



January 2021 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more

A Message from JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation knew that 2021 would be a historic year as the US recovers from a global pandemic, proceeds with a new Presidential administration and newly balanced Senate, and offers new opportunities for policy change and reforms.

The pandemic exposed the depth and consequences of ongoing problems in our health system. We identified three critical areas that were ripe for reform: our annual mortality rate from preventable medical errors, our flawed model and financing of skilled nursing facilities, and our narrow approach to a successful pregnancy. To address these three policy opportunities with urgency and focus required us to set aside the “business as usual” of our three operating arms—the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, Health Careers Futures and WHAMglobal—and form special Full Court Press teams with directed strategies.

Our current “Zoom World” allowed us to engage the top experts in each area to guide and shape our efforts. We are working intensely to maximize our impact during these stressful times. Please follow our journey in the stories below and throughout this year in The Window.

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Patient Safety Full Court Press Team Advances in 2021

Full speed ahead into a new year, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's Patient Safety Full Court Press Team met virtually on January 25 to discuss policy and technology considerations for a National Patient and Provider Safety Authority (NPSA).

The Team was honored to have National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Chairman Robert Sumwalt as a guest speaker. Chairman Sumwalt shared information on the NTSB's structure and functions, noting that the NTSB includes a board of five

presidential-nominated board members and a staff of 400, and that the NTSB provides recommendations, not regulations, based on its investigational findings. Chairman Sumwalt emphasized the benefit of the federal agency's independence towards its ability to investigate adverse transportation events, and his continued partnership will be crucial to modeling the NPSA on the NTSB's prior success.



Tom Mitchell, Lead Technologist of the Block Center, and E. Fredkin University Professor of Machine Learning and Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University, spoke about applications for artificial intelligence and machine learning, and how these can play a role in improving patient safety. He said that given the right data, artificial intelligence (AI) technology has a lot to offer, and that we have current and upcoming autonomous technologies that could be applied to patient safety now and in the near future. Through the NPSA, he said, AI could be used to detect cancer, monitor patients remotely, and support second opinions on diagnostics and proposed treatment plans, among many other uses. He advocated for a push towards applying these technologies to health care through the NPSA.

Jeanne Iasella, Chief Solutions Officer of TeleTracking, a Pittsburgh company with 30 years of experience, presented on command centers and their applications to improving safety in patient access, placement, and discharge. Jean shared that TeleTracking has been focused recently on command centers, and that future opportunities exist to use command centers for patient safety. These include dedicating a command center "desk" to patient safety; using the power of predictive analytics to improve patient safety; creating adaptive workflows; and extending patient safety beyond the acute care setting.

The Team discussed the opportunities to bring healthcare up to speed with data use, monitoring, real-time tracking, and technology to identify and prevent errors, and they noted data sharing and collaboration will be key going forward. Recognizing the plethora of technologies available and forthcoming, the Team identified the need to prioritize areas of focus for the NPSA.

James Gelfand, Senior VP, Health Policy of the ERISA Industry Committee wrapped the meeting with a presentation on policy next steps to push for the NPSA at the legislative and executive levels, and what is needed from the NPSA Committee members. The Team will move forward with finalizing their policy plans and begin building a coalition to advance policy for the NPSA.

Senior Living Full Court Press Team Explores Teaching Nursing Facility Model

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation's Seniors Full Court Press Team met virtually January 28 to discuss actionable solutions to the issues plaguing the long-term care system. Experts explored the most promising care and policy options for skilled nursing, housing, and community-living for frail seniors.

Stuart Butler, PhD, Senior Fellow at the Economic Studies of The Brookings Institution, presented *The Convergence Center for Policy Resolution Report* he led to bring consensus on senior living policy objectives. Butler identified four themes: Reorganizing nursing homes to serve different populations appropriately; better supports for the workforce; advancing opportunities for home-based and community-based care; and realigning the payment and regulatory system to these different models. Butler discussed policy opportunities to achieve these objectives, and he noted that more data and analysis is necessary to test these ideas and inspire confidence in leaders to fund such changes.



The Team then welcomed a panel of senior care experts: Stuart Altman, Former Dean of the Heller School at Brandeis University and former Chairman of the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission; Alice Bonner, PhD, RN, FAAN, Director of Strategic Partnerships for the Center for Innovative Care in Aging of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement; Tricia Neuman, ScD, Senior VP and Executive Director of the Program on Medicare Policy at Kaiser Family Foundation; and Bruce Vladeck, former administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration (now the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services). The panel provided their perspectives on the options for reimagining senior living, including reforming Medicare and payment systems to best serve senior groups, the need to package messages for government leaders, and the necessity to better support the workforce. Lou Woolf, MBA, President and CEO of Hebrew Senior Life, described his organization's renowned research strategies that combine a viable business model with high quality, best practice senior care.

To explore potential for bringing a research and teaching nursing home model to Pennsylvania, JHF COO and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zionts and Terry Fulmer, President and CEO of the John A. Hartford Foundation, presented objectives for a pilot project. JHF's involvement in the PA

[Regional Response Health Collaborative Program](#) provides a solid foundation. JHF would serve as the project lead and partner with academic institutions, health systems, and skilled nursing facilities to improve access and participation in evidence-based research. This pilot would provide the data needed to demonstrate how enhanced access to clinical skills at the skilled nursing level can improve care quality and cost outcomes.

Moving forward, the Team will further explore opportunities to network across the Commonwealth, build the case for senior living policy change, continue the call to reinvent our long-term care system while continuing to provide our seniors with supports.

To learn more about the need for reimagining senior living, read Karen Feinstein's Pittsburgh Business Times op-ed, "[Vaccines won't cure nursing homes' ills.](#)"

Maternity Full Court Press Team Prepares Next Steps

On January 20, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's (JHF) Maternity Full Court Press Team gathered virtually for their first meeting of 2021, to build momentum for advancing key policies related to perinatal community health workers (CHWs) and doulas, midwives, and WIC to improve maternal health.

