



**April 2023 | Jewish Healthcare Foundation news, events, milestones, & more**

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## JHF's Goals for 2023

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation has been steadily advancing its agenda in 2023 with priorities in each organizational focus area: patient safety, workforce development, women's health, senior and long-term care, HIV/AIDS, and teen mental health.

Its goals for the year include:

### Patient Safety:

- Establishing the National Patient Safety Board at the federal level with a focus on the public-private research-and-development team to identify injury and harm, study the pre-cursors and causes, and adopt solutions.
- [Completing a feature-length documentary to highlight patient safety innovation and Challenge winners.](#)
- Planting a flag in Pittsburgh to become a global tech hub for autonomous patient safety solutions through its Regional Autonomous Patient Safety (RAPS) initiative by:
  - Holding [a launch event February 24](#) at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU).
  - Funding the Initiative for Patient Safety Research at CMU and the development of technologies at the Pitt Department of Biomedical Informatics to reduce medication errors.
  - Forming a Regional Advisory and Patient Safety R&D Salons.
  - Catalyzing early stages of patient safety R&D with seed grants.

### Workforce Development:

- Helping to launch the first three cohorts of the [BH Fellows program](#), a new Allegheny County Department of Human Services program supporting frontline behavioral health workers in critical service areas.
- Launching a statewide healthcare workforce initiative to advance policy priorities to create and retain healthcare jobs.
- Holding two Death & Dying Fellowships: one in the winter for graduate students and one in the fall for professionals in the field.
- Establishing a [Patient Safety Fellowship](#) built on a competition from the Patient Safety Technology Challenge.

### Women's Health:

- Supporting midwifery modernization policies and reimbursement for doulas.
- Serving as [fiscal agent](#) for the dissemination of over \$9 million from the PA Department of Human Services for Maternal and Child Health.
- Serving as statewide convener of funders and advocates for Women's Reproductive Health.
- Reconstituting the [WHAMglobal board](#) with new experts from around the world focused on "Women's Health Inequity for Older Women."



- Sustaining support for and collaboration across community-based organizations in the Pittsburgh Safer Childbirth City through the Community Fund Shared Resource Hub.
- Expanding the scope of the PA PQC across the continuum of care and (e.g., increasing the percent of hospitals with a protocol to close the loop on the referral status with the post-discharge services and supports from 30% to 50%).

### Senior and Long-Term Care:

- Bringing best practices to 600 nursing facilities in Pennsylvania through the PA LTC Quality Improvement Learning Network.
- Piloting Dementia-Ready strategies to attend to the growing number of persons in Pennsylvania living with dementia and their caregivers.
- Taking the lead in new statewide policy efforts for Moving Forward (NASEM Report on Nursing Facility Quality), the first in the nation as a pilot.

### HIV/AIDS:

- Increasing market rates to provide sustainable housing for eligible HIV positive clients.
- Working to increase access to HIV testing in the primary care settings to reduce new infections by 95%.

### Teen Mental Health:

- Convening youth-led advocacy meetings with state and local policymakers focused on teen mental health awareness day, excused mental health days, and improved access to school-based resources.
- Developing a model for community-initiated care for teen mental health with community organizations participating in the collaborative and with health system partners.
- Celebrating and supporting the launch of The Beacon, a teen mental health space by The Friendship Circle with funding from JHF.
- Facilitating a 2023 PA Youth Advocacy Series which convened 20 participants throughout the state and engaged youth leaders in every aspect of planning and facilitation.

## Regional Autonomous Patient Safety (RAPS) Seed Grant Program Established

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation's Distribution Committee (JHF) approved a \$300,000 one-year grant to the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative (PRHI) to support patient safety research and development in the region via the second phase of the Regional Autonomous Patient Safety (RAPS) initiative.

PRHI will use the grant funding to create a \$200,000 Seed Grant Program to provide early-stage grants to multidisciplinary Research & Development teams, start-ups or tech companies in the Pittsburgh region that are developing, testing, or adopting an autonomous solution to prevent medical errors and organizing a series of "Patient Safety R&D Salons" with



multidisciplinary research teams, providers, payers, and tech companies in the region in response to the ideas raised during breakout sessions at the RAPS Launch Event.

The Seed Grant Program will begin accepting proposals on June 1, 2023 with funding being awarded based on the extent to which the autonomous patient safety solution is aligned with what healthcare providers need to work in a safe environment and the extent to which it is aligned with federal funding opportunities. More details will be forthcoming soon on the PRHI website.

