary funds, or a portion of the funds, to purchase the items below. If you would like to make a gift to purchase one or more Wish List items, please enclose your check in the magazine's attached envelope and note which item(s) you wish to fund. You also can make a gift at UPMCSusquehanna.org/Donate, and note in the comments section which item(s) you would like to fund.



#### Jared Boxes for Children <u>Five UPMC Susquehanna Emergency Departments</u>

The goal of the Jared Box Project is to lift the spirits of children in the hospital. The boxes symbolize the importance of play and are filled with well wishes, hope, and love.

A Jared Box is a plastic storage box filled with small gifts, toys, games, and fun activities. Each box contains items selected for a specific age and gender. Jared Boxes provide a special diversion for young patients in emergency departments, patient rooms, surgical centers, and clinics as the children receive medical treatments.



#### Quilt Supplies The Gatehouse

The Gatehouse, our inpatient hospice unit, cares for more than 300 first-time patients every year. Each patient receives a handmade blanket or quilt as a part of his or her stay. A group of quilters gathers monthly to donate their time to make the quilts. Your gift of \$61 would provide the necessary materials for the group to put together one quilt.

For more information on the quilting group, or to donate quilts or blankets, please contact Ashley Stensland at stenslandam@upmc.edu or 570-326-8952.



#### Grief Book Bags for Children Heartworks

Family-based Heartworks provides free grief support for children and teens. Grief support for a child after the loss of a loved one, whether that is a parent, grandparent, or sibling, is vital for the emotional health and development of that child. To expand Heartworks beyond its bi-weekly meetings, grief support book bags are being provided to local libraries and schools as funding becomes available. These reusable book bags are for children to check out of libraries or for guidance counselors to distribute when needed. The book bags include grief support books for various ages, as well as a packet children can keep that includes activities, pamphlets, and information on Heartworks. See pages 30 and 31 for more information.



#### InformaTV® Bingo Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

The staff at the Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Center works hard to provide the residents with a variety of engaging activities on a daily basis. One favorite of the residents is bingo. InformaTV Bingo easily works on the large television already in the community room. It displays and announces bingo numbers, either manually or automatically, to accommodate those with visual or hearing deficits.

## **TREE OF LIFE CLUB** at UPMC Susquehanna. <sup>(2)</sup> denotes Hour Club members. The Hour Club is an elite group that recognizes employees who make a tremendous commitment by giving back one hour of pay

every pay. Listed below are all new TLC donors from July 1 - December 31, 2017.



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## Four Contributions at Work Grief Support for Children & Teens



ithout support, a child experiencing grief can endure even more hardship. Studies show unattended grief is linked with depression, violence, truancy, school failure, substance abuse, and suicidal tendencies. These are staggering potential outcomes when you consider that one-in-20 children has a parent who dies before the child graduates from high school. That number doesn't include the loss of a sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or friend. And those statistics may be even higher in Lycoming County due to the opioid crisis and a higherthan-average suicide rate.

"Not every family can or will attend our traditional Heartworks program," says **Linda Bryant**, Children's Bereavement-Heartworks program coordinator. "Only about 20 percent of families in need step through the doors of Heartworks."

Linda is referring to UPMC Susquehanna's family-based grief support program for children, teens, and their parents or caregivers. Participants share a pizza dinner two evenings each month, followed by age-appropriate activities designed to help them find healthy ways to express their grief.

## Heartworks Wish List

#### **Activity Kits:**

- (5) Kit for families who have experienced the death of someone close to them (\$110 each)
- (5) Kit for families who have had a pet die
   (\$80 each)
- (5) Kit that explores feelings (\$120 each)

#### **Grief-Themed Book Bags:**

- (7) High school bags
  (\$110 each)
- (6) Middle school bags (\$90 each)
- (14) Elementary school bags (\$140 each)

To make grief support more accessible, Heartworks is piloting a community-wide initiative that puts important resources in students' hands so they can share the resources with their families. Partnering with schools and libraries for distribution, Heartworks staff and volunteers created book bags and activity kits designed to help children, teens, and families begin working through their grief.

"Children are often unwilling to talk about their feelings of grief because they don't want to make a parent cry. The subject can end up becoming taboo, making it difficult for a family to address," Linda says. "These tools give families the words to begin difficult conversations, as well as ideas for positive outlets for their grief and ways to build memories."

