

HEALTH CARE CHAMPIONS



VANESSA BARNABEI, PH.D., M.D.

Professor and chair,
University at Buffalo,
Obstetrics and Gynecology

► **Data:** 219 Bryant St., Buffalo, NY 14222 • vmbarnab@buffalo.edu

► **With this company for:** 4.5 years

► **In the health care field for:** 36 years

► **Born in:** Vineland, N.J.

► **Lives in:** Williamsville

► **College:** B.S., Rutgers University (Livingston College); Ph.D., University of Virginia; M.D., University of Virginia

► **Children:** Elisabeth, Benjamin

► **Awards and achievements:** Milwaukee Magazine's Best Doctors, 2012 Best Doctors in America, 2011-12 Medical College of Wisconsin Outstanding Faculty Award, 2012 National Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching, 2004 The Patrick and Margaret McMahon Endowed Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medical College of Wisconsin, 2000-12 Top 20 Physicians, Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, Milwaukee, 2001-12 chair, UB Department of OB/GYN

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** We have made major strides at Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo in developing policies and procedures that have successfully decreased maternal morbidity in terms of surgical-site infections, postpartum hemorrhage and other hospital-acquired conditions. I also went on my first medical mission this year to Nicaragua, an experience that was both fulfilling and frustrating.

► **Entered my profession because:** Since I was a girl, I saw inequities in the way women were treated in school and in life, and I wanted to help women reach their full potential. With my

interest in biology and genetics, health care was the obvious choice for a profession. I cannot imagine having done anything else with my life and career. Obstetrics and gynecology have enabled me to have a positive impact on the lives of women and their families through clinical care and research; deliver babies, which is one of the most fun and thrilling things a person can do; and teach and train the next generation (or two) of medical providers.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Tennis, piano, reading/self-improvement

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Planned Parenthood, Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network, American Red Cross

► **Bucket list:** Travel to exotic places like the Galapagos Islands. Live at the beach. Learn a new language.



KEVIN BIDTAH

Chief information officer,
Evergreen Health

► **Data:** 206 S. Elmwood Ave, Buffalo, NY 14201 • kbidtah@evergreenhs.org

► **With this company and in the health care field for:** 17 years

► **Born in:** Durango, Colo.

► **Lives in:** Hamburg

► **College:** B.A., University at Buffalo

► **Spouse:** Leah

► **Children:** Elijah, Anna, Judah, Noah, Laura, Michael

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Finding a great team to build our information systems department to include IT, telecommunications, electronic health records, security and database systems. We could not have accomplished milestones of the last year without this team. The company grew by 138 staff in 2016. We added locations and moved staff between buildings. We improved our network infrastructure, asset management

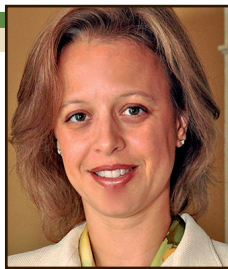
and deployment process, ticketing systems, security and telecommunications. We transitioned from paper to electronic record systems that capture data, meet industry quality and security standards, and plan for an environment to manage our population's health care.

► **Entered my profession because:** I began work in case management for individuals living with HIV/AIDS because I saw how much this population needed help and a voice. I eventually moved into IT and database work because there was a need for staff in these areas. I began working on the transition to electronic records two years ago. We were a nonprofit that provided care and documented most things on paper. Now we are a company that functions mostly in an electronic-records environment.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Chess, spending time with family, watching my boys play hockey and my girls learn ballet

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Evergreen Health, Jericho Road, International Institute of Buffalo

► **Bucket list:** Grow old with my wife. Be a great dad. Take my wife and kids to visit their family on the Navajo reservation.



HELEN CAPPUCCINO M.D.

Surgical oncologist,
Roswell Park
Cancer Institute

► **Data:** Elm and Carlton streets, Buffalo, NY 14263

► **With this company for:** 18 years

► **In health care field for:** 29 years

► **Born in:** Kenmore

► **Lives in:** Lockport

► **College:** B.A., cellular physiology, University at Buffalo; M.D., University at Buffalo; surgical residency, Hahnemann Medical School/Monmouth Medical

Center, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

► **Spouse:** Andrew Cappuccino, M.D.

► **Children:** Jacqueline, Andrew, Mac, Jake, Nicholas, Elizabeth

► **Grandchildren:** Darn it! None yet! But I do have a grandkitty named Maestro.

► **Awards/achievements:** University at Buffalo Volunteer of the Year 2016, medical school; keynote speaker, John S. Koplas Memorial Lecture Series (May 2014); WNY Community Leader Healthcare Award, National Federation of Just Communities, WNY chapter, 2010; AMA Physician Recognition Award 1995-97; Positive Physician Project – selected as one of America's 50 most positive physicians, 1995; features editor and writer *Gastronomie* magazine and several medical publications; author, "Being a Woman Surgeon: 60 Women Share Their Stories," two selections (April 2015); "The Best of Medicine: Doctors, Patients and the Covenant of Caring"; "The Best Medicine: Stories of Doctors and Patients who Care for Each Other"; *Vertebra* Film Development: producer of five feature-length films, some chosen for film festivals including Toronto International Film Festival, Big Apple Film Festival, Austin Film Festival, CineVegas

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** We finally finished formally educating all our children this year; paid the last tuition bill. All six kids have college degrees. Professionally, each day I see and care for patients is a series of little victories and a compassionate touch (I hope!) that makes their cancer journey easier. I am especially proud when I am able to educate patients in a way that helps them to minimize their surgical intervention and maximize their clinical outcome. I will be happy if one day there is no need for anyone to do a job like mine.

