



# The Scribe

A publication of the Medical Society of Metropolitan Portland

PHYSICIAN WELLNESS

## A healing garden



'A Nature Place' at Legacy Emanuel offers relaxing respite for providers.

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OFF HOURS

## Stress-buster

Physician-researcher Kristina Young, MD, PhD, embraces boxing for its technical aspects, stress relief and camaraderie.



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December 2018

### FOCUS: THE YEAR IN MEDICINE

## Trio of women CEOs discuss priorities for Oregon market, challenges facing health care



Kathryn Correia, Legacy Health



Lisa Vance, Providence Health & Services



Ruth Williams-Brinkley, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals of the Northwest

By Cliff Collins  
For The Scribe

This year, for the first time, Oregon's three largest private health care systems are headed by a female chief executive.

### NOTE TO OUR READERS

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Scribe* newspaper. Please make note of some of the interactive features of this publication. Articles that jump between pages have hyperlinks on the continuation line for your convenience. We have also linked advertisements and other web references to their respective websites.

You can double-click the page to zoom in or out, and grab and drag when zoomed in, to navigate around.

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We welcome your feedback, and appreciate your readership.

Thank you.

Though women have served in administrative and executive posts for a long time in all three systems, 2018 marked the first time a woman has held the top leadership position in each.

The most recent chief executive to begin her new role was **Lisa Vance**, with **Providence Health & Services** in Oregon, who started in August. With eight hospitals in the state, Providence is Oregon's largest health system and largest private employer, with more than 21,000 employees.

**Kathryn Correia** took over as president and CEO of **Legacy Health** in late June, and **Ruth Williams-Brinkley** became president of **Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals of the Northwest** in early 2018. All three bring years of experience and were selected in national searches.

*The Scribe* asked each executive to outline her priorities in the Oregon market, with emphasis on physician relations, as well as the challenges facing health care.

### Ruth Williams-Brinkley

Williams-Brinkley is Kaiser Northwest's third female president, preceded by Cynthia Finter from 2001 to 2006, and earlier, Barbara West. Before joining Kaiser, Williams-Brinkley was CEO of KentuckyOne Health, a division of Catholic Health Initiatives, one of the nation's largest non-profit health systems. She first entered the health care field as a nurse, and served in top executive positions at Carondelet Health Network in Tucson, Ariz., and Memorial Health Care System in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Williams-Brinkley said she was attracted to Kaiser's fully integrated model of health care delivery, as well as its emphasis on wellness and evidence-based medicine. In addition, the way the organization interacts with its physicians appealed to her, especially working with Imelda Dacones, MD, Northwest Permanente's president and chief executive.

### PHYSICIAN PROFILE

## Choo advocates for gun safety, racial and gender equity

By Jon Bell  
For The Scribe

The response was expected.

It was the tone of it that surprised physicians such as Oregon Health & Science University's **Esther Choo, MD, MPH**, and prompted them to fire back.

At issue was a tweet from the National Rifle Association on Nov. 8 that found the gun rights organization criticizing a recent paper from the American College of Physicians. That paper called for stricter gun controls to reduce injuries and deaths from firearms.

"Someone should tell self-important anti-gun doctors to stay in their lane," the NRA tweeted.

That didn't sit well with Choo and other physicians around the country, who responded with a hashtag campaign, **#ThisIsOurLane**, that took the NRA to task.

"We are not self-important: We are important to the care of others. We are not anti-gun: We are anti-bullet holes in our patients," Choo tweeted back at the NRA.

Her message racked up nearly 13,000 likes and almost 4,200 retweets. And hers was just one of countless others that took on the NRA, some using graphic images of bloody emergency rooms where patients had died from gunshot wounds.

“

I think a lot of us feel very personal about this and **that it's our responsibility to address** this issue.”

–Esther Choo, MD, on physicians advocating for improved gun safety

"I think it made sense that the NRA responded to some extent, but it was their choice of words that really struck a nerve with physicians," said Choo, an associate professor of emergency medicine and a physician at OHSU. "I think it just showed me how ready physicians were to comment on the issue. People are really frustrated with the lack of progress."

The issue took a macabre turn a little more than a week later when Dr. Tamara O'Neal, an emergency room physician at Mercy Hospital & Medical Center in Chicago, was gunned down by her ex-fiance, who shot two others in the hospital before turning the gun on himself. The incident underscored how much physicians are actually in their lane when it comes to gun violence.

"We are also victims," Choo said. "We are so in this lane, even though we don't always want to be. I think a lot of

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The deadline for nominations is Jan. 18

MSMP is seeking nominations for the Rob Delf Honorary Award, the annual award the Medical Society's Board of Trustees created in recognition of Rob Delf's long service to the organization.

The award is given to a person or persons who exemplify the ideals of the Medical Society within the community where members practice. This can be demonstrated by work projects or activities that improve community health or the practice of medicine in arenas including, but not limited to, the practice of medicine; educating new members of the medical community; educating the public about health, medicine and health public policy; improving public health and emergency preparedness; advocacy in health public policy; or other community activities related to health care and policy.

The award may be given to members of the medical community, the health education community or the general public. Please visit [www.MSMP.org](http://www.MSMP.org) or [www.MMFO.org](http://www.MMFO.org) to submit your nomination. The deadline for nominations is Jan. 18.



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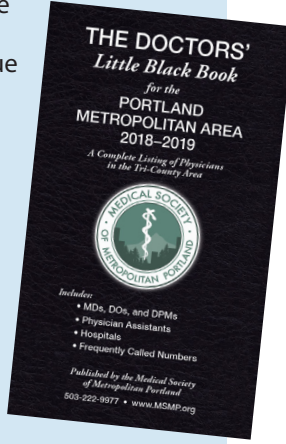
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# Efforts yield results in lowering opioid use

A pharmacist-led intervention that targeted patients undergoing joint replacement surgery led to a significant reduction in post-surgical opioid use among hip replacement patients, according to a **Kaiser Permanente** study published in November in the *American Journal of Managed Care*. Knee replacement patients did not experience a comparable reduction, according to a news release.

