

## It's In Orbit! Liftoff PGH 2020 Initiative Launched at All Boards Retreat

It's been in the works for months, but now it's real: [Liftoff PGH 2020](https://LiftoffPGH.org) has fired off.

All three operating boards of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation gathered last week for the launch of an event that we hope will prepare the Pittsburgh region to rise to the top as a center of health innovation and discovery. A moonshot.

Both an event and an ongoing process, the defining Liftoff exploration is slated for September 15-16, 2020 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. The event's online presence is now live at [LiftoffPGH.org](https://LiftoffPGH.org), where everyone can sign up for regular updates and inquire about sponsorships. Advisory committees have been meeting since July to begin shaping speaker panels and interactive exploration spaces. A social media campaign will launch in September.

Liftoff seeks to attract healthcare practitioners, insurers, designers, consumers, entrepreneurs, academics, civic, political and thought leaders from across the region to imagine a future where we excel above all others in meeting consumer needs and preferences. The intent is to make

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Women of Impact Public Health Cohort Gathers in Pittsburgh	3
JHF Awards \$20,000 for Excellence in Maternity Care	4
JHF Approves \$115K to Support Teen Mental Health, Reduce Maternal Mortality	5
JHF Gives Leading Presentation on Senior Health Care of the Future at AJAS Conference	7
Honoring key JHF Architect Farrell Rubenstein	8
Ed Gainey, Terry Starz Lead August "Fit" Programs	9
JHF Trustee Profile: Steve Irwin	9
JHF Staff Profile: HIV/AIDS Team's Sue Steele	11
Former JHF Intern Hired to Support Maternal Health Initiative	12
Veteran Events Director Joins Liftoff PGH 2020 Effort	13



(Continued from page 1)

Pittsburgh a leader among competitive regions in discovering and realizing new and updated avenues to deliver health by 2030.

The gathering will explore the outer limits of innovation around five key themes: workforce and training; entrepreneurship; health spaces new and old; patient engagement and empowerment; and payment and regulation.

“We aim to assemble the key players and global thought leaders for two days to explore the best-case scenarios for Pittsburgh as a global health hub in 10 years,” said JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD. “We envision nothing less than a regional renaissance creating a Pittsburgh that excels as an economic, academic, research, healthcare delivery and health assurance, reputational and entrepreneurial leader.”

Underscoring the need to prepare for the major changes underway was Ethan Brosowsky, senior director of the Advisory Board, which helps healthcare organizations to improve performance through the latest research and data. He was a guest speaker at the packed August 26 meeting of the boards of JHF, the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, and Health Careers Futures.

A decade ago, Brosowsky noted, the 16-image CT scan represented the peak of high-tech health care. Today, CT scans can take 320 images or more, and innovation includes genetic screening to detect deadly diseases, digital monitoring by implantable chips, and eventually tattoos that change color to indicate acute changes in one’s biochemistry.

“There is no shortage of clinical innovations to study, but the larger point is that the horizon is constantly shifting,” he said. “Health care is making transformative, evolutionary leaps forward. It’s smart of Pittsburgh to build the infrastructure now that will help you make the most of it.”



Trustees of the boards of JHF and its operating arms gathered August 26 to hear about Liftoff PGH 2020 and the Advisory Board’s presentation on coming innovations in clinical health care.



The Advisory Board’s Ethan Brosowsky addressed a room packed with trustees JHF’s boards on August 26.



## Women of Impact's Public Health Cohort Gathers in Pittsburgh

Two dozen members of the newly established Women of Impact Public Health Cohort gathered in Pittsburgh last month to reflect and recharge.

Meeting at the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's airy 26<sup>th</sup> floor conference space August 7-9, the women participate in an intensive leadership development training presented by the de Beaumont Foundation, which advances policy and builds partnerships to strengthen public health.



De Beaumont Senior Fellow Karen Remley and JHF CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein surrounded by the WOI Public Health Cohort in Pittsburgh.

Participants took a step away from workaday obligations and distractions with a program called Your Indelible Mark™, created by consultancy Lumeri LLC to help successful, executive women cultivate their enduring legacy. Peggy Williams, senior partner and the program's facilitator, noted that women typically juggle not only their careers, but the management of their families and households, and often fail to take time to reflect and rejuvenate. Yet intentionally stepping away to do both is essential to leading well.

