

Appointments

Patrick Tigie confirmed as OHIC's new Commissioner

Following the retirement of Commissioner Marie Ganim, **PATRICK TIGIE** has joined the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC) in January serving as the agency's new commissioner. In December of last year, after being nominated by Governor Gina Raimondo, Tigie was unanimously approved by the Rhode Island State Senate Health and Human Services committee and approved by the full Senate afterward.

Prior to joining OHIC, Commissioner Tigie served as the Assistant Secretary for Health and Medicaid director for RI's Executive Office of Health and Human Services where he led the state's Medicaid program, which under his leadership served approximately 300,000 residents and had an annual budget of approximately \$2.5 billion.

Commissioner Tigie plans to accelerate and expand upon the ongoing successes OHIC has achieved in expanding access, parity, and affordability of health care in our state. In particular, Commissioner Tigie has laid out six items in which he will be focused on as he begins his tenure as commissioner:

- Continuing to ensure that Rhode Islanders receive adequate coverage for COVID-19 testing, treatment, and care.
- Leveraging the regulatory structure within OHIC to accelerate delivery system reform.
- Continued implementation of the Affordability Standards.
- Continuing to increase behavioral health care access and ensure parity between behavioral and physical health care services.
- Advancing the statewide expansion of telehealth services.
- Continuing on the success of the RI Cost Trends Project. ❖

Providence Center names Tiffney Davidson-Parker President, COO

PROVIDENCE – **TIFFNEY DAVIDSON-PARKER** is the new President and COO of The Providence Center. Her first day was January 11, 2021.

"Davidson-Parker was selected after a national search for a new President and COO of The Providence Center. Her experience and educational background makes her an ideal candidate to lead The Providence Center's health care services and social programs. Throughout her career, Tiffney has served in many roles to evaluate and strengthen systems of care for children, families, and those with medical and mental illness, which will make her a valued asset to our TPC community and Care New England," said **MARY MARRAN**, President and COO, Butler Hospital, and



Maria Ducharme, DNP, RN, named Miriam Hospital President

PROVIDENCE – **MARIA DUCHARME, DNP, RN, NEA-BC**, has been promoted from her position as senior vice president of patient care services and chief nursing officer to president of The Miriam Hospital, which became effective Jan. 1, 2021. She succeeds Arthur J. Sampson, who retired at the end of 2020 after serving as president since 2012.



Dr. Ducharme, who has spent her entire professional career at The Miriam Hospital, was appointed following a national search. Following her graduation from Rhode Island College in 1987, she was hired as a cardiovascular medical/surgical nurse. In 2010, she was named senior vice president for patient care services and chief nursing officer of The Miriam.

She has led some of The Miriam's most ambitious and successful efforts to achieve excellence in the quality of patient care at the hospital. Most recently, she has helped lead the hospital's response to COVID-19, directly overseeing the refinement and deployment of new safety protocols developed in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Under her stewardship, The Miriam attained four-year Magnet recognition – considered the gold standard for nursing excellence – six consecutive times, which is a feat accomplished by only three other hospitals in the United States.

Dr. Ducharme earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions (2015), a Master of Science degree in nursing from the University of Rhode Island (1996), and a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from Rhode Island College (1987).

She lives with her husband, ophthalmologist Joseph Ducharme, MD, in her native Barrington, where she graduated from Barrington High School in 1982. They have three children. ❖

SVP, CNE Behavioral Health Service Line.

Davidson-Parker recently served as the Founder and Chief Executive Officer for Universal Therapeutic Services (UTS) in South Carolina – an outpatient behavioral healthcare community-based agency, serving the ages of two and beyond. During her service, the organization served 400+ families, secured an ethnically diverse team of clinicians and established multiple sustained partnerships.

Previously, as Chief of Operations for Visions of Greatness (VOG), she implemented six programs and obtained a three-year CARF accreditation with a letter of high honors sent to the Governor's Office of South Carolina, and an invitation to become a CARF Evaluator. ❖

Appointments



Angela Bannerman Ankoma named V-P, Director of the Equity Leadership Initiative at Rhode Island Foundation

ANGELA BANNERMAN ANKOMAS, MS, has been appointed a vice president of the Rhode Island Foundation. The Providence resident will lead the Equity Leadership Initiative, which is one aspect of the Foundation's broad, 3-year, \$8.5 million

plan to eliminate inequality and racial disparities and promote inclusion and diversity. Ankoma will also serve as a member of the Foundation's leadership team.

Most recently, she was Executive Vice President, Director of Community Investment, at the United Way of R.I., where she served as a member of the executive team and led the organization's grant-making, public policy, government relations, research and evaluation activities.

Previous to the United Way, Ankoma was Chief of the Office of Minority Health at the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), where she implemented the Minority Health Plan for Action; and was Co-Director of RIDOH's Health Equity Institute.

Ankoma has a Master of Science in Social Work and a Master of Science in Public Health from Columbia University and a BA in Africana Studies and Psychology from Connecticut College.

"Angela will work across and within departments at the Foundation to maximize this effort's impact, and will recruit and steward a community advisory committee to assist in developing the Equity Leadership Initiative," said Neil D. Steinberg, president and CEO of the Foundation. "One effort of the Equity Leadership Initiative will be to identify, cultivate, mentor and seek access and opportunity for individuals who identify as Black, Hispanic or Latino, Indigenous and Asian, from across sectors, to help build a pipeline of future leaders in established positions of influence throughout the state."