Nan Strauss, JD, Director of Policy and Advocacy at Every Mother Counts, introduced policy interests at the national level. These include the [HHS Action Plan](#) and [US Surgeon General's Call to Action](#) that set goals to improve maternal health outcomes by 2025. Nan noted federal priorities include extending Medicaid coverage to a full year postpartum and increasing federal matching funds, establishing accountability for respectful, quality, equitable maternity care, and improving access to high-value models of maternity care that focus on equity and involve midwifery and community-based doulas.



Wandy Hernandez-Gordon, Co-Chair of the Founding Board for the National Association of Community Health Workers, Past Chair of APHA's CHW Section; Senior Program Specialist, HealthConnect One; and Co-President and Co-Founder, Illinois CHW Association, spoke next on the CHW movement and implications for maternal and child health. Wandy shared examples of work that could inform future PA action, including HealthConnect One's grassroots perinatal CHW training programs and Illinois' recent legislation to advance CHWs as a profession.

Geri Henchy, MPH, Director of Nutrition Policy and Early Childhood Programs at the Food Research and Action Council, then spoke about the best WIC models and how they could be achieved. She identified strategies of conducting outreach and promotion, integrating WIC within

primary care, and streamlining access to WIC can improve uptake. She cited programs already implementing these changes in Vermont, Washington D.C., New York, Oklahoma, Georgia, California, and Colorado.

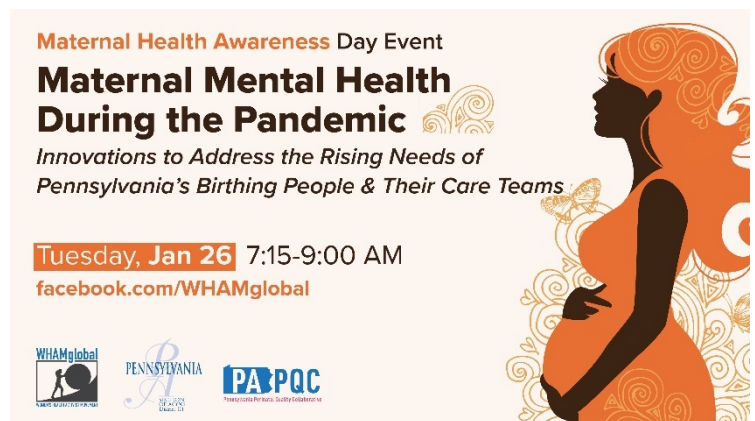
JHF Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson, MPH presented 2021 strategies for the Maternity Full Court Press Team. These include the formation and facilitation of regional WIC Action Groups, the formation of a Perinatal CHW & Doula Steering Group, leveraging JHF's CHW Steering Group to gain consensus on certification standards and financing recommendations for perinatal CHWs, and an education and advocacy blitz to pass the Midwifery Moderation Bill in 2021.

The Team discussed the presentations and next steps. Comments covered how to create more flexibility and make the WIC experience more user-friendly, and the associated regulatory changes necessary to make these changes. This could look like expanding access to online shopping or virtual access, as well as having grocers store WIC items in a singular location for ease of access. Others mentioned opportunities to standardize implementation of maternal depression screening throughout WIC programs. In addition, the Team discussed defining a formal scope of practice for CHWs in Pennsylvania, increasing the number of perinatal CHWs, and further integrating CHWs into prenatal healthcare.

The Maternity Full Court Press Team will next identify stakeholders and begin building the aforementioned workgroups to advance policy around maternal health.

Statewide Program Highlights Maternal Mental Health Innovations During Pandemic

The Women's Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal) hosted a January 26 [Maternal Health Awareness Day](#) program in partnership with the PA Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PA PQC). This year's program highlighted maternal mental health during the pandemic and innovations to address the rising needs of Pennsylvania's birthing persons and their care teams. Over 490 attendees joined the virtual workshop.



Keynote speaker Priya Gopalan, MD, Chief of Psychiatry at Magee Women's Hospital, and Medical Director of the Psychiatry Consultation-Liaison Service at the University of Pittsburgh Department of Psychiatry, shared data demonstrating the large impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of individuals in the U.S. and highlighted the dramatically higher prevalence of postpartum depression among Black and Latina women. Dr. Gopalan discussed opportunities to address mental health needs by screening patients and connecting them to services, mentioning Magee Women's Hospital's work and adaptations to telepsychiatry.

PA Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Teresa Miller shared with attendees the available resources to address Pennsylvanians' critical mental health needs. She detailed current home-visit and virtual programs intended to address social determinants of health for pregnant and parenting families. Secretary Miller also commented on DHS's work to address racism and their commitment to programs' equity in development and implementation, including a [new health equity report from DHS](#).

The webinar concluded with insight from a panel of guests including Dale Adair, MD, Medical Director of the Office of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services at PA DHS; Mandy Fauble, PhD, LCSW, Director of Clinical Care Services at UPMC Western Behavioral Health at Safe Harbor; Saleemah McNeil, CLC, MS, MFT, Reproductive Psychotherapist & Founder/CEO of Oshun Family Center; and Nazanin Silver, MD, MPH, Gynecologic Psychiatrist at UPMC Pinnacle Women's Behavioral Health Specialists.

View the recording and resources presented during the program on the [WHAMglobal website](#).

WHAMglobal Board and Learning Collaborative Convene

On Thursday, December 10th, the Women's Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal) Safer Childbirth Cities team convened its first Learning Collaborative virtual meeting. The Learning Collaborative welcomed Brown Mamas, The Birthing Hut, Elephant Song Doula Services, Kangaroo Birthing, and MAYA Organization to the space with an orientation of the Safer Childbirth Cities project, our health equity commitments, and the benefits of participating as a Community Fund member. Each team met with a

Jewish Healthcare Foundation staff member who will serve as their coach to talk through how their respective maternal health projects have evolved over the course of the planning phase. The Learning Collaborative used the time to set housekeeping/ground rules to create a safe space for all members. The session included mindfulness activities in order to center and affirm the work that these organizations facilitate on a daily basis across the region.



WHAMglobal Board members gather virtually for December's meeting.

