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A Long Journey from Thailand to Memorial Lab for a Good Night's Sleep

PAWTUCKET – Eden Weinmann hadn't had a good night's sleep in 30 years. Scoliosis arcs his spine into a 103-degree curve, making it difficult to breathe when he would lie down. When he did drift off, the curvature triggered gastroesophageal reflux disorder (GERD), high blood pressure and a pressing need to urinate several times a night.

Over the years, Weinmann, a Washington, DC, native who lives in Thailand and has worked as a lawyer, writer, economist, urban planner and management consultant – sought medical help for much-needed sleep. He says he found that “every doctor tends to know what's in their specialty, whether it's urology or pulmonology.”

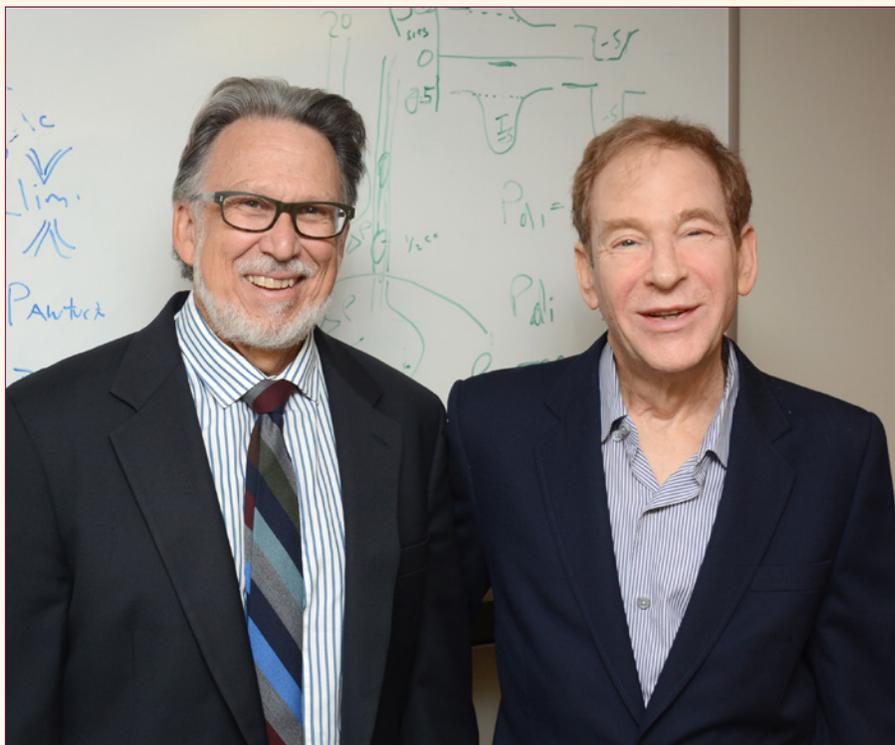
“I went to five major medical centers – four in America, one in Asia – and nine doctors in the last year and a half and none could pull it all together. Many wanted to operate on my back,” Weinmann said.

Called “teenage onset idiopathic scoliosis,” the disease left him unable to sleep more than an hour straight, which made him think he might have chronic fatigue syndrome. Then he noticed that his blood pressure would be elevated when he woke up. He researched the connection and found sleep apnea.

“It was like being waterboarded incessantly all night long, but I saw that and it was like ‘boom!’ Then I found a chapter about diseases of the chest wall in Murray and Nadel's *Textbook of Respiratory Medicine*,” Weinmann says of the piece written by **F. DENNIS MCCOOL, MD**, interim chief of pulmonary, sleep and critical care medicine at Memorial and medical director of the sleep labs at both Memorial and Kent hospitals.

“In the chapter, Dr. McCool connects chest wall disease with sleep apnea,” Weinmann said.

Dr. McCool wrote that he had seen significant improvement when patients with chest wall diseases use a bipap machine that uses pressure to get the air into the lungs. Weinmann bought his own machine, but didn't know what pressure setting to use. As a result, his lungs



F. Dennis McCool, MD, at left, interim chief of pulmonary, sleep and critical care medicine at Memorial and medical director of the sleep labs at both Memorial and Kent hospitals stands with grateful patient, Eden Weinmann.

weren't fully inflating and there was little difference in his sleep. Needing to get an expert's help, he made an appointment in January and took the long transcontinental trip to see Dr. McCool.

The doctor scheduled a sleep study. Based on the numbers from Weinmann's machine, Dr. McCool says he was able to start the machine on a high pressure and inch backwards until he reached the right setting.

After trying five categories of urine remedies, cognitive behavior therapy, GERD medications, and limiting caffeine during the day, Weinmann says his night in the Memorial Hospital Sleep Lab was “great.” Once he was able to get more sleep, he found his daytime work schedule improved as he was able to concentrate more on work and did not need naps.

“It was a huge weight being lifted off my shoulders, like a major black cloud of the quality of my life going away and the sunshine coming back out!” says the

Columbia and Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate.

Dr. McCool, who is also a Professor of Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, says he believes in blending clinical acumen with knowledge of respiratory physiology. This allows one to make better connections between a specific disease or condition with other possible symptoms.

“People don't have the time to think about the physiological side of things, but they need to because there are so many answers in the overlap,” he says.

Weinmann, who remains temporarily in Rhode Island to continue seeing Dr. McCool, says he is so pleased with the comprehensive approach taken in caring for him at Memorial that he would like to “find a way to extend ‘Pawtucket care’ over the rest of my medical treatment, including outside Pawtucket, both now and into the future, in this country and also in Asia.” ❖



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Recognition

Dr. Alan Morrison's Research Project at VA Funded to Study Heart Valve Disease



PROVIDENCE – **DR. ALAN MORRISON**, a cardiologist at the Providence VA Medical Center, was awarded a 12-month pilot project August 29 through Ocean State Research Institute to study the thickening and hardening of aortic heart valves.