The study, conducted among 561 patients receiving either hip or knee replacement surgery at Kaiser Permanente Northwest, randomized half the patients to usual care and half to an intervention consisting of three parts. First, patients received a mailed brochure before surgery describing what they should expect regarding opioid use and pain control after surgery. Second, they received a follow-up brochure after surgery with additional information. Finally, patients who filled a prescription for opioids 28 to 90 days after surgery received a follow-up phone call from a pharmacist who used motivational enhancement techniques to reinforce the information and engage the patients in discussion.

Overall, the effects were similar between intervention and usual care patients. But for patients who underwent hip replacement therapy, the intervention

had clinically and statistically significant effects on opioid use. For this group of patients, median opioid use was about half for the intervention group compared to the usual care group. Patients who received knee replacement therapy did not experience the same reduction.

"There's no question that opioids play an important role in managing pain for orthopedic surgery patients," said **David Smith, PhD, RPh**, a distinguished investigator at the **Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research** and lead study author. "However, previous research has shown that once patients use opioid therapy for 90 days, they're more likely to keep using it for years. Our study showed that by identifying the patients at highest risk and reaching out to them with educational materials and specialized, targeted telephone support, we can successfully encourage them to reduce their immediate post-surgical opioid use, potentially mitigating the risk of longer-term use."

It is not yet clear, Kaiser noted, why the intervention was ineffective in patients who had knee replacement surgery, but researchers believe this may be related to the greater magnitude and duration of pain associated with knee replacement surgery, among other possible reasons. Opioid use in the United States has



Maisie Shindo, MD, talks with patient David Knierim during a follow-up exam after his thyroid surgery. Shindo has led an initiative to reduce opioid use among patients undergoing thyroid and parathyroid surgery.

Photo courtesy of OHSU/Kristyna Wentz-Graff

grown dramatically in recent years, from about 100 million prescriptions filled in 1992 to nearly 250 million in 2015. Orthopedic surgery is second only to primary care in generating the highest rates of opioid prescriptions among adults, with many patients using opioids both before and after surgery, Kaiser noted.

## A change in culture

The alarming level of opioid use nationally prompted **Oregon Health & Science University's Maisie Shindo, MD**, to lead an initiative in fall 2016 to sharply reduce the use of powerful opioids among patients undergoing thyroid and parathyroid surgery.

The initiative, OHSU reported last month, has paid dividends. With the support of the hospital's nursing staff, more than half of all patients who have had their thyroid or parathyroid glands removed go home with no opioids at all, the university said. Moreover, patients seem to prefer it.

"The more you prescribe, the more patients think they need it," said Shindo, a professor of otolaryngology/head and neck surgery in the OHSU School of Medicine. "Now we tell patients that some form of discomfort and pain is normal and there are ways to manage it without opioids."

David Knierim, a 62-year-old engineer from Wilsonville, recently underwent two procedures to remove his thyroid gland due to cancer. He emerged from each procedure with little pain and relieved

that he needed only over-the-counter acetaminophen, OHSU reported. A key advantage for Knierim was that he was able to work from home starting the day after surgery because he was able to think clearly.

Shindo had prepared him ahead of time so there were no surprises.

"I was expecting it to be tolerable," he said. "Finding out that I wasn't going to be on opioids was definitely a side benefit."

Shindo said reversing the trend of opioids took a change in culture, noting the reduction in prescribing in OHSU's Thyroid and Parathyroid Program required the buy-in of the recovery room nurses.

Shindo recently co-authored a retrospective review, published in *JAMA Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*, that documented a sharp reduction in opioid prescribing among OHSU thyroid and parathyroid patients. The study showed a sharp decrease in opioid prescribing through the end of 2017. Since then, the downward trend has continued.

In her endocrine cases, Shindo rarely prescribes any opioids in patients who have not previously taken them. She also has encouraged other clinicians to minimize opioids for patients undergoing endocrine surgery, OHSU said. ■

## PHYSICIAN PROFILE, from page 1

we feel very personal about this and that it's our responsibility to address this issue."

Choo's response to the NRA further endeared her to an already blossoming Twitter following, which had first exploded about a year earlier. In the wake of a white supremacist march and counter-protest in Charlottesville, Va., that left one woman dead, Choo tweeted about how she experiences racism in the emergency room when patients refuse care from her because of her race. (Choo's parents came to the United States from Korea in the 1960s.)

In short order, Choo's Twitter following skyrocketed from about 5,000 to more

than 25,000. She's now up to nearly 52,000.

"I'm still really puzzled about what is happening for me in social media," Choo said. "I'm used to working for years on a long study and having 18 people read it. It's nice to have a little bit more of an audience and share a little education. It feels like a nice opportunity, and I'm grateful for it. I don't understand it, but I'll take it."

## Potential to make an impact early on

Social media can be somewhat of a crutch, but Choo also had some communication chops under her belt long before she took to Twitter. Born and raised near Cleveland, Ohio, Choo thought journalism was going to be her route, so she earned

her bachelor's in English from Yale College. She also interned at the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* for a summer. That experience helped change Choo's mind and shift her toward a career in medicine.

"I hadn't really thought of medicine as something I could do. It's not in my family or anything," she said. "Over the course of covering several tragedies, I got more in tune with the first responders and the impact they made. I was impressed with the people who were triggered to respond to tragedy. I really was interested in that early on and never lost it."

Choo went on to earn a medical degree from Yale University School of Medicine and, later, a master's degree in public health from OHSU. Her residency was at Boston Medical Center, and she completed a fellowship at OHSU in 2009. There weren't any jobs here Choo was interested in at the time, so she headed back east to work at Brown University before returning to OHSU about three years ago.