WHAMglobal Board met virtually on December 3, 2020 to review the year's activities and discuss plans for 2021. The meeting featured a WHAMglobal Board Member Spotlight on Laurie Zephyrin, MD, MPH, MBA, Vice President, Delivery System Reform The Commonwealth Fund, with guest Roosa Tikkanen, MPH, M.Res., Senior Research Associate, The Commonwealth Fund, who presented and discussed the recent Issue Brief: [Maternal Mortality and Maternity Care in the](#)

[United States Compared to 10 Other Developed Countries](#). Board member Jennifer Moore, PhD, RN, Executive Director, Institute for Medicaid Innovation (IMI) presented on IMI's report, Community-Based Maternal Support Services: [The Role of Doulas and Community Health Workers in Medicaid](#).

JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD presented a WHAMglobal year in review, along with WHAMglobal Board Chair Debra Caplan, MPA and JHF staff Julia Och, Robert Ferguson, MPH, and Kate Dickerson, MSc. Brief highlights included the IWF COVID-19 Global Conversation, [Safer Childbirth Cities Launch](#), [What's at Stake for Women+ in this Election Town Hall event](#), [Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative](#) and [Moving on Maternal Depression Initiative](#), the [2020 Salk Health Activist Fellowship](#), and the [Pennsylvania WIC Stakeholders Collaborative](#).

JHF staff then presented what's next in 2021, focusing on JHF's [Full Court Press](#) health policy initiative arm to promote policy for comprehensive pregnancy and postpartum care, through midwifery integration, the PA WIC program, and perinatal CHWs and doulas.

Liftoff PGH Announces Regional Agenda for Leadership in Health Technology

Liftoff PGH demonstrated that Pittsburgh has all the essential pieces to be an international leader in applying frontier technologies to healthcare safety, quality and effectiveness. But we must have the regional vision, commitment, collaborations, and focus to propel us to leadership.

Moving forward, we envision a future where Pittsburgh innovators collectively advance six key areas of groundbreaking technology, highlighted during the events of Liftoff PGH. Please read our Regional Agenda for Leadership in Health Technology based around these six key areas, available [here](#).



Over 600 of our region's leading pioneers took the first step during our virtual summit in December 2020, where they brought their best and brightest ideas to our virtual kitchen table—but their work is just beginning.

Across Pittsburgh's health innovation ecosystem, technology is the undercurrent of positive change. If Pittsburgh is to succeed on the global stage, we must hone our focus on technology-driven solutions that open opportunities to better health. Stakeholders from education and workforce development, to payment and policy reform, to public health and healthcare delivery, must combine efforts and bring the focus to health tech innovation in Pittsburgh. Liftoff PGH

provided many sparks of inspiration—including our Ideathon pitch competition finalists—and now is the time to act.

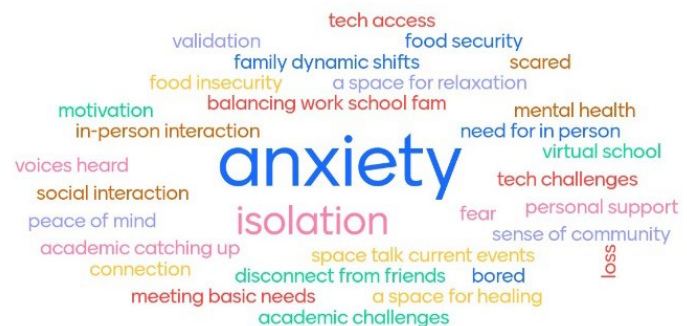
We would like to thank those who have joined our mission so far—including our speakers, advisory committee, sponsors, and community partners—but the work has only just begun. We invite the entire Pittsburgh health innovation ecosystem to put our region on the global stage.

Teen Mental Health Collaborative Joins to Serve Communities

The JHF Teen Mental Health Collaborative has been hard at work since launching in late 2020. Representatives of the [14 grantee organizations](#) have attended several virtual meetings, during which the Collaborative has defined their objectives for working together to better serve teens in their communities. Meetings include spotlights on each Collaborative member, so each can learn about the others' work.

Collaborative meetings include opportunities for members to learn from one another, for example, about successful strategies to engage teens and families. The Collaborative is working to identify opportunities to better integrate community health with traditional health systems. Members have identified that the Collaborative can leverage their strengths, including involving youth voice, creating safe spaces for teens, and their commitment to supporting holistic, equitable teen mental health, to combine efforts and make the case for the community's role in promoting teen mental health.

JHF will continue to serve as the facilitator for these meetings and identify opportunities where the Collaborative can advocate for policy change and improve quality of care.



Collaborative members shared their perspectives on teens' pressing concerns, collected in this wordcloud.

Youth Advocate Wins PA NAMI Award

The PA Youth Advocacy Network is pleased to share that youth advocate Abby Rickin-Marks has been chosen as the recipient of the NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania's 2021 Youth Mental Health Leadership Award. We are so proud of Abby and her work to support youth voice in mental health. Abby will be presented the award at this year's Virtual Child, Adolescent, and Transition Age Youth conference on Friday, February 5.

Over the past two years, Abby has played a significant leadership role in guiding the work of the PA Youth Advocacy Network as a student leader. Through skillful, caring leadership of student discussions on difficult topics such as mental health stigma, suicide prevention, and inequality, Abby has demonstrated her ability to connect with students of all backgrounds and identify shared values and experiences to communicate to Pennsylvania policymakers. She facilitated meetings with two state legislators for students to share their concerns and organized an entirely student-led virtual workshop on discrimination in education. She also serves as a student advisor for UpStreet and chairs the teen wellness committee at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh. Abby has been a stand-out leader among all the students we've engaged in our youth advocacy work. Her warm and empathetic approach, her integrity, and her commitment to addressing injustices in our society will enable her to continue to do great things in the future.



Abby Rickin-Marks

International Women's Forum Meeting Focuses on Long-Term Care

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) hosted a virtual meeting for the International Women's Forum Pittsburgh chapter on January 21, 2021. JHF President and CEO Karen Feinstein and JHF Board Chair Debra Caplan led the discussion on the current crisis and underlying challenges of the long-term care industry.

