

◆ Garnet Health.

Gems

Exceptional
Lives Here.



A Special Touch.

*How a new wig program is
helping cancer patients.*

With Gratitude from the Garnet Health Board of Directors

At its February meeting, the Board of Directors acknowledged the extraordinary commitment of all Garnet Health physicians and staff throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. For over two years, and through four surges of the pandemic, our three hospitals treated approximately 11,000 COVID-19 patients, performed thousands of COVID-19 tests and vaccinated nearly 50,000 people from this terrible virus. We mourn the staff members that we lost in the pandemic battle and are thankful to everyone who contributed to fundraising efforts to help support those families affected.

Over the course of the pandemic, we were able to accomplish many amazing things for the welfare of our patients, staff and visitors. Teams were able to quickly set up pop-up day care for our staff, establish new virus screening systems at hospital entrances, implement innovative high-tech cleaning practices, manage stringent visitor policies and fully comply with ever-challenging federal, state, and local mandates. The impact of operational changes, such as temporarily postponing elective surgeries, provided serious financial challenges that Garnet Health continues to experience.



Virginia Rizzo

*Garnet Health
Interim Board of
Directors Chair*

"This was a full team effort, shared among our physicians, nurses, staff and volunteers," said interim Board Chair Virginia Rizzo. "We are very grateful for everyone's dedication during these trying two years."

Incidences of COVID-19 significantly declined in Orange and Sullivan counties in February and March 2022, mirroring statistics around the country. While Garnet Health has begun to loosen visiting restrictions and some masking in nonclinical areas, all hospital staff are still required to mask in public and clinical areas.

"As we track the shrinking incidence of the virus in our community, we are looking at every way to get back to normal operations for our staff and patients," said Al Pilog, Garnet Health President and CEO.

"Thank you again for all that you do every day for our patients, our community and for each other," he said. "Together, we will move forward and continue to make Garnet Health the strongest pillar of health and wellness for our neighbors, family, friends and loved ones."



Al Pilog

*Garnet Health
President & CEO*



Pictured: Volunteer Gerry Farrell (left) with breast cancer patient Debi Kowalczyk (right).

Patient Care Goes Beyond Treating the Condition

What started out as a donation of wigs to the Spagnoli Family Cancer Center from the American Cancer Society has become a sign of hope. Last fall, the Ray W. Moody, MD, Breast Center requested an inventory of the donated wigs along with a catalog so that patients could pick out a wig without having to rummage through bags. Our Volunteer Services team acted quickly, taking inventory and creating a color catalog showcasing different cuts, colors, fibers and styles of available wigs. Patients can now try on wigs with family members and choose one that will make them feel most like themselves as they journey down the road to recovery. All wigs are free of charge to our cancer patients and come with care instructions.

Gerry Farrell, a six-year volunteer with GHMC and former Volunteer Director at Arden Hill Hospital, played a large role in taking stock of the wigs and in the styling, staging and photographing of them. Gerry felt it was important to showcase this free resource to our patients to help them feel a sense of normalcy during a not-so-normal time.

“Organizing these wigs and compiling them so patients could easily look at the different hair colors and styles meant that I was, in some way, helping them to feel better about themselves,” said Gerry. “I can’t provide

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hands-on care, but I can, hopefully, in some way help to make a difference in their cancer journey.”

Debra “Debi” Kowalczyk, who was diagnosed Stage 1 Breast Cancer late in 2021 after a routine annual mammogram detected an abnormality, is one patient who is grateful for her new wig.

Debi had a partial mastectomy that was confirmed Invasive Ductal Carcinoma (IDC). After her second chemotherapy infusion treatment, she began to lose much of her hair. Debi found the Ray W. Moody, MD, Breast Center a wonderful place to help her through her cancer journey. The wig catalog provided an option that helped her feel better about herself. She tried on a few options and settled on a wig that strongly resembled how she used to wear her hair.

||

My experience with the Breast Center was awesome. They are a wonderful and resourceful group of professionals who have been there to help me with my look and connecting me with resources that have helped to offset my medical bills.

