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Recognition

Dr. Jonathan Kurtis honored by American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

Recognized for research that could aid in the development of a malaria vaccine

PROVIDENCE – **JONATHAN D. KURTIS, MD, PhD**, was awarded the Bailey K. Ashford Medal by the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) for research that could aid in the development of a malaria vaccine. Dr. Kurtis, the founder and director of the Center for International Health Research at Rhode Island Hospital and a professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University, was presented the medal during ASTMH's annual meeting in Philadelphia.

"I congratulate Dr. Kurtis on the occasion of this tremendous honor, the awarding of the Bailey K. Ashford Medal for distinguished work in tropical medicine," said **DOUGLAS ANTHONY, MD, PhD**, pathologist-in-chief at Rhode Island Hospital. "Jake has spent his entire career working toward developing a vaccine that will protect millions of people from malaria and other tropical infections. His drive and dedication to improving global health is admirable, and we're thrilled that others in this field share our view of the impact of his work."

Most notable among Dr. Kurtis' recent work is the discovery of a protein that is essential for malaria-causing parasites to escape red blood cells. Antibodies to this protein trap the parasite in the red blood cells, rendering them incapable of causing further damage. It is hoped that this discovery could lead to the development of a vaccine that will prevent the progression of *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria, which kills one child every 15 second in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.

The medal honors distinguished work in tropical medicine. It is named for Col. Bailey K. Ashford (1873–1934), a pioneering physician who, at age 26, recognized that hookworms caused the anemia prevalent among the rural populations of Puerto Rico. He was instrumental in founding the School of Tropical Medicine in Puerto Rico that later transformed into



(L to R) Chandy John, MD, last year's recipient of the Bailey K. Ashford Medal presenting the award to Jonathan Kurtis, MD, of Providence.

the school of medicine.

Dr. Kurtis is also an expert in schistosomiasis immunity, and he has led extensive population-based studies in the Philippines, China, Kenya, Tanzania and Brazil. His research is funded under a series of grants from the National Institutes of Health and the Gates Grand Challenges in Global Health. Chandy John, MD, director of the Ryan White Center for Pediatric Infectious Disease and Global Health at Indiana University School of Medicine, nominated Dr. Kurtis.

"Dr. Kurtis has made seminal contributions in understanding the modulation of protective immune responses by developmental and nutritional factors and the identification of vaccine candidates for *falciparum* malaria in the pediatric population," said John. "His work in these areas is recognized both nationally and internationally for its innovative approaches and overall excellence."

In addition to serving as principal investigator or co-investigator on six research projects, Dr. Kurtis is a prolific writer. His bibliography includes 75 published papers, and he has delivered more than 50 academic presentations. He serves on the editorial boards of *Infection and Immunity* and *Human Parasitic Diseases* as well as an *ad hoc* reviewer for a number of journals including *Nature Communications* and the *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*.

At the Alpert Medical School, Dr. Kurtis lectures on international health, parasitology, coagulation and pharmacology. The university has awarded him the Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching 12 times.

Dr. Kurtis earned his bachelor's degree and medical degree as well as a PhD from Brown University. He is a National Research Council fellow and a recipient of a Becton-Dickinson tropical medicine research award. ❖

Recognition

Center for Bariatric Surgery at Miriam earns Optum Center of Excellence accreditation

PROVIDENCE – The Center for Bariatric Surgery has received the designation as a Center of Excellence (COE) from The Clinical Sciences Institute (CSI) of Optum, a leading information and technology-enabled health services business focused on providing health care systems resources to improve care.

“At The Center for Bariatric Surgery, we take a comprehensive approach to treating obesity,” said **SIVA VITHIANANTHAN, MD**, chief of minimally invasive and bariatric surgery at The Center for Bariatric Surgery, a program of Rhode Island and The Miriam hospitals. “With our 40 years of cumulative experience, we provide care that is safe, coordinated and personalized. We are committed to working closely with each patient to achieve his or her goals.”