The group discussed JHF's recently-produced documentary, *What COVID-19 Exposed in Long-Term Care*, which received rave reviews. A panel of local leaders in skilled nursing shared their struggles to maintain health and happiness among their residents, their families, and their frontline workers while the virus took its toll and forced an eerie isolation. Panelists included Paul Winkler, President



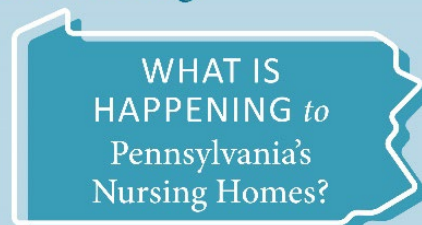
Panelists Paul Winkler, Deborah Winn-Horvitz, and Nick Vizzoca

and CEO, Presbyterian Senior Care, Deborah Winn-Horvitz, President and CEO, Jewish Association on Aging, and Nick Vizzoca, President and CEO, Vincentian Collaborative System. Then national thought leader Katie Smith Sloan, President and CEO, LeadingAge and Executive Director of The Global Ageing Network shared insights from working to improve our current system of services and supports to address ageism and to promote innovation.

LTSS Center @ UMass Releases Nursing Homes Report

In spring 2020 the Jewish Healthcare Foundation engaged researchers at the LeadingAge LTSS Center @ UMass Boston to complete a study documenting the critical role that nursing homes play in the care of older and vulnerable adults in Pennsylvania. The UMass Boston team was led by Professors Edward Alan Miller, PhD, MPA and Marc A. Cohen, PhD, and included doctoral students, Elizabeth Simpson, MPH, and Molly Wylie, MS.

The Case for Funding:



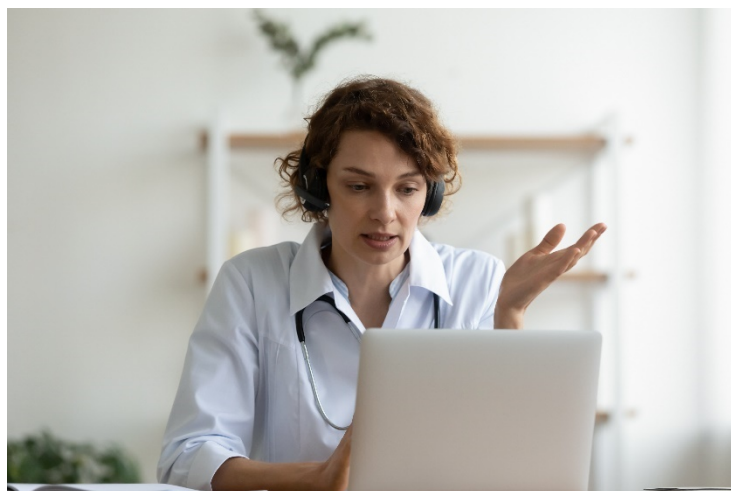
The research team put together a comprehensive longitudinal database and analyzed trends that have been affecting both the demand for and supply of nursing home care, including changes in Medicaid reimbursement. The team highlighted issues related to changes in the profile of users, workforce, quality of care, and payments, all of which will affect the utilization and financial viability of nursing homes in the state. The report, entitled “The Case for Funding: What Is Happening to Pennsylvania’s Nursing Homes?” is available [here](#), as well as infographics to accompany the report available [here](#).

Jewish Healthcare Foundation Joins New State Long-Term Care Support Effort

In 2020, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) served as lead educator for the Regional Response Health Collaboratives Program (RRHCP), which supported long-term care residents and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RRHCP was a partnership between the [PA Department of Human Services](#) (PA DHS), the [PA Department of Health](#), the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#), and key healthcare organizations and health systems across the

Commonwealth. As part of the program’s offerings, JHF launched a statewide learning network available to all long-term care facilities with twice weekly webinars on topics related to infection

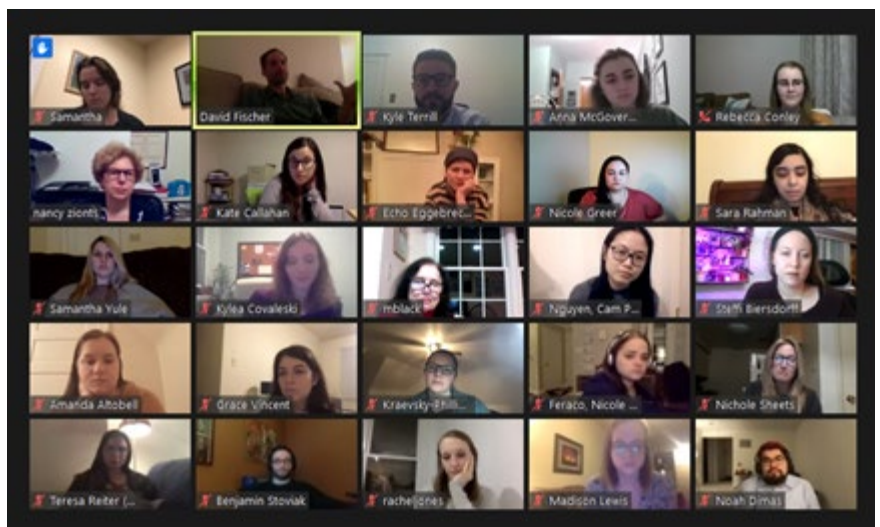


control and the latest guidance for responding to and mitigating spread of COVID-19. JHF developed toolkits to help facilities become more self-sufficient during the pandemic.

RRHCP drew to a close at the end of 2020, and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation will again serve as lead educator in the [Regional Congregate Care Assistance Teams \(RCAT\)](#), a new, more limited, version of RRHCP that will provide COVID-19 outbreak support to long-term care facilities through February 28, 2021. On January 21 as part of the RCAT program, JHF conducted a statewide webinar with over 1000 registrants for personal care homes and assisted living facilities, focused on improving campaigns and uptake for staff vaccinations/reducing vaccine hesitancy. As a result of interest generated through that event, Nancy Zionts and JHF Quality Improvement Specialist Nicole Greer were invited as featured speakers at the statewide PA Healthcare and Coalition meeting on January 26 and will present at the statewide PA Homecare association meeting.