The additional \$100,000 in approved funding will be used to commission an economic analysis on the number of jobs that have the potential to be created or retained if the region deployed its world-renowned strength in autonomous technologies to prevent medical errors.

Read more in the [Pittsburgh Business Times](#), [Technical.ly](#), and the [Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle](#).

## 2023 Patient Safety Challenge Fellowship Announced

The 19th annual Patient Safety Fellowship is looking toward the future. During the Patient Safety *Challenge* Fellowship this summer, fellows will reimagine health care starting from a patient/family perspective and designing it to be vastly safer.

Fellows will have access to mentors – nationally recognized leaders in patient safety – to help shape their vision. The curriculum will inform the fellows' understanding of the existing patient safety landscape and opportunities for reinventing the system.



The outcome will be a concept presentation that teams will present in-person at the expo-style Finale in August. Academic and healthcare leaders from the Pittsburgh-region will be invited to the finale to hear fellows' ideas. A panel of judges will pick a winner, and the winning team will receive a \$5,000 cash prize.

The challenge is currently seeking applicants who are graduate students (including health care, public policy, tech, business, and beyond), medical residents, or undergraduate students in health professions or a related field. Applicants must be currently in a degree program to apply. Applications are being accepted until the newly extended deadline of May 7. To apply visit: [patientsafetytech.com/fellowship](https://patientsafetytech.com/fellowship).

## Youth Advocacy Series Finale Brings Mental Health Needs into Focus for Legislators and Advocates

The PA Youth Advocacy Network, a program of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF), launched the 2023 Teen Mental Health Advocacy Series on February 1 with the youth presenting their final advocacy projects during the virtual finale on March 29.

This was the second annual series connecting Pennsylvania high school students with advocacy skills, such as communicating their cause, using data for advocacy, and coalition-building.

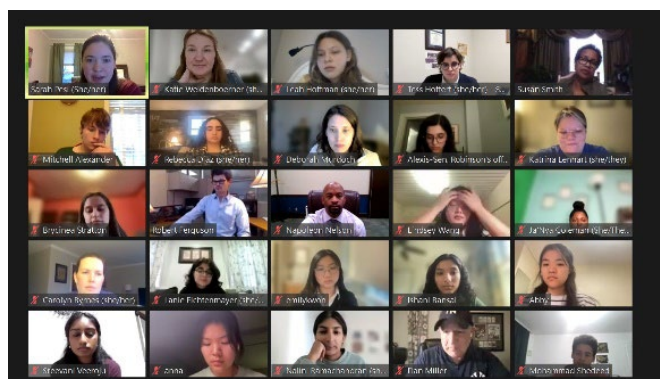
The 19 participants represented seven counties across the commonwealth including Allegheny, Lancaster, Luzerne, Montgomery, Philadelphia, Washington, and York. The students range from grades 9-12 and have varied experiences exploring and leading advocacy initiatives in their schools and communities. The Advocacy Series builds on JHF's years of efforts to call for change in teen mental health through the PA Youth Advocacy Network.

The finale offered an opportunity for students to get feedback on projects from leaders at mental health organizations and legislators. Providing framing to the group discussion, Sarah Pesi, policy associate at JHF, shared, "Many of the projects are focused on what teens hope to impact on the local level within their schools. Your perspectives will provide insights on to larger systemic changes that could require state policy changes to support these types of student-led initiatives and resources you know of that can support students and existing efforts they might be able to leverage."

The youth's projects included:

- The important role of schools to address mental health and substance use disorder from implementing curriculum, increasing services, and making sure the environment of schools is a place where students feel safe and supported;
- Addressing stigma around mental health and substance use disorder and the Importance of Peer Support including education efforts, forming clubs, different ways to talk about the issues to address stigma, and ways for teens to be supports to each other;
- Issues of inclusion and equity including social inclusion, rural and telehealth access, access to therapeutic services for all, disability inclusion, the impact of period poverty on mental health, and affirming resources for LGBTQ+ mental health.

During the virtual finale, students presented their final projects to family, friends, mental health advocates, and legislators. Distinguished guests included: Rep. Napoleon Nelson; Rep. Dan Miller;



Participants, faculty, and guests during the 2023 Teen Mental Health Advocacy Series finale.



Alexis Trbovich, representing State Sen. Devlin Robinson; Tess Hoffert, representing State Sen. Judy Schwank, and JHF Board president Debra Caplan.

