

WHAT'S NEW

PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL

JULY/AUGUST 2023

INAUGURAL ARTS GALLERY Showcases Pennsy Artists



► Above Left: Mark R. Attilio, PharmD, BCOP, with his fused glass creations
Above Right: Carmen Patrascu, MD, next to her handmade jewelry and clothing
Photo Credit: Bryan Mell, Audio Video Technology Specialist

Pennsylvania Hospital's (PAH's) Great Court recently became a hub for the arts, featuring colorful paintings, handcrafted textiles, and captivating photographs, all created by PAH staff and students.

The inaugural arts gallery was hosted by a team of Internal Medicine residents. It served as an opportunity to promote PAH's upcoming Humanities in Medicine Club, which was inspired by a lecture on narrative medicine, offered to interns and residents at the hospital.

"The whole idea behind narrative medicine is to focus on retelling patient stories and processing our experiences through the arts to better our clinical practice," said **Chris Palazzolo, MD**, an Internal Medicine resident and one of the coordinators of the event. "We knew so many people [at PAH] who have artistic abilities and thought this would be a great way to share their work and get the word out about the club."

Nearly 50 pieces of art were submitted to the gallery, which centered around the theme of "Connections"—our

connections with human beings and the world around us.

Artwork included photographs depicting scenes of nature and wildlife, taken during trips abroad; body art, with one of the artists providing henna to attendees; and live music from members of the Penn Med Symphony Orchestra. Staff also submitted short stories, poetry, and an audiovisual poem reflecting experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, in both patient care and their personal lives.

"Medicine has been a challenge over the last couple of years due to the pandemic," said Palazzolo, who submitted two poems and a Sharpie drawing of a skull, vertebrae, and pelvis with embroidered flowers. "I think art gives us a way to unload the heavy bags we've been carrying. It gives us a way to feel human at the end of the day, to express ourselves and our emotions."

Among the featured artists was **Mark R. Attilio, PharmD, BCOP**, a clinical pharmacist specialist, who had three fused glass pieces on display.

For his artwork, he uses his family's home kiln—a tool his mother uses to make jewelry. Prior to the gallery, Attilio had only shared his fused glass creations as gifts with others, such as PAH's Pharmacy residents. Serving as a preceptor in the Pharmacy Residency Program, Attilio instructs the residents how to create colorful glass coasters, which he then preps and delivers to the team at the end of their training. Attilio gathered the medical residents for his latest piece, made especially for the gallery, of the Penn shield, made up of shattered glass and pieced back together by the residents for a mosaic design.

"One of my big things is inclusion," said Attilio. "I really like how these glass activities support this idea and build connections among individuals."

Carmen Patrascu, MD, a clinical associate professor of Renal Electrolyte and Hypertension, also had several pieces at the event, including a painting, jewelry, and clothing that she crocheted and sewed during the pandemic.

The clothing—a shirt made for her husband and a skirt—was created in honor of her grandmother (the best crochet master of all time) and her mother who is known for excellent knitting.

"My work in Nephrology and in art both involve love and care. I am very detail-oriented and want to perfect my skills, both patient-wise and creation-wise," said Patrascu. "I'm looking forward to having more opportunities that will bring PAH together through sharing our passions outside of medicine."

Palazzolo and her team hope to hold more galleries in the future, after the launch of the Humanities in Medicine Club, which plans to hold its first meeting this summer.

"We were extremely happy with the variety, and amount, of art we received," said Palazzolo. "Our hope is to make the gallery an annual event and have even more people get involved at the next one."



VANTAGE POINT INTERIM CEO DAN WILSON, MBA, BSN, RN, FABC

Pennsylvania Hospital's (PAH's) arts gallery, featured above, highlighted pieces of art, created by our talented workforce, that encompassed the theme of "Connections"—the way we interact with the world around us. But this theme is not just limited to the arts gallery, as we see our staff make meaningful connections with colleagues, patients, and the community in prolific ways every day at the hospital, exemplified by stories in this month's *What's New*.

One way we uphold connections is through gathering at events that celebrate our diverse staff and patient population. Earlier this summer, we joined together for Pride Month—to amplify the voices of the LGBTQ+ community—and Juneteenth—

to commemorate the end of slavery in the United States and honor the culture and achievements of Black Americans.

Another way is through efforts that help patients navigate the health system. Our nurse and patient navigators strive to connect patients to resources to guide them through their care on campus. *System News* includes a feature about oncology nurse navigators' support services across UPHS, along with special recognition of PAH's Oncology Nurse Navigator **Jennifer Polo**, who received a Daisy Award for her creativity in coordinating a patient's appointment schedule.

In addition, members of the Abramson Cancer Center at PAH, at a Breast

Cancer Awareness Garden Pop-Up event, strengthened connections with our community through holding conversations and offering resources on cancer screening services to promote the importance of preventative health. We even encourage social connection on an internal level, with Hall-Mercer's Intensive Case Management team fostering mental health among its team members with monthly wellness activities.

Interactions like these allow us to achieve high-quality care year after year. I thank our employees for their commitment to showing compassion and building trust—making profound connections—not only with our patients but also with each other.

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An Evening of Poetry, Percussion, and PREVENTATIVE HEALTH AWARENESS



In recognition of National Cancer Survivor Month in June, Pennsylvania Hospital (PAH) partnered with Penn Medicine Community Relations to host a Breast Cancer Awareness Garden Pop-Up Event, comprised of spoken word poetry, live music, and stories to promote preventative health. Attended by staff, patients, and community members in the PAH Courtyard, the event had musical performances by the Sistahs Laying Down Hands Collective, who encouraged attendees to play instruments with them, provided by the local group. In addition, the event featured a booth to connect attendees to services at the Abramson Cancer Center, such as scheduling breast cancer screenings.