Death and Dying Fellowship Launches Virtually in 2021

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF)'s 2021 Death and Dying Feinstein Fellowship began with the first session on January 25. The Death & Dying Fellowship takes on a key challenge: the reality that professionals are not well prepared to deal with death, dying, and grieving families, especially during an era of COVID-19. The Fellowship allows participants to learn, confront, and discuss the legal, medical, social, cultural, familial, and spiritual aspects of death and dying within a multi-disciplinary group in a low-pressure environment. The 2021 Fellowship will take advantage of a virtual world's opportunities, as the program will welcome speakers from outside of Pittsburgh, while Fellows will attend virtual site visits.



Death and Dying Fellows engage in a group discussion during their first virtual session.

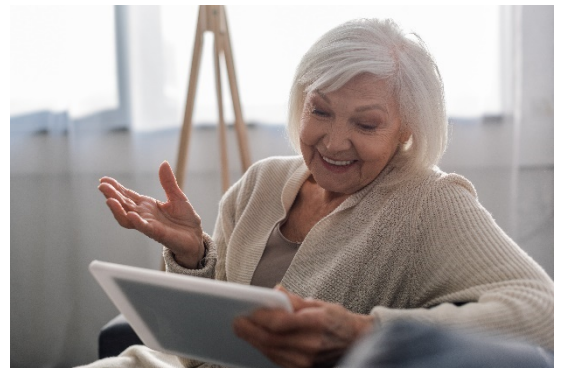
This year's fellowship welcomes 37 Fellows, who represent 15 degree programs (from nursing and occupational therapy to social work and public health) and hail from seven universities in Pittsburgh, Toledo, and San Francisco.

During the first session, JHF President & CEO Karen Feinstein provided an overview of the JHF and its operating arms with an emphasis on the 2021 FCP strategies, and the heightened awareness of death and dying experienced as a result of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

She also provided background on JHF's interest in improving care at end-of-life care through our Closure initiative, and encouraged the Fellows to become active in changing systems of care that do not meet the needs of patients and families. Dr. Robert Arnold, Chief, Section of Palliative Care and Medical Ethics at the University of Pittsburgh presented on the importance of relationships and communication in end-of-life care. JHF COO and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zions and Judy Black, MD, Medical Advisor to JHF introduced the 9-week Fellowship agenda and led students in a discussion around their individual goals and aspirations for the fellowship.

Jewish Community Supports Seniors with Engaging Programs During Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many challenges to our senior and caregiver community, from finding ways to connect remotely, to navigating unexpected care transitions, to illness and grief. We are especially saddened by the closing of the Charles Morris Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, which provided quality care to its Squirrel Hill residents for years. As they have long before COVID-19, our community's programs are still supporting seniors physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially wherever they live.



The Jewish Association on Aging has made significant contributions to this effort. JAA President and CEO Deborah Winn Horvitz says, "The Jewish Association on Aging provides a wide array of home and community services that have always encouraged independence among our region's seniors. By having the knowledge, staff, and operations in place when the virus came to Western PA, we could increase volume and provide new options where and when they were most needed," Winn-Horvitz said. Through tele-care from the PT@JCC, referrals to AgeWell Pittsburgh, expanded support for low-income residents, and nearly 20,000 kosher meal deliveries through Mollie's Meals, the JAA has ramped up activity for seniors during COVID-19. Winn-Horvitz added, "The challenges of the pandemic provided opportunities to focus our priorities and up our commitment to keep everyone we serve safe, healthy, and engaged."

"The pandemic turned life upside down, but we've also seen the community step up in big ways," says Laura Poskin, Executive Director of Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh. "Early on, the stellar folks leading our local services and programs recognized that they'd have to modify to keep people healthy, safe and connected. In-person visits became telephone calls. Sit-down meals turned into pick-up or delivery. Classes and conversations went virtual with phone-in options. It's taken a whole lot of continued creativity and collaboration, but Pittsburghers are resilient—our leadership and also our older neighbors participating in these programs."

JHF is proud to be part of the effort to support seniors during this difficult time through our Senior Connections initiative. Seniors can be physically active through the JHF-supported Fit with a Physician program led by Dr. Terry Starz and Venture Outdoors. The Virtual Senior Academy, originally a JHF project that is now managed by the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, engages seniors intellectually through online classes. JHF also offered virtual volunteer

opportunities with the GRAN Intergenerational Reading Program, and training for those caring for persons with dementia.

In these dark times, continued collaboration and creative planning are crucial if we are to provide seniors with the best opportunities to reengage and thrive as we look forward to widespread distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. After the pandemic, we will ensure that these programs continue to fulfill seniors' wants and needs, as we maintain our commitment to quality senior programming.

JHF Recognized During JCC “Little” Big Night

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) was honored to be recognized during the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh's (JCC) virtual Little Big Night on January 23.

“For all these years, the JCC has been there for us, from birth to older age, and even toward end of life. But right now, during COVID, I cannot imagine an institution that has been more actively there for us.

In that respect, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation knew we had to be there for them,” said JHF President and CEO Karen Feinstein. In 2020, JHF

granted [\\$2.5 million in emergency funding](#) over two years to support the JCC's work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

From community blood drives to meals for seniors to fitness classes, camps, and family retreats, the JCC's contributions to our community are vital, especially during this difficult time. We are thankful for all they do, especially to the heroic staff who make the JCC's programming possible. We look forward to continued partnership with the JCC into the future.

Watch Karen Feinstein's full remarks from the event [here](#).



Karen Wolk Feinstein speaks during JCC's virtual “Little” Big Night.

Introducing New Board Chair Debra L. Caplan

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation is pleased to introduce our new Board Chair, Debra L. Caplan, a long-time Board member and friend of the Foundation. Caplan served as past JHF Board Vice Chair from 2018-2020, Chair of JHF's Distribution Committee from 2012-2016, and she is currently Board Chair of JHF's operating arm Women's Health Activist Movement Global (WHAMglobal). In addition to her years of involvement with JHF, Caplan's extensive experience and knowledge of health care as an administrator, a community activist, and personal involvement with Montefiore Hospital lend great value to her new position as JHF Board Chair.