Optum’s Centers of Excellence networks are developed in conjunction with a national panel of industry experts and practitioners. Centers of Excellence evaluation criteria includes positive patient outcomes and cost effectiveness.

Bariatric surgery is a safe and effective option for treating

obesity. The Center for Bariatric Surgery (<http://www.miriamhospital.org/centers-and-services/center-for-bariatric-surgery.html>) performed 1000 bariatric surgeries from June, 2012 through August, 2015, and provides a full range of multidisciplinary services, including:

- Coordinated preoperative and long-term nutritional and behavioral modification programs.
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- Team of bariatric surgeons available 24/7 for care of all bariatric patients.
- State-of-the-art laparoscopic and minimally invasive technologies.
- Free, multi-disciplinary, professionally coordinated patient support groups.
- Highly trained operating room personnel and certified nursing staff. ❖



ADAM MASTOON

White Coat Ceremony 2015

Students in the Alpert Medical School Class of 2019 received their first white coats on Oct. 17 in the Ceremony of Commitment to Medicine, which marks a student's transition from classroom to clinical study. It was held at the First Unitarian Church, and was followed by a reception at the medical school. The event was sponsored by the Brown Medical Alumni Association.



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Recognition

Ghada Bourjeily, MD, receives Selya biomedical research award

PROVIDENCE – Lifespan, Rhode Island's largest health system, honored pulmonary medicine expert **GHADA BOURJEILY, MD**, of Smithfield, with the 2015 Bruce M. Selya Award for Excellence in Research. Named for the Hon. Bruce M. Selya of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and a former Lifespan chairman, the annual award is presented to leading researchers across the Lifespan network for outstanding biomedical work.

Dr. Bourjeily is an attending physician in pulmonary services and obstetric medicine and director of research at the Women's Medicine Collaborative. She is board certified in internal medicine, pulmonary medicine and critical care medicine and is an associate professor of medicine at the Alpert Medical School.

Her research has focused on sleep-disordered breathing and its impact on cardiovascular and metabolic outcomes during pregnancy, with her most recent work looking at the placenta's role in sleep-disordered breathing. Her current work as principal investigator and co-investigator is funded by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development and the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health.



The Hon. Bruce M. Selya presents Ghada Bourjeily, MD, with the 2015 award for research excellence.

Her other honors include two American College of Chest Physicians awards for clinical research in women's health and the Young Investigator Award from the North American Society of Obstetric Medicine.

Bourjeily has authored numerous abstracts, articles and book chapters. She edited a textbook on pulmonary disorders in pregnancy and was guest editor of an issue in *Chest Medicine* on lung disease and pregnancy. She serves as a reviewer and editorial board member for numerous journals in her primary disciplines as well as for obstetric journals. She is the

chairperson of the Women's Health Network (the College of Chest Physicians) and vice president of the North American Society of Obstetric Medicine.

Established in 1999, the award honors Lifespan's first board chairman. Judge Selya is devoted to the promotion of academic medicine. The prestigious award recognizes research excellence of Lifespan's independent investigators and enhances the visibility and critical role of research. All award recipients are named members of the Selya Research Award Committee for a three-year term. ❖

Southcoast Health named one of the nation's 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by Truven Health Analytics

FALL RIVER, MASS. — Southcoast Health has been named one of the nation's 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by Truven Health Analytics, an independent and objective research firm. The study, now in its 17th year, singled out 50 hospitals from across the country that achieved superior clinical outcomes in this critical area of care. Southcoast Health is the only community hospital in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island to be recognized.

"Time and time again Southcoast has distinguished itself as one of the country's elite providers of cardiac care," said **KEITH A. HOVAN**, President & CEO of Southcoast Health. "The part

of this success that I am most proud about is that this top-notch care is being provided in a community hospital setting, and is available to every person in our region regardless of social or financial standing."