## U.S. Surgeon General Meets with Pittsburgh Youth and Youth Organizations

U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy visited Pittsburgh on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> to hear from community members and teens around the issue of protecting youth mental health. These discussions were in follow-up to the national advisory Dr. Murthy issued on youth mental health in December 2021.

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation participated in two roundtable discussions organized by the Boys & Girls Club of Western Pennsylvania (BGCWPA) as part of his visit. JHF's program manager Deborah Murdoch, MPH participated in a community roundtable focused on the impact of violence and trauma on the mental health and wellbeing of teens and families, and PA Youth Advocacy Network member Mohammad Shedeed joined teens from the BGCWPA for a discussion with Dr. Murthy.



Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General speaks with Pittsburgh youth.

During discussions with Dr. Murthy, community leaders shared the innovative work happening in communities to address the impact of trauma through trusted relationships with teens and families and the need to extend the continuum of care for youth mental health by investing in these resources. Murdoch detailed JHF's work through the Teen Mental Health Collaborative to gather youth-serving organizations to share approaches and learn from one another.



Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, U.S. Surgeon General (bottom left) joins Pittsburgh advocates for teen mental health, including Deborah Murdoch (second from top right), on April 3.

Youth discussed their stressors, substance use disorder, and the impact of COVID-19 isolation and technology on mental health in discussions, youth advocated for mental health education and resources in schools, safe spaces in, and access to supportive adults.

"Having the honor of meeting with the Surgeon General of the United States was a very humbling and exciting experience. It was powerful to see with my own eyes how the government is actively trying to amend the mental health crisis among the youth of the country by taking their very important perspectives into account," Shedeed said.

## Teen Mental Health Collaborative Holds Quarterly Meeting at Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation

On March 23, the [Teen Mental Health Collaborative](#) held its quarterly meeting at Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation as an opportunity to network, share organizational highlights, and hear and learn from partner organizations.

Collaborative members heard presentations from Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation Program Director Coley Alston on supporting LGBTQ+ Youth; Boys and Girls Club of Western Pennsylvania VP of Operators Melissa Fuller,

BGCWPA VP of Teen Programs and Partnerships Kara Petrosky, and Vitable Director of Sales Brian Cottone Jr. presented on teen mental health innovations for health system and CBO collaboration; and Sophia Duck, training and engagement manager of The Mentoring Partnership of SWPA, provided information about The Mentoring Partnership grief toolkit, education and training.

Following the meeting, Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation facilitated an in-person Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) training for interested collaborative members. The training explored concepts and terminology around SOGIE, defined health disparities impacting the LGBTQ+ community and the layers of discrimination that cause them, and examined potential biases that may create barriers to providing service. This is part of a larger initiative of the collaborative to offer mental health skill-building to staff of community-based organization similar to the model of community-initiated care to better equip staff, to serve teens of all backgrounds.



Attendees at the Teen Mental Health Collaborative meeting at Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation on March 23.

## Jewish Healthcare Foundation Hosts Lunch with Allegheny County House Delegation

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) hosted a lunch with members of the Allegheny County House Delegation on April 5, providing an opportunity for many of the new members of the delegation to learn more about JHF, its mission, and its ongoing work across Pennsylvania.

Attendees included: Rep. Jessica Benham, Rep. Emily Kinkead, Rep. Matt Gergely, and Rep. Nick Pisciotano, Chair of the Allegheny County House



(left to right) Ricardo Worthey, Rep. Emily Kinkead, Karen Wolk Feinstein, Robert Ferguson, R.J. Ewanco, Rep. Abigail Salisbury, Rep. Nick Pisciotano, Rep. Matt Gergely, and Catherine Weis.

Delegation, Rep. Abigail Salisbury, Catherine Weis, representing Rep. Arvind Venkat, and Ricardo Worthey, representing Rep. La'Tasha Mayes' office.

During the session, Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD presented the JHF's policy priorities for consideration for the 2024-25 budget year, including: Investing in Pennsylvania's innovation economy to establish Pittsburgh as a patient safety research and development hub and establishing an Office of Healthcare Workforce Reform. The presentation was followed by a discussion and question and answer session.

## Karen Feinstein Joins International Study Tour for Knowledge Exchange in Health Care and Policy

Dr. Feinstein participated in an 11-day international study tour with the Commonwealth Fund and AcademyHealth.