Debra L. Caplan

"We're at a profound moment in our nation's and healthcare system's history, and I believe the Jewish Healthcare Foundation is uniquely positioned to continue to play an important role," said JHF Board Chair Debra Caplan. "There has never been a more critical time for swift advocacy and thoughtful philanthropy to repair the ongoing damage from COVID-19 and to address pre-existing critical healthcare issues that persist during this pandemic. The Board and staff of JHF have the expertise and the clout to continue to drive the necessary responses to the pandemic, and I look forward to ensuring we do all that we can to support our community and partners."

The new year will see Caplan lead JHF toward its three primary policy objectives as part of its new *Full Court Press* Initiative, but many of JHF's ongoing programs will continue to play crucial roles in responses to the pandemic.

Caplan is no stranger to tireless work in the healthcare sphere. Montefiore Hospital was a second home to Caplan, a Squirrel Hill native with family ties to the hospital, and the college summers she spent working at Montefiore profoundly influenced her career. She first made her mark in Massachusetts at the Department of Public Health. Caplan created policy and protocols for the state's first emergency medical system and established training programs for emergency medical technicians and paramedics. Launching the state's first poison control program and a statewide trauma system was next. After serving in a leadership role at the state Office of Emergency Medical Services for five years, she went on to join the storied Brigham and Women's Hospital, a Harvard Medical School Teaching Hospital. There, as a young vice president with an array of operational responsibilities, she developed the program that performed the first heart transplant in New England.

Caplan returned to Pittsburgh with a master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School. She served as a vice president at Allegheny General Hospital with oversight of many operational departments, academic programs, and strategic and community development initiatives. Caplan spent 27 years as a top administrator at West Penn Allegheny Health System

and Allegheny Health Network before retiring in 2015. Caplan currently serves as an [Executive-in-Residence](#) at the Forbes Funds advising nonprofit leaders on governance and management and has an independent healthcare and nonprofit consulting practice.

Caplan is active across the Pittsburgh community and serves on a number of local boards, including Partner4Work, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and WQED (where she served as a past board chair). She currently serves as President of the Pittsburgh International Women's Forum.

As the new JHF Board Chair, Caplan looks forward to guiding the ongoing collaboration between Board members and JHF staff. She will leverage her deep ties to the community and experience in healthcare leadership to inform strategic decisions across JHF's array of projects and programs.

JHF Leads Community COVID-19 Public Service Announcements

To promote mask-wearing in the Pittsburgh community, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) initiated a partnership with the Pittsburgh Steelers to create a public-facing lawn sign campaign. Working with members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Contact Tracing Consortium, Pittsburgh-area universities, and other community partners, JHF is funding the production and distribution of the Steelers lawn signs to remind the public of the importance of mask-wearing during the pandemic. Despite the rollout of vaccines, [scientists advise](#) for continued mask-wearing at least into the summer. Giant Eagle has agreed to adapt the campaign and run a parallel effort within their stores to further encourage mask-wearing. If your organization is interested in helping to post or distribute the Steelers *Winners Wear Masks* lawn signs, please email info@jhf.org for more information.



Steelers lawn signs made it all the way to Cambria County, PA

JHF is leading the development of a communications campaign to stop the spread of COVID-19 through work with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Contact Tracing Consortium and closely collaborating with the PA Department of Health. JHF developed plain language infographics and social media content about contact tracing, isolation, quarantine, and the COVID Alert PA app for the Consortium's 100+ members to share in their communities. JHF staff will lead a new sub-committee with Consortium members to continue to expand the communications campaign.

Honoring Dr. Bruce Block, A Physician Pioneer and Early EHR Revolutionary

As he retires from his position as Chief Medical Informatics & Learning Officer at the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI), we wish to recognize Bruce Block, MD for a lifetime of extraordinary achievement in improving the quality and application of assessment methodology at the organizational level and the frontline of health care. Decades before others in the United States, Dr. Block developed and placed assessment and evaluation tools directly in the hands of healthcare practitioners and patients. The result was improved patient care throughout practices, and improved patient health outcomes.



Bruce Block, MD

Block grew up in a housing project in the Bronx and later on moved with his family to Oregon, and then Southern California. After completing his undergraduate major in English Literature at Stanford University in 1967, he attended Yale Medical School.

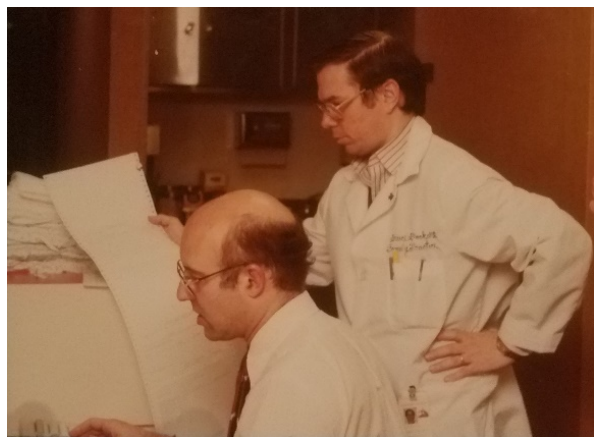
After graduating in 1971, Block and his then-classmate Marian married and subsequently completed their internships in Cleveland. They joined the newly formed National Health Service Corps with two friends from medical school and were assigned to two practice sites in western Pennsylvania, 20 miles from the nearest hospital. Two years later, he obtained one of the new federal Rural Health Initiative grants, which allowed him to build a five-practice rural health system, owned and directed by a regional community board. As medical director, he faced the dual challenges of increasing professional staffing and assuring quality. He and his colleagues trained nurse practitioners who took on roles in the local school system, the new medical practices, and the senior citizen community. As the practices grew, it became harder to evaluate gaps in care and the need for new programs.

In the early 1970s, identifying gaps in care often required manually going through thousands of charts—an impossible task in a busy practice. To make this process more efficient, Block developed a proto-EHR employing McBee cards as patient records. Strategically-placed holes on the edge of the card represented tracking criteria such as “flu shot candidate” or “diabetes.” The hole was notched if the patient had the characteristic. Block recalled, “If we needed to send out reminders for flu shots, we put a long knitting needle through the flu hole on the edge of the stack of patient cards. The cards with the notch would fall on the floor and we had our recall list.”