While she was training, Choo said she loved the "breadth and acuity" of emergency medicine and never hesitated when choosing the field.

"Either you are drawn to high acuity or not," she said. "To me this is the kind of pace and the kinds of diseases and patients I want to see. These are patients where you have the potential to make an impact early on in their presentation."

For Choo, the downside of emergency medicine is not getting to develop long-term relationships with patients the way providers in other fields do.

"You don't own your patients and you aren't super specialized," she said. "You are a generalist. You stabilize them and hand them off. So, close relationships are something that we miss out on, and that can be a little sad for someone who likes medicine and likes people."

## Seeking to make a major contribution

At present, Choo splits her time between research and practicing in a clinical setting, with the former taking about 75 percent of her time. Much of her work focuses on the treatment of substance use disorders, women's health, violence, digital health and health disparities. One big study underway right now is a three-year look at cannabis use and motor vehicle collisions. It's only about a year in, so Choo said it's too soon to speculate on any findings.

On top of her professional work, Choo also spends some of her volunteer efforts on raising awareness and sharing ways to reduce gender inequity and sexual harassment in health care. She said harassment in health care isn't unique, but the field is one that's more prone to it.

"Health care also has so many potential sources of harassment," Choo said. "There are peers, supervisors, staff, and then you interact with patients and patients' families. That makes health care pretty special in terms of having all these pieces in place."

Choo said she thinks one of the best ways to address harassment and gender inequity in health care is to tie the issues much more closely to patient care and quality improvement.

"If you don't have a safe and respectful

## PHYSICIAN PROFILE

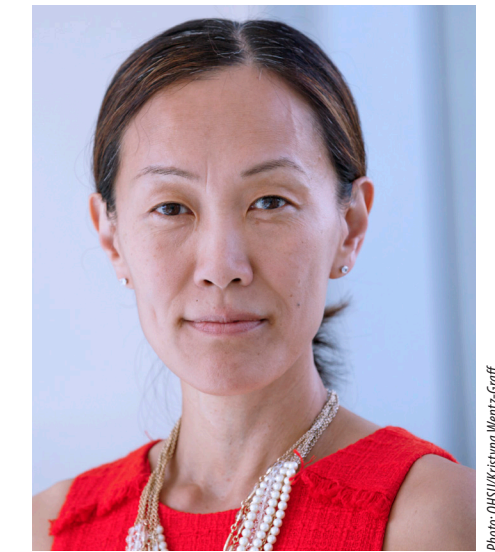


Photo: OHSU/Kristyna Wentz-Graff

"Over the course of covering several tragedies, **I got more in tune with the first responders and the impact they made. I was impressed with the people who were triggered to respond to tragedy.** I really was interested in that early on and never lost it."

— Esther Choo, MD, MPH

environment for your employees, how can you have it for your patients?" she said.

When she's not in the trenches of medicine or advocating for causes important to her, Choo said she has a "pretty regular life" with her husband and four kids, who range in age from 3 to 11.

"We are a runaround family," she said. "It's mostly figuring out how we can keep the kids active or just run out their energy."

For Choo, there's likely to be no running out of her own energy anytime soon, either. She's starting a big project that will look at the state of Oregon's opioid policies, and she's serving as chair of the state's cannabis commission. She'll also continue practicing and tackling the issues that have become so important to her.

"I feel like there's just so much going on," Choo said. "I want to make a major contribution for women in our field. I think for the near future, it's going to be all cylinders firing." ■

To read an opinion piece on firearm safety authored by Esther Choo and Martin Schreiber, MD, professor of surgery in the division of trauma, critical care and acute care surgery at OHSU, please visit <https://news.ohsu.edu/2018/11/21/its-time-to-set-the-table-for-firearm-safety/>.

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## Providers, health systems recognized for excellence

### OHSU physician receives prestigious award, medical student first to receive scholarship



Martin Schreiber, MD

**Martin Schreiber, MD**, professor of surgery with the OHSU School of Medicine, received the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award in Trauma Resuscitation Science from the American Heart Association. Schreiber, head of the Division of Trauma, Critical Care and Acute Care Surgery, has served in the U.S. Army in Iraq and Afghanistan and led numerous studies about trauma care. He leads the Department of Surgery's efforts to support the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's stated goal for zero preventable deaths after injury through civilian and military collaboration.

The American Heart Association established the award in 2003 to honor scientists for their outstanding contributions in cardiac and trauma science. Schreiber is the second OHSU recipient of the prestigious award. Donald Trunkey, MD, former chair and professor emeritus of surgery in the School of Medicine, received it in 2010.

**Nick West**, a fourth-year medical student at OHSU, received a Pisacano scholarship of up to \$28,000 based on his accomplishments in his undergraduate career at Oregon State University and his leadership at OHSU. West is the first OHSU student to be selected as a Pisacano Scholar since the start of the program in 1993.

West developed the Family Medicine Interest Group Mentorship Program, which connects first-year medical students interested in family medicine with OHSU family medicine residents. He is a founding member of the Dean's Student Rural Advisory Group, a program to help guide OHSU policy and programs for rural medical education. Through the program, he and two fellow classmates created the Rural Medicine Discovery Program, allowing students to visit a rural community, have a clinical experience with a rural doctor and dinner with hospital administrators, and time to mentor high school students.

West was selected for a position in the Rural Scholars Program and is the only member of his class selected to participate in the Oregon FIRST program. In this program, students spend their fourth year of medical school in Klamath Falls training with the Cascades East Family Medicine residents.