► **Entered my profession because:** As much as it is a cliché to say, I really chose medicine to help people. I chose surgery because I like the pace and unique, decisive fulfillment of it. I chose Roswell specifically because

patients are at a critical life and medical juncture and I feel I can impact positively on their medical and surgical care while being kind and compassionate, making their journey a little easier. I like the longitudinal aspect of cancer care, getting to know patients and follow them over their lifetime.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Travel, food and wine activities (Chaîne des Rôtisseurs), playing Scrabble, reading, movies

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Albright-Knox Art Gallery, WNY Women's Foundation, UB Foundation, Roswell Park Cancer Institute

► **Bucket list:** Being a grandmother. Seeing an opera in each of the great opera houses around the world (preferably Italian operas). Take all my kids and their loved ones on a wine tour. Take grandkids to Walt Disney World, as we did with our children.



TERRIE CARBONE PNP

Pediatric nurse
practitioner, Roswell
Park Cancer Institute

► **Data:** Elm and Carlton streets, Buffalo, NY 14263 • theresa.carbone@roswellpark.org

► **With this company for:** 23 years

► **In the health care field for:** 38 years

► **Born in:** Buffalo

► **Lives in:** Buffalo

► **College:** R.N., B.S.N., Niagara University; M.S., CPNP, University at Buffalo

► **Spouse:** Robert

► **Children:** Robert, Christina, Genevieve, Nicholas

► **Grandchildren:** Maddex, Cooper, Vivienne

► **Awards/achievements:** Completed coursework for my Family Nurse Practitioner to be able to care for long-term survivors of childhood cancer; help run bone marrow donor drives for

"Be the Match Program" to recruit donors for international registry; contributing writer, Children's Oncology Group Resource Guide for Cancer Survivorship; medical service trip to Guyana, South America; nominated for Daisy Award at Roswell Park; attend Children's Oncology Group and bone marrow transplant conferences to keep my knowledge current.

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** This has been my proudest accomplishment: to be nominated as a Business First Health Care Champion 2017 by my patients' mothers. I am humbled. The children I care for are the true champions and their mothers. The fact that they feel that way about me makes me very proud that I am able to provide that kind of care. It is such a difficult road a family walks when they have a child going through treatment for cancer. If I can make it a little easier, I have done my job and that means the world to me.

► **Entered my profession because:** I was first inspired by my beautiful mother, who was also a nurse. It was rewarding to help others and I loved working with children. I immediately found my passion in pediatric oncology. I was amazed by the resilience of these children. They smile despite the adversity. Their courage and strength inspires and makes you a better person. It helps keep your life in perspective. It is an honor and privilege to care for these children. Roswell Park also inspires me. It is a wonderful place to work with a great philosophy, everyone works as a team, it is all about the best care for our patients. I feel privileged to have spent my career here.

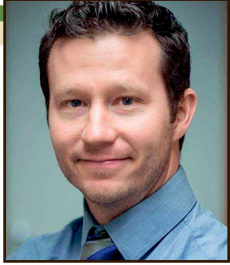
► **Hobbies/interests:** Volunteer for "Be the Match" Program recruiting bone marrow donors for patients in need of a bone marrow transplant; volunteer for Camp Good Days and Special Times for children with cancer; watching college football.

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Carly's Club, Camp Good Days and Special Times, PUNT Foundation – they all benefit children with cancer



HEALTH CARE CHAMPIONS

► **Bucket list:** Participate in medical service missions. Visit Ireland where my family is from. Have my own horse.



MATT CHRISTOPHER D.C.

Owner, Christopher Family Chiropractic

► **Data:** 350 Alberta Drive, Amherst, NY 14226

► **With this company for:** 7 years

► **In the health care field for:** 8 years

► **Born on:** Grand Island

► **Lives in:** Akron

► **College:** B.S., biomedical science/biochemical pharmacology, University at Buffalo; D.C., chiropractic, D'Youville College

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** It's the same as every day – my ability to give back and help others. Nothing makes me happier than to help others, professionally or personally. If every one of us could go that extra little step every day, the world would be a more beautiful place.

► **Entered my profession because:** I know this will come across as cliché but it was to help people. I always wanted to go into some aspect of health care, and chiropractic is a very hands-on field that gives me the ability to help people and to provide the best quality of care. I wanted the opportunity to integrate chiropractic and our conservative-care approach with traditional medicine. My practice is structured around evidence-based medicine and working with all medical specialties – surgeons, PCP, pain management, functional medicine and physical therapists on a daily basis.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Fishing, outdoors, my three beagles

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Project Homeless Connect, Harvest House, Roswell Park Alliance Foundation

► **Bucket list:** Travel more to see all the beautiful

places our world has to offer.



JEREMY ESSMAN

Senior director of clinical operations, Kaleida Health

► **Data:** 100 High St, Buffalo, NY 14203 • jessman@kaleidahealth.org

► **With this company for:** 3.5 years

► **In the health-care field for:** 19 years

► **Born in:** Birmingham

► **Lives in:** Hamburg

► **College:** Physician assistant, D'Youville College; master's in health administration, Roberts Wesleyan College

► **Spouse:** Lisa

► **Children:** Raegan, Kylie, Payton, Cassidy, Chloe

► **Awards/achievements:** Airman of the Year, U.S. Air Force; Bravest of WNY; Air Force Commendation and Achievement Medal; Hometown Hero

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Aiding in the transformation and advancement in the delivery of care to our patients. Through a collaborative and multidisciplinary approach with medical providers and nursing staff, we have enhanced the care on our neurological units. This includes increasing the number of medical providers in the unit, as well as the skill set, to ensure that patient recovery and safety is best in class. Buffalo General Medical Center/Gates Vascular Institute treats more strokes than any hospital in New York state and we have the ability to change people's outcomes and advance the quality of life. It's more than improving a process; it's improving someone's life.