Dr. Feinstein was one of eight U.S. healthcare leaders invited to explore healthcare delivery and policy landscapes in New Zealand, Australia, and Singapore to learn about innovative work being done in these countries to advance healthcare delivery, policy, and equity. The tour's mission is to provide a space for leaders to identify potential opportunities to foster cross-national relationships and translate lessons from their experiences to inform domestic policy and practice.



Participants of the International Study Tour.

The itinerary encompassed focus areas including innovation in primary care delivery, access to care for rural and indigenous populations, mental health, maternal and child health, aging services, healthcare financing, advanced technology, and cost management for pharmaceuticals and healthcare services. It also provided opportunities for immersion in the cultures of the countries, including the Māori population in New Zealand and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in rural Australia.

Dr. Feinstein traveled with Aaron Carroll, Indiana University School of Medicine; Adimika Meadows Arthur, HealthTech for Medicaid; Andrew Carlo, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute; Dave A. Chokshi, NYU Grossman School of Medicine; Narda Ipakchi, The SCAN Foundation; Keisuke Nakagawa, UC Davis Health; Prof Bola Owolabi, NHS England; Danielle DeCosta, AcademyHealth; Molly Fitzgerald, Commonwealth Fund; Michael Gluck, AcademyHealth; and Reggie Williams, Commonwealth Fund.

Read reflections from Michael Gluck on the visit to New Zealand [here](#).



## International Women's Forum Leaders Convene to Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Jewish Healthcare Foundation President and CEO and past International Women's Forum (IWF) Pittsburgh Forum President Dr. Feinstein and JHF Board Chair and past IWF Pittsburgh Forum President Debra Caplan, MPA attended a special gathering of IWF leaders from around the globe and to also represent the IWF Pittsburgh Forum, along with Esther Bush, past IWF Global board member, and Susan Kirsch, Current IWF Pittsburgh Forum president.



(left to right) Esther Bush, Susan Kirsch, Karen Feinstein, and Debra Caplan.

The *Visionary Leaders Celebration* was a small and intimate gathering of 125 of the 7,000-plus global IWF members gathered to celebrate the IWF global mission and vision of advancing women's leadership and championing equality, and kickoff the 50th anniversary of the International Women's Forum.

Highlights of the two-day gathering included: Diplomatic dinners with various ambassadors (Dr. Feinstein attended a dinner at the South African Embassy, and Caplan joined nine other IWF global members at the residence of the Ambassador of Chile); a leadership conversation with The Honorable Susan Rice, Domestic Policy Advisor to President Joseph Biden; an in-depth tour of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, including a discussion with its CEO Deborah Rutter; and networking and connecting with IWF colleagues from around the globe.



Dinner at the South African Embassy.

Dr. Feinstein and Caplan co-founded the IWF Special Interest Group in Healthcare to convene global female leaders in health care and beyond to discuss shared priorities and innovative ways to improve health and health care. The Special Interest Group has created a space where IWF global members with mutual interests can meet to discuss healthcare-related issues of the day.

## Global Pittsburgh International Health Leader Cohort Visits JHF to Learn about Women's Health Initiatives

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) hosted 11 healthcare professionals from nine countries who were nominated by the U.S. embassies for the project “Mitigating Challenges in Women’s Health” to learn about the Foundation’s women’s health initiatives, particularly the work of *Pittsburgh: A Safer Childbirth City* and the Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative.

The delegation included medical professionals involved in women’s healthcare treatment and disease prevention education programs included nurses, doctors, hospital administrators, Ministry of Health officials, educators, non-governmental organization (NGO) staff, and social workers.



Global Pittsburgh delegation and JHF staff at the JHF offices on April 19.

During the visit to JHF, Chief Policy Officer Robert Ferguson, MPH, Jennifer Condel, SCT(ASCP)MT, manager, lean healthcare strategy and implementation, and PA PQC and Pittsburgh: A Safer Childbirth City project manager Sara Nelis, RN provided an overview of the Foundation’s work and structure, including the Foundation’s work on creating a National Patient Safety Board, the ways its fellowship programs are supporting healthcare systems experiencing workforce shortages, and the programs it has implemented to support maternal health care across Pennsylvania to increase access to services and work towards health equity.

Discussions centered on the challenges and successes of using information technology systems to increase quality of care, accurate data collection in the healthcare space, serving women in rural areas, social determinants of health and how those are addressed, and how the pandemic underscored the fragility of health systems and staffing.