"These well-deserved recognitions and awards are the result of the tireless efforts of our doctors, nurses and ancillary staff," said **DR. MARGARET FERRELL**, Physician-in-Chief of Cardiovascular Services at Southcoast Health. "The skill and dedication of the individuals who make up our team are second to none, and I'm very proud to see our achievements recognized once again on a national level." ❖

Recognition

Melissa Nothnagle, MD, receives Family Medicine Education Consortium Leadership Award

PAWTUCKET – **MELISSA NOTHNAGLE, MD, MSc**, family medicine residency director, associate professor of Family Medicine, Memorial Hospital/The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University was awarded the Family Medicine Mid-Career Faculty Achievement Award. It is from the Family Medicine Education Consortium, a family medicine organization that serves the northeast region of the United States and supports collaborative educational and clinical initiatives in primary care, education, policy and advocacy. Dr. Nothnagle received the award at their annual conference recently.



JEFFREY BORKAN, MD, PhD, professor and chair of Family Medicine, Memorial Hospital / The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, assistant dean for Primary Care – Population Health Program Planning stated in his nomination letter, “Dr. Nothnagle has made significant clinical, teaching, intellectual, and advocacy contributions to the field of Family Medicine, particularly in the areas of medical education scholarship and comprehensive reproductive health training.”

Dr. Nothnagle has been on the family medicine faculty for 13 years, after completing her residency training at Memorial. ❖

Dr. Brenna L. Hughes invited to serve on immunization expert work group of ACOG

PROVIDENCE – **BRENNA L. HUGHES, MD**, of North Kingstown, chief of the Women’s Infectious Diseases Consultative Service at Women & Infants Hospital and associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, has accepted an invitation to become a member of the Immunization Expert Work Group of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG). The Group serves as an advisory group



of ACOG’s Committee on Obstetric Practice, Committee on Gynecologic Practice, and Committee on Adolescent Health Care.

The ACOG Immunization Expert Work Group was formed in 2010 following an ACOG immunization task force and the H1N1 pandemic to develop and deliver accurate immunization education and resources, and continues to demonstrate ACOG’s commitment to increasing immunization rates. The Work Group is made up of immunization and infectious disease experts who regularly report on their activities and are able to relay ACOG guidelines and opinions.

Dr. Hughes and her Work Group members will be asked to develop and review documents such as committee opinions, patient and provider fact sheets, physician scripts, letters, and other patient and provider immunization materials. ❖

Dr. Gary Frishman elected to board of American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists

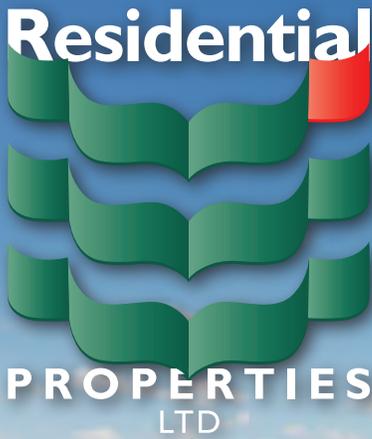
PROVIDENCE – **GARY N. FRISHMAN, MD**, associate director of the Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility and Residency Program Director at Women & Infants Hospital, and professor of obstetrics and gynecology at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, has been elected secretary/treasurer of the American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists (AAGL). With more than 7,700 members from 100 countries, the AAGL is the leading association in the world in promoting minimally invasive gynecologic surgery. Dr. Frishman will begin duties later this month for a one-year term. After his term as secretary/treasurer, Dr. Frishman will then ascend to vice president, and then president of the association the follow year.



Dr. Frishman currently sits on the Residency Review Committee for the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical

Education (ACGME) overseeing all obstetric and gynecologic residency training programs in the United States. He is also deputy editor for the *Journal of Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery* and serves as an oral board examiner for the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG). Dr. Frishman previously served on the board of directors for both the AAGL and its associated Fellowship in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery.

Dr. Frishman received his undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania and attended medical school at Columbia University in New York City. Following this, he completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia and a fellowship in reproductive endocrinology and infertility at the University of Connecticut in Farmington. ❖



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Recognition



Michael J. Dacey, MD, MS, FACP, president and chief operating officer, Kent Hospital; Joseph W. Spinale, DO, FACC, FACP, sr. vice president and chief medical officer; Jim Burke, vice president, finance; Judith Laurence, manager, Hospitality Shop; and Mary Jane Sweetland, president of Kent Hospital Auxiliary.