The rural practices began to identify gaps in care, but the cards couldn't tell them the causes or the best solutions. Living as part of the communities in which he practiced, Block often saw people on the street whom he knew had serious health issues, but who had stopped coming to see him. He realized that his care team needed a way to prevent gaps in care, not just recognize them.

After replacing themselves in the rural practices they started, Bruce and Marian moved to Pittsburgh in 1981 to take on combined teaching, research, and patient care roles. Block took on the job of medical director of the Family Medicine Residency's Family Health Center at Shadyside

Hospital. He saw an opportunity to truly advance frontline assessment and revolutionize the residency program, which, he says, “should develop tools for doctors out in practice, as well as train people to become specialists in primary care.”



Block in 1984, working on his EHR system.

Responsible for 27 residents, 12 faculty, and over 7,500 active patients, Block realized that he needed better data and assessment methods in order to provide a proper learning environment for primary care. He visited pioneering electronic medical record groups at Duke and Harvard and attended national meetings about using computers in medical care to understand the components of an effective EHR. Block mocked up the data he wanted to capture and how it could be used by busy physicians. He began searching for developers who could help him build what he wanted. He found a company in Cambridge working on a new electronic medical record concept. Working with them, he designed the medical record system he wanted. This

partnership allowed development of one of the first five practice-based EHR systems in the country.

The system, at Block's insistence, allowed data entry through dictation, rather than typing and clicking. The dictation placed alerts at the bottom of the patient's chart, so that the physician could see what lab tests or immunizations, for example, were due at each subsequent visit. The new system created report cards for each doctor on their diagnostic behavior and performance on health maintenance items (e.g., mammograms). The residents and faculty could see how they were doing compared to others in their class and to other doctors in their practice, driving practice and behavior change.

The system allowed Block to do some of the first EHR-based primary care studies in the U.S. For example, he was able to analyze 12 years of blood pressure measurements – 96,000 in all – and focus on the care of 1,200 patients living with high blood pressure. All previous research used just one or two blood pressure measurements a year; and nobody at the time had 12 years of practice-based data. The Family Health Center used Block's EHR for 18 years—a testament to its robust design.

In 1998, Dr. Block was awarded a grant from Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and UPMC Shadyside to develop community-based programs to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. He helped set up a coalition of African American churches called *Healthy*



Block with colleagues and community members of Healthy Hearts and Souls

Hearts and Souls and became the Medical Director, using what he knew about program development and evaluation to provide the underpinnings for a series of smoking and fitness projects. Based on the results of a novel community needs assessment, Block worked with community members to implement smoking cessation, nutrition, and exercise programs with the churches, all the while collecting data on enrollment behaviors and the effect on smoking rates and fitness metrics.

Just as he put data directly into the hands of physicians (decades before others began doing so), Block involved the community in actually using the data to understand program impact and improve their work. With significant funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Health in 2000, the program expanded its focus to include diabetes. Giving people feedback about their behavior and outcomes – a precursor to apps and devices like *fitbit*® today – drove notable self-care changes: 85% of those with diabetes were engaged in some kind of regular exercise at the end of the first year of the program, along with significant improvements in their health.

The theme of putting the assessment data into the hands of providers and patients continued to drive Dr. Block as Chief Medical Informatics & Learning Officer at PRHI. As director of the federal REACH program in western Pennsylvania (Regional Extension and Assistance Center for Health Information Technology), Block and his team recruited 962 providers in 340 practice sites to adopt – and use – electronic health records. This recruitment track record ranked western Pennsylvania second among REACH sites throughout the U.S., a result of countless face-to-face encounters with physicians during which Block and his team demonstrated how the practice's own assessment data could actually reveal improvement opportunities.

As Pennsylvania medical director of a multi-state initiative funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, Block and a PRHI team implemented and evaluated a collaborative care management model to improve the care of patients who experience diabetes or heart disease along with mental health conditions. Pulling the participating sites' own data from their own EHRs, Block could show the physicians a list of people whose care had lapsed, or those whose lab tests were poor – patients for whom practice improvements could truly mean better health outcomes.

Block also served as co-PI with PA SPREAD on a four-year Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality network quality improvement grant to enhance QI capabilities in practice groups in the region. Dr. Block worked with teams of trainers and coaches at PRHI to assure content reliability and teaching efficacy throughout the range of educational offerings. Additionally, he served as faculty with PRHI's Perfecting Patient and Community Care training programs, which support organizational development using application of Lean methodology. He has been particularly interested in working with Community Mental Health Centers, FQHCs, and Social Service agencies to enhance readiness for value-based payment initiatives.

With PRHI, Block was also physician lead for practice transformation projects, including the HealthChoices Patient-Centered Medical Home Learning Network, which supports partnerships between practices and Managed Care Organizations in adopting a model of care that puts patients at the forefront, and the Reinvesting in Health Initiative to expand supportive services and focus on what matters most in perinatal care.

Looking back over more than 50 years of Dr. Block's career, we are grateful for his contributions to advances in frontline assessment, including one of the country's first EHRs. As we look forward to even better assessment and evaluation approaches, it is fitting to honor those, like Dr. Block, upon whose shoulders we stand. His mantra "Health happens in-between doctor's visits" will continue to motivate us to look to community development as the best investment in health.

Introducing Sarah Pesí

We are pleased to welcome a new staff member, Sarah Pesí, to the JHF team. Sarah currently works part-time as Teen Engagement and Outreach Coordinator at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, where she focuses on wellness, outreach, and service with teens. While continuing this work, she will join JHF as a part-time Policy Assistant. Sarah will support JHF's Adolescent Behavioral Health Initiative, including the Youth Advocacy Network and Teen Mental Health Collaborative, as well as the Full Court Press health policy initiative. Sarah has a Master of Science in Public Policy & Management with a concentration in public policy analysis from Carnegie Mellon University, and she earned a BA in Public Policy Studies and a minor in social services administration from Chatham University. Sarah is passionate about empowering teens and youth, and about the role of individuals to make a difference. She became interested in public policy after writing and passing her own piece of legislation in PA as a teen.