## New Patient Safety Technology Challenge Award Winners Announced

The [Patient Safety Technology Challenge](#) is designed to fuel the engagement of students and innovators in creating solutions and envisioning transformational approaches to reduce preventable harm from medical errors and reimagine a vastly safer healthcare system. Five competitions that took place in Washington DC, Georgia, Alabama, Utah, and Massachusetts recently announced their winners.

The Patient Safety Technology Challenge sponsored the International Virtual Reality Healthcare Association’s Patient



The winning team from West Virginia University (WVU) Medicine at the International Virtual Reality Healthcare Association’s Patient Safety Technology Challenge.

Safety Technology Challenge. The winning idea, a pilot to incorporate virtual reality (VR) guided breathing exercises for airway clearance for high-risk post-operative patients, came from a West Virginia University Medicine team. The second prize was given to the idea to use VR to train physicians how to place central line catheters to reduce central line-associated blood stream infections (CLABSI). The third prize went to University of Pennsylvania startup venture, Vital Sign for Well-Being, a VR-enabled, evidence-based, and personalized platform for reproductive and maternal mental health.

The Patient Safety Technology Challenge partnered with Emory University's Goizueta Healthcare Association's 2040 Healthcare Futuring Competition on April 7, 2023. Teams were asked to envision a new, radically safer healthcare system. BioFuture brought home the top prize of \$1,500 for their idea of creating integrated computational facilities to improving care through predictive modelling with team members from both Emory University and Georgia Tech. SW<sup>2</sup> placed second and received a \$1,000 prize for their tech-enabled system that reduce medication errors. Arjun Srinivasan, MD, deputy director for program improvement in the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion Centers for Disease Control and Prevention served as a judge.



The winning BioFuture team and Dr. Arjun Srinivasan at the 2040 Healthcare Futuring Competition.

The University of Alabama's Alabama Entrepreneurship Institute held the 2023 Edward K. Aldag Jr. Student Business Plan Competition on April 13 and 14. The Patient Safety Technology Challenge sponsored a new \$2,500 prize for the best tech-enabled solution. The winners created NephSol Inc. which developed a brain blood flow monitor for dialysis patients that will provide real-time alerts and continuous monitoring designed to curb common risks that patients encounter during dialysis, including the risk of falls, stroke, cognitive decline, and tissue damage which can be identified earlier with their technology.



Winners of the best tech-enabled solution at the Edward K. Aldag Jr. Student Business Plan Competition.

This year's Bench to Bedside, hosted by the University of Utah's Center for Medical Innovation, gave a \$10,000 award sponsored by Patient Safety Technology Challenge for the best tech-enabled solution. The winner was Luko Suo, MD, MS, who is studying biomedical engineering at the University of Utah and is a recent graduate from the School of Medicine. Suo developed the Pegasus Safety Breakaway System which aims to reduce the risk of medical tubing complications through their novel solution of buffered safety breakaway tubing. Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative invited local judges David Classen, MD, Pascal Metrics' chief medical information officer and Michael Woodruff, MD, who formerly served as Intermountain Healthcare's chief patient experience officer to select the winning team.

At this year's MIT Hacking Medicine's Grand Hack held April 20-23, 35 out of 42 teams competed for the Patient Safety prize. Octila Health won the \$1,500 1<sup>st</sup> place prize for their app that will enable home patient monitoring and education for behavioral health patients to ensure the



continuation of care. The \$1,000 second place prize went to NexxStep Health that created a mobile based patient action plan to streamline delivery of care. Susan Haas, MD, Ariadne Labs' core faculty member in Safe Surgery Safe Systems program, Karen Boylan, RN, for Cheetah Medical's director of sales and clinical training, and Jack Rowe, MD, Agilon Health's senior medical director served as the judges.

Read about past competitions involved in the Patient Safety Technology Challenge at the [Patient Safety Technology Challenge website](#).

## Two Patient Safety Awards Added to Competitions Across the Country

Two competitions have joined the [Patient Safety Technology Challenge](#) funded by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and administered by the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative.

The East Carolina University Healthcare Innovation Pitch Program is a business competition for East Carolina University clinicians, faculty, and students to pitch ideas that address one of the five main categories of patient harm. There are no restrictions on the stage of the idea being submitted. The deadline to register is May 16. Selected teams will have four training sessions and an in-person pitch presentation will be held June 22.