► **Entered my profession because:** I feel blessed to have the opportunity to serve others in health care. I was fortunate when early in my military career I was selected to complete EMT training. This was the beginning

of my passion for health care. Finding myself frequently in a position of leadership, and with a growing interest in the business side of health care, I elected to pursue a master's degree in health administration. My clinical experience coupled with my business education allows me to work effectively with health leaders to advance the delivery of health care.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Golfing, hunting, camping

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Friends of Mark Colmerauer, Compassion International, Lupus Alliance of WNY

► **Bucket list:** Travel in my RV cross-country. Complete an adventure race. Tour Europe.



TORIN FINVER M.D.

Medical director, Horizon Health; medical director, Renaissance Addiction Services; fellowship director of addiction medicine at University at Buffalo

► **Data:** 291 Elm St., Buffalo, NY 14203 • tfinver@horizon-health.org

► **With this company for:** 3 years

► **In the health care field for:** 24 years

► **Born in:** Chisholm, Minn.

► **Lives in:** Hamburg

► **College:** Pace University; M.D., University at Albany; Robert Packer Hospital, Family Medicine Residency; fellowship in addiction medicine, University at Buffalo

► **Children:** Hollace

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** To be offered the opportunity to be part of a team with the best people I've ever worked with. I think locally we have made some great changes to how we treat addiction. We continue to look for ways to improve and work together as a community.

► **Entered my profession because:** I loved the science. I had surgery as a child and admired

my personal physicians. I dedicated myself to treating addictions because of the impact it had on my family and me.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Music, hiking, traveling



LAURA FISHER

Associate director of genetic counseling, Windsong Health Medical Alliance

► **Data:** 55 Spindrift Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221 • lfisher@windsonghealth.com

► **With this company for:** 1 year

► **In the health care field for:** 4 years

► **Born in:** Amherst

► **Lives in:** Clarence

► **College:** B.S., SUNY Geneseo; M.S., Boston University

► **Awards/achievements:** Louis A. and Ruth Siegel Awards for Excellence in Teaching, Honorable Mention

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Establishing and leading a cancer genetic counseling program at Windsong to provide genetic testing to patients in Western New York.

► **Entered my profession because:** Genetic counseling encompasses my interests in health care, genetics, teaching, and counseling. I was inspired by my brother, who has a genetic condition called Fragile X Syndrome. Because of this, I can empathize with patients who are concerned they may have a genetic condition in their family.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Traveling, cooking, running

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Familial Cancer Foundation of WNY, National Fragile X Foundation, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

► **Bucket list:** Give a TED talk



RANDY GERLACH

Administrator, Schofield Residence

► **Data:** 3333 Elmwood Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217 • rgerlach@schofieldcare.org

► **With this company for:** 2 years

► **In the health care field for:** 36 years

► **Born in:** Buffalo

► **Lives in:** Williamsville

► **College:** B.S., Daemen College

► **Spouse:** Claudia

► **Children:** Jessica, Alison, Claire, Kevin

► **Grandchildren:** Alison, Ella

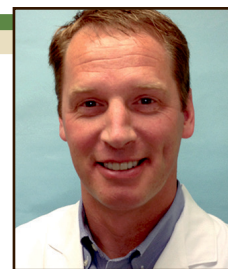
► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Schofield Residence receiving the Bronze Quality Award from the American Health Care Association

► **Entered my profession because:** My mom was in a nursing home at a young age. There I saw a need to enhance the experience of patients and families as they experience the later-life journey. Nothing would ever be as good as home but it was a goal that was relevant to every resident I have ever met.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Golf, music, coaching

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Ali's Rally, Unyts, WNY Kidney Foundation

► **Bucket list:** Travel to Italy. Attend the Masters. See a concert at the Reiman Theater in Nashville.



TROY GIBSON

Managing partner, Hand & Rehabilitation Specialists PLLC

► **Data:** 5144 Sheridan Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221 • troydgibson@gmail.com

► **With this company for:** 5 years

► **In the health care field for:** 17 years

► **Born in:** Charleston, W.Va.

► **Lives in:** Buffalo

► **College:** B.S., Marshall University; M.S., Eastern Kentucky University

► **Spouse:** Heather

► **Children:** Claire, Charles

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Receiving an excellent rating from our patients after an extensive patient satisfaction survey.

► **Entered my profession because:** I was intrigued by how much a talented therapist can assist in recovery after injury. I was attracted to the opportunity to interact with people from every walk of life. I still feel the same way today.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Road cycling, skiing, entertaining friends and family



JENNIFER GURSKE-DEPERIO M.D.