"Leaders who have a greater purpose in their line of sight are the best leaders," Williams said. "The clarity they bring to their work benefits them and those who work with them. Having clarity helps you know where to invest your energies – and where not to. There will always be people asking you to take on new projects. Remember that 'no' is a complete sentence."

de Beaumont Senior Fellow Karen Remley concurred. "In order to rise in an organization, it's essential to turn down some opportunities for fewer, more meaningful ones. That needs to happen more in health care. Women make up more than two-thirds of the public health workforce, yet they are underrepresented in leadership roles and earn, on average, \$3,000 less per year than their male counterparts."



Several members of the WOI Public Health Cohort kayaked Pittsburgh's rivers on August 7.

Attendees were public health experts, including government health officials, physicians, and other leaders from nonprofits, healthcare systems, and universities that included Vanderbilt University, the University of Texas, Michigan State University, and the University of Pittsburgh; the health agencies of New York City, the state of Virginia, Sonoma County, Calif., Columbus, Ohio, and rural Kentucky; and

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the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Each participant was tasked with considering how to make a lasting impact in public health. They also identified potential collaborations among the group to elevate critical public health issues. Members will continue to connect and partner on initiatives that improve public health across the country.

Taking seriously the charge to recharge, participants also enjoyed Pittsburgh at the peak of its summer beauty with walking tours of several of downtown's architectural gems and by kayaking the city's shimmering rivers.

The public health cohort is part of the larger Women of Impact, a by-invitation group of 70 executive-level women from all facets of the U.S. healthcare industry. Founded in 2013, its overarching goal is to leverage the power of women's leadership to improve the U.S. healthcare system and ensure recognition for women as leaders. JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein is a founding member. JHF staff, including Women's Health Specialist Kate Dickerson, provide operational support.

## **Jewish Healthcare Foundation Gives \$20,000 Award for Excellence in Maternity Care**

Twenty-nine graduate students and young professionals representing 17 healthcare disciplines participated in the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's (JHF) Patient Safety Fellowship and awarded \$20,000 to Penn Medicine's Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, recognizing their excellence in improving maternal care and addressing racial disparities. Each summer JHF organizes the Patient Safety Fellowship to apply innovative methods and strategies in implementation science, team-based problem-solving, and continuous quality improvement for healthcare settings. This year's focus was excellence in reducing the risk of maternal mortality, offering comprehensive maternity care, and in taking a broad view of "successful" pregnancy.



Members of the winning team at Penn Medicine's Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

The U.S. has three times more maternal deaths than other developed countries. In recognition of this tragic reality, JHF studies what other countries offer related to pregnancy and postpartum care. The objective is recognizing and rewarding best practices here in the U.S. and in Pennsylvania that provide comprehensive maternity care.

To acknowledge the current efforts in Pennsylvania, JHF identified five leading birthing centers that displayed comprehensive support for both mom and baby. The finalists were Allegheny Health Network's West Penn Hospital, Geisinger Health System in Danville, Moses Taylor Hospital in Scranton, Penn Medicine's Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital. These sites were selected because they demonstrated that a successful pregnancy should be defined beyond a mother giving birth to a healthy baby. Pregnancy and the months after birth are a critical time for mothers and babies. When both fare well, lifetimes of health and fulfillment likely lay ahead. When either or both fares poorly, they are more likely to experience

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suffering, distress, and financial loss. The best maternity care models in the United States and abroad recognize that comprehensive care, from prenatal to postpartum, with wide-ranging physical and emotional family supports are crucial for healthy beginnings.

During the Fellowship, Fellows interviewed and researched the participating sites. The finalists offered such enhancements as new interventions for hypertension, programs for integrating midwives, comprehensive care services for opioid use disorder-affected mothers, staff-lead quality improvement projects, and patient and family engagement. The findings were discussed, shared, and voted on during the Patient Safety Fellowship finale. As a result, the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania was selected for the Patient Safety Fellowship Award for Perinatal Care.



Patient Safety Fellows discuss their experience in the Fellowship at the Finale on July 30.

Penn Medicine was selected for its overall comprehensive, collaborative, and quality improvement approach to maternal care. At the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, the team has successfully implemented innovative programs like Mothers MATTER, a compassionate care program for pregnant and postpartum women impacted by opioid dependence; and Heart Safe Motherhood, a text-based intervention for hypertension, which is the biggest cause of maternal mortality and poor health. Penn Medicine also assembles multidisciplinary committees comprised of staff at all levels who are focused on quality improvement and safety, as well as a Health Equity Task Force which addresses the impact of racial and implicit bias and social determinants of health.