Kent Hospital Auxiliary reaches \$1M pledge

WARWICK – The Kent Hospital Auxiliary has reached its \$1 million pledge made to the hospital to help support important clinical services and advancements. In January 2012 the Auxiliary pledged to raise \$1 million for the Ambulatory Service Pavilion, Dialysis Unit and renovations to the 3 North patient floor. Through the Auxiliary's annual golf tournament, the Hospitality Shop revenue, and numerous fundraisers, this pledge was reached in about 3 ½ years, well under the five-year estimate. Auxiliary members presented the check during their annual luncheon.

"The hard work and dedication the Kent Hospital Auxiliary has demonstrated is truly commendable," said **MICHAEL J. DACEY, MD, MS, FACP**, president and chief operating officer, Kent Hospital. "They are tireless ambassadors for the hospital and our community. Their generosity and ongoing commitment is a testament to their hard work and leadership for the growth and betterment of Kent Hospital."

"It is an honor to give back to Kent Hospital for all that it does for the community," said Mary-Jane Sweetland, president of the Kent Hospital Auxiliary. "The Auxiliary is thrilled to be able to present this million dollar donation to ensure the constant improvement of programs and services that daily help meet needs of so many." ❖

Dr. Amy Salisbury published in *American Journal Of Psychiatry* for study findings in depression medication and pregnancy

PROVIDENCE – **AMY SALISBURY, PhD**, a research scientist at Women & Infants Hospital's Brown Center for the Study of Children at Risk and an associate professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, was published for her study "Effects of Maternal Depression on the Neurobehavior of Infants," in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

Women who were pregnant and diagnosed with depression were involved in the study. Researchers evaluated the effects of prenatal use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and benzodiazepines, as well as no drug treatment, on newborns. Dr. Salisbury and her team found adverse effects in infants of women taking SSRI antidepressants during pregnancy beyond the first seven to 10 days postpartum and that the use of benzodiazepines in conjunction with SSRIs was associated with more significant problems in infant neurological functioning than SSRI use alone.

"Infants in the SSRI and SSRI plus benzodiazepine groups had lower motor scores and more central nervous system stress signs across the first postnatal month as well as lower self-regulation. Infants in the depression group had low arousal through the newborn period," explained Dr. Salisbury.

"Women who need treatment should continue to receive it. The recommendations are actually to not stop taking the medications just to prevent neuro-behavioral problems for the baby at birth as we did not find evidence that it prevents these signs. The one caution was in using a benzodiazepine to treat women as the effects were more pronounced and longer lasting."

However, Dr. Salisbury notes that women who need that medication combination may be at higher risk from their symptoms showing that the need for treatment may outweigh the potential problems for the baby.

Additional co-authors on the study from Women & Infants Hospital include **CYNTHIA BATTLE, PhD**, a research psychologist in the Center for Women's Behavioral Health and associate professor of psychiatry and human behavior (research) at the Alpert Medical School; **CYNTHIA LONCAR, PhD**, director of clinical services for the Women & Infants Center for Children and Families and assistant professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at the Alpert Medical School; and **BARRY LESTER, PhD**, founder and director of the Brown Center for the Study of Children at Risk. ❖

Recognition

Bradley Hospital named “Top Performer on Key Quality Measures” by Joint Commission

One of four facilities in New England to receive distinction for psychiatric services

EAST PROVIDENCE – Bradley Hospital, the nation’s first psychiatric hospital focusing exclusively on children and adolescents, has earned the distinction of ‘*Top Performer on Key Quality Measures*’ for 2014 by The Joint Commission, the leading accreditor of health organizations in the U.S.

Bradley Hospital was recognized as part of The Joint Commission’s 2015 annual report “*America’s Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety*,” for attaining and sustaining excellence in accountability measure performance for inpatient psychiatric services.