So far, 12 grief-themed book bags are being used at schools in Lycoming County. There are different versions for elementary, middle, and high school students. Each bag is filled with items that help normalize the experience of grief, along with pamphlets on child-teen grief, activity books, and journals that students can keep.

"Professionally, they have been a lifeline this year with so many parent deaths," says **Jennifer Patterson**, a guidance counselor from the Jersey Shore School District, about the book bags. "It's nice to have additional resources that target multiple ages and a tool that helps us maintain that school-to-home connection, which is so important. The workbooks are great, and the DVDs for the younger children are excellent. I appreciate and use all of them frequently."

Three activity kits dealing with loss and emotions are available at the James V. Brown Library. With donations, Heartworks hopes to place activity kits in the five other Lycoming County Library branches. An additional goal is to provide grief-themed book bags to every school in Lycoming County.

You can help children and teens find support for their grief. To become a Heartworks program volunteer, please contact Linda Bryant at 570-320-7691. To help purchase a grief-themed book bag or activity kit, make a note of which item(s) you would like to fund, and enclose your check in the magazine's attached envelope.

You also can make a gift online at UPMCSusquehanna.org/Donate and include a note in the comments section to direct your funds to Heartworks.



## LEGACY SOCIETY The Legacy Society recognizes those who made a planned or

estate gift to Susquehanna Health Foundation. The "past" designation distinguishes our members who have passed away, but whose estate or planned gifts to the Foundation reflect the lasting legacy they left to help others.

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## **Plan Now For Your 2018 Tax Break**

It's not too early to plan for this year's tax break. If you and your spouse are at least age  $70\frac{1}{2}$ , you each can transfer up to \$100,000 from your IRA directly to a charitable organization.

#### **Top 3 Benefits:**



Satisfies your required minimum distribution

2 Reduces your taxable income

#### 3

Allows you to help the charity of your choice with a gift to continue its mission

## How to complete an IRA charitable rollover:

#### Step 1:

Contact your IRA custodian to learn the company's procedures

#### Step 2 :

Contact Susquehanna Health Foundation for complete instructions to ensure you receive the proper deduction



#### **Consult with a Tax Professional**

Although the process is simple, you should consult with a tax professional to ensure you receive the maximum benefit from your gift

To learn more about this option or how you can make a gift that will help improve health care in your community, call Tom O'Connell, Major and Planned Gifts Officer, at 570-320-7612.



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not listed in other giving levels. These gifts were made from July 1 - December 31, 2017.

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Friends of Soldiers + Sailors Memorial Hospital Annual Campaign The campaign raised \$40,000, which includes a matching donation of \$7,000 from Citizens & Northern Bank. UPMC Susquehanna Soldiers + Sailors added another \$10,000, bringing the total to \$50,000 to purchase two baby warmers for the hospital's obstetrics unit.

#### SUSQUEHANNA HEALTH FOUNDATION

# new doctors



#### Jasneet Bhullar, MD Surgery | 570-321-3160

Susquehanna Health Medical Group welcomes Jasneet Bhullar, MD, to the General Surgery team. Dr. Bhullar completed his residency in general surgery at Providence Hospital & Medical Centers in Southfield, Michigan, and completed a fellowship in colorectal surgery at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Dr. Bhullar completed his medical degree at Government Medical College, Amritsar, India, and dual fellowships in urology at National University Hospital, Singapore. He is board-certified by the American Board of Surgery.

#### John Hunter, DPM Foot and Ankle | 570-321-2020

Foot and Ankle Specialty Care is pleased to welcome John Hunter, DPM, with an office in Lock Haven. Dr. Hunter received his bachelor's degree in biology from The Pennsylvania State University and earned his doctorate in podiatric medicine from Temple University in Philadelphia. Dr. Hunter completed his podiatric surgical residency at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Binghamton, New York. He is board-certified by the American Board of Podiatric Medicine.



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By bringing the best physicians and advanced medical treatments to our region, UPMC Susquehanna delivers on its promise to provide high-quality, patient-centered care.

## Joseph Kaplan, MD Medical Oncology | 570-326-8470

The Cancer Center officially welcomes Joseph Kaplan, MD, to the medical oncology team and to his new role as medical director of the Cancer Center at UPMC Susquehanna Soldiers + Sailors. He brings more than 25 years of experience to his new position. For the past two years, Dr. Kaplan has worked in a temporary capacity at the Cancer Center at UPMC Susquehanna Divine Providence. His new office is located at UPMC Susquehanna Soldiers + Sailors in Wellsboro. Dr. Kaplan is passionate about partnering with our patients, their families, and the community for their oncologic and hematologic needs.