Orthopaedic surgeon, UBMD Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine

► **Data:** 5959 Big Tree Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127 • jgurske@buffalo.edu

► **With this company for:** 6 years

► **In the health care field for:** 18 years

► **Born in:** Rochester

► **Lives in:** East Amherst

► **College:** B.S., Daemen College; M.S., Daemen College; M.D., University at Buffalo

► **Spouse:** Jamie dePerio

► **Children:** Jackson

► **Awards/achievements:** Board certification, American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery; Kenneth Krackow M.D. Research Award; Robert Gillespie Pediatric Orthopaedic Award; Arnold P. Gold Foundation Humanism and Excellence in Teaching Award; Daemen College Distinguished Alumni of the Decade Award; Dr. Benjamin and Lilia Oblatz Award in Orthopaedic Surgery; Alpha Omega Alpha

HEALTH CARE CHAMPIONS



Honor Society; Catholic Health System Love Award; Florida Orthopaedic Institute Fellowship Research Day Award; Mary A. LoCurto Community Service Scholarship Award; clinical assistant professor at University at Buffalo; member of American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society.

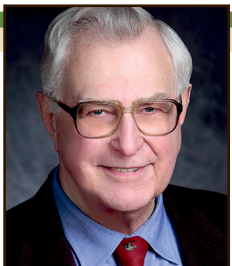
► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Taking care of patients, growing my practice and mentoring orthopaedic residents and Daemen College PA students.

► **Entered my profession because:** To make a difference in patients' lives and help to improve their quality of life.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Spending time with family, running, boating

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Skating Athletes Bold at Heart (SABAH), Friends of Night People, Habitat for Humanity

► **Bucket list:** Visit Hawaii



JOHN HELLRIEGEL JR., M.D., PH.D.

Women's health provider, Neighborhood Health Center

► **Data:** 155 Lawn Ave., Buffalo, NY 14207 • j.hellriegel@nwbchcc.org

► **With this company for:** 8 years

► **In the health care field for:** 40 years

► **Born in:** Scranton, Pa.

► **Lives in:** Amherst

► **College:** B.A., Alfred University; M.S., Canisius College; Ph.D., University at Buffalo; M.D., Medical College of Pennsylvania

► **Spouse:** Bonnie

► **Children:** Jennifer, Steven, John

► **Grandchildren:** 6 grandchildren

► **Awards/achievements:** Vincent J. Capparo, M.D., Award; Outstanding Chief Resident, Obstetrics and Gynecology, University at Buffalo; Chief

Residents' Award, Sisters of Charity Hospital; Robert J. Powalski Sr. M.D. Best Teaching Attending Award, 2004 and 2006, Sisters of Charity Hospital; Sadoo Enterprises Distinguished Citizen Award

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Providing direct patient care to a diverse patient population through a commitment to service of the underserved.

► **Entered my profession because:** I had a keen interest in women's health and pregnancy.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Fishing, spending time with family, computer programming

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute, Neighborhood Health Center, SPCA

► **Bucket list:** Take a cruise across the United States and Canada.



KEVIN HORRIGAN

Associate vice president, People Inc.

► **Data:** 1219 N. Forest Road, Williamsville, NY 14221 • khorrigan@people-inc.org

► **With this company and in the health care field for:** 14 years

► **Born in:** Lackawanna

► **Lives in:** South Buffalo

► **College:** B.A., SUNY Buffalo State

► **Spouse:** Joann

► **Children:** Jeremiah, Matthew

► **Awards:** Business First 40 under 40; distinguished alumni, political science department, SUNY Buffalo State

► **Proudest accomplishment in last year:** Helping coordinate a statewide effort to give our direct-support professionals a living wage known as the #bfair2directcare campaign.

► **Entered my profession:** To make government work better so people receive the services they deserve, and to play a role in making Buffalo better.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Kayaking, golfing, going to dinner with my wife

► **Favorite nonprofits:** People Inc., Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, South Buffalo Community Table

► **Bucket list:** Take a Viking Cruise through Europe



PATRICIA HUNTER

Manager of behavioral health, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York

► **Data:** 257 W. Genesee St., Buffalo, NY 14202 • hunter.patricia@bcbswny.com

► **With this company for:** 2 years

► **In the health care field for:** 40 years

► **Born in:** Buffalo

► **Lives in:** Buffalo

► **College:** B.S., social work, University at Buffalo; MSW, University at Buffalo; Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Certified Case Manager (CCM)

► **Children:** Elliott

► **Achievements:** Nearly four decades dedicated to the behavioral health population.

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Being promoted to BlueCross BlueShield's behavioral health manager has made me so proud. Being in a position that allows me to make a positive difference for our members and the behavioral health community is really rewarding.

► **Entered my profession because:** I have always been a caretaker and interested in the health care field. During my first job, I was exposed to mental illness for the first time. I eventually realized that my real passion and calling was to make a difference for the mental health and substance abuse populations.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Trying new things, traveling, painting and sewing

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Kids Escaping Drugs, Save the Michaels of the

World Inc., Hospice Erie

► **Bucket list:** Travel more someday when I retire; Australia has always been on my wish list. Spend more time volunteering in the community. Spend time with my family.



MICHAEL JORDAN M.D.

Attending physician, Lifetime Health Medical Group

► **Data:** 1185 Sweet Home Road, Amherst, NY 14226 • michael.jordan@lifetimehealth.org

► **With this company for:** 9 years

► **In the health care field for:** 10 years

► **Born in:** Buffalo

► **Lives in:** Amherst

► **College:** B.S., Niagara University; M.D., University at Buffalo

► **Spouse:** Jennifer

► **Children:** Lola, Emma

► **Awards/achievements:** Arnold P. Gold Foundation Humanism and Excellence in Teaching Award; Lifetime Health 2013 Physician of the Year, WNY; Make-a-Wish WNY advisory board member; primary care sports medicine physician for the Buffalo Bandits; chief of medicine at Lifetime Health (five years); admission committee, UB Medical school

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** I was nominated by my peers at Lifetime to be the practice medical director at the Amherst site. This position allowed me to take a leadership role as I acted as the liaison with the administrators and the physicians in the group. Knowing that my fellow physicians looked to me as someone they could trust was extremely rewarding.