"I am pleased to join the Foundation's team and lead this effort. Community foundations have a rich history of community leadership. I am enthusiastic about the Foundation's leadership in advancing racial equity by addressing the underlying, long-standing structures and systems that perpetuate racism and injustice. I am excited to support the next generation of industry leaders – bank presidents, hospital CEOs, and leaders in academia and K-12 education; corporate executives, policy-makers, judges and more – who are people of color." ❖



Christine Foley, MD, elected to Fellowship in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery (FMIGS) Board

CHRISTINE FOLEY, MD, of Women & Infants Hospital, was elected to the Fellowship in Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery (FMIGS) Board by the current FMIGS fellows and program directors. She will serve

as Fellows Representative during this two-year commitment, which began in January 2021.

The FMIGS Board is part of AAGL and is an international organization charged with overseeing the current MIGS fellowships. The mission of the FMIGS Board is to provide a uniform training program for gynecologists who have completed their residency and desire to acquire additional knowledge and surgical skills in minimally invasive gynecologic surgery (MIGS) so they may: serve as a scholarly and surgical resource for the community in which they practice; have the ability to care for patients with complex gynecologic surgical disease via minimally invasive techniques; establish sites that will serve a leadership role in advanced endoscopic and reproductive surgery; and further research in minimally invasive gynecologic surgery. ❖

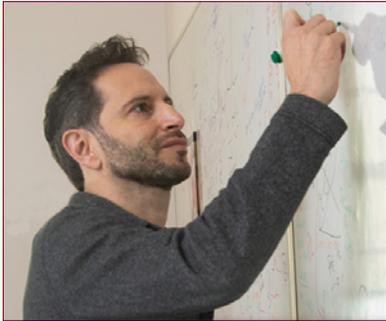
Pawtucket appoints Public Health and Equity Leader

PAWTUCKET – Amid the ongoing national concerns and the coronavirus pandemic that has affected Pawtucket communities disproportionately, the City of Pawtucket has appointed a Public Health and Equity Leader, **ELIZABETH DAMOURA MOREIRA** of Pawtucket.



She begins on February 1st and will focus on coronavirus response efforts within the community while leading the BEAT COVID-19 initiative. She will also focus on working with the Rhode Island Department of Health and different community groups on distribution coordination for the vaccine. ❖

Recognition



National Academy of Sciences honors Carney Center's Michael J. Frank, PhD

WASHINGTON – The National Academy of Sciences will honor 20 individuals with awards in recognition of their extraordinary scientific achievements in a wide range of fields spanning

the physical, biological, social, and medical sciences.

Among the recipients is **MICHAEL J. FRANK, PhD**, Director of the Carney Center for Computational Brain Science and Professor of Cognitive, Linguistic and Psychological Sciences at the Carney Institute for Brain Science at Brown University, who will receive a 2021 Troland Research Award for his pioneering contributions to the new field of computational psychiatry and neurology.

A primary driver of theoretical advances in learning and decision making for more than 15 years, Frank's work has advanced the understanding of deep underlying cognitive algorithms and their biological mechanisms through computational models and original experimentation.

Beyond his groundbreaking theoretical and experimental advances, Frank has created new strategies for integrating computation with experimentation, and further mapping these findings to real-world applications. Most notably, he is a co-creator and an active leader in the new and emerging field of computational psychiatry, building a deeply theoretically principled link from psychological and neuroscientific insights to clinical definition and ultimately practice.

Two Troland Research Awards of \$75,000 are given annually to recognize unusual achievement by early-career researchers (preferably 45 years of age or younger) and to further empirical research within the broad spectrum of experimental psychology. The winners will be honored in a virtual ceremony during the National Academy of Sciences' 158th annual meeting. ❖



RI Free Clinic Exec Marie Ghazal recognized with RIF's Murray Family Prize for Community Enrichment

The 2020 Murray Family Prize for Community Enrichment at the Rhode Island Foundation has been awarded to **MARIE GHAZAL**, executive director of the Rhode Island Free Clinic in Providence.

With the honor, Ghazal received \$50,000 in recognition of her long commitment to helping Rhode Islanders with cultural and language barriers and economic challenges obtain affordable health care. There are no restrictions on the use of the money.

"Marie's passionate commitment to serving the community around her is an inspiring standard for others to follow. We take enormous pride in honoring her for her drive and her achievements," said Paula McNamara, daughter of Terrence and Suzanne Murray, who along with her family established the Murray Family Prize for Community Enrichment at the Foundation.

A resident of Rumford, Ghazal has been executive director of the R.I. Free Clinic since 2010. Under her leadership, the Providence nonprofit organization has expanded access to health care, dental care, specialty services and training to provide 10,000 patient visits annually, as well as opening a COVID-19 test site this year.

"I have dedicated my nursing public health career to increasing access to health care for those in need. I am deeply honored to be recognized by the Murray Family for the impact my work has made in addressing inequalities in health care in our state, especially in our minority and underserved communities," said Ghazal.

A corps of more than 800 volunteer doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses and medical support staff help provide care. In addition, Ghazal has successfully secured the partnership of key partners including CVS Health, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island and Amica among many others.

Ghazal serves on the Rhode Island Action Coalition's Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action and has also served in leadership positions at Providence Community Health Centers, Blackstone Valley Community Action Program, Central Falls Health Center and the Pawtucket Heart Health Program.

"It is important to celebrate the positive contributions of Rhode Islanders like Marie who are striving diligently and humbly to serve others," said Neil D. Steinberg, the Foundation's president and CEO. "We are grateful to the Murray family for honoring the remarkable leaders whose dedication improves the lives of those around them and provides hope." ❖