*Editors' note: Providers and health systems throughout the Portland metro area continue to excel in groundbreaking research, life-saving techniques, and service to their patients and their communities. The Scribe highlights some of these awards and accomplishments from 2018.*

### Providence Heart Institute completes clinical trial for new heart failure treatment

Providence Heart Institute participated in a clinical trial to investigate the MitraClip's use to improve quality of life for heart failure patients. Results of the trial, announced in September, suggest a tiny clip inserted onto one of the heart's valves, in combination with medication, can prevent hospitalization for heart failure and improve survival rates for select heart failure patients.

See **EXCELLENCE**, page 11

### CEOs, from page 1

Dacones "is a strong leader with a clear vision, and I was excited by the prospect of partnering with her," said Williams-Brinkley. "The partnership between the health plan and physicians is very important to achieving optimal health outcomes for our members."

Among Kaiser's priorities is focusing on addressing the social factors that influence people's health outside its clinics.

"We know social determinants make up the majority, possibly as much as 80 percent, of a person's health," she said. "We won't improve the health of our communities if we don't tackle issues such as affordable housing, childhood trauma and food insecurity. It's challenging for doctors, in the limited time they have with patients, to address these things. One important step we've taken is screening for social determinants during primary care appointments, then referring patients to navigators who can connect them to community resources."

In terms of the biggest challenges facing the industry nationally and regionally, Williams-Brinkley emphasized that affordability tops the list. "People shouldn't have to choose between buying medications and paying their mortgage," she said. "We also need to transform from a sick-care to a preventive care system. As a health care industry, we should be rewarded for keeping people healthy and out of the hospital, using the hospital as one tool of many to improve and restore health."

A second challenge is "a critical shortage of talent," she noted. Nationally, Kaiser is set to open its own medical school next year in Pasadena, Calif., to help build the talent pipeline. "We also need to diversify

the health care workforce, because we know it improves care outcomes when cultural, language, and other barriers are removed in health care interactions."

Third, "Mental health and addiction are areas where our nation is in crisis," Williams-Brinkley said. "These are medical conditions; they should be treated and supported in the same ways that we support other medical conditions."

### Lisa Vance

Providence's Vance replaced Dave Underriner, who left in April to take a position with Kaiser Foundation Health Plans and Hospitals in Hawaii.

Vance grew up in Medford and spent 26 years with Providence in Oregon in a variety of leadership roles. She served five years as chief executive of Providence Portland Medical Center and two years as chief executive for Oregon Clinical Programs and Home and Community Services. She most recently was senior vice president of clinical program services for Providence St. Joseph Health in Renton, Wash., now the parent company of Providence in Oregon.

A major current priority for Providence is "to find creative ways to grow our alignment with our physician partners," Vance said. The objective, she said, is to build "strong partnerships with physicians, not only our employed Providence Medical Group doctors but also our aligned, community-based physicians. We're looking for the best way to create meaningful, sustainable partnerships, including joint-venture possibilities with surgeons and ambulatory centers."

"One of the questions we're asking is: How do we do things together in a highly

regulated environment?" She pointed to a successful example: Working together with orthopedic surgeons and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, "we put together a bundle for total joint replacement," she said. "CMS acted as the third-party administrator for incentive payments for the bundle of services." Payment was split between Providence and the surgeons. "The program improved affordability and the quality of care. Everyone – especially our patients – saw the benefit. We need to find more opportunities where there's alignment like that."

Vance said "one of the big pressures on health care reform" is declining reimbursements. The "continuity" of Medicaid funding is a major challenge. Moreover, "We're working on how we drive the value proposition of affordability without compromising the patient experience or the high quality of our care. With health care in general, we need to transform how we provide services in order to meet needs and be affordable."

Providence's goal is "creating healthier communities" by improving health. She cited Providence's partnership with Intel Corp: "We're in our fifth year of working together. By working closely with them on their health and wellness goals for their employees, we've helped improve costs, quality of care and the patient experience." Vance said the relationship has "allowed us to move key initiatives forward and test out new approaches to delivering care."

As part of that effort, Providence is emphasizing taking health care to people, Vance said. Examples include "increasing our presence in ambulatory care settings,

telehealth such as Providence Express Care, and providing more in-home care that's convenient for where people live and work."

### Kathryn Correia

Correia succeeded George Brown, MD, as Legacy Health's president and CEO. Brown had been at the helm since 2008.

Correia brought to Legacy over 20 years of experience leading large health care institutions similar to Legacy's in size and scope. Her background includes the practice of "Lean" leadership.

Before coming to Legacy, Correia was CEO of HealthEast, a health system in Minneapolis until 2017, when she led the organization's successful merger with Fairview Health Services, creating the largest health system in the state. She then became Fairview Health Services' chief administrative officer, where she has played a key role in Fairview's overall integration, planning, advocacy and philanthropic efforts.

Correia sees her new job as helping Legacy "reach its full potential, by discovering opportunities and recognizing how they can advance us into the future."

Among the main challenges for Legacy and Oregon health care in the coming months and years are Medicaid funding and "ensuring access to care for those who are vulnerable or marginalized," she said.

Legacy's priorities in relation to the overall market include working in partnership with PacificSource Health Plans; "serving the Medicaid population even better than we already do; and providing value to our customers by increasing the benefits and lowering the burden of health care," she said. ■



## Health policy, research advances among the highlights of Scribe coverage

From research and treatment advances to providers lauded for service, *The Scribe* in 2018 covered a broad array of stories that offered readers insights into the Portland area's health care landscape. The following is a small sampling of those stories:

**JANUARY** – The Oregon Health Plan was under threat in part from Measure 101, which asked voters to approve or reject temporary assessments that earlier legislation had placed on most hospitals, health insurers and managed care groups such as coordinated care organizations. Voters approved the measure, which the **Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems**, a key supporter, called a "critical affirmation of our collective belief that Oregon is better off with a robust Medicaid program that tends to the needs of patients before, during and after an illness or the birth of a child."