► **Entered my profession because:** I have always loved sports and been involved in many different sports including high school basketball, lacrosse, football and baseball. I was a Division 1 lacrosse

player at Niagara University. At the same time, I excelled at and enjoyed biology, chemistry and math. The perfect fit for a career was combining my love of sports with academics, thus I decided to pursue sports medicine.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Fishing, boxing, golf

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Make-a-Wish, Horizon Health Services, St. Gregory the Great Parish

► **Bucket list:** Travel the world. Experience new cities, cultures and cuisines.



LINDA KERWIN ED.D.

Dean of health professions, Trocaire College

► **Data:** 360 Choate Ave., Buffalo, NY 14220 • kerwinl@trocaire.edu

► **With this company for:** 16 years

► **In the health care field for:** 35 years

► **Born in:** North Tonawanda

► **Lives in:** Wilson

► **College:** A.A.S., Niagara County Community College; A.A.S., Trocaire College; B.S., University at Buffalo; M.S., Concordia College; Ed.D., Concordia College

► **Spouse:** Daniel

► **Children:** Courtney

► **Awards/achievements:** Commissioner practitioner for the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs; Trocaire College Educator of the Year; selected for poster presentation, Oncology Nursing Society Annual Congress; Sigma Theta Tau (international nursing honor society); Bob Coop Community Leadership Award; National League for Nursing (District 1) Award; bone marrow recruitment coordinator, National Marrow Donor Program and Umbilical Cord Blood Registry Program

► **Entered my profession because:** As an R.N., I typically gravitate to positions in health care.

When the opportunity to work as an educator at Trocaire College was extended to me, it was purely happenstance and I felt like I was treading in unfamiliar waters. This uncertainty soon was exchanged with the realization that I was becoming part of something bigger than myself. Accepting new challenges and responsibilities allowed me the opportunity to hone abilities that I didn't even realize I had. I feel that my role in higher education was the perfect foundation that I needed as a young professional. It has been an endearing and captivating journey for me to help shape and mold the success of Trocaire's graduates.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Biking, swimming, reading

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Direct Relief, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Samaritan's Purse

► **Bucket list:** Scuba dive with my husband. Write a book with my daughter. Inspire the people I am surrounded by, one person at a time.



ADAM KOTOWSKI M.D.

Medical and lab director, Hemophilia Center of WNY; staff physician, RPCI Oncology, Roswell Park Cancer Institute

► **Data:** 199 Park Club Lane, Williamsville, NY 14221

► **With this company for:** 4 years

► **In the health care field for:** 10 years

► **Born in:** Williamsville

► **Lives in:** Elma

► **College:** University of the Sciences in Philadelphia

► **Spouse:** Laurie

► **Children:** Adam, Ben, Sydney

► **Awards/achievements:** Division chief of hematology oncology, Sisters Hospital and cancer liaison physician; poster presentation, Hemostasis and Thrombosis Research Society; medical and



HEALTH CARE CHAMPIONS

lab directorship at the Hemophilia Center

- **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Finishing a Tough Mudder Race
- **Entered my profession because:** Originally to develop therapies to treat cancer using my background in pharmacology and toxicology. My mission became treating hematologic and oncologic patients with respect, honesty and passion.
- **Hobbies/interests:** Golf, exercise, building Legos with my children
- **Favorite nonprofits:** Buffalo City Mission, YMCA Buffalo Niagara, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
- **Bucket list:** Visit the "1,000 Places to See Before You Die: A Traveler's Life List."



CARRIE MEYER

Executive director,
Independent Health
Foundation

- **Data:** 300 Essjay Road, Buffalo, NY 14221 • cmeyer@independenthealth.com
- **With this company and in the health care field for:** 22 years
- **Born in:** Buffalo
- **Lives in:** Hamburg
- **College:** Associates, Trocaire College; B.S. Hilbert College; certified nutrition and wellness consultant through American Fitness Professionals and Associates
- **Children:** Jimmy, Brooke
- **Awards/achievements:** Buffalo Business First's 40 Under 40 Award, 2004; Community Leadership Award in Business from The National Federation for Just Communities of WNY, 2009; Trocaire College Reflections Award, 2016
- **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Creating a national conversation around healthy food options which resulted in the first healthy eating competition in

Buffalo last summer, putting our community on the map for promoting nutrition and the importance of healthy eating.

- **Entered my profession because:** I have always been passionate about helping others and enjoy working with organizations that share the same values in wanting to build healthier communities.
- **Hobbies/interests:** Boating, traveling, collecting sea glass
- **Favorite nonprofits:** Buffalo Prenatal Perinatal Network, WNY United Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Sheas Performing Arts Center
- **Bucket list:** Take a hot air balloon ride. Hike the Grand Canyon. Set a world record to feature one of our community health programs.



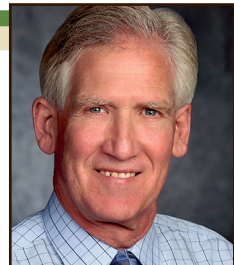
OWEN MOY M.D.

