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Celebrating the Culture

The 2016 national election was one of the most memorable elections of our lifetime. In the fall of 2016, nearly 61 percent of eligible voters, or 138 million Americans, took to the polls and cast their vote on important decisions that would affect hundreds of millions of people. In other words, 88 million Americans did not vote in that election. Although voter turnout hit a 20-year low in 2016, it’s in line with the voter turnout trend for the last 40 years. Regardless of political affiliation, these numbers should be startling to all of us who have a stake in American democracy.

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**OUR CIVIC DUTY IS OUR DUTY TO OUR PATIENTS: Penn Medicine Votes from CEO Kevin Mahoney**

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But, if Penn Medicine can redesign workflows, have staff volunteer to learn new roles, set up testing centers, and stand up a regional telemedicine platform all in the span of a few weeks, then the PMX Week planning team could come up with an exciting plan that would get employees excited and energized. This year, PMX Week will run Monday, October 19 through Friday, October 23.

CELEBRATING THE CULTURE

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Continued on page 2

OUR CIVIC DUTY IS OUR DUTY TO OUR PATIENTS: PENN MEDICINE VOTES

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To cohort, or not to cohort? That is the question many hospitals have grappled with throughout the pandemic. As COVID-19 cases continue to be reported, hospital leaders are deciding whether to group COVID patients in one unit or to spread them out wherever beds are available. For Pennsylvania Hospital’s Jeffrey T. O’Neill, AIA, ACHA, CHFM, senior director of Facilities, and Omyaka Nwankwo, MD, chair of the Infection Prevention Committee, there is no single best practice that all hospitals should follow. What is essential, though, is for facilities management and infection prevention teams to partner up to make these decisions.

“The COVID-19 situation calls for a team-based approach,” O’Neill said. “It’s important to remember that a decision made in the beginning of the pandemic doesn’t need to be continuous,” Nwankwo said. “As COVID-19 volumes change, hospitals should maintain an open conversation between all stakeholders to decide whether they should switch strategies. A partnership between facilities and infection prevention brings both areas of expertise to the table to make a decision that is best for patients and staff.”

Shifting patient care

For the Pennsylvania Hospital at Penn Medicine (PHMC), the now open space will be filled with more medical-surgical beds in order to keep up with increasing volume and support patient care efforts.

“Depending on the story, people can see themselves in a particular narrative or situation.”

One story highlighted in this year’s campaign centers around Dee Knight, BSN, an infusion therapy nurse, and Elizabeth Wang-Hsu, PhD, a physical therapist, both from Penn Medicine at Home, who bonded over the intensity that surrounds COVID-related visits. Their tenacity and teamwork in the moments before a patient visit paints a vivid picture of our new reality. Working out of the trunk of Knight’s car, Wang Hsu helped her don and doff the layers of personal protective equipment (i.e., gloves, masks, booties, and gowns), all while in full PPE herself.

This year’s PMX Week also coincides with the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. The Present campaign will culminate with a story highlighting chemotherapy nurse Claire Maggio, BSN, OCN, of the Abramson Cancer Center, who will retire in December after 38 years with Penn Medicine. Maggio insisted that her accomplishments and accolades are merely a reflection of her colleagues and patients. “My mother inspired me to become a nurse and working at Penn Medicine has fulfilled me in ways that go beyond words and expectations,” Maggio said.

“It’s important to remember that a decision made in the beginning of the pandemic doesn’t need to be continuous.”

Penn Medicine employees are the centerpiece for 2020 PMX Week, the virtual activities and events will drive the camaraderie and spirit, fostering a sense of being together — while sometimes remaining apart. For example, employees can test their Penn Medicine knowledge by participating in the PMX Week Scavenger Hunt. Completely online, this friendly competition between entities puts employees to the test with how much they know about the history, locations and people of Penn Medicine. The Penn Medicine entity with the most correct responses wins. Winners will be announced during PMX Week.

Penn Medicine Prize Packs will be sent to five randomly selected participants from the winning entity who complete the hunt. Other planned virtual activities will include how employees can get involved with the Quizzical Challenge or High Five challenge. Complete details are available on the PMX Week calendar at www.pennmedicine.org/PMX.

More ways to celebrate

Virtual fun and camaraderie

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In addition to employee stories and virtual activities, the week will recognize those who keep the PMX going. The Celebrate and Share campaign will celebrate the often hidden heroes of Penn Medicine. Employees are encouraged to submit photos and stories via Penn High Five, Penn Medicine’s employee recognition program. Each entity will have a designated day to recognize and thank employees for their contributions.

The week will also feature virtual entertainment including concerts, comedy, and other events.

Nominate someone

Employers are encouraged to nominate colleagues who went above and beyond this year. To submit a nomination, login to Penn High Five at pennhighfive.com and use the site’s search function to find the recipient. Then choose from a multimedia library of memes and gifs to accompany your feel-good message.