Dr. Morrison, who is also an assistant professor of medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, said his team's long-term goal is to develop new treatments to improve the

survival rate and quality of life for veterans with calcific aortic valve disease.

Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death for U.S. veterans.

Morrison said previous research identified some key inflammatory signals associated with the calcification of plaque in the hearts of veterans. "It turns out that, as we inhibited the calcification of plaques, we also slowed aortic valve thickening and hardening," said Dr. Morrison. "We hope to apply what we've learned to develop effective treatments for aortic stenosis." ❖



MATTHEW HEALEY

More than 500 swimmers participated in the seventh annual Swim Across America at Roger Wheeler State Beach in Narragansett recently, raising more than \$158,000 for cancer research at Women & Infants Hospital. At the event were, from left, Mark R. Marcantano, president and chief operating officer at W&I; Dr. Maureen Phipps, chief of obstetrics and gynecology at W&I, and Dr. Paul DiSilvestro, W&I's interim director of the Program in Women's Oncology.



Patrick Sweeney, MD, receives ACCME's 2016 Rutledge W. Howard, MD, Award

CHICAGO – The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME®) announced that **PATRICK SWEENEY, MD, MPH, PHD**, is the recipient of the 2016 Rutledge W. Howard, MD, Award for Individual Service to the Intrastate Accreditation System.

Given in two categories, this award recognizes state medical societies, their staff, and volunteers for their contributions and commitment to advancing community-based continuing medical education (CME) programs and the intrastate accreditation system.

The recipients will be given their awards during a ceremony at the ACCME State/Territory Medical Society Conference, to be held December 7–8, 2016, in Chicago.

Dr. Sweeney was nominated for the award by the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS). For the past 23 years, Dr. Sweeney has led the RIMS Committee on CME as Chair. Under his leadership, RIMS has continued to be designated as an ACCME Recognized Accreditor of intrastate CME.

Dr. Sweeney has served in many roles at Women and Infants Hospital, including as Director of Medical Education, Director of CME, Chair of the CME Committee, and Chair of the Graduate Medical Education Committee. He also spent 17 years as Associate Dean of Medicine for CME at Brown Medical School.

Dr. Sweeney has been involved with CME on a national level since 1992 as an ACCME surveyor, surveying more than 75 nationally accredited CME programs. He has served as a member of the ACCME Committee for Review and Recognition, and as a member, Vice Chair, and Chair of the ACCME Accreditation Review Committee.

"As I look back over the list of previous recipients of this award, I am impressed by how many of them have become valued personal friends and colleagues. I am indeed honored to have my name added to such a prestigious list of CME professionals, and I am grateful to the Rhode Island Medical Society for having submitted my name in nomination. During my 25 years in CME I consider myself extremely fortunate to have worked with some of the most talented and committed individuals in our field, and I gratefully share this recognition with them," he said.

"It is very difficult to do justice to the breadth, depth, and distinction of Dr. Patrick Sweeney's long service to CME in Rhode Island and nationally. He has been recognized and honored by his peers on numerous occasions, and has earned the respect of our legislators and regulators for his steadfast single-handed defense of the integrity of CME from the many unripe ideas that too often spring up in the halls of state government. Due to Patrick's commitment to the community and education, he was honored by his colleagues with the Medical Society's special award for medical professionalism. On behalf of all his colleagues and friends in Rhode Island, we thank the ACCME for formally recognizing this fine gentleman and physician," said **RUSSELL A. SETTIPANE, MD**, President, Rhode Island Medical Society. ❖

Appointments



Dr. Stephanie Curry joins CharterCARE Medical Associates

PROVIDENCE—**DR. STEPHANIE A. CURRY**, a physician specializing in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism with an added interest in obesity medicine, has joined Charter CARE Medical Associates (CCMA).

Dr. Curry is a graduate of the Medical University of the Americas, completed her Internal Medicine residency at Roger Williams Medical Center and recently completed a Fellowship in Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism at Lahey Hospital and Medical Center in Burlington, Mass. Dr. Curry has co-authored 14 academic publications and presentations. She has also participated in numerous research projects at Lahey Hospital and Medical Center, Miriam Hospital and Roger Williams Medical Center.

At CCMA, Dr. Curry's practice will concentrate on general endocrinology with a special focus on treating diabetes and on medical weight loss, in collaboration with the Roger Williams Weight Loss Surgery Program. ❖

Edward Hurley, MD, named President-elect of Pediatric Research Society, Junior Section

EDWARD HURLEY, MD, a second-year neonatal-perinatal medicine fellow at Women & Infants Hospital, has been chosen as president-elect of the Junior Section of the Society for Pediatric Research (SPR). His term begins immediately and will run through June 2017, at which point he will begin his one-year term as president of the society.

A graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and of Harvard University, Dr. Hurley earned his medical degree at New York Medical College. He completed an internship and residency in pediatrics at Brown University/Hasbro Children's Hospital. He has published research in *Pediatrics*, *The American Journal of Medical Genetics*, *The Rhode Island Medical Journal*, and *The Archives of Disease in Childhood, Fetal and Neonatal Edition*.

The mission of the American Pediatric Society's Society for Pediatric Research is to foster the research and career development of investigators engaged in creating new knowledge that advances the health and well-being of children and youth. Since 2012, the Society for Pediatric Research Junior Section has helped to introduce and integrate trainees into the Society by promoting scholarly work and serving as a resource for those making the transition to junior faculty. ❖



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