Clinical Professor of
Orthopedic Surgery,
Program Director: Hand
Fellowship, Jacobs
School of Medicine and
Biomedical Sciences,
University at Buffalo,
Excelsior Orthopedics

- **Data:** 3925 Sheridan Drive, Amherst, NY 14226 • omoy@excelsiorortho.com
- **With this company for:** 5 years
- **In the health care field for:** 30 years
- **Born in:** New York City
- **Lives in:** Amherst
- **College:** B.S., Fordham University; M.D., SUNY Upstate Medical Center; orthopedic residency, University at Buffalo; hand and microsurgery fellowship, Mayo Clinic
- **Spouse:**Carolynn
- **Children:** Christopher, Jacob
- **Awards/achievements:** Nominated annually to Castle Connolly Top Doctors since 2005
- **Entered my profession because:** I was intrigued by the intellectual and physical challenges of being a surgeon/educator while having a positive impact on the lives of others.
- **Hobbies/interests:**

Skiing, cycling, fly fishing

- **Favorite nonprofits:** Buffalo City Mission, Hospice of WNY, Third Sector Capital Partners
- **Bucket list:** Wingsuit flying. Surf the north shore of Oahu. Heli-skiing with my sons.



BRUCE NAUGHTON M.D.

Vice president, chief
medical officer,
Univera Healthcare

- **Data:** 205 Park Club Lane, Buffalo, NY 14221 • bruce.naughton@excellus.com
- **With this company for:** 2 years
- **In the health care field for:** 35 years
- **Born in:** Oklahoma City, Okla.
- **Lives in:** Buffalo
- **College:** B.S., George Washington University; M.D., University at Buffalo
- **Spouse:** Kathleen
- **Children:** Cody, Conner, Jack
- **Awards/achievements:** Plenary Speaker, American Geriatrics Society; Community Service Award, Alzheimer's Association of WNY
- **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Leading care re-design for the Medicare line of business including skilled nursing care utilization and treatment in place, tele-medicine to expand access to primary care for high-risk older persons and to expand home care as an alternative to hospitalization.
- **Entered my profession because:** I had a vision at a Black Sabbath concert in 1971 that it was time to get serious, follow my father's example and do something meaningful. Older adults have been and remain a vulnerable population for whom quality health care delivery is a challenge.
- **Hobbies/interests:** Running, cooking with my wife, art appreciation

- **Favorite nonprofits:** WBFO, WNED, Buffalo Arts Studio
- **Bucket list:** Buy a Jeff Koons piece of art. Live in Rome. Raise chickens in North Buffalo.



DARLENE SCHRANTZ R.N.

Director of patient
care services, Bertrand
Chaffee Hospital

- **Data:** 224 E. Main St., Springville, NY 14141
- **With this company and in the health care field for:** 44 years
- **Born in:** Selma, Ala.
- **Lives in:** Springville
- **College:** B.S.N., University at Buffalo; R.N., Sisters of Charity Hospital
- **Spouse:** Frederick
- **Children:** Susan Schrantz Griffin (deceased), Matthew
- **Grandchildren:** Clare, Sam
- **Awards/achievements:** Inpatient Obstetric Nursing Certification; 2017 BCH Foundation Garden Party honoree; neonatal advanced life support Instructor
- **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Implementing a Quality Care reporting template with goals, targets and actionables; welcoming Mercy Flight of WNY to their new helicopter hanger at BCH
- **Entered my profession because:** After Cardinal Mindszenty High School, I intended to go into teaching. I had a part-time job after school at Brooks Hospital as a cart person. We took dinner trays to the patients and looked after basic needs. I observed the nurses caring for patients and knew that I wanted to enter the health care field.
- **Hobbies/interests:** Cooking, quilting, volunteering at the BCH Women's Association and St. Aloysius Church
- **Favorite nonprofits:** Bertrand Chaffee Hospital, BCH Foundation, Mercy Flight of WNY

- **Bucket list:** Cross-continental train trip. Visit friends and family. Volunteer in the Springville community.



JENNIFER SEIB

Director of Substance Use
Disorder Clinic, BryLin
Behavioral Health System

- **Data:** 531 Farber Lakes Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221 • jseib@brylin.com
- **With this company for:** 5 years
- **In the health care field for:** 14 years
- **Born in:** Lockport
- **Lives in:** Newfane
- **College:** B.S., Hilbert College; M.A., Medaille College
- **Spouse:** Matthew
- **Children:** Cameron, Madison, Jocelyn
- **Awards/achievements:** Appointed by the Western New York Chemical Dependency Consortium to chair the Public Policy Committee for the last two years. I have had the privilege of speaking to many different groups and professions about addiction, treatment and recovery.
- **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** I was able to participate in a learning collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care through the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care. Through this collaborative, I learned about the importance of being a Trauma-Informed organization and was given the tools in which to implement Trauma-Informed Care throughout all aspects of an organization. Armed with this new knowledge and tools, I was able to chair a small committee in the BryLin Behavioral Health System and currently lead the organization's Trauma-Informed Care implementation plan.
- **Entered my profession because:** Early on I was fascinated by what made people think, feel and behave in the ways that they do. With

addiction, specifically, I felt many people were not able to get help because there has existed a stigma about addiction, which is in part due to the myths and misunderstandings surrounding the disease of addiction. The more I learned about addiction, the more my passion for helping people receive treatment for their disease grew. I saw how amazing people were struggling with their illness and wanted to be part of helping them manage their disease and learn how to live full and fulfilling lives.

- **Hobbies/interests:** Camping, reading, bowling
- **Favorite nonprofits:** Kids Escaping Drugs Inc.; Pride Center of WNY; Veterans One-Stop Center of WNY Inc.
- **Bucket list:** Travel to Ireland. Take an Alaskan cruise to see the Aurora Borealis. Attend a show at the Sydney Opera House.