## Ajay Kumar, MD Medical Oncology | 570-326-8470

The Cancer Center welcomes Ajay Kumar, MD, to the medical oncology team. Dr. Kumar received his bachelor's and medical degrees from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. He completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock. Dr. Kumar also earned a fellowship in hematology and oncology while at the University of Arkansas. Dr. Kumar is board-certified in hematology, medical oncology, and internal medicine, providing him with the expertise necessary to care for patients from initial diagnosis through treatment and beyond.



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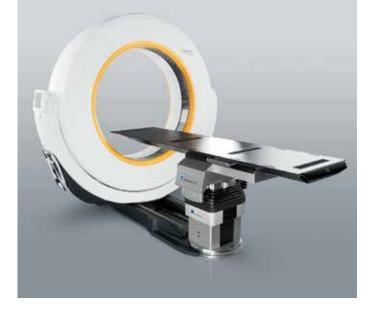
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ew operating equipment at UPMC Susquehanna is helping surgeons treat patients with complex brain or spine problems. The Brainlab system, Airo mobile CT scanner, and Zeiss operative microscope are the most up-to-date tools available. They can provide surgeons with improved visualization and greater localization of brain and spinal cord lesions before and during procedures to assist with surgical planning and performance.

**UPMC Susquehanna is one of the first health systems in the nation to purchase these state-of-the-art tools.** When used together, they can enhance preoperative planning, expand surgical strategies and capabilities, and increase safety.

"This is the top of the line as far as technology and represents a substantial investment in the neurosurgery program by UPMC Susquehanna," says **Dr. James Fick**, a neurosurgeon who has used earlier versions of the system. "The ability to walk patients and family members through a planned procedure using



Mobius

these visual tools greatly enhances their understanding and confidence in the treatments we can provide."

Using the system, surgeons can project detailed, real-time images of the patient's brain on a computer screen or large screens in the surgical suite for the entire surgical team to view. The equipment enables precise localization and removal of tumors and lesions, some of which otherwise could be masked during the procedure. These advantages can minimize the length of incisions, limit damage to healthy tissue, and shorten patient recovery times. In addition, real-time, guided imagery enables surgeons to review their surgical approach, examine alternative approaches, and even inspect results before completing a procedure. This last step previously had to wait for a postsurgical CT scan.

<sup>66</sup> Patients are the ultimate benefacto UPMC Susquehanna neur

UPMCSusquehanna.org/Giving

Dr. James Fick introduced the Brainlab system to the community at the Williamsport– Lycoming Chamber of Commerce PM Exchange, hosted by UPMC Susquehanna on February 8.

## SURGEONS USING THE SURGICAL TOOLS

"Neurosurgery has been progressively improving over time, especially in the last four decades, with the addition of the CT scan and MPI." save **Dr. Podwan Paijoub** of LIPMC

especially in the last four decades, with the addition of the CT scan and MRI," says **Dr. Rodwan Rajjoub** of UPMC Susquehanna Neurosurgery. "Now we have a technological aid to take the best care of our patients, with visualization for pre-surgical planning, as well as guided imagery during the procedure. This new system is the most advanced and would not be possible without the generous support of our Foundation and donors."

The Zeiss operative microscope uses advances in optics to provide cutting-edge illumination and magnification of abnormal tissues so surgical targets remain in focus. In the past, surgeons may have had to adjust a microscope's orientation thousands of times.

## rs of this investment in technology.<sup>>></sup>

osurgeon Dr. Hani Tuffaha

"This is an exciting new tool that can be used for selected brain and spinal cord cases," says **Dr. Hani Tuffaha**, a neurosurgeon at UPMC Susquehanna. "Patients are the ultimate benefactors of this investment in technology."

**Dr. Ronald DiSimone**, FACS, an orthopaedic surgeon who performs spinal fusion and minimally invasive eXtreme Lateral Interbody Fusion (XLIF) spine surgery, is using the Airo, a mobile CT scanner that functions with the Brainlab's navigation system, in select spinal fusion procedures to view exact placement of pedicle screws used to correct spinal deformities.