The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Digital Health Hub Foundation's Digital Health Awards 2023 will include a patient safety category sponsored by the Patient Safety Technology Challenge. The Digital Health Awards will recognize companies' innovative achievements in improving health through technology. Submissions to [apply are open](#) now and will close on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The winners will be announced the HLTH conference in Las Vegas on October 9, 2023.

The Patient Safety Technology Challenge is designed to fuel the engagement of students and innovators in creating solutions and envisioning transformational approaches to reduce preventable harm from medical errors and reimagine a vastly safer healthcare system.

## Nancy Zionts Speaks to Consumer Technology Association Foundation Board

On April 18, Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) COO and Chief Program Officer Nancy Zionts spoke at the Consumer Technology Association (CTA) Foundation board meeting, held virtually via Zoom.

Zionts was invited to speak by Steve Ewell, executive director of the CTA Foundation, to share about JHF's experience of coming to the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) as a





healthcare foundation, how the experience of attending has changed over time, why JHF continues to come back, and what influence it has had on JHF's grantmaking.

While JHF was one of the first foundations to accept an invitation to attend CES almost 10 years ago, nearly a dozen foundations attended this year.

Zionts and JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein attended CES in January to explore how technology is being used in JHF's key focus areas, including aging, the healthcare workforce (think "community health worker with a smartphone"), and patient safety.

Zionts shared what she and Dr. Feinstein had reported to the Health Careers Futures Board, namely, that as a foundation that aspires to bring creativity and new ideas to the healthcare space, it is important to gain exposure to the cutting-edge of technology, and CES is the ultimate place to do so. Ewell inquired about the evolving role JHF and Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative are playing relative to patient technology challenges, and he expressed hope that collaborations with CES will evolve in that regard.

## Nancy Zionts Facilitates the Discussion at Theresa Brown's Book Release

Pittsburgh native, best-selling author, and former Jewish Healthcare Foundation Board member Theresa Brown, RN celebrated the release of her book *Healing*, on April 11 at Penguin Bookshop in Sewickley.

Zionts led a conversation with Brown, who discussed her experiences and process in writing the memoir about her own poignant, powerful personal story about her breast cancer diagnosis. The event also included a question-and-answer session with the audience.



Theresa Brown reads from her book with Nancy Zionts at the Penguin Bookshop on April 11.

Brown is the author of the New York Times bestseller *The Shift*, has been a contributor to the New York Times. Her writing appears on CNN.com and in the American Journal of Nursing, the Journal of the American Medical Association, and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. She has been a guest on MSNBC Live and NPR's Fresh Air.

## Pittsburgh Arts & Lecture Event with Emily Kline, PhD Rescheduled

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation is the presenting sponsor of a conversation with Emily Kline, PhD Thursday, May 11 at 6 p.m. as part of the Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures Made Local Series at the Carnegie Library Lecture Hall. The lecture is a free event, and in person and virtual tickets are available [here](#).

A conversation with Dr. Kline will be held from 10-11 a.m.



Thursday, May 11 at The Friendship Circle, 1922 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh. Please [RSVP here](#) by May 5 for this event. This event was postponed in April and is at a new location.

Emily Kline, PhD, author of the soon to be released book, [\*The School of Hard Talks, How to have Conversations with Your \(Almost Grown\) Kids\*](#), a practical, engaging guide to help adults and parents connect and communicate with youth people.

Dr. Kline, a clinical psychologist and writer, grew up in Pittsburgh and worked for Jewish Residential Services in Squirrel Hill and in psychiatric research at the University of Pittsburgh. She then went on to graduate degrees at the University of Maryland, a fellowship at Harvard Medical School, and faculty appointments at Harvard and Boston University. She is the recipient of a career development award from the National Institute of Mental Health. She has published dozens of articles appearing in a range of peer-reviewed scholarly journals, textbooks, and popular magazines, and she has spoken with audiences all over the world about mental health and interpersonal communication.

## JHF Hosts Self-Defense Seminar for Staff

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation hosted a two-day self-defense seminar April 14 and April 21. Provided by master instructors from the Isshinryu Karate Academy, the course provided staff with self-defense techniques and scenarios, taught by Renshi Leon (Len) Cherney and Sensei Chocku Radhakrishnan. Of the training, Dr. Feinstein said “I feel so much better prepared if something awful happens. At least I know the basics of what to do and what not to do.”



Renshi Leon Cherney (right) and JHF HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator Christopher Garnett (left) at the training.