— Debi Kowalczy

||

While Debi is still getting used to her wig, she says it is comfortable and really likes how much it resembles her own hair and style.

Volunteer Services’ next project is to take inventory of bras donated by the Garnet Health Foundation for patients facing biopsy or reconstructive surgery.

For more information about Garnet Health oncology services, visit garnethealth.org/cancer.



Pictured: Styles featured in the Volunteer Services’ wig catalog.

Quality Corner

The New Infection Control and Safety Champion Program

The Infection Control Safety Champions serve as resources for their unit and help to identify infection control and safety issues. They provide peer-to-peer coaching, deliver education and promote good hand hygiene practices.

Congratulations to the following staff members selected to be a part of the first cohort:

Breann Sytsema, RN, 2 North; Peg Ensslin, RN, ED; Jenna Malouf, RN, 4 South; Kim Soria, RN, 4 South; Kimberly Yablensia, RN, 5 North; Lauren Barnable, RN, 2 West/CDA; Jean Lazio, RN, 2 West/ CDA; Mary Sandvick, LPN, Unit Clerk, 2 West/CDA; Stephanie Blasko, RN, 5 South; Jillian Knoll Helt, RN, 5 South; Katherine Schleiermacher, RN, 4 West; and Madeline Ciccone, Pharmacy Clinical Coordinator.

The champions attended a 4-hour training course. The program was funded, in part, by the American Nurses Association’s Project Firstline grant. If you would like to volunteer to be a champion, please contact Susan Thirkield, BSN, RN, CIC, Infection Preventionist, at sthirkiel@garnethealth.org.

BEE AWARDS



Buzzworthy: Compassion Takes Flight

Garnet Health Medical Center – Catskills, Michael Ottino, Maintenance Mechanic 3

Congratulations to Michael Ottino for being selected as GHMC-C's Employee of the Month for February! Mike's colleagues say that he always has a smile, a story or a wave while he's busy mowing, plowing, planting or tinkering as he makes the grounds beautiful, welcoming and peaceful for employee, patients and visitors. "I am sure he does a whole lot more, but this is what I see on my way in and out of work," read the nomination. "Every hospital is not as lucky as we are to have a park-like property."

Mike's nominator goes on to say that Mike does more than beautify the grounds. He keeps our roads and parking lots safe, too! During a recent Code Brown, Sullivan County roads were treacherous. Many staff "white-knuckled" their drive into work, dreading the hill to our beautiful campus, but pleasantly discovered that Mike had every road and parking lot plowed, salted and sanded! Kudos to Mike and the maintenance team for keeping safety in the forefront on bad weather days and always!



From left to right: GHMC-C CEO Jonathan Schiller, Roy Quick, February BEE Mike Ottino, Kevin Hosking, Patti Huebner, Miguel Vargas, Stanley Sanchez and Joshua Babcock

Garnet Health Medical Center, Christina Kirschke, Phlebotomist

GHMC has selected Christina Kirschke as its February Employee of the Month! Christina is admired by her colleagues for being a flexible and a strong team player who constantly puts patients first, all while wearing a permanent smile!

Recently, Christina noticed that help was needed manning the Outpatient Building front lobby door. An emergency required all security guards to respond, forcing the front door to be locked since no one was available to greet patients and let them into the building. Although Christina was just about ready to go home for the day, she immediately began covering for security, letting patients in, asking for their Urgent Care codes to enter, taking temperatures, providing masks as needed and in some cases escorting patients to registration, DI, Urgent Care and the Pharmacy. Christina stayed until Urgent Care and the Pharmacy closed, long after her shift ended. Thank you, Christina, for being a true team player and for putting our patients first!