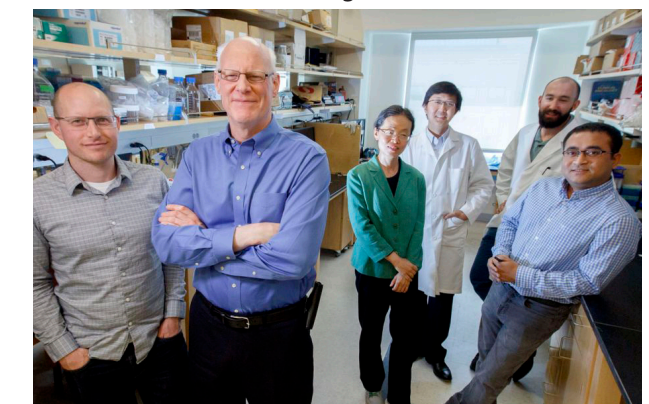
**FEBRUARY** – *The Scribe* reported on the formation of a pediatric accountable care organization, an Oregon first and one of the nation's few. The ACO was organized by the **Children's Health Alliance, Providence Children's Health and Providence Health & Services**, with the goal of providing comprehensive health services to children, including those with complex care needs.

**MARCH** – In a move aimed in part to help the **Medical Society of Metropolitan Portland** sharpen its focus on serving the region's health care community, MSMP announced it would close its Medical Society Staffing. The service had for more than five decades found and placed well-qualified employees for the metro area's medical community, but market forces meant MSMP was among the nation's last medical societies that still maintained a staffing service. Medical Society Staffing's longtime leader, **Paula Purdy, CMA (AAMA)**, who, with the announcement, moved to **Med-X Staffing Services LLC**, was lauded by medical clinic administrators for her leadership and work ethic.

**APRIL** – We cast a spotlight on **Melanie Crites-Bachert, DO, FACS, FACS** (left), a leader in helping patients impacted by conditions such as severe bladder dysfunction. Using the InterStim sacral neuromodulation therapeutic device, she's pioneered a surgical technique for sacral neuromodulation therapy used to treat patients.

In a separate *Scribe* story, area providers reflected on new recommendations expanding the definition of hypertension, with some noting the recommendations' educational value in helping patients understand the risks of high blood pressure.

**MAY** – Though Oregon is known for health care progressiveness, a new report showed the state in a less-flattering light in total care costs. "Healthcare Affordability: Untangling Cost Drivers," which assessed the state's population covered by private health insurance, found that Oregon ranked in the middle of Utah, Colorado, Minnesota and Maryland as average for total cost. The report found that prices here in 2015 were higher than



Meanwhile, a month after graduating its first class, OHSU's curriculum known as **YOUR M.D.**, was the focus of additional *Scribe* coverage. Among the outcomes of what has been described as OHSU's competency-based and time-variable curriculum is that 100 percent of graduating

medical students this year successfully landed a residency, compared with an average of 93 percent nationally.

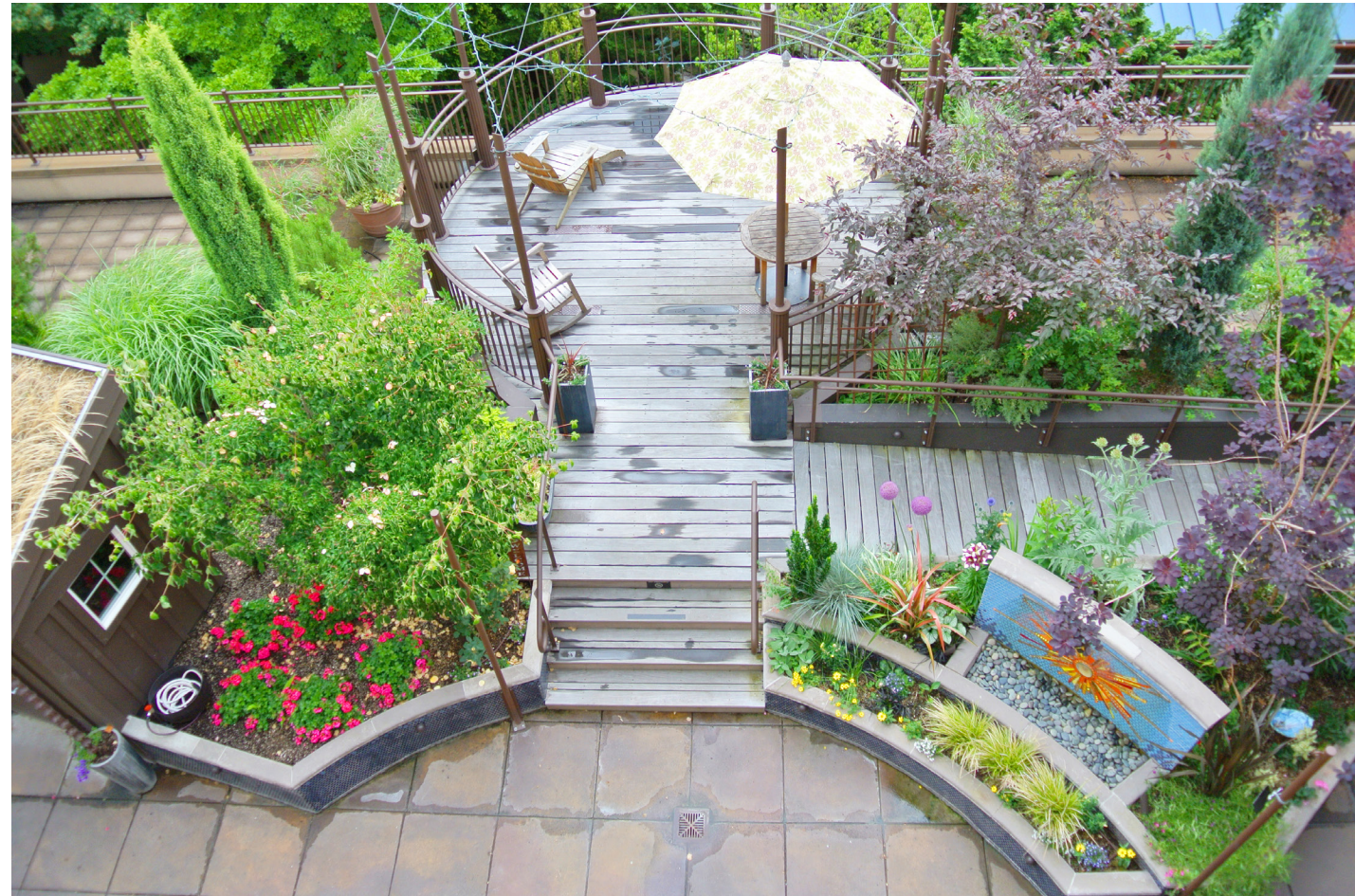
**AUGUST** – *The Scribe* reported on an elective at OHSU that helps equip future physicians for practical nutrition conversations with patients. We also profiled **Dana Hargunani, MD, MPH** (right), the newest chief medical officer for the Oregon Health Authority. The pediatrician helps inform OHA's strategy and health care policy, including planning for the next five years of evolution of the CCO model. Her first memory of wanting to pursue medicine was when she had knee surgery as a child after crashing on her bike. "That was my first exposure, and I just became enthralled with the work the clinical team was doing and everything that was going on," she said.