Bradley Hospital, which is also a teaching hospital for the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, is one of only 1,043 hospitals out of more than 3,300 eligible hospitals in the United States to achieve the 2014 *Top Performer* distinction.

“This is the third year Bradley Hospital has been recognized as a *Top Performer* in the five years since the creation of the program,” said **DANIEL J. WALL**, Bradley Hospital president. “This recognition from The Joint Commission affirms our commitment to consistently provide the best quality care for each child and family we serve, and is a credit to the exemplary work of our patient care staff.” Bradley Hospital was also recognized in 2012 and 2013 for its performance on accountability measure

data for inpatient psychiatric services in 2011 and 2012.

The *Top Performer* program recognizes hospitals for improving performance on evidence-based interventions that increase the chances of healthy outcomes for patients with certain conditions. Along with inpatient psychiatric services, performance measures included in the recognition program include heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care, children’s asthma, stroke, venous thromboembolism, perinatal care, immunization, tobacco treatment and substance use.

To be a 2014 *Top Performer*, hospitals must meet three performance criteria based on 2014 accountability measure data, including:

- Achieve cumulative performance of 95 percent or above across all reported accountability measures
- Achieve performance of 95 percent or above on each and every reported accountability measure with at least 30 denominator cases
- Have at least one core measure set that had a composite rate of 95 percent or above, and within that measure set, achieve a performance rate of 95 percent or above on all applicable individual accountability measures. ❖

Women & Infants earns Top Performer On Key Quality Measures® from Joint Commission

PROVIDENCE – Women & Infants Hospital has been recognized as a 2014 *Top Performer on Key Quality Measures®* by The Joint Commission.

Women & Infants was recognized as part of The Joint Commission’s 2015 annual report “*America’s Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety*,” for attaining and sustaining excellence in accountability measure performance for perinatal care. Women & Infants is one of only two hospitals in Rhode Island and 1,043 hospitals out of more than 3,300 eligible hospitals in the U.S. to achieve the 2014 *Top Performer* distinction.

“We are so proud of this honor and to be recognized among some of the best hospitals in our country,” said **MARK R. MARCANTANO**, president and chief operating officer, Women & Infants Hospital. “This distinction as a *Top Performer* by The Joint Commission is recognition of our organization’s continuous focus on improving the safety and the quality of the care that we provide to the women and newborns of our region.”

The *Top Performer* program recognizes hospitals for improving performance on evidence-based interventions that increase

the chances of healthy outcomes for patients with certain conditions. The performance measures included in the recognition program include heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care, children’s asthma, inpatient psychiatric services, stroke, venous thromboembolism, perinatal care, immunization, tobacco treatment, and substance abuse.

To be a 2014 *Top Performer*, hospitals had to meet three performance criteria based on 2014 accountability measure data, including:

- Achieve cumulative performance of 95 percent or above across all reported accountability measures;
- Achieve performance of 95 percent or above on each and every reported accountability measure with at least 30 denominator cases; and
- Have at least one core measure set that had a composite rate of 95 percent or above, and within that measure set, achieve a performance rate of 95 percent or above on all applicable individual accountability measures. ❖

Recognition

Newport Hospital's rehabilitation program receives 2015 Press Ganey Guardian of Excellence Award

NEWPORT – Newport Hospital has been named a 2015 Guardian of Excellence Award winner by Press Ganey Associates, Inc. for the hospital's inpatient rehabilitation patient experience. Press Ganey is a leading health care performance improvement and analytics organization. The distinction recognizes top-performing health care organizations that have consistently reached the 95th percentile or above in categories ranging from patient experience to physician engagement.

The Guardian of Excellence Award is a nationally recognized symbol of achievement in health care. The Press

Ganey awards annually honor health care organizations that have consistently sustained performance in the top five percent for each reporting period for the year. This year's award is based on quarterly reports delivered between May 2014 and April 2015.