The Employee of the Month program is also known as the Being Exceptional Every day (BEE) Award—and Being Exceptional Every day takes dedication, loyalty and commitment. To nominate an employee, physician, volunteer or team/department, visit the intranet page, scroll down and click on the BEE Award icon.

GHMC 2021 Employee of the Year Greg O’Gorman Celebrates

GHMC’s 2021 Employee of the Year Greg O’Gorman received his official recognition on March 8. With staff and colleagues looking on, Garnet Health CEO Al Pilonig (left) presented Greg (center) with a BIG check in recognition of his significant honor. Food and Nutrition Services Director Nancy Tienken (right), who was Greg’s nominator, was on hand to participate in the celebration. Greg also received a gift basket and lunch.



We look forward to celebrating with Maryann Eldred, GHMC-C 2021 Employee of the Year, on April 6 at the Callicoon Campus.



GHMC-C Recognizes a Great Catch!

A Good Catch award was recently presented to Dorothy Donlon, RN. Dorothy, thank you for your diligence and for keeping our patients safe!



From left to right: Mary Kay Mooney, Clinical Director; Dorothy Donlon, RN (receiving certificate); Suzanne Lange, CNO, VP Patient Care & Services; and Jonathan Schiller, CEO, GHMC-C.

For more information about the Good Catch Award, whose nominees are judged by the Patient Safety Subcommittee, contact Vice President, Quality/Patient Safety Officer Mary Ellen Crittenden at mcrittenden@garnethealth.org

A Good Catch occurs when a corrective action and/or timely intervention prevents an incident or medical error.

We Want to Hear YOUR Innovative Ideas and Project Requests!



The Project Management Office (PMO) wants to hear your innovative ideas and your new project requests! Led by John Marino, Director of Project Management, this department collects the project requests and reviews those requests monthly with leadership (PMO Board) throughout the health system. The monthly review of projects allows leadership to get a firsthand look at new project requests and ensure that they align with the organizational goals as well as foster transparency throughout the health system. The PMO Board met for the first time in February and successfully reviewed nine submitted projects. It was a great turnout, and everyone thought the process worked very well, so let's keep the momentum going!

The next PMO Board Meeting is April 11. If you have an innovation idea or a new project, submit it to the PMO via the intranet. Using a Chrome browser, click or copy this link <http://garnetinfo/Home/PMO> to access the online request form.

Questions? Contact John Marino, Director Project Management, at jmarino@garnethealth.org

We celebrated National Doctors' Day— March 30

During the pandemic, America has been humbled to witness the extraordinary devotion displayed by our nation's doctors. But while all that doctors do may have made the news, at Garnet Health, our doctors' expertise and endless compassion aren't news to us at all. A heartfelt thank you to our physicians for helping us improve the health of our community by providing exceptional healthcare, everyday.

2022 National Volunteer Week

April 17-23

This observance is an opportunity to recognize our volunteers for the valuable service they provide and the positive impact they have on patients and staff. Our volunteers help to build stronger relationships among our hospital family members and our patients.

We would like to shine a light on those who inspire us to serve, recognizing and thanking volunteers who lend their time, talent and voice to make a difference. Pictured are a few of the nearly 270 volunteers across the system that we're proud to have as part of our family!

From left to right:

(Row one) Louis Glickman, Dyson the Dog, Leabert Parkes, Steve Grossman, Mary Quinn

(Row two) Wendy Grossman, Mishka the Dog, Joseph Labuda, Catherine Frahme, Christopher DeLong

(Row 3) Peggy Butler-Bertholf, Krissy the Dog, Jana Elkashef, Peter Najdzin

(Row 4) Carl Wolfe, Ripley the Dog, Helen O'Brien, Larry McKay, Joanne Sreca





Thank You!





Garnet Health's Wound Healing and Hyperbaric Centers Reaccredited



Congratulations to Garnet Health's Wound Healing and Hyperbaric Centers, located in Middletown and Harris, for earning reaccreditation by the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society (UHMS), which recognizes facilities that have met or exceeded the highest standards of care and patient safety.