Pennsylvania has taken active steps to improve maternal care and reduce maternal mortality including establishing Pennsylvania's Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC) and the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PA PQC). Administered by JHF and launched with the support of Governor Tom Wolf, the PA PQC consists of 56 birth sites and neonatal intensive care units and 11 health plans that are identifying processes to improve and quickly adopting best practices.

"Our Fellows were given the unique opportunity to learn from some of the best maternal health practitioners in Pennsylvania, and we were impressed to see improvements being made by all of the participating systems," said JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein. "The Perinatal Quality Collaborative presents a powerful opportunity for these systems to share with one another and work toward making Pennsylvania one of the best places in the country to have a child."

## **Jewish Healthcare Foundation Approves \$115K to Support Teen Mental Health and Reduce Maternal Mortality**

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation on August 26 approved three grants to extend its efforts in support of adolescent behavioral health and maternal health. The grants support initiatives to engage teens in mental health and mental wellness in Squirrel Hill; pilot a school-based behavioral health program in the South Hills; and improve the reach and effectiveness of the state's WIC Program.

Adolescent behavioral health became an area of focus for JHF in 2016 in response to increasing reports that teens in crisis – and their parents – were unable to find timely treatment. The initiative

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expanded in December 2018 when JHF approved a grant, following the shooting in the Tree of Life synagogue, to improve adolescent behavioral health services in the 15217 neighborhood.

#### *Strengthening Adolescent Behavioral Health in Squirrel Hill*

JHF approved a two-year, \$70,000 grant to engage local teens around their mental health and mental wellness. Fewer than 40 percent of adolescent Pennsylvanians with depression have received treatment in the past 12 months, and access to mental health services are even harder for teens to find than they are for adults. The grant will help fund a teen engagement coordinator at Squirrel Hill's Jewish Community Center to engage and support teens for 24 hours per week.

This complements JHF's ongoing 15217 initiative, a community-wide initiative for teen mental health based in Squirrel Hill. The teen engagement coordinator will work closely with the 15217 program coordinator to foster strong mental health and wellness practices for Pittsburgh's teens. The coordinator will also build relationships with the other youth-facing groups to share resources and training.

#### *Piloting a School-based Behavioral Health Program in the South Hills*

JHF approved a one-year, \$20,000 grant to help create a pilot school-based mental health initiative at Baldwin-Whitehall High School. Implemented in partnership with Allegheny Health Network and Jefferson Regional Foundation, *The CHILL Project* is a year-long comprehensive curriculum designed to transform school culture through skill learning, implementation, and internalization for all individuals in the school community network.

*The CHILL Project* will provide a mindfulness room for students, faculty, and parents to actively engage in mindfulness-based learning opportunities and practice these skills. The *CHILL* Mindfulness Room will be equipped to host a wide range of activities that enhance the mindfulness learning experience and offer an area for "prevention & skill development" versus "discipline & recovery."

The pilot project also will develop a supportive school community that promotes mental health and provide resources and training to teachers. *The CHILL Project* anticipates serving approximately 2,100 students, 100+ educators, and 2,000+ caregivers in the Baldwin-Whitehall and West Jefferson School Districts.

"JHF's youth advocacy efforts have benefitted from the participation of teen leaders from Baldwin High School who engaged in the Youth Advocacy Summit and the Harrisburg-based advocacy efforts – with the full support of their school's leadership," said JHF Program Manager Deborah Murdoch, MPH. "This pilot will offer lessons for other districts as well as state and national policy recommendations, and it demonstrates the commitment of JHF youth advocates to create safe, supportive school communities equipped to meet the mental health needs of their students."

#### *Reinvigorating Pennsylvania's WIC Program: A Statewide Best Practices Summit*

JHF approved a one-year, \$25,000 grant to help Pennsylvania strengthen its WIC Program through a statewide best practices summit. The federally funded Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, known as the WIC Program, has been a cornerstone in efforts to support the health of mothers and babies – physically, socially and mentally – for more than 40 years. But enrollment by Pennsylvanians in WIC has declined, which means the state could lose significant federal funding.