**SEPTEMBER** – We reported on the Oregon Health Authority's decision to suspend for now work on an ambitious attempt to establish centralized provider credentialing. Financial difficulties were cited as the primary reason that the effort fell by the wayside. The array of providers to be served also was a hurdle. Those involved expressed hope that the progress made on the so-called Oregon Common Credentialing Program could one day continue.

**OCTOBER** – An OHSU Circle of Giving grant is helping propel research into Alzheimer's disease among women. Our story focused on the work of two researchers, **Ursula Sandau, PhD** (right), and **Julie Saugstad, PhD** (left), from OHSU's Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine in the School of Medicine, who received the annual \$125,000 grant for research into the role micro-RNA plays in making Alzheimer's more common, and worse, in women.

**NOVEMBER** – In the wake of the unprecedented shutdown of the state's only heart transplant program at OHSU – a decision that shocked the area's medical community – leaders at Providence and OHSU said the two institutions were discussing a possible joint heart transplant program as they worked together to care for patients. ■

*The above is just a sampling of The Scribe's coverage of the area's medical community in 2018. To read additional stories from the past year, please visit MSMP.org and click on "Publications."*



“During the day when people are working and seeing patients or taking care of administrative duties, **I think it’s very important for them to take breaks so they can do their work better and they aren’t as tired and burned out when they get home.**”

– Minot Cleveland, MD

## A healing garden ‘A Nature Place’ at Legacy Emanuel offers relaxing respite for providers

By Melody Finnemore  
For The Scribe

An open-terrace garden at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center is helping medical providers and other employees, patients and their visitors, and volunteers reduce stress through elements of “portal, path, destination and surround.”

The 6,800-square-foot garden, called “A Nature Place,” is located near the hospital’s Family Birth Center and Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit. It is accessible around the clock to all hospital patients, visitors and employees.

“The natural environment can foster well-being and enhance people’s ability to function,” said **Teresia Hazen, MEd, HTR, QMHP**, coordinator of the Therapeutic Garden Program at Legacy Health. “The garden is such a peaceful place and the perfect antidote from the stress in a hospital environment.”

The Legacy Emanuel garden was also the setting for an in-depth research investigation on nature to combat stress and burnout among nurses. The groundbreaking study was published in the November 2018 *American Journal of Critical Care* and is available to download and read in full: *Impact of Nurses Taking Daily Work Breaks in Hospital Garden on Burnout*.

“To our knowledge, this is the first controlled study to investigate the influence of taking work breaks in a garden on nurse burnout,” said co-investigator **Serene Perkins, MD, FACS**, director of surgical and clinical research for Legacy Research

Institute. “In short, taking work breaks in the Legacy Emanuel garden significantly reduced burnout in nurses working in high-stress environments.”

In the study, nurses spent about 20 minutes taking a break in the garden each day. A positive effect was noted after just six weeks.

**Roger Ulrich, PhD, EDAC**, co-project investigator and landscape designer, said, “There is a pattern of evidence that suggests that well-designed gardens can reduce stress, lower blood pressure and relax people.” Ulrich is a guest professor of architecture at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden, and an emeritus professor at Texas A&M University.

According to Ulrich, anything that can be done to improve staff morale and help nurses cope with intense job demands and stresses can potentially help hospitals and other health care providers deliver better quality care.

A recent Gallup survey found that burnout impacts as many as two-thirds of American full-time workers to some degree, with 23 percent reporting feeling burned out often. Among nurses, a third are believed to experience high levels of burnout. It is a pressing problem that cuts across occupations of all kinds, industries and settings. For workers, it can eat away at their mental and physical health in a myriad of ways and can even shorten lifespans. An estimated \$125 billion to \$190 billion in health care spending is attributed to burnout each year, according

to Legacy Health.

**Minot Cleveland, MD**, Legacy’s medical director of employee health, said the health system plans to extend the research to include physicians. He said there currently are no studies in medical literature related to how gardens in the workplace impact physician stress and burnout.

“From a research standpoint, we are interested in looking at that. From an observation standpoint, we do see physicians coming out to take breaks,” he said.

Cleveland noted that many employees feel pressure to do more with less, and they are stressed not only about taking care of their work but also having enough time to spend with their families. He pointed to Legacy’s mission statement, “Our legacy is good health for our people, our patients, our communities and our world.”