Upholding accreditation is a testament to the exceptional level of patient care and operational safety provided by the staff at both locations. Participation in the accreditation program, which is voluntary, takes months of preparation and requires rigorous evaluation of operations, equipment, staff and training to ensure that the utmost quality of care is maintained within the undersea and hyperbaric medicine field.

Garnet Health's Wound Healing and Hyperbaric Centers offer a variety of wound healing therapies, such as Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, which speeds the wound healing process by giving the body access to more oxygen than normal. Slow-healing and chronic wounds that benefit from this treatment include – but are not limited to bone infections, traumatic injuries and reopened surgical incisions.

For more information about our Wound Healing and Hyperbaric Centers, visit www.garnethealth.org.

Cardiothoracic Surgery Training Commences at GHMC

The first day of formal Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit (CTICU) training kicked off on March 7 for eight of our ICU RNs. This prestigious group, who dressed in red to commemorate this day, is the first of three cohorts scheduled to be trained. This training session, led by New York-Presbyterian (NYP) educator Ed Park, jump-started a 12-week program to teach experienced ICU RNs how to care for post-cardiac surgery patients. Nine of the 12 weeks will be taught at NYP in Queens.

Garnet Health Medical Center's Cardiothoracic (CT) Surgery Program, also referred to as open heart surgery, is anticipated to start November 2022. We are proud of our growth and the commitment of our staff to bring such a needed and specialized service to our community.

A big thank-you goes to Columbia HeartSource and New York-Presbyterian for partnering with us and helping us prepare to get our program up and running.

We are actively hiring experienced CTICU clinical professionals, as well as experienced ICU clinical professionals who would like to train for CTICU positions. If you are interested in joining our CT Surgery Team, reach out to Ann Marie Neville at aneville@garnethealth.org.



Pictured left to right: Jacqueline Slanovec, Erin Kirwan, Stephanie Bianchi, Linda Curiale (Nurse Manager), Kathy Bermo (Nurse Director), Sarah Stewart, Melanie Pinto and Katherine Hansen.

GHMC RN Presents at Nursing Symposium

Tanya Camacho, BSN, RN, OCN, presented the project, "It Takes a Village to Put Food in the Bank: Changing Food Insecurity in Our Community One Patient at a Time," at the 12th Annual RNLMI Nursing Symposium on December 3, 2021. In addition to her role as an oncology nurse in the Infusion Center, Tanya is the Chair of the Shared Governance Nursing Research and EBP Committee and an active member of the Shared Governance Community Committee. Tanya is a passionate supporter of combating social determinants of health and supporting our community!



Leading the Way



Nancy Folino, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CCRN, has been promoted to Senior Administrator Nursing Process, Magnet & Professional Practice. Nancy joined GHMC in 2018 as the Nursing Director of 3 North Progressive Care Unit. While in this role, Nancy managed numerous successful performance improvement initiatives, including decreasing falls by 70% in 2019 and decreasing HAPIs by 25% in 2020. Also under Nancy's leadership, the 3 North team received the Beacon Silver Award for Nursing Excellence in 2020. Last year, Nancy gained additional responsibility with oversight of the Medical Emergency Response Team and Committee. She also recently implemented an Evidenced Based Research project with her team on decreasing CHF readmissions. Nancy obtained her MSN in Nursing Administration from the University of Phoenix, where she received an Outstanding Achievement Award. She is certified in Nurse Executive Advanced Nursing and Critical Care Nursing. Nancy can be reached at nfolino@garnethealth.org.

Nancy Karas, BSN, has been promoted to Clinical Director of the Emergency Department at GHMC-C. She started her career in 1999 at Arden Hill as a Med/Surg/Pediatric RN, transitioning to the Emergency Department in 2004 where she worked for 12 years. In 2016, Nancy moved into a leadership role as the first Emergency Department Clinical Supervisor for the night shift at ORMC. She was promoted to the role of Emergency Department Nurse Manager at GHMC in 2019, where she oversaw patient care in the Emergency Department, Children's Emergency Department, and the Access Center. Nancy graduated in 1996 from Orange County Community College with an Associate Applied Science degree and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Chamberlain University in 2019. She can be reached at nkaras@garnethealth.org.