Newport Hospital recently expanded its rehabilitation services with the launch of a psychiatry service line and the addition of two new psychiatrists who work closely with the hospital's Vanderbilt Rehabilitation Center staff, providing medical support, enhancing services, and completing the continuum of care on

both the inpatient and outpatient sides. "The nursing and therapy staff at Vanderbilt are so well trained and exude the kind of confidence that gives the necessary boost to patients who are recovering from significant impairments," said **MUSTAPHA KEMAL, MD**, medical director of Vanderbilt Rehab.

Quarterly rankings generated by Press Ganey are based on data in its Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey database and must be at the 95th percentile or above for every quarter in the time frame. ❖



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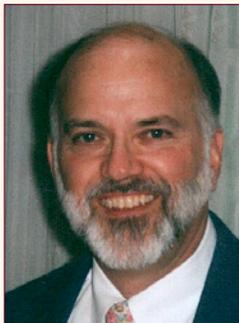
Obituaries

DAVID P. FLETCHER, MD, 64, formerly of East Greenwich, passed away November 5, at Briarcliffe Manor, eight years after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. He was the devoted husband of Barbara A. Fletcher.

He was a graduate of Brown University Medical School and started his career at St. Louis Children's Hospital where he met his wife. Dr. Fletcher returned to RI and was a beloved pediatrician in Warwick for 25 years before retiring due to illness.

He was a kind and gentle soul. His patients of all ages loved him. He will be missed terribly by family and friends. Besides his wife, he is survived by his son, Joseph M. Fletcher of Nashville, TN; a brother, Harold G. Fletcher of Lebanon, IL; a sister, Barbara A. LaRose of Hope, RI.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Rhode Island Chapter or Gentiva Hospice. ❖



JOSEPH P. PROCACCINI, MD, 67, of Johnston, passed away peacefully surrounded by family October 24, 2015 at the Philip Hulitar Hospice Inpatient Center in Providence. He was the cherished husband of Alberta F. (Ristigian) Procaccini.

Dr. Procaccini was a summa cum laude graduate of Manhattan College and a magna cum laude graduate of Creighton University School of Medicine, Omaha, NE. He completed a Family Practice residency at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix, AZ. He started his career as a part-time emergency room physician in Washington DC, where he was also employed at the NIH.

Dr. Procaccini opened a private medical practice in Johnston RI from 1980-1993. He was a clinical instructor in Family Medicine at Brown University School of Medicine from 1984 to 1993. He then began his career at Reliant Medical Group in MA, where he worked in Adult Urgent care from 1993 to the present.

His colleagues often commented what a difference one person makes in the lives of others. They have described "Dr. Joe" as someone with a following of fans that included patients, colleagues and staff. His calm demeanor and soothing voice helped many through challenging times. His colleagues looked to him for his wisdom, intelligence and wonderful wit.

The family wishes to acknowledge their gratitude and deep appreciation to Dr. Joseph DiBenedetto, Jr. and his wife Pat. Dr. DiBenedetto was a friend for more than 30 years. As Joseph's physician, he gave him the greatest gift of many quality years beyond what was one would expect, given his rare diagnosis. Joseph was the most loving husband, father, son, brother, uncle, friend and colleague. He believed his purpose in life was to be of service to those who were ill and needed help. He will be missed by all.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his loving son Joseph M. Procaccini of Johnston. Joseph was the brother of Martha Nardacci (husband Nick) and Charles Procaccini (wife Robyn). He was brother-in-law to Albert Ristigian Jr., Renee Gasparri (husband Chris), Karen Laflamme (husband Claude) and Judith Ristigian. He also leaves behind many adored nieces and nephews.

If you wish to make a donation in memory of Joseph P. Procaccini, please make it to the Tomorrow Fund. ❖



DR. STEVEN A. PELIGIAN, 58, of North Kingstown, passed away November 16, 2015, as a result of injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

A Providence native and beloved friend to many, "Dr. Steve" was a physician in private practice and later became Medical Director of CODAC, a behavioral health care agency where he worked for 15 years. He was an Emeritus Member of the Board of

Trustees for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Church, 70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI 02908 or Clinica Esperanza/Hope Clinic, 60 Valley St., Providence, RI 02909. ❖