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States such as Vermont, Maryland and California, however, have models that Pennsylvania could draw upon to improve enrollment here. Building on its work to reinvigorate the WIC Program, JHF – in partnership with other funders from the Pennsylvania Health Funders Collaborative and the state Department of Health – will organize a statewide gathering in Harrisburg this fall. The grant will partially fund the summit's costs, and other PFHC members are invited to lend their support. The summit will bring together statewide WIC leaders and stakeholders to learn from innovative best-practice models across the country and spark action towards regional implementation.

JHF also renewed the following grants:

A one-year, \$68,000 grant to the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, a non-profit comprised of regional leaders committed to improving the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania, to align the regional healthcare workforce's size and skills with expected demand, and develop community-wide strategies to address the rising cost of care.

## **JHF Gives Leading Presentation on Senior Health Care of the Future at AJAS Conference**

Innovators such as Amazon and Uber have disrupted the retail and transportation industries, and health care is not far behind. With more than 72 million Baby Boomers in the United States driving consumer trends, these companies have set their sights on redesigning senior services.



Smart companies and agencies – including those that traditionally have served older adults, and those who have not – are recognizing the need to embrace consumer demands for faster, simpler, high-quality solutions.

"We cannot afford to take for granted the needs and demands of seniors," said Jewish Healthcare Foundation CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein on August 21. "Commercial players enabled by new technologies are creating new models of care in new spaces with a new workforce. They understand consumer preferences for one-stop shopping and comprehensive service approaches."

Feinstein was the lead presenter at the regional conference of the Association of Jewish Aging Services, which promotes and supports the delivery of services to an aging population. Its membership is comprised of more than 95 organizations with Jewish-sponsored nursing homes, housing communities, and outreach programs across North America. The Jewish Association on Aging (JAA), which operates residences and services in Pittsburgh, hosted the conference at its facilities near Summerset along the Monongahela River.

Feinstein stressed many of the themes that will be a part of JHF's Liffitt PGH conference in September 2020. Like their younger counterparts, seniors use smartphone apps to monitor their vital signs. Even more important for them, however, are spaces that are transforming themselves into centers of information and engagement: pharmacies, health clubs, libraries, and community centers.

Interdependence with others can be as important as independence, Feinstein said, as loneliness and depression are increasingly recognized as problems for isolated older adults. Beginning to take hold is the "senior village" concept, which combines an array of care levels in campus-like settings with wide lifestyle choices and interaction with people of all ages. Ideally, residences can be adapted around the consumer in response to changing health conditions and needs.

More than 200 such villages are operating in 45 states, with at least 150 more in development. Included among local models are Presbyterian SeniorCare in Oakmont, and Providence Point in Scott Township.

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## Farrell Rubenstein, one of JHF's architects, honored

On August 26, JHF trustees paid tribute to former Jewish Healthcare Foundation Board Chair Farrell Rubenstein for his roles both in creating the foundation as a legacy organization to Montefiore Hospital, and for his strong leadership from 2000-2002 as its fourth chairman. Rubenstein will be honored on September 5 by the Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh with the prestigious Emanuel Spector Award, which recognizes individual contributions to local philanthropy.

"Farrell has been a part of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's story since before the foundation officially existed," said Karen Wolk Feinstein, JHF President. Rubenstein was the chair of the University of Pittsburgh Board of Trustees' Health Sciences Committee in the late 1980s, a time when Montefiore Hospital was struggling financially. In autumn 1998, the leadership of both the university and hospital gathered to discuss its fate.

"The meeting went on for hours," Rubenstein recalled. "It became increasingly obvious that the hospital wasn't going to walk away ahead of the game. Finally, Montefiore board chairman Stanley Gumberg said, 'Why don't you buy us?'"

Gumberg and Rubenstein negotiated the sale. UPMC transferred \$75 million to form the endowment of what was then called the Montefiore Foundation. As current JHF Chair David Ehrenwerth recounted, Rubenstein was at one time or another on all sides of the transaction: in board leadership at Pitt, Montefiore and finally JHF. "That is quite unique." It took a special person to address community concerns during the sometimes-tense transition.

Feinstein detailed several major initiatives during Rubenstein's tenure as chair. These include establishing the foundation as a leader in healthcare workforce development, creating fellowships for graduate students, and launching Working Hearts, a cornerstone of the women's health agenda that lives on through WHAMglobal. JHF seeded the mental health court; now it is deeply involved in adolescent behavioral health through the 15217 initiative and other advocacy efforts. "The creation of Perfecting Patient Care University to address medical error sealed our leadership in work that still continues to this day," she said.