Susan Murphy has joined Garnet Health as Talent Acquisition Manager. She previously served as a Talent Acquisition Specialist at Saint Clare's Hospital. Susan is committed to establishing productive relationships with hiring managers and candidates and is passionate about recruiting and retaining talent. Susan received a Bachelor of Science degree from East Stroudsburg University. She can be reached at smurphy@garnethealth.org.

Shanita Reynolds, MSN, RN, CMSRN, has been promoted to the position of Nursing Administrator of Professional Practice. Shanita joined GHMC in 2017 as Nursing Director on 3 South Progressive Care, where she managed several successful performance improvement initiatives. In 2019, Shanita joined the Surgical Services team serving as Nursing Director for the Post Anesthesia Care Unit, where she obtained the highest nursing unit employee engagement scores two years in a row. Most recently, Shanita was nominated as the 2022 Nurse Leader of Distinction. Shanita earned her BSN from Herbert H. Lehman College in 2010, graduating with honors. In 2015, Shanita received an MSN as a Clinical Nurse Leader from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT., graduating with honors. Currently, Shanita is pursuing her Doctorate of Nursing Practice at Aspen University. Shanita can be reached at sreynolds@garnethealth.org.



Joyce Timko, MBA, CRA, RT, (R), (M) (CT), has been promoted to Administrator of Diagnostic Imaging for Garnet Health. She is responsible for X-Ray, CT, MRI, Ultrasound, Vascular Ultrasound, Nuclear Medicine, PET CT, and Interventional Radiology at GHMC. At GHMC-C, Joyce oversees X-Ray, CT, MRI, Ultrasound, Nuclear Medicine, Cardiac Nuclear Medicine, 3D Mammography, Vascular Ultrasound and Bone Density. She previously served as Garnet Health's Diagnostic Imaging Director for five years. During that time, Joyce led the GHMC Diagnostic Imaging team to obtain the ACR Diagnostic Imaging Center of Excellence certification and expanded DI services in multiple modalities including MRI and CT. Joyce is a Certified Radiology Administrator (CRA) and is ARRT Registered in Radiography, Mammography and Computer Tomography (CT). She earned a Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences degree from Quinnipiac University, MBA from Mount St. Mary College and will be completing her Doctorate of Business Healthcare Administration at Liberty University in December 2022. Joyce can be reached at jtimko@garnethealth.org.

The Garnet Health Foundation is pleased to offer two college scholarships.

The Ronald Sherman, MD Nursing Scholarship

Criteria

Scholarship awards will be made to those graduating Middletown High School students seeking careers in nursing and seeking coursework and degrees at Orange County Community College, Middletown, NY and Mount Saint Mary College, Newburgh, NY. Two awards in the amount of a \$1,000 each are made annually.

Applicants must complete a one-page, up-to-500-word, single-spaced, typed essay answering the following question: *Describe your passion for the nursing profession, and how will that passion shape you as a future professional nurse?*

The Matthew O'Brien Memorial Scholarship Fund

Criteria

The Matthew O'Brien Memorial Scholarship Fund awards two \$500 scholarships annually.

Scholarship awards will be made to:

- Garnet Health High School volunteers who are pursuing a career in the medical profession, and
- Garnet Health employees' graduating seniors who are pursuing a career in the medical profession, and
- Port Jervis graduating seniors pursuing a career in the medical profession.

Applicants must complete a one-page, up-to-500-word, single-spaced, typed essay answering the following question: *Describe your passion for the medical profession, and how will that shape you as a future medical professional?*

Deadline

Essays must be submitted by May 1, 2022.