## JHF Sponsors Healthy Start's Black Birth Expo

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation was a silver sponsor of Healthy Start's [Black Birth Expo](#) held April 15 at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center. Nelis attended the event which provided resources, vendors, education, and community. The keynote speaker was Christin Farmer, founder of Birthing Beautiful Communities. Other speakers included: Aquene Watkins of Royally Fit, Muffy Mendoza of Brown Mamas, and Tamiah Bridgett of It's a Natural Thang.



## JHF Encourages Action on National Healthcare Decisions Day

In recognition of National Healthcare Decisions Day, members of the Jewish Healthcare Foundation Aging Team were available on April 17 and 18 to answer questions about advance directives and how to name a healthcare agent. Staff were encouraged to stop by, ask questions, and get additional information.

National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) is held annually to inspire, educate, and empower the public and providers about the importance of advance care planning. Since its inception, JHF has had a steadfast commitment to end-of-life care, and a critical component of this is gaining knowledge about and comfort with conversations around care at the end of life.



From left to right: Sarah LaVoie, Lisa Boyd, Maureen Saxon-Gioia, and Lisa George discuss choosing a healthcare proxy.

## Dr. Michael Becich and Family Ride to Support Cancer Research

On May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Michael J. Becich, MD, PhD, a friend of the Foundation, associate vice chancellor for informatics in health sciences at the University of Pittsburgh, and distinguished professor and chair of Pitt's Department of Biomedical Informatics at the School of Medicine, underwent below-the-knee amputation for a Charcot ankle due to complications from his Type 2 diabetes. Despite three surgeries to remove infected bone and abscesses from a staph infection, he succumbed to the Jardiance-induced amputation due to accelerating infection.



**RUSH TO CRUSH  
CANCER**

His journey to recovery has included four surgeries since the May amputation and has finally resulted in him walking two hours daily on his new prosthetic.

His new goal is to return to biking on May 20 of this year in the [Rush to Crush Cancer](#) fundraising event for Hillman Cancer Center, where Becich is the associate director of cancer informatics. He will participate on a team with his three children Kayla, Nikki, and Mike.

"It's been a lesson-filled journey for me, and it's taught me much, and made me even more passionate about medication error elimination to realize the goals our patient safety initiatives via the Regional Autonomous Patient Safety (RAPS) initiative," Dr. Becich said.

Learn more about his efforts on [Mike's](#) fundraising page.

## Premier Medical Associates Receives AMGA's Acclaim Award

Pennsylvania-based Premier Medical Associates recently received the American Medical Group Association (AMGA)'s Acclaim Award for the second year in a row. PMA is led by Chief Executive Officer Mark DeRubeis who also serves as co-chair of Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative.

[The Acclaim Award](#) recognizes the nation's premier healthcare delivery organization that has successfully aligned itself with the Quadruple Aim by moving toward equitable and value-based care.



Premier Medical Associates was recognized for initiatives including: Developing a strong focus on improving the control of chronic diseases, increasing screening rates, and improving immunization rates to reduce the incidence of preventable diseases; creating a patient experience committee and appointing patient experience managers, participating in a Clinically Integrated Network (CIN) that includes provider and hospital participants across three states; attaining level 3 NCQA Patient Centered Medical Home certification continuously since 2013; and creating an equity dashboard for colorectal cancer (CRC) screening rates, hypertension control, diabetes control, and more.

## Now Hiring: Behavioral Health Program Associate

The Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) seeks an engaging and enthusiastic Behavioral Health (BH) Program Associate to join a cross-functional team to participate in JHF's behavioral health programs. [Click here](#) to view the full job description and apply.



## Dan Swayze Pioneers Community Paramedicine Innovation and Healthcare Workforce Development

Dan Swayze, DrPH, MBA, MEMS, has been involved in emergency medical services for more than 30 years and is one of the earliest pioneers of community paramedicine.

"I started as a wannabe medical student and quickly realized that I wasn't going to be able to get into medical school. I had always been a part of a volunteer fire department





with my dad in a very rural area in upstate New York. I grew up in the firehouse with him and was always attracted to serving in that capacity,” said Swayze.

Swayze is currently the vice president of community services at UPMC. He formerly served as: Assistant vice president of Clinical Affairs, Community Support Services at UPMC; vice president and chief operating officer of the Center for Emergency Medicine of Western Pennsylvania for 16 years; an adjunct professor at the University of Pittsburgh; vice president of consumer health and wellness at Acclamation Systems, Inc.; and the director of health programs and director of prehospital care at UPMC.