Sarah Pesí

Welcoming Back Liftoff PGH Intern Kaitlin Roderick

We are pleased to welcome back Kaitlin Roderick, a returning intern who worked with Liftoff PGH last year. Kaitlin is entering her final semester at Carnegie Mellon University, where she is pursuing a Master of Health Care Policy and Management degree. Previously Kaitlin interned with Allegheny Health Network, where she worked as a student health coach to support seniors with chronic illness.

"I've always had an interest in aging and helping the senior population, and JHF let me explore that interest," Kaitlin says. Starting in June, Kaitlin collaborated with the JHF aging team and Liftoff team to coordinate an end-of-life workshop for the December 2020 virtual conference. Sponsored by the McElhattan Foundation, the workshop explored innovations in palliative care and hospice.

These areas are familiar to Kaitlin, who has volunteered with nursing homes and hospice organizations since middle school. Her drive to find innovative solutions in aging carried through her college career at Washington & Jefferson College and then on to CMU, where she first heard of JHF. Reflecting



Kaitlin Roderick

on her intern experience so far, Kaitlin expressed high value of the Foundation's commitment to education across the spectrum of healthcare. "If there's one thing I learned from this, it's to keep learning."

Kaitlin's Liftoff PGH internship broadened her view of Pittsburgh's potential for healthcare innovation. As an intern, she supported the Liftoff PGH Generation Fempreneur sessions, a collaboration with the Pittsburgh Technology Council's Business as Usual webinar series that highlighted Pittsburgh's up-and-coming women+ health innovators. Kaitlin said learning about the region's growing health innovation ecosystem gave her "a lot of hope and excitement towards my future career."

As she rejoins the Liftoff PGH team, Kaitlin is excited to develop a health innovation program that will do the same for younger students. Kaitlin is enthusiastic about what she and other young innovators can bring to the field. "A lot of new people are coming in with new ideas, a new mindset really, for what healthcare can be for everybody... My generation is very open-minded, and we're ready to explore new things."

PA POLST Coordinator Retires

With the announcement of her upcoming retirement, Marian Kemp, RN, BSBA leaves an accomplished legacy while she served as the PA POLST coordinator.

Following Kemp's initial retirement from Highmark Inc. in 2011 after serving as their Senior Markets project manager, she was appointed the Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) coordinator of the Coalition for Quality at the End of Life under the auspices of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation. Over the past decade in this role, Kemp led the efforts to provide statewide information and education on the POLST process. She had a leadership role in the development of the POLST Training: Doing it Right, designed to help assure the quality of the POLST conversation and the design of the PA POLST [website](#).



Marian Kemp

"On our twenty- year journey in advocating and advancing POLST, Marian was the true visionary who worked tirelessly behind scenes and I cannot thank her enough for her contributions," said Judith Black MD, medical advisor at the Jewish Healthcare Foundation.

As stated in her final POLST Notes, Kemp's wish is that the work continues and that greater understanding of the value of POLST to patients and families and healthcare professionals is achieved. Kemp will continue to be a member of CQEL representing community consumers. Future inquiries about PA POLST can be directed to Nicole Greer, Senior Quality Improvement Specialist at the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, at info@papolst.org.

Karen Feinstein Named Among Pittsburgh Business Times Power 100

Congratulations to Jewish Healthcare Foundation President & CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, who was recently named among the Pittsburgh Business Times Power 100 list, a guide to the region's most influential business leaders! Read more [here](#).



Apply for Innovation Works' 2021 JHF Healthcare Safety Challenge

During the Liftoff PGH 2020 live broadcast, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and **Innovation Works** announced the new 2021 "Hardware Cup" JHF Healthcare Safety Competition. The Healthcare Safety Competition is a pitch competition dedicated to identifying the most exciting patient safety and healthcare innovation startups in the U.S. and across the globe. The Competition includes mentorship opportunities and \$60,000 in cash prizes with the application cycle open from January 5- March 7, 2021.

For more information
visit **www.healthcaresafetypgh.org**



WQED Screening JHF Long-Term Care Documentary in Virtual Event

Join WQED and host Lynn Hayes-Freeland on February 24 at 7:00pm for the documentary *What COVID-19 Exposed in Long-Term Care*, produced by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, followed by a national panel of experts who will discuss what is happening in the long-term care industry, what it means for boomers and their children, and what are the policy changes that need to occur to care for our frail seniors in the decades ahead. This is an hour you will not want to miss.

RSVP here:

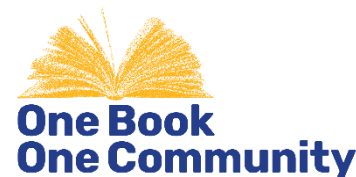
<https://ovee.itvs.org/screenings/55iri>



Join Us for Pitt Public Health One Book One Community Event

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation is sponsoring a Pitt Public Health [One Book One Community](#) event. [Dr. Dána-Ain Davis](#), Director of the Center for the Study of Women and Society and Professor of Anthropology at the Graduate Center, CUNY (New York) will present on her book, [Reproductive Injustice: Racism, Pregnancy and Premature Birth](#).

Join us to learn more about the role that medical racism plays in the lives of Black women who have given birth to premature and low birth weight infants and to discuss the opportunities for action in the region. Dr. Davis addresses this phenomenon, placing racial differences in birth outcomes into a historical context, revealing that ideas about reproduction and race today have been influenced by the legacy of ideas which developed during the era of slavery. Drawing on interviews with nearly mothers, fathers, neonatologists, nurses, midwives, and reproductive justice advocates, Dr. Davis argues that events leading up to an infant's arrival in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), and the parents' experiences while they are in the NICU, reveal subtle but pernicious forms of racism that confound the perceived class dynamics that are frequently understood to be a central factor of premature birth.



Q&A discussion will follow, moderated by Dr. Dara Mendez, Director of the Center for Health Equity & Assistant Professor of Epidemiology at the Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh.

Extending Sympathies to Jim Rooney and Family

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation extends its deepest sympathies to Board Trustee Jim Rooney and his entire family with the news of the passing of his mother, Patricia Rooney. She leaves an incredible legacy, and JHF is grateful for the ways she was always a welcome supporter and partner. Read her [obituary here](#).