Jim Rogal recounted that his father, Alvin Rogal (JHF's first chair), spoke often of his respect for Rubenstein's leadership and wisdom, and often sought his advice and counsel.

Rubenstein said he is proud of his appointment of Rick Rosen to chair the investment committee. Under Rosen's leadership, the original JHF corpus (\$45 million plus \$30 million over five years) has grown into about \$135 million, even though the foundation has provided more than that amount in disbursements over time.

As Ehrenwerth summed up: "We owe Farrell for our birth, our growth and our successful existence."

Quipped Rubenstein: "In the end it all worked out, but like in the Bible, it started with chaos."



JHF Chair David H. Ehrenwerth and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein paid homage August 26 to former Chair Farrell Rubenstein, center.



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## Ed Gainey, Terry Starz Lead Fit with a Legislator;

### Upcoming Fit Events Sept. 7, 26

Some 25 participants joined state Rep. Ed Gainey and Jewish Healthcare Foundation board member Terry Starz, MD, for a walk August 20 as part of JHF's Fit with a Legislator program.

Co-sponsored by JHF's Senior Connections and AARP Pennsylvania, and organized by Venture Outdoors, the program is an opportunity for people to walk with their elected representatives while chatting about anything from their parks, street conditions, policies, or whatever's on their minds.

Next up on September 26 from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. is "Walk with City Councilperson Erika Strassburger" in Schenley Park. A related program, Fit with a Physician, is slated for September 7 from 10 a.m. – noon at the Frick Park Environmental Center. The subject will be combatting arthritis and Inflammation.

Sign up for future walks at [VentureOutdoors.org](http://VentureOutdoors.org).



Dr. Terry Starz (blue hat) and Rep. Ed Gainey (white t-shirt) led a Fit With A Legislator walk in Mellon Park August 20.

## JHF Trustee Profile: Steve Irwin, equity partner at Leech Tishman

Steven D. Irwin, J.D., equity partner at Leech Tishman, is a Trustee of Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and Co-Chair of the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative.

He has served on numerous other civic and nonprofit boards. Current service includes: Vice-Chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Pennsylvania Advisory Committee; Chair of Sustainable Pittsburgh; regional board member and former Pittsburgh chair of the Anti-Defamation League. He has previously served as board member and president of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Pittsburgh; and from 2006-2014 as a commissioner to the Pennsylvania's Department of Banking and Securities.

His family includes spouse Andi Irwin, a painter, Airbnb proprietor and co-owner of River Forest Country Club in Freeport; daughter Jillian Irwin, an internal medicine resident physician at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center; son Jesse Irwin, host of a morning network TV show in Pittsburg, Kansas; and daughter Rose Irwin, a freshman at Taylor Allderdice High School.



(Continued on page 10)

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Steve Irwin can still recall the day his public speaking career began. He was a 10-year-old fifth grader in St. Petersburg, Fla., where his family recently had relocated from Queens, New York.

“I was one of maybe three Jews among hundreds of students,” he recalled. Classmates bullied and proselytized to him. Come December, he received the gift his public school bestowed on every student: a copy of the New Testament.

“The teacher said, ‘Well, why don’t you tell us all a little bit about *your* religion, Steven?’” Most pre-teens would have tried to disappear behind a lunch box. Irwin, however, seized the moment.

“So, attempting to hide my New York accent, with my Orthodox background, and years of Hebrew school three days a week, I began by explaining about Hanukkah, and Passover....” Within a year, Irwin had dusted off his accordion and joined five older boys in [Solomon and the Wise Guys](#), a klezmer band that traveled the southeast on weekends playing bar mitzvahs, rallies and radio shows.

He worked on his high school newspaper and as a copy boy at the late *St. Petersburg Times*, taking summer classes and winning a college scholarship through its journalism school, known now as Poynter Institute. He headed to Harvard and its storied, student-run *Crimson*, graduating with a degree in government. A job as a legislative aide in U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter’s came next, around which he earned a degree from Georgetown University Law Center. That led to a clerkship with U.S. Circuit Court Judge Joseph F. Weis, Jr. in Pittsburgh – also the hometown of his then-wife. For the past 18 years, Irwin has been with Leech Tishman, chairing its Employment and Government Relations Practice Groups along the way.