KENNETH SNYDER M.D.

Vice president of physician
quality, Kaleida Health

- **Data:** 100 High St., Buffalo, NY 14203 • ksnyder3@kaleidahealth.org
- **With this company for:** 2 years
- **In the health care field for:** 15 years
- **Born in:** Buffalo
- **Lives in:** Buffalo
- **College:** B.S., biomedical engineering, The Catholic University of America; M.D., University at Buffalo; Ph.D., philosophy, University at Buffalo.
- **Spouse:** Samantha
- **Children:** Paulina, Eliana, Niki, George
- **Awards/achievements:** Congress of Neurological Surgeons Vascular Fellowship for Cerebrovascular Research, Toshiba Stroke Imaging Research Fellowship; Gold Humanism in Excellence in Teaching Award

HEALTH CARE CHAMPIONS



► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** In the last year Kaleida Health has significantly reduced the number of acquired contagions. Through a collaborative and multidisciplinary approach involving administrators, physicians, nurses and clinical staff, we've been able to continue to improve the level of care for patients. As a best-in-class health system, our dedicated staff worked tirelessly to identify best practices to ensure patients receive the best care.

► **Entered my profession because:** I chose neurosurgery for an assortment of reasons. One of them is that it allowed for the greatest opportunity to merge biophysics and engineering with patient care and treatment. The hybrid of those specialties allows for the creation of new, advanced technology in neurosurgery.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Music, running and exploring use of virtual reality in teaching and education.

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Brain Aneurysm Foundation, PUCGS, The Jacobs Institute

► **Bucket list:** Visit every continent. Travel to space. Perform remote/wireless robotic neurosurgery on a patient in a different physical location.



JILL SYRACUSE

Executive vice president, chief engagement and servicing officer, independent Health

► **Data:** 511 Farber Lakes Drive, Buffalo, NY 14221 • jill.syracuse@independenthealth.com

► **With this company and in the health care field for:** 32 years

► **Born in:** Buffalo

► **Lives in:** Clarence Center

► **College:** B.S., Canisius College

► **Spouse:** Kenneth

► **Children:** Kathryn, Emily

► **Awards/achievements:**

Buffalo Business First Power 100 Women; Buffalo 612' C-Level Executive Award; in 2009, our executive team at Independent Health was named Executive Team of the Year by HealthLeaders Media magazine; Leadership Buffalo, 2002

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** After looking at a few graduate schools, I enrolled in the Syracuse University MBA Program. It's been on my bucket list to obtain an advanced degree. It's a great program and I really love it.

► **Favorite nonprofits:** ALS Foundation/Hearts for ALS, Aspire Inc., Buffalo State Foundation.

► **Bucket list:** Go to Africa and see an elephant. Organize my laundry room and keep it that way. Raise money so we can find a cure for ALS.



SHERRY TRINKWALDER R.N.

Director of nursing, Northgate Health Care Facility

► **Data:** 7264 Nash Road, North Tonawanda, NY 14120 • strinkwalder@mcguiregroup.com

► **With this company for:** 25 years

► **In the health care field for:** 36 years

► **Born in:** Clearfield, Pa.

► **Lives in:** North Tonawanda

► **College:** R.N., Trocaire College

► **Spouse:** Paul

► **Children:** Amanda, Peter

► **Grandchildren:** Aurora, Morgan

► **Awards/achievements:** Helping maintain facility in first quintile for quality ratings for four years.

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Having a deficiency-free DOH survey in January

► **Entered my profession because:** My mother encouraged me to enroll in the practical nursing program that was offered at Niagara-Orleans BOCES.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Boating, swimming, movies

► **Favorite nonprofits:** No Kid Hungry, Alzheimers Association, Make-a-Wish Foundation

► **Bucket list:** To live on a yacht when I retire. Take an Alaskan cruise. Take granddaughters to Disney World and stay in the Magic Kingdom so they can meet all the princesses.



CARRIE WHITCHER

Vice president, health care improvement, Univera Healthcare

► **Data:** 205 Park Club Lane, Buffalo, NY 14221 • carrie.whitcher@univerahealthcare.com

► **With this company for:** 13 years

► **In the health care field for:** 21 years

► **Born in:** Gowanda

► **Lives in:** Orchard Park

► **College:** B. S., SUNY Fredonia; MHA, Xavier University

► **Spouse:** Matthew

► **Children:** Logan, Landen

► **Awards/achievements:** American College of Healthcare Executives' Early Careerist/Young Healthcare Executive Regent Award of the Year; recognized by a long-term-care organization for outstanding leadership in team building and morale; BlueCross BlueShield Association Honorable Mention for development and related outcomes of a hospital pay-for-performance program; Beyond Leadership Program Achievement of Excellence in Personal Leadership, Leading Others and Strategy Execution & Driving for Results; selected for BOLT (Building Organization and Leadership Talent) Program that recognizes strong leadership, initiative, analytical ability, business acumen and excellent performance history

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Driving an organizationwide culture of collaboration

to achieve improved quality performance, which ultimately benefits the communities we so passionately serve.

► **Entered my profession because:** My younger sister is physically challenged and I have been fortunate to have a life experience that witnessed great trials, enormous successes and the opportunity to celebrate both. Such an experience has resulted in a lifelong desire to serve others and make a positive impact for the betterment of health care across our communities.

► **Hobbies/interests:** painting, Pilates, gardening

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Univera, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Aspire

► **Bucket list:** Travel to the Greek Isles. Cross-country skiing.