“I always thought ‘patients’ should come first, but I’ve really come to believe that with this virtual epidemic of nurse and physician burnout it’s important to take care of our people first,” he said.

Cleveland chairs Legacy’s Good Health Council and helps coordinate employee wellness activities in the garden, including live music, healthy snacks, chair massages and a “Midnight in the Garden of Good Health” event for staff who work at night. He said that even just looking at nature can help lower blood pressure and reduce stress, so the garden is helpful in both good weather and bad.



Physicians, nurses and other employees at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center are experiencing reduced stress and burnout thanks to an open-terrace garden in the hospital. Legacy Emanuel was part of a groundbreaking study on the impact nature can have on improving wellness among nurses, and it plans to expand the study to include physicians.

Photos courtesy of Legacy Health

“During the day when people are working and seeing patients or taking care of administrative duties, I think it’s very important for them to take breaks so they can do their work better and they aren’t as tired and burned out when they get home,” he said.

Legacy Emanuel’s garden was recently recognized during the Healthcare Design Expo & Conference in Phoenix, Ariz. The Center for Health Design’s Evidence-Based Design presented representatives from Legacy and landscape architect Quatrefoil Inc. with the Platinum Touchstone Award, its highest honor.

The award recognizes the use of an EBD process in the pursuit of increasing value, improving outcomes and engaging stakeholders. Awards were presented to projects that showed exemplary achievement through collaboration, evaluation and sharing, the touchstones of the EBD process. ■

## Our legacy is yours.

Transforming care to create good health for all

Legacy Health, your locally owned partner in health, plays a vital role in the health of our community and in the local economy. Legacy has six hospitals plus complete children’s care through Randall Children’s Hospital at Legacy Emanuel, more than 70 primary care, urgent care and specialty clinics, a clinically integrated network with almost 3,000 providers through Legacy Health Partners, and facilities for lab, research and hospice. We also employ some 13,000 people locally.

We are currently hard at work transforming how we deliver care in a way that focuses on keeping our patients well and proactively preventing disease.

### Population health

A core component of our Care Transformation strategy is population health, with a goal of helping people achieve better health and avoid the need for more intensive treatments in the future. One of Legacy’s population health programs is Care Support Resources (CSR). Through the CSR program, a team of nurse care managers, pharmacists, health coaches and others work with people with chronic conditions in partnership with their provider to help them reach and maintain their highest level of health. The result is a healthier population and lower health care costs for all.

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# Physician-research scientist discovers perfect stress-buster:

# BOXING



By John Rumler  
For The Scribe

Research scientist-physician **Kristina Young, MD, PhD**, engages in critical bench-to-bedside cancer research and translates advances and discoveries from her own laboratory work to treat her cancer patients, all under the same roof at Providence Portland Medical Center.

Mondays through Wednesdays, Young leads a research lab at the Earle A. Chiles Research Institute investigating tumor micro-environments and finding ways to improve the anti-cancer immune response. Thursdays and Fridays, she works directly with patients in her radiation oncology practice at The Oregon Clinic.

Married and a mom to a 7-month-old and a 4-year-old, Young has two goals as a physician-scientist. "The first," she says, "is to use all my education, training and access to technology to empower my patients in their fight against cancer; the second is to continue learning and investigating so we develop novel treatments that end cancer."

Working in a setting where lives hang in the balance is rewarding yet incredibly demanding. Young credits boxing and boxing training as being the perfect stress-buster for her.

Some of her colleagues were astonished to learn that Young was a boxing enthusiast, relates Steven K. Seung, MD, PhD, FACR. "I was surprised at first," says Seung. "At the risk of sounding sexist, for a woman in the healing arts

to engage in martial arts, where the intent is to pound the body and face, it seems paradoxical."

Medical director of both radiation oncology at the Providence Cancer Institute and the Gamma Knife Center of Oregon, Seung is one of several colleagues who have accompanied Young to the gym. He even climbed into the ring with her. "She beat me to a pulp," he said, laughing. "I was not pain-free for some time."

Seung was so impressed with the high level of the workouts that he also became a regular at the gym. "Dr. Young is a wonderful friend, physician and role model for young health care aspirants, but I do want a rematch with her," he says.

Growing up in a small, beach community in southern California, Young, who played soccer, ran cross-country and pole vaulted, seemed destined for a career in engineering: Her dad was a successful engineer and inventor who developed a precursor to GPS, and her mom, who emigrated from Palestine, was his business partner.



Although Young earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering at UCLA, she also volunteered at a genetics research lab and when the mother of a close friend died of breast cancer, she veered onto a medical-research path.

Relocating to Portland in 2003 to begin the MD/PhD program at OHSU, Young met her husband, Darren, now a primary care physician at Kaiser Permanente. Graduating in 2010, Young attended Providence St. Vincent Medical Center for her internship and then completed her residency in radiation oncology at OHSU.

Young played intramural soccer until the winter of 2014, when she became pregnant and began looking for another way to stay fit. Her husband showed her a magazine article about Molly McConnell, a two-time women's junior welterweight world boxing champion, who opened

a gym in Northeast Portland. One Saturday, Young decided to check out the facility and, to her amazement, was immediately hooked. "It was everything I hoped for and more. My first visit I stayed more than two hours and I couldn't wait to go back."

Focusing primarily on physical fitness and cardio, Young began working out four days per week, spending at least an hour in the gym. On Mondays, Young climbs into the ring with an experienced partner wearing a punch mitt and practices throwing punches and different combinations along with footwork and body movements, bobbing and weaving, ducking imaginary blows – all this under the scrutiny of a trainer calling out instructions over the din in the gym. "It's quite vigorous. At the end I am soaked wet and feel satisfied that I've had a great workout," she says.