In spite of COVID, Penn Medicine employees will be celebrated and applauded for their remarkable contributions to the patients, family, community and organization. As all other PMX Week celebrations before, 2020 PMX Week will provide many unique and engaging opportunities for employees to have fun.

Visit www.pennmedicine.org/PMX to view the calendar of virtual events, stories, activities and multimedia experiences and to share your story.
The scene is all too familiar scene in homes across America: parents are having to navigate and manage their children’s care, education and well-being while tending to their professional responsibilities at work. In many cases, this is all happening while under one roof. Indeed, as COVID-19 continues to impact our lives, the challenges faced by our employees who are also parents is unprecedented.

“The Penn Medicine Workforce Wellness Committee launched PennMedicineTogether to recognize that no matter what your role in Penn Medicine, you are important to its success, and we are here to support you,” said Lisa Belling, MD, senior vice dean for Academic Affairs in Penn’s Perelman School of Medicine. “PMT spares wellness, child support options, mental health offerings through COALTE, expressions of gratitude, etc. In each area, we are trying to meet people when they are to help them navigate this ongoing crisis.”

The UPHS Employee Benefits and Wellness Team has come up with several resources that provide options for both child care and educational support for employees and their families. The options include resources for independent childcare (infant through pre-K), for families to safely connect and share care in the geographic area, and for school-age children who need childcare to help with online/hybrid learning, tutoring and other services. Education support options can be found by visiting this site: https://www.med.upenn.edu/PennMedicineTogether/our-families/.

“As a mom of two young children, I have empathy for what our families are going through. We don’t want our employees to feel like they’re on their own dealing with this all by themselves,” said Jen Brady, associate director of Employee Benefits and Wellness. “It’s important that they feel supported with realistic options to help them do their most important job — raising and taking care of their children.”

Brady also suggested that employees work with their managers in balancing work and childcare schedules, helping to ensure they meet their commitments and keep life running smoothly.

Lancaster General Hospital Completes 100th TCAR Surgery

Santo “Sam” Iacono loves life. And thanks to decades-long care at Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health and a steadfast commitment to healthy living, the 84-year-old is more active than many people half his age. This is impressive for any octogenarian, much less one who has undergone quadruple bypass surgery, valve replacement, and two carotid artery procedures to prevent stroke that were performed via a newer, minimally invasive procedure that reduces operative risks — at age 82.

Iacono was first diagnosed with carotid artery disease — one of the leading causes of stroke in the US — in 1997. He underwent a procedure called carotid endarterectomy to remove the plaque in the carotid artery on the right side of his neck. In 2018, Todd Wood, MD, chief of Cardiology at Lancaster General Hospital, discovered a blockage in Iacono’s left carotid artery. This time, due to his age and the severity of the blockage, he was a candidate for a more minimally invasive stenting procedure called TCAR, or TransCarotid Artery Revascularization.

Wood teamed up with Meghan Dermody, MD, chief of Vascular Surgery and medical director of the Interventional Vascular Unit at LGH, to perform the TCAR procedure. The advanced system temporarily reverses blood flow away from the brain while a stent is inserted to open the narrowed carotid artery. Reversing blood flow and filtering it outside the body prevents any fragments of plaque that may become loose during the procedure from entering the brain. The minimal dissection also decreases the risk of local nerve injury and makes recovery easier for many patients.

The LG Health Heart & Vascular Institute, which was the first in Lancaster County to offer TCAR, successfully operated on LGH’s 100th TCAR patient in August.

Hosted by Andy Dean, LCSW, a senior community relations specialist at Princeton House, “Mind on Mental Health” is a weekly podcast series that strives to meet the community’s greater need for mental health information and support during the pandemic. The episodes feature Dean and other Princeton House professionals delving into topics within their areas of expertise. Episodes are available through Apple, Spotify, Google, and other podcast platforms or at mindonmentalhealth.podbean.com.

“Podcasts seemed like the most accessible way to share information with the community,” Dean said. “I’ve always been very impressed with the knowledge that Princeton House’s clinicians possess, and it has been a blast for me to have these conversations.”

The first three episodes in August featured Dean conversing with Chelsea Mazzara, LCSW, senior primary therapist with Princeton House—Hamilton, about ways that parents can support their children’s mental health during the pandemic. Champignon appeared on the first two episodes in September to discuss how parents can promote their own mental health.

Champignon and Dean explored topics such as celebrating small victories, finding balance, and the upside — and portal downside — of social media. An important fact to remember, Champignon said, is that social media photos are curated. They offer a glimpse of a moment, not a complete picture. She recommends maintaining multiple accounts when possible — Instagram allows this — so parents can devote a personal account for connecting with family and friends and a “parent empowerment profile” for following people who present a more realistic account of life during the pandemic that helps parents feel supported and less alone.