As a featured speaker for the event, **Susan Kruse Sullivan, CRNP, MSN**, nurse practitioner in Medical Oncology, described her passion for community outreach, particularly raising awareness about screenings among underrepresented groups in medicine. Through these efforts, she has been able to learn more about common obstacles to care, such as access and fear—patients feeling unsure how to navigate the health system or nervous to start treatment.

“The most important part of my development as a nurse practitioner is how much I learn from people in the community. I’ve been involved in events like this for the past 35 years, attending church events and health fairs,” said Sullivan. “It’s meaningful to help break through some of these barriers by providing resources and making people feel more comfortable to seek out care just by having a conversation with them outside of a clinical setting.”

▶ Susan Kruse Sullivan, CRNP, MSN, center, with members of the Sistahs Laying Down Hands Collective



TEAM APPRECIATION

WITH PLANTS AND PAINTING



The Serenity Garden at Hall-Mercer Community Mental Health Center hadn’t been utilized by staff and patients in a long time, observed **Yavette Mond, MEC**, who serves as an Intensive Case Management supervisor. Staff typically stayed indoors to complete their work and meet with patients, leaving the garden empty. In an effort to transform the space into a more popular spot for the Hall-Mercer community, Mond hosted an activity that not only spruced up the garden but also promoted wellness amongst her team members.

She first introduced the idea by giving sun catchers—small, reflective ornaments to hang outdoors or by a window to capture light and cast an array of colors—to her team, who expressed excitement about enhancing the garden. They were all encouraged to invite a patient who would be interested in participating, using the activity as a way to support their goals.

“One of the things we do to help patients is goal plan,” said Mond. “We identify areas of their lives that are impacting their mental health and set goals, like socialization and stress relief, to improve it.”

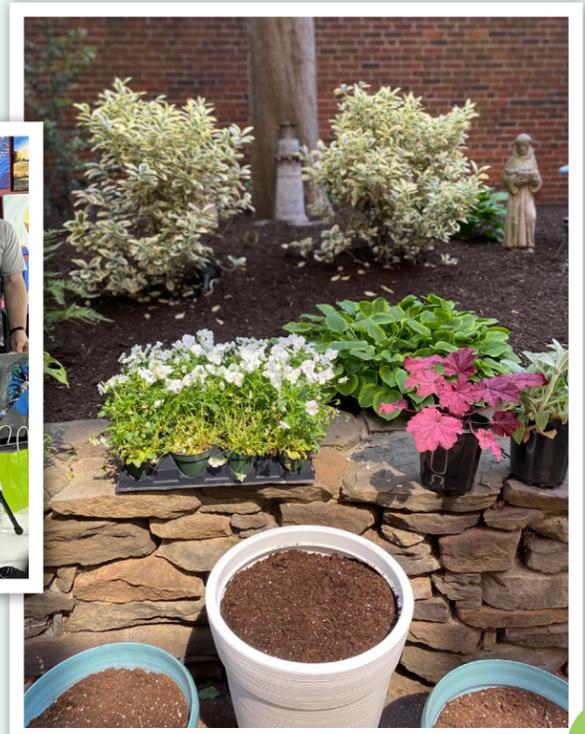


▶ Left to right: Blended Case Management Case Managers Beatrice Carrillo, Brittany McNeil, Bianca Ogelsby, Fatima Joshua, and ACCESS Case Manager Leo Porth

Mond recruited lead horticulturalist **Dan Bangert**, who presented a variety of potted plants to create a sensory garden—plants that appeal to the five senses to promote an engaging experience in the garden, comprised of leaves with different textures and scents of basil and mint. Since 2021, Bangert has been holding similar information sessions for Behavioral Health’s sensory gardens in the Spruce building.

“My team loved it, and even had lunch there afterwards. They could’ve listened to Dan talk all day,” said Mond. “One patient didn’t want to leave. She really enjoyed just sitting there with the breeze. It was very peaceful for her.”

Mond holds activities like this with her colleagues as part of their last team meeting at the end of every month.



Each activity is centered on a theme to bolster well-being, and to provide a token of appreciation for her team. The garden was part of the theme Alive April—having to do with nature. In May, the team gathered for Magnificent May, in which they joined a painting class to create artwork together.

“I love my team and try to find ways to let them know that I care,” said Mond. “I want them to feel like I’m not just here to manage them, but I’m here to help them grow.”



▶ Emergency Department Assistant Nurse Manager Lindsey Coates, MSN, RN, CEN, and Cardiology Nurse Lauren Coates, MSN, RN, CEN, at the Pride Month flag-raising ceremony
Photo Credit: Anthony Boyd, Relief Security Supervisor



▶ HR Coordinator Quanny Huggins, CRCST, BS, at the Juneteenth Day of Remembrance
Photo Credit: Bryan Mell, Audio Video Technology Specialist

SUMMER CELEBRATIONS: Pride Month and Juneteenth

In June, Pennsylvania Hospital staff gathered for events hosted by the Culture and Community workgroups of the PAH Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, including a flag-raising ceremony to kick off Pride Month, along with the hospital’s second annual Juneteenth Day of Remembrance in the Elm Garden. Read more about the events, and see more photos, in the online edition of the *What’s New* newsletter.



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Publications Director

CONTACT WHAT’S NEW AT:

Department of Communications
3600 Civic Center Boulevard
5th Floor, Suite 500
Philadelphia, PA 19104-4310

phone: 215.834.8604
email: julie.wood@pennmedicine.upenn.edu

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