Young's regimen includes jumping rope and punching the heavy bag as well as the speed bag. On Tuesdays and Saturdays, her focus is cardio-boxing and punching the heavy bag for five three-minute rounds. Varying her routine on different days, Young also does circuit training, works out with the heavy ropes, lifts free weights, and does calisthenics and sprints. She and her husband also do elliptical workouts on their home gym machine.

"Kristina is one of my favorite people in the world. She's been with us almost since we opened six years ago," says McConnell, owner of McConnell's Boxing Academy. "We've been with her through some major life events including two pregnancies. Both times she was in the gym working out and throwing punches right up 'til the day before she gave birth."

Describing Young as "incredibly intelligent and driven," McConnell says her boxing understudy totally embraces the technical aspects of boxing as well as the stress relief and the camaraderie. "Kristina works as hard as anyone, but it's no surprise. No one accomplishes what she has unless they have an incredible work ethic."

Recently having lost her father to cancer, McConnell says sometimes highly trained medical specialists focus on the disease instead of the person. "Not Kristina. She is always so kind and compassionate; she cares very deeply for others, whether you are her friend, her co-worker, or her patient. After what I went through with my dad, I am so thankful there are people like Kristina whose life's mission to defeat the horrible disease of cancer."

Program administrator for the Earle A. Chiles Research Institute, Katie Robb, MSM, met Young when she was completing her fellowship and the two quickly became friends.

"Whatever Dr. Young decides to tackle, she pursues with full commitment and passion," says Robb. "This was evident in her medical and scientific training, in her clinical practice and research. She knows that a healthy mind and body are essential to providing the highest quality care to her patients and unlocking the potential of the immune system to detect and destroy cancer." ■

EXCELLENCE, from page 6

## Legacy Emanuel gala raises more than \$110,000 for ECMO program

In October, Legacy Emanuel Medical Center celebrated the caregivers who treat seriously ill or injured patients using Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) technology. About 150 guests gathered in The Atrium at Legacy Emanuel to honor the heroes who perform this life-saving work each day and to raise funds for the hospital's ECMO program. The event netted more than \$110,000 thanks to the generosity of so many, as well as presenting sponsor – the Piacentini family, represented at the event by Frank Piacentini and Sara Weinstein.

An ECMO machine substitutes for a patient's failed lungs or heart. The revolutionary technology allows the lungs to rest, giving the body time to fight the infection by oxygenating the blood outside of the body when the lungs cannot function normally.

Emanuel Medical Center Foundation is raising funds to help purchase four ECMO machines and ancillary equipment. Each machine costs approximately \$105,000. Legacy Emanuel's program is the only ECMO program in the Pacific Northwest to have an ECMO transport team. The six-person mobile critical care team is available at a moment's notice for patients in immediate need of this life-saving therapy.

## Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center ranked as top performer

For a second consecutive year, Legacy Health has the top performing hospital in Oregon's Hospital Transformation Performance Program. Legacy Meridian Park Medical Center was the only hospital in Oregon, out of 28 state DRG hospitals, to achieve all 11 performance metrics for reporting year 2017, as noted in the Oregon Health Authority's "Oregon Hospital Transformation Performance Program (HTPP) Year 4 Performance Report." Legacy Mount Hood earned the top ranking the previous year.

## OHSU's Professional Staff Awards recognize everyday excellence

OHSU's Professional Board recognizes clinicians and patient care teams for excellence in patient care during its

annual Professional Staff Awards ceremony. Among many others, this year's recipients included the inpatient hospice pilot team: **Jessica Bordley, MD**, assistant professor of medicine (hematology and medical oncology), School of Medicine; **Ines Koerner, MD, PhD**, associate professor of anesthesiology

and perioperative medicine, School of Medicine; **Alicia Sampson, BSN, RN**, quality specialist, Healthcare Quality Management; **Travis Scott, BSN, RN**, nurse educator, Healthcare Clinical Education Services; and **Susan Yoder, BSN, RN**, director of patient relations, OHSU Healthcare.



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### Searching for funding?

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For grant applications and to learn more about MMFO, please visit [www.MMFO.org](http://www.MMFO.org).

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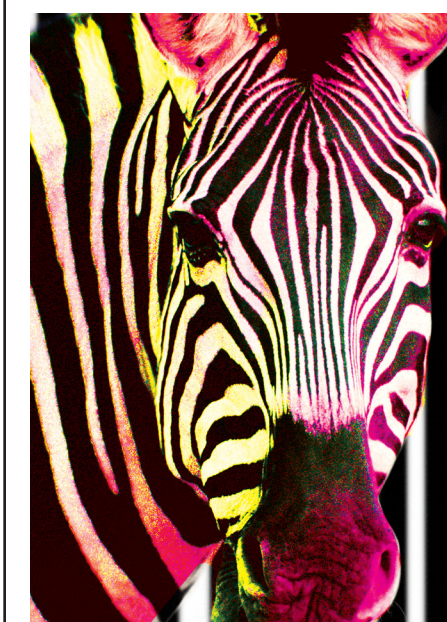


### Online extra! Don't miss this article!

When a child is sick or has another medical condition that prevents them from fully participating in school activities, schools often require a "doctor's note" documenting the condition. Such notes for general education students are fairly routine. However, for students receiving special education services, it is extremely important that doctor's notes cover certain legal bases in order to support the child's individualized education program (IEP).

Diane Wisearson of Wisearson Law provides a checklist of items that should be addressed in a doctor's note for special education students.

To learn more, please visit [www.MSMP.org/MembersOnly](http://www.MSMP.org/MembersOnly).



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*We are committed to private sessions that respect the dignity and training of each clinician. Our commitment is to provide short-term wellness sessions with the option of referral to additional care, if needed. Career counseling is available to enhance decisions within the clinician's training and expertise. Autonomy, choice and privacy are the most critical components of our overall program.*



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