To judge ourselves or weigh our value or weigh our success by how things used to be is no longer fair” — Kristy Champignon
Complete absentee ballots the week available in both English and Spanish. You learn more and access a variety of tools can simply visit the Penn Medicine Getting involved in the Penn Medicine November’s election. Medicine Votes enables all, especially communities in need, to vote in this Penn Medicine Votes team removes some of can’t make it to the polls, the Penn statuses to helping inpatients fill out forms which is “a direct result of a focus on operational growth, communication, and education across all disciplines.”

HUP ED Recognized for Excellent Practice

HUP’s Emergency Department received the ENA Lantern Award sponsored by the Emergency Nurses Association. The award recognizes EDs that demonstrate excellent practice and innovative performance through leadership, education, advocacy, and research. It is named in honor of Florence Nightingale, who worked to improve and transform nursing in the 19th century.

ECMO Program Awarded Gold Level Award

The HUP/PennMC extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) program was awarded the Gold Level Award for Excellence in Life Support from The Extracorporeal Life Support Organization. This award reflects years of interdisciplinary partnership, said Kelly Hoenisch, MSN, nurse manager of the Heart & Vascular ICU. “Our nurse-run hybrid model in conjunction with our perfusion and provider partners allows each discipline to function at the highest level,” she said. The award recognized the program’s simulation training and rapid deployment of ECLS services which is “a direct result of a focus on operational growth, communication, and education across all disciplines.”

Cooper Named GSPP Director

Jessica Cooper, MS, has been named executive director of Good Shepherd Penn Partners (GSPP), which offers inpatient and outpatient post-acute care services. In her new role, Cooper will oversee recent day-to-day operations and all aspects of GSPP’s strategic plan.

Previously, Cooper served as chief administrative officer for the Neuroscience Service Line. In that role, she provided administrative leadership in developing Penn Medicine’s novel strategic partnerships in patient care for neuroscience across the region. She helped reduced variations in care, managed total cost of care, improved the patient experience, and developed strong working relationships with colleagues to develop successful and innovative programs such as the Spine Center.

Continued from page 1

Our Civic Duty Is Our Duty to Our Patients: Penn Medicine Votes

>From CEO Kevin Mahoney

Before the election, or request a vote-from-home ballot, text “VOTE PENN” to 34444. As of the end of September, over 3,400 employees and patients have done so. To contact the Penn Medicine Votes team or get your questions answered, please reach out to pennmedvotes@pennmedicine.upenn.edu.

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An Angel Looking Over Their Shoulder

The Emergency Department staff at Chester County Hospital has a very special angel looking over them these days thanks to Rick and Audrey Lathrop, parents of registered nurse Jessica Lathrop who is a 10-year veteran of the hospital.

Rick carved the angel shortly after retiring to North Carolina three years ago, using a computer-controlled machine which cuts a design on the computer out of wood. “Once the piece was carved, he hand-sanded and stained it and added little personal touches.”

The design for the angel, who is wearing a surgical mask, cap, lab coat and stethoscope, was purchased by Lathrop from a Russian artist who was inspired by the hardship of medical professionals during the pandemic.

“My parents wanted to show their support for me and the rest of the medical professionals here,” Lathrop said.

The carved wooden angel found a home near a wall filled with cards and drawings from people thanking the health care heroes for their work during the pandemic.

“It’s nice to do what we always do every day and know that our families and our community appreciate it. And for me it means a lot to see something from my parents here at work every day since they live so far away,” Lathrop said.

“A lot of the staff at the hospital have thanked me and asked about it too… it’s been a little bit of fame for my dad.”

“Very special angel looking over them. A lot of the staff at the hospital have thanked me and asked about it too… it’s been a little bit of fame for my dad.”

Higginbotham reflects on advocacy and action: A Q&A with Eve Higginbotham

Between the pandemic’s disproportionate impact on communities of color, widespread economic hardship destabilizing society’s most vulnerable individuals, and nationwide demonstrations calling for the long-overdue dismantling of racist systems and institutions, the spotlight on some of the country’s most deeply entrenched issues has only become brighter. Through all of these challenges, Eve J. Higginbotham, SM, MD, ML, vice dean for Inclusion and Diversity and professor of Ophthalmology at the Perelman School of Medicine, has been busy sharing her voice and taking action.

On a new National Academies report on the underrepresentation of women in STEM: “I have been interested in gender, anxiety, and building a diverse workforce and inclusive culture my entire career, so I’m really excited about the suggested interventions — like collecting demographic…data to help institutions transparent and accountable, establishing mentorship and sponsorship programs, and addressing funding disparities.”

On Penn Medicine’s Action for Cultural Transformation initiative: “There are two main parts to ACT — long-term strategies that reflect ongoing needs at the system and entity levels, and ‘Just Do It’ that immediately make a difference. We’re maintaining an intersectional focus by welcoming ideas from town halls, facilitated discussions, and online feedback because we don’t want to miss any perspectives.”

In a Q&A on the Penn Medicine News site, Higginbotham reflects on the watershed moment that we all face, and how Penn Medicine is rising to the occasion and taking action. Read more at https://bit.ly/3mS0K9Z.