**What does a typical work day for you look like? What’s the hardest part of your job? What’s most satisfying?**

I split my day four ways: I manage a chronic disability, so for several hours each morning, I’m doing therapy. Then I see my daughter off to school, and walk our dog through CMU’s campus. The rest of the day is divided between community and legal work. There’s often a board meeting, and I usually have at least one meal a day with someone very interesting. I host an interview program, [Political Jungle](#), Monday nights on PCTV21. When I have time, I enjoy yoga, reading, sculling, and practicing Spanish and Hebrew.

**Among your fellow JHF board members, what are some of the ways your contributions are unique?**

I’m not a medical professional, although I am a constant consumer of medical services. And I am a student of government and politics. The relationships I’ve built with people in policy and political positions in many diverse communities over a generation are helpful. Since 1994, I’ve been counsel to Healthcare Council of Western Pennsylvania, and handled number of employment matters in the health care field that has given me insight into the business of health care and patient safety.

**What part of our work is most resonant or meaningful for you?**

Making our aging population’s lives vibrant, functional, and less dependent. And amplifying our original focus on patient safety. That work is absolutely critical. We can be a lab for best practices, as we’re doing now around perinatal health. And our fellowships: I love what we do to inspire the next generation of practitioners.

I deeply admire the way Karen [CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein] has surrounded herself with diverse, brilliant and experienced individuals, and insisted on taking our regional experience to improve health care to a national level. Her irreverence and courage are inspiring. Just being a fly on the wall at our board meetings and sponsored activities is a privilege. To carry on the legacy of Montefiore, to do great things, to refuse to accept the status quo is much more than refreshing – it is an imperative.

(Continued on page 11)

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## What advice would you give to a younger version of yourself?

Be kind to yourself. Don't look for a single mentor – find the best behaviors and thinking in everyone, and adapt it for yourself.

## Favorite non-work things about the region?

The rivers and bridges. And, having grown up in a place where not much happened between the arrival of Ponce DeLeon in 1513 and air conditioning in the 1950s, I embrace Pittsburgh's history – from the pre-revolutionary times through the Civil War, its industrial revolution, and our propensity for reinventing our region. It's that resilience that inspires me every day.

## Things people might be surprised to know about you?

I was cantor at the Tree of Life synagogue every third week for several years. I spent four years playing around the country with the punk-country-rock band the Surreal McCoys. I play keyboards, sing background, and wrote the song "[Rosie Rose](#)" on their album *The Bottle & The Gun*.

## Staff Profile: Sue Steele, Project Coordinator, HIV/AIDS Team

Growing up, Sue Steele thought she'd become an art teacher.

The native of Vandergrift, Westmoreland County studied visual arts and arts education at Penn State University, with her first classroom job at a Pittsburgh public middle school. Her classroom experience, however, pointed her to a career outside the classroom that melded her creativity and visual communications skills with a clear need: that for youth and young adults to get accurate, understandable information about their bodies, sex and health.

"I never thought I'd be working in sexual health, but it was my students," Steele said. "I saw such a need among them to have basic information."

Steele went on to spend 14 years in education at Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania, developing and modifying curriculum, coordinating peer education programs around pregnancy and STI prevention, and eventually running the department. She joined the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's HIV/AIDS team five years ago.

She is the project coordinator for AIDS Free Pittsburgh, a JHF-created, Allegheny County-based coalition of state and local public offices, nonprofits and the oft-competing insurance plans and healthcare providers that treat and care for individuals living with or at high risk of contracting HIV. Steele has helped the coalition to collaborate, develop and implement a community outreach plan that has helped to reduce HIV infection rates in Allegheny County by 39 percent over the past three years.

"JHF plays a role as a regional convener that no other organization could pull off," she said. "It's great to be a part of that."

Steele also helps to monitor and evaluate regional organizations that receive key federal funds to combat AIDS, as well as organizations in the Minority AIDS Initiative program, which includes outreach to people with HIV who, because of lack of resources, stigma or



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other issues, have not engaged with consistently care and treatment. From 2014 through 2016, she coordinated the foundation's HPV vaccination initiative, which worked to increase the use of cancer-preventing vaccination through healthcare provider trainings, community awareness, and education.