Please mail them to:

Garnet Health Foundation
707 East Main Street
Middletown, NY 10940

Attn: (Insert name of which scholarship you are applying to)

**For more information, contact the
Garnet Health Foundation
Office at 845-333-2333.**



Employee Wellness Resources

Your physical, emotional and mental health is a priority to us. We encourage you to make time every day to do things that help you reduce your stress and anxiety levels. For example, if you have time during a break, consider taking a short walk outside. Stepping outside, even for a few minutes, is a great way to get some fresh air, clear your mind and maybe even get a few steps in. The Middletown and Harris Campuses are great places to walk outside or enjoy the beautiful gardens, spring through fall. Consider taking your break or eating your lunch in the garden. Read a book, meditate or just sit and take in the beauty of nature for a few moments.

Garnet Health Medical Center also offers a Zen-Den on the first floor near the Emergency Room. This space offers employees a quiet and relaxing place to retreat without distraction. There are also several free wellness resources available to you (see the list below).

Remember, it's up to you to take care of yourself so you can be at your best, not only for yourself, but for those who count on you—family, patients, colleagues and your community!

Important Numbers

**Garnet Health EAP
Employee Assistance Program**
800-999-7222

**Statewide Peer
Assistance for Nurses**
800-457-7261

**Fearless! Hudson Valley, Inc.
Abuse Helpline**
845-562-5340

Mental Health Association
845-342-2400

Child Protective Services
800-342-3720

Live Well, Be Well



Pictured is the Zen-Den located at GHMC, on the first floor near the Emergency Room.



You're the heartbeat of Garnet Health.

Your feedback is vital! Your opinions count!

Take the 12-Question Employee Engagement Pulse Survey.

March 21 to April 21

All employees hired on or before February 27, 2022, should have received the Gallup Employee Engagement Survey in their Garnet Health email.

If you did not receive an email, call Gallup Support at 888-486-9104.

If you have any issues opening the link or questions concerning the safety of opening the email, contact IT at 845-333-2020.

This survey is completely confidential.

The full Employee Engagement Survey will take place in October 2022.

Save the Date!

Tricounty Heart Walk

Saturday, May 21, 2022

Harriman State Park, Lake Welch
Beach, Stony Point, NY



Wearing Blue to Promote Colorectal Cancer Awareness

March was National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. By wearing blue on March 4, our staff joined others from across the country in helping to bring awareness to colorectal cancer and to honor all who are impacted by the disease. In 2022, an estimated 151,030 people will be diagnosed with this highly preventable disease. They will join the more than 1.4 million colorectal cancer patients and survivors living today. We went blue for them, their families and their community!

An In-Person Expression of Gratitude

Fran Justus, GHMC-C Executive Assistant, relayed a wonderful face-to-face encounter.



Yesterday, I came out of Administration walking toward the elevator. A gentleman was walking out of OB, and together we took the elevator down to the 1st floor. We exchanged hellos in the elevator, and then he gave me a thumbs up sign and said we have the nicest staff that work at GHMC-C. I thanked him and could see he was truly impressed and pleased with the care his wife received here. No names were exchanged, but that small gesture meant a whole lot!



Likes, Loves, Tweets and Follows

Sharing some love from our social media followers!



Bev Whitmore
Commented on Garnet Health Wall Post "On love's biggest day of the year, let's show a little extra ❤️ to... 3 days ago

Callicoon is amazing in every aspect of healing. Thank you to all !.

[View Thread](#)



Sharon Esposito

My brother is a patient of yours and my brother talks very highly about you. Your great Dr. Most of all I personally want to say thank you for taking care of my brother

**The "Dr." that Sharon references is Christina Wood, FNP. Christina, thank you for the great care that you provided to Sharon's brother!*

Gems Newsletter

Produced by Garnet Health Marketing & Corporate Communications.
For more information, email mmanheim@garnethealth.org or call (845) 333-2391.

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