DANELLE WOTKA R.N.

Chief nursing officer, Elderwood Administrative Services

► **Data:** 500 Seneca St., Buffalo, NY 14204 • dwotka@elderwood.com

► **With this company for:** 12 years

► **In the health care field for:** 41 years

► **Born in:** Niagara Falls

► **Lives in:** Youngstown

► **College:** A.A.S. and R.N., Niagara Community College

► **Spouse:** Paul

► **Awards/achievements:** Nominated as a Nurse of Distinction; board-certified in gerontology; Who's Who Among Executives & Professionals; RAC-CT 2010; DNS-CT; Six Sigma Green Belt

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Working with a dedicated, caring and talented group of individuals to provide expected and deserved levels of quality care and services. Expanding clinical capabilities provided by Elderwood facilities in areas of

telemetry, out-patient rehabilitation and telehealth.

► **Entered my profession because:** I entered the nursing profession 41 years ago in the area of geriatrics and have never once looked back. I wanted to make a difference in providing quality care and services to this very special population but I also wanted to embark on a career that would offer me the opportunity to stretch my talents, one that I would find personally and professionally fulfilling. The work has been diverse and ever-changing. It has provided me with endless opportunities for professional growth and development.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Boating, gardening, reading

► **Favorite nonprofits:** American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, Alzheimer's Association

► **Bucket list:** Step foot on all seven continents. Learn to say thank you in 10 languages. Walk the Great Wall of China one more time.



JESSICA YOUNG M.D.

Assistant professor of surgical oncology; director of the Breast Cancer Risk Assessment and Prevention Program, Roswell Park Cancer Institute

► **Data:** Elm and Carlton streets, Buffalo, NY 14263 • jessica.young@roswellpark.org

► **With this company for:** 5 years

► **In the health care field for:** 12 years

► **Born in:** Toronto

► **Lives in:** Buffalo

► **College:** B.S., Pennsylvania State University; M.D., Jefferson Medical College

► **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** Being named co-program director of the breast surgery oncology fellowship

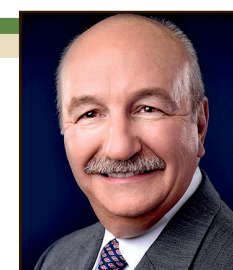
program at Roswell. Great mentors and mentees have been instrumental in my life and I am so happy to be part of that life-educating process through our fellowship.

► **Entered my profession because:** I have always been a practical person, and medicine always struck me as an extremely practical profession. People will always need doctors, right? And of all the fields in medicine, surgery is definitely one of the most practical. It is direct, dynamic and life-saving. I specifically work in breast cancer surgery because I love having (mostly) women as my patients. Women are strong, fierce, resilient creatures and being able to help them during a terrifying time of their lives is an inspiration and an honor. I honestly think we'll find a cure for cancer in my lifetime, and I'll happily retire.

► **Hobbies/interests:** Traveling, baseball, reading escapist fiction

► **Favorite nonprofits:** Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders), Childfund International, Roswell Park Alliance Research Foundation

► **Bucket list:** Throw the opening pitch at a Jays game. Learn to cook Chinese food. Compete on "So You Think You Can Dance."



ROBERT ZIELINSKI M.D.

Physician, medical oncology and hematology, Buffalo Medical Group PC

► **Data:** 325 Essjay Road, Williamsville, NY 14221 • rzielinski@buffalomedicalgroup.com

► **With this company for:** 26 years

► **In the health care field for:** 32 years

► **Born in:** Buffalo

► **Lives in:** Clarence

► **College:** B.S., Cornell University; M.D., SUNY Upstate Medical Center

► **Spouse:** Linda (deceased)



HEALTH CARE CHAMPIONS

- ▶ **Stepsons:** Jeffrey, Patrick
- ▶ **Grandchildren:** Mitchell, Connor, Nicholas, Tyler, Roslyn, Marygrace, Mike
- ▶ **Awards/achievements:** Physician of the Year, Hospice Buffalo (1996) and Niagara Hospice (1998); Kevin Guest House Heart of Compassion (2003); Lutheran Charities Magi Award (2013)
- ▶ **Past:** Hospice Buffalo board of directors (1995-08); Buffalo Medical Group board (1997-99; 2001-16), Zion Lutheran Church Clarence Center Council (2005-10; president, 2007-09)
- ▶ **Current:** Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center board of directors; regional leadership board, American Lung Association of the Northeast
- ▶ **Proudest accomplishment in the last year:** I was co-captain of the Buffalo Medical Group team entered in the American Lung Association's Fight For Air Climb in March. BMG was a corporate sponsor and we had over 50 climbers, all in honor of my wife, who died of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis in March 2016, and our CEO's mother-in-law, who died of lung cancer shortly after. I became the public face of the cause, appearing in a web-based video for the group and on WGRZ-TV in two segments of their programming. We built a team of over 50 climbers and raised by far the most money in the region and third most in the United States.
- ▶ **Entered my profession because:** As a medical oncologist, I am privileged to be part of some of the happiest and saddest moments of people's lives. Helping the dying to make difficult decisions and to ease the burdens they and their families carry is every bit as rewarding as the celebrations with long-term survivors.
- ▶ **Hobbies/interests:** Golf, horse racing, scuba diving
- ▶ **Favorite nonprofits:** Hospice, Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center, American Lung Association
- ▶ **Bucket list:** Dive the Great Barrier Reef before it all dies out. Attend the Breeders Cup. Make a hole-in-one.