Swayze has a doctorate degree in behavioral and community health services from University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, a master’s in business administration from University of Pittsburgh Katz School of Business, and a master’s in emergency medical services from Drexel University.

From his earliest years in the profession, he saw how paramedics skills and passion weren’t being used effectively to respond to the needs of the communities they served.

“Historically, we’ve trained paramedics to do emergency medical responses, which was absolutely essential when the ambulance service was first getting started in the United States. But the more that I got involved, the more I realized that there’s a misalignment with the resources they have and the work that they’re being asked to do. That is really what has driven my subsequent work on how we can use that workforce differently and in a more impactful way,” Swayze said.

As a paramedic, Swayze realized he was drawn to the ability to impact one person’s life at a time – a “one call, one life” kind of response. But due to many factors, including protocol, expertise, time, and resources, the needs of his patients weren’t always being dialed into the right agency.

He harkens back to memories of a man who lived in a condemned building he owned who had multiple chronic illnesses, no support, and was often in and out of the hospital but struggled to care for himself because he was concerned for the well-being of his dog who had a concerning lump on its side. A call to a vet to do a pro-bono case and get the dog started on the medicine it needed also led to calls to get the patient set up with the care he needed and had a right to through the VA.

Swayze also recounted a PhD who called with symptoms of congestive heart failure. Upon a visit to the home, medics found that he was taking medications meticulously as prescribed by multiple doctors, who weren’t aware of what the others were prescribing. That community health worker was able to remedy the situation before it was deadly.

“When you realize that people are calling 911 because they have a crisis of some kind but they just don’t know who else to call, the 911 system has become the de-facto early emergent entry into any system of care – if you’re homeless or food insecure or you have any challenge,” Swayze said. “There is no other system of care that is as immediate and as responsive as the emergency medical system is. The problem is that it’s the wrong system for most of those other types of crises. It wasn’t designed to handle it.”

Recognizing this issue as an opportunity, UPMC Health Plan's Freedom House 2.0 program was born.

Modeled from Pittsburgh's innovative 1960s initiative which recruited, trained, and employed economically disadvantaged individuals, the 2.0 reboot is a 10-week program training people from economically disadvantaged communities as emergency medical technicians and community health workers. Participants receive mentorship and financial support, as well as state approved EMT certification and training.

The first seven cohorts of students, approximately 100 students in total, that have graduated since 2020 are predominantly African American women from communities that are marginalized and impoverished. Until Freedom House 2.0, they had struggled to get their foot in the door of the healthcare system workforce as they deal with their own social determinants.

"What's unique about Freedom House 2.0 is that we recognize that the students that are in the classroom are experiencing the same trauma as the residents of the communities that we're trying to help. In order for them to be successful, we have to wrap around other social services into the classroom setting so that they can be successful," Swayze explained, adding that this means helping with food insecurity, childcare, transportation issues, and more.

With 60 to 80 percent of participants completing the program and being placed in EMS and clinical settings, it has proven to be a successful workforce pipeline for UPMC and regional health care more broadly.

As a result of this program and others, Swayze, and in turn Pittsburgh, are widely considered one of the earliest pioneers of community paramedicine, a model of community-based health care in which paramedics work outside their normal emergency response and transport roles to maximize the use of emergency care resources and enhance access to primary care for medically underserved populations. Several states have seen its success and enacted legislation enabling community paramedicine.

In addition to receiving several local and state EMS awards, in 2014 Swayze received national recognition from the Journal of Emergency Medical Services and Physio-Control as an EMS10: Innovators in EMS recipient for his work with the CONNECT Community Paramedic project in Pittsburgh.

Swayze has been a long-time friend, board member, and supporter of JHF. He was: A faculty member of the EMS Champions program; active with the Senior Champions program; attended the EMS Israel mission with Nancy Zions and other EMS leaders in November of 2010; served on the Full Court Press on seniors from 2020-2022; and remains an active board member, serving on both the JHF Board and the Health Careers Futures Board.

"Karen and Nancy are so innovative in their approach. What I find from attending Board meetings and various learning collaboratives is they're so far out in front of so many important topics that you realize that if it's on their radar it's worth paying attention to. They tirelessly advocate for these

important topics, support marginalized communities, and really make an impact. It's truly inspirational," Swayze said.