"When used for appropriate patients, this real-time view allows surgeons to make smaller incisions during the procedure, potentially reducing the patient's length of stay in the hospital and overall recovery time," says Dr. DiSimone. "The system is an investment in technology that aids our ability to treat trauma more effectively and safely, as well as treat selected spinal patients using the most advanced techniques available."





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## Skin Grafts Mark the Beginning

of More Advanced Care at



UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport

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**ancy Springman**, 75, was just a mile from her home in Montoursville when she was involved in a motor vehicle crash last August. In addition to a fractured sternum and bruises from head to toe, Nancy received a deep wound on the inside of her left calf that likely resulted from her airbag deploying.

"I didn't really feel any pain from it," says Nancy, recalling that a paramedic cautioned her not to look at the gaping, one-to-two-inch wound. Her biggest concern came later when **Dr. Alex Guerrero**, medical director of UPMC Susquehanna's Trauma Program, told her she would need a skin graft to ensure the wound would heal properly.

"I was worried that I would have to go to another hospital, and that it would take a long time to heal," Nancy says. "I'm most comforted when I have my family around, so I was very happy to learn that I could have it all done at UPMC Susquehanna Williamsport."

Nancy became the first patient to receive a skin graft at Williamsport. It's a treatment that became available with the addition of a team of six acute-care surgeons, including Dr. Guerrero, last summer. Experienced in performing complicated surgeries, the surgeons provide 24/7 coverage at Williamsport as part of UPMC Susquehanna's journey to become a designated trauma center.

"It's a big deal," Dr. Guerrero says. "Patients with traumatic wounds like Nancy's can require many weeks of care at a hospital, and that can be a real hardship for both the patient and his or her family members if that care can only be provided three or four hours from home."

Managing traumatic wounds through skin grafting is a natural first step toward treating patients who have complex cases as UPMC Susquehanna's journey to trauma designation continues. Serial surgeries, similar to those used for skin grafts, are increasingly being used to treat severely ill patients.

"Instead of performing one six-to-eighthour procedure, which is really hard on the patient, acute care surgeons are moving toward operating in segments, providing a break and the opportunity for the patient to receive nourishment between procedures," Dr. Guerrero says. "It's a change in mentality and a totally different approach to managing treatment for very sick patients that's helping more and more patients survive."

Preparing a wound for a skin graft often requires multiple surgeries for debridement, the removal of dead tissue, which would attack the new skin. Nancy had three surgeries over six days before doctors harvested skin from her thigh and stretched it to the size necessary to cover her wound. Following the surgery to apply Nancy's skin graft, surgeons used a suction machine to keep the graft in place. When Dr. Guerrero removed the machine five days later, he confirmed that the graft was successful. "If I had been farther away, there's no way he could have made it to see me every day," Nancy says. "I am happy to be a pioneer, and so grateful that things went well in the end. It took a lot of time and a lot of people praying for me. Dr. Guerrero is a fine doctor. I am very thankful that he was able to save my leg, and that I didn't have to go away to have it done."

Since Nancy's treatment, several more patients have received successful skin grafts at Williamsport. Dr. Guerrero says these procedures are just the beginning of more advanced care the community can expect to receive close to home with the acute-care team in place, and the journey to trauma designation under way. Even patients who might need to be transferred can still receive an immediate and local head start with their care.

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It's a change in mentality and a totally different approach to managing treatment for very sick patients that's helping more and more patients survive.<sup>29</sup>

- Dr. Alex Guerrero

"We had a 100 percent take, which is excellent. That's the percentage of the graft that turns in to new skin," Dr. Guerrero says. "Because of many factors, including Nancy's good health, she did really well. The graft looks great."

During her two weeks at Williamsport for treatment of her wound and other injuries, Nancy was thankful to have her daughter and granddaughter take turns visiting her each night. Her other daughter, who lives out of town, came to visit, and Nancy's husband, Ronald, who is retired but works half days as secretary/treasurer of Fairfield Township, was also able to visit her every night. "With the team of acute-care surgeons available 24/7 at Williamsport, there is literally nothing we can't stabilize to at least get a patient to first base before transferring, if necessary. It's an unbelievable asset for the community," Dr. Guerrero says.

"Our efforts as an Acute Care-Trauma Service are helping ensure optimal care and recovery for adults and children," adds **Starlett Bixby**, RN, BSN, CEN, trauma manager, Williamsport Emergency Department. "The support of UPMC Susquehanna leadership to bring this level of lifesaving care close to home will not only save lives but empower survivors."



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