She was part of the HIV/AIDS team's successful efforts to win a nearly \$896,000 grant from the state Department of Health in June, which is going to five nonprofit organizations that provide early intervention services for HIV prevention and wraparound care services. Richard Smith, project director of the HIV/AIDS team, has cited the efforts of Project Associate Ashley Chung and Steele as part of that success, thanks to their strong-rooted connections with grassroots organizations in the community and thorough-going technical assistance to those groups.

Steele said she particularly enjoys her work developing marketing and social media campaigns for the team's programs, and the foundation's arts-driven events, such as AIDS Free Pittsburgh's "Too Hot for July" pride celebration.

"Sometimes prevention messages incite shame, or fear: 'You have to do this, or you'll die.' That really doesn't work very well," Steele said. "We put a positive spin on things, make it attractive, and keep the messages simple and clear."

Steele has volunteered with Big Brothers Big Sisters and Gwen's Girls, and currently serves on the fundraising committee for Day One, a housing intervention program for single mothers and their children. She also has provided technical assistance to Pittsburgh Black Pride, which over the past two years has restructured and begun to raise its profile in the region.

In her free time, Steele enjoys cooking, traveling, practicing hot yoga and embroidery.

## **Former JHF intern joins staff supporting maternal health initiative**

Elizabeth Balskus joined the Jewish Healthcare Foundation on August 12 as Quality Improvement Facilitator for Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative. The collaborative, known as the PA PQC, was launched in April by JHF to bring together maternity care units to identify and adopt practices for better maternal health outcomes. Balskus will support the PA PQC team and various sites as a quality improvement coach. She is fresh from a summer internship here supporting the 15217 Neighborhood-Based Teen Mental Health Initiative.

Balskus received a master's degree in Philosophy from the University of Oregon, where she served as a philosophy teaching fellow for four years. A PhD candidate in Healthcare Ethics at Duquesne University, she is completing her thesis on the need for and consequences of implementing a multi-dimensional concept of safety, including psychological, emotional, and communal safety in perinatal and psychiatric care. Previously, she has also worked as a member of the STAR Clinic at PeaceHealth hospital in Eugene, Oregon, and as a postpartum doula.

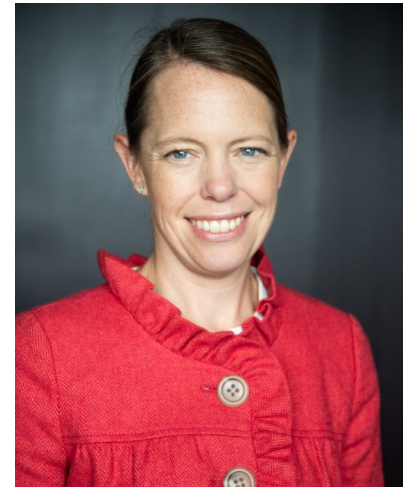


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## Veteran Events Director Joins Liftoff PGH 2020

Kinsey Casey joined the Jewish Healthcare Foundation on August 19 as a consultant supporting next year's Liftoff PGH, a conference and ongoing process to position the Pittsburgh region as center for healthcare innovation.

Casey comes to JHF after two years in San Francisco as the inaugural chief of staff for Emerge America, a national nonprofit that recruits and trains Democratic women to run for office. She spent seven years in the Obama Administration at the White House, State Department and the Department of Homeland Security. She held leadership roles for several large-scale events including the 2009 presidential inauguration and the 2008 Democratic National Convention.



Earlier this year, she led teams on the Rise of the Rest bus tour through Florida and Puerto Rico by billionaire venture capitalist Steve Case, and served as an associate producer on RightsCon, an international digital human rights conference in Tunisia with 3,000 people attending nearly 400 panels over three days.

In Pittsburgh, Casey led the planning and execution of the 2016 White House Frontiers Conference hosted at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University, a national convening to explore the future of global innovation that featured President Obama and leaders in medicine, artificial intelligence, smart cities, climate change, and space.

A proud native of Helena, Montana, she enjoys anything outdoors, especially running, skiing, hiking, backpacking, snowshoeing, and crew.

JHF Chief Financial Officer Chuck Morrison and Andi Iriwn, wife of board member Steve Irwin, dressed in leopard print at an August fundraiser for the Allegheny County Parks Foundation.



JHF CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein and executive board members of the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement in Washington D.C. on August 27.

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## Connect with the Jewish Healthcare Foundation:

