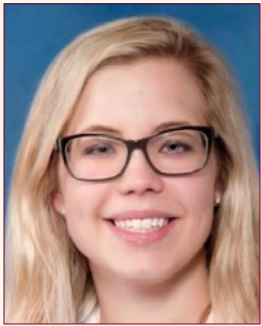


Appointments



Melinda Delaney, MD, named new medical director at RI Free Clinic

PROVIDENCE – The Rhode Island Free Clinic announced that **MELINDA DELANEY, MD**, has taken over as the new medical director, succeeding **ROSS HILLIARD, MD**.

“On behalf of our patients, volunteers, staff and board of directors, we thank Dr. Hilliard for his unwavering commitment to advancing Rhode Island Free Clinic’s mission,” said **FORREST DANIELS, MD**, CEO. “We’re excited to have Dr. Delaney eagerly embrace this important clinical leadership role, building on the legacy first established nearly 20 years ago by **DR. CAROLINE TROISE**, and ensuring we can continue to provide the best quality care to our patients.”

Dr. Delaney has been a core primary physician at the clinic. As medical director, she will work closely with providers and volunteers to continue to expand the quality of care offered and boost the clinic’s efforts to recruit volunteer providers.

“I’m excited and honored to join the free clinic in this important leadership role. This is a wonderful opportunity to make a meaningful impact on the community’s health care,” Delaney said. “This is a cause that is near and dear to my heart. I look forward to working closely with our dedicated team to improve access to health care for those in need. I can’t wait to get started!”

Dr. Delaney is also a faculty physician at Brown University’s combined internal medicine pediatrics primary care clinic and an assistant professor of internal medicine and pediatrics at the Warren Alpert Medical School. She heads the medicine-pediatrics residency quality improvement curriculum and is an investigator in a multi-site National Institutes of Health research project for vaccine hesitancy.

She completed her residency in combined internal medicine and pediatrics at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, where she also finished the UPMC Medical Education Program. She received her medical degree from Wayne State University, where she focused in urban underserved medicine, and earned her undergraduate degree in biology at the University of Michigan. ❖



Neil Steinberg nominated as Board Chair of New Rhode Island Life Science Hub

PROVIDENCE – Surrounded by leaders from across local government and the life science industry, Governor **DAN MCKEE** recently announced that he is appointing **NEIL STEINBERG** to chair of the board of the new Rhode Island Life Science Hub. The Governor was joined by House

Speaker **K. JOSEPH SHEKARCHI** and Rhode Island Commerce Secretary **LIZ TANNER** for the announcement.

“In my State of the State address, I said that Rhode Island was ready to become a leader in the life science industry. Today’s announcement brings us one step closer to reaching our full potential in this growing field,” said Governor McKee. “In our last budget, we made a \$45 million life science investment to help attract biotechnology companies from around the world. I am proud to nominate Neil Steinberg to a crucial new position that will help guide the state’s strategy as we become a hub for good-paying jobs, innovative technologies, and steady economic development in the life science industry.”

Created in the FY24 RI Ready budget, the Rhode Island Life Science Hub will be the central entity and coordinating organization of life science initiatives on behalf of the State of Rhode Island. In addition to this new public body, the FY24 budget also includes Governor’s McKee’s proposal to invest \$45 million in the life science sector for the development of much-needed wet lab incubator spaces. These funds would also be used to support grants, loans, business development and incubation services to grow this sector.

I want to thank the Governor for his commitment and leadership, along with Speaker Shekarchi, in creating the Rhode Island Life Science Hub and providing the initial \$45 million to fund this exciting initiative. There is a great deal of potential here. Utilizing my experience, network, and leadership we will work collaboratively and inclusively to grow and build this sector in Rhode Island,” said Steinberg.

As chair, Steinberg would lead a board of 15 individuals with experience in health care, higher education, business, economic development and more. It is also anticipated that the Board will hire a senior level executive to lead the day-to-day operations.

The Rhode Island Life Science Hub will also facilitate the development of medical advances and scientific breakthroughs with companies who specialize in the fields of medical devices, biomedical technology, medical therapeutic therapies, biogenetics, biomedical engineering, biopharmaceuticals, genomics and life sciences. Through targeted investments of grants, tax credits, and incentives, the Rhode Island Life Science Hub will fund and incubate Rhode Island-based life science companies that will promote economic and workforce development within the state and allow Rhode Island to successfully compete on the national and international level.

The Governor’s appointment will be sent to the Rhode Island Senate for advice and consent. ❖

Appointments



Emily Ortega Goddard, MD, joins Brown Surgical Associates, Division of Bariatric Surgery

PROVIDENCE – Brown Surgical Associates recently announced that **EMILY ORTEGA GODDARD, MD**, has joined both the practice's Division of Bariatric Surgery and its Division of General Surgery.

Dr. Goddard, who will also serve as a surgeon at the Providence VA Medical Center, specializes in both bariatric and general surgery, with a particular interest in surgical endoscopy, robotic surgery, complex abdominal wall reconstruction and hernia surgery, and foregut surgery.

Dr. Goddard received her medical degree in 2017 from the Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia, and in 2022 completed her general surgical residency at WellSpan York Hospital in Pennsylvania. She subsequently completed her fellowship training at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University in Minimally Invasive and Bariatric Surgery in 2023.

"Rhode Island truly holds a special place in my heart. Not only did I receive my fellowship training here, but my husband grew up here. So, it's home for us," Dr. Goddard said. "I am thrilled to join such a talented group of surgeons from whom I've already learned so much. I know together we will continue to advance the field of minimally invasive surgery and provide our patients with cutting-edge procedures and therapies." ❖



Haley Leesley, MD, joins Brown Surgical Associates Division of Thoracic Surgery

PROVIDENCE – Brown Surgical Associates recently announced it is welcoming **HALEY LEESLEY, MD**, to the practice's Division of Thoracic Surgery.

Dr. Leesley specializes in cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, with a particular interest in the minimally invasive treatment of lung and esophageal cancers, as well as benign disease of the chest wall, foregut, and thoracic cavity.

She received her medical degree from Tulane University School of Medicine, and completed her surgical residency with Brown University, and a cardiovascular and thoracic surgery fellowship with the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, TX. ❖



Kerry LaPlante, PharmD, named Dean of the College of Pharmacy at URI

KINGSTON – The University of Rhode Island has named **KERRY LAPLANTE, PharmD**, an internationally recognized expert in antimicrobial resistance and infectious diseases, as the next dean of the College of Pharmacy. LaPlante, who currently

serves as department chair and professor of pharmacy at URI, becomes the first female dean of the pharmacy college.

The eighth dean of the College of Pharmacy, LaPlante succeeds Paul Larrat, who led the college for more than a decade and earlier this year announced his intent to return to the faculty. LaPlante's appointment follows a comprehensive and competitive national search. Her tenure will commence on Jan. 2, 2024.

LaPlante joined URI in 2004 as associate professor of pharmacy, rising to full tenured professor in 2015. She was named pharmacy practice chair in 2020, and has played a prominent role in expanding and enhancing the college's research program, which is ranked among the top 10 percent in funding among pharmacy colleges in the nation.

LaPlante, a Buffalo, New York, native, serves as director of the Infectious Diseases Research Program at the Providence VA Medical Center, and as an infectious diseases pharmacotherapy specialist at the VA, as well as an adjunct professor of infectious diseases at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. She is chair of the Rhode Island Department of Health's Antimicrobial Stewardship and Environmental Task Force, where she leads the Antimicrobial Stewardship Expansion Initiative across acute care, long-term care and urgent care facilities throughout the state. She is an adviser to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the PEW Research Center and the Joint Commission, which accredits and certifies healthcare organizations across the country.

LaPlante was a director of the Pharmacology Core for the Rhode Island NIH-COBRE Center for Antimicrobial Resistance and Therapeutic Discovery; a member of the NIH-NIAID Antimicrobial Resistance Leadership Group; an elected Fellow of the Infectious Diseases Society of America and the American College of Clinical Pharmacy; and former president of the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP). She directs a training fellowship at the Providence Veterans Affairs Health Care System; and is a vice president of Making a Difference in Infectious Diseases (MAD-ID), a national non-profit health organization; and serves as associate editor of the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

LaPlante earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Wayne State University's Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in Detroit, and her bachelor's degree in biology from Canisius University in Buffalo, NY. ❖

Recognition

Methodius Tuuli, MD, elected to the National Academy of Medicine

PROVIDENCE – Women & Infants Hospital has announced that **METHODIUS G. TUULI, MD, MPH, MBA**, Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Women & Infants Hospital; Executive Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Care New England Health System, has been elected as a member of the National Academy of Medicine (NAM).

The formal notice from **VICTOR J. DZAU, MD**, President, National Academy of Medicine, states, “Your election reflects the high esteem in which your peers and colleagues regard you. As an NAM member, you are now part of a group of truly distinguished individuals who have made important contributions to health, medicine, and science.”

Members of the Class of 2023 were elected by current members through a process that recognizes individuals who have made major contributions to the advancement of the medical sciences, health care, and public health. Only 100 individuals are selected each year. The Academy says Dr. Tuuli was elected “for employing large multicenter trials and cohort studies, in the U.S. and globally, to generate evidence for clinical practice and policy to prevent adverse obstetric outcomes including surgical site infection after cesarean, management of labor, and medical complications in pregnancy while building research capacity and mentoring diverse scholars.”

Dr. Tuuli graduated from the University of Ghana Medical School in 2001. He attended the University of California at Berkeley, earning a Master of Public Health degree in 2003 with a concentration in maternal and child health. He completed residency training in Obstetrics & Gynecology at Emory University



in 2008, and fellowship training in Maternal-Fetal Medicine at Washington University in 2011. Dr. Tuuli completed the Business of Medicine Physician MBA program at the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University in 2020.

A board-certified Maternal-Fetal Medicine physician, his research is focused on the prediction and prevention of adverse obstetric outcomes. He currently leads three NIH-funded multicenter trials on intravenous versus oral iron for the treatment of anemia in pregnancy in the U.S., the use

of a novel intrauterine negative pressure device for the management of postpartum hemorrhage, and optimizing glycemic control in overweight and obese patients with gestational diabetes. In addition, he leads a recently awarded Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health grant to develop a model for integrating community-based maternal support services into perinatal care to address care coordination and social determinants of health and test the impact on perinatal health equity.

In his role as Chief of Obstetrics & Gynecology at Women & Infants Hospital, Dr. Tuuli has been focused on improving quality and eliminating disparities in perinatal outcomes. He also is the Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at The Warren Alpert Medical School and holds the Chace-Joukowsky Professorship in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Brown University.

Dr. Tuuli and other new members will be formally welcomed to the NAM during next year’s annual meeting in October 2024. ❖



Pictured left to right: Professor **Charlotte Teunissen**, Sir **Philip Scheltens**, Prime Minister **Mark Rutte**, Health Minister **Connie Held**, Professor **Mia Kivipelto**, Professor **Wiesje van der Flier**, and Dr. **Stephen Salloway**.

[BUTLER HOSPITAL/CNE]

Stephen Salloway, MD, delivers plenary lecture at Dutch Defeating Dementia Conference

AMSTERDAM – **STEPHEN SALLOWAY, MD**, founding Director of the Memory and Aging Program at Butler Hospital, delivered the plenary lecture to open the Defeating Dementia conference hosted by the Dutch Health Ministry and the World Dementia Council for the G-20 health ministers in Amsterdam on October 2, 2023.

He was invited by the World Dementia Council and the government of the Netherlands, which afforded an opportunity to work with policy makers, patient advocates, and dementia experts on global planning for Alzheimer’s disease. There were delegations from six continents and leaders from large global organizations, including the WHO, World Bank, AARP, and the Alzheimer’s Association. ❖

Recognition

US Army Maj. Benjamin Misemer, MD, veterans honored by Kent, CNE

WARWICK – Ahead of Veterans Day, Care New England and Kent Hospital held a ceremony on October 12, 2023, to show appreciation for all military veterans, but especially Kent Hospital employees who are National Guard members, reservists, or military veterans. **MAJOR BENJAMIN MISEMER, MD**, was honored with a special hero's recognition. He is an Emergency Department physician at Kent Hospital and a major in the

Medical Corps for the United States Army Reserve.

Dr. Misemer, who joined Kent Hospital as part of the Emergency Department in 2022, is approaching his 20th year of service in the Army Reserves Medical Corps. During that time, he completed two overseas tours, returning from his most recent deployment in the Middle East this past July.

"We are so grateful to Dr. Misemer for his service to our country. In addition to being a part of the armed forces, he undertakes the immense responsibility of delivering high-quality healthcare to patients in our community. At a time when this industry has been particularly tough on healthcare workers, he has continued to strive for excellence day in and day out. It is a source of great pride to know Care New England employs such dedicated and selfless people in our community," said **MICHAEL WAGNER, MD**, president and CEO Care New England Health System.

PAARI GOPALAKRISHNAN, MD, MBA, president and COO, Kent Hospital, said "Dr. Misemer embodies the true essence of service. He transitioned from the frontlines of the battlefield to the frontlines of the Emergency Department. His unwavering dedication to our nation and serving our community is quite simply a testament to the resilience of our veterans."



US Army Maj. Benjamin Misemer, MD, at the event and on duty for the Medical Corps in the Army Reserve. [KENT, CNE]

Dr. Misemer's wife, also a physician, **JESSICA GUIDI, MD**, couldn't the celebration, but their two children Owen and Sadie were a part of the surprise. Also on hand to recognize Dr. Misemer's service were **DARREN GIRARD, MD**, Kent Hospital Chief of Emergency Medicine, U.S. Senator **JACK REED**, Rhode Island House Speaker **JOSEPH SHEKARCHI**, Brigadier General **ANDREW J. CHEVALIER**, Rhode Island National Guard, and **KASIM YARN**, Director, Rhode Island Veterans Services. ❖



Recognition

South County Health receives three-year accreditation from The American College of Radiation Oncology

WAKEFIELD – South County Health’s Radiation Therapy program was recently awarded a three-year accreditation from The American College of Radiation Oncology (ACRO). South County Health is one of only approximately 300 practices nationwide to receive this prestigious accreditation.

ACRO accreditation is a voluntary process in which professional peers use identified standards indicative of a quality practice, and an audit is conducted to assure that these standards are followed. The accreditation occurs in South County Health’s first year of eligibility, as they recently acquired the Radiation Therapy facility at 142 Kenyon Avenue in Wakefield and reopened in spring of 2022, providing services to patients of South County Health and patients referred from other community providers.

“We’re honored to have earned this recognition from the American College of Radiation Oncology,” said **KEVIN CHARPENTIER, MD**, Chief Medical Officer at South County Health. “Earning this prestigious accreditation is a testament to the extraordinary cancer care delivered at South County Health by our exceptionally skilled providers and clinical staff, especially Dr. Daniel Fass and his team at South County Health Radiation



Therapy. This achievement underscores our commitment to providing the highest quality of cancer care while ensuring that every cancer patient receives individualized, compassionate care tailored to their unique needs, right here in South County.” ❖



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Places

Ortho RI Surgery Center team completes 1,000th total joint replacement

WARWICK – On October 6, 2023, orthopedic surgeon **ROBERT MARCHAND, MD**, of Ortho Rhode Island completed the 1,000th joint replacement surgery performed at the Ortho RI Surgery Center in Warwick. The procedure was a total knee arthroplasty.

The Ortho RI Surgery Center, which has provided care since opening in 2021 at 300 Crossings Boulevard in Warwick, is home to innovative, same-day orthopedic surgery for patients throughout southern New England.

“Ortho Rhode Island is proud to serve our community’s orthopedic needs at the Ortho RI Surgery Center. The Center’s 1,000th total joint replacement is the result of our longstanding dedication to providing great patient experiences and outcomes for total joint replacement,



Dr. Robert Marchand with the surgical team who completed Ortho RI Surgery Center’s 1,000th total joint replacement, left to right: Bridget Wilder, Physician Assistant; **Dr. Robert Marchand**, Orthopedic Surgeon; Sarah Zaniewski, Surgical Technologist; **Laura Huling**, Operating Room Registered Nurse. [ORTHO RI]

using the latest technology in a safe, comfortable, and convenient outpatient setting,” said Ortho Rhode Island President and CEO **MICHAEL BRADLEY, MD, MBA, MS**.

The Ortho RI Surgery Center’s milestone 1,000th joint replacement utilized innovative robotic-assisted Mako technology. Dr. Marchand is a pioneer of robotic-assisted orthopedic surgery, and recently completed his 9,000th Mako surgery. As one of the foremost

robotic-assisted surgeons in orthopedics, he has contributed to the development and training of surgeons around the world. At Ortho Rhode Island, Dr. Marchand collaborates closely with a team of highly skilled robotic-assisted joint replacement surgeons that includes **DR. DAVID VEGARI, DR. JASON TARTAGLIONE, DR. PETER PIZZARELLO, Jr., DR. SIDNEY MIGLIORI, DR. MICHAEL MASON, DR. ROALD LLADO, DR. ANDREW KAY, DR. NATHAN HOWLETT, DR. DAVID BURNS**, and **DR. MICHAEL BRADLEY**.

In addition to same-day joint replacement surgery, the Ortho RI Surgery Center provides outpatient surgeries in a variety of orthopedic subspecialties, including spine, sports medicine, hand and upper extremity, and foot and ankle. Ortho Rhode Island surgeons complete more complex cases at partner hospitals, such as the Center for Advanced Orthopedic Surgery, a partnership with South County Health. ❖

VA Providence Launches Age FIT

PROVIDENCE – VA Providence cut the ribbon October 2nd on ITS Age-Friendly wing on the 6th floor known as Age FIT, for age friendly integrative teams.

It’s an initiative to deliver safe, reliable, high-quality health care in every setting based on what matters most to older Veterans.

“As our Veteran population ages, it’s important to tailor healthcare that takes into account their unique need,” said **LAWRENCE CONNELL**, Director VA Providence Healthcare System.

DR. JULIO DEFILLO, Providence Chief of Geriatric and Extended Care, said the focus is on Veteran with a system known as the 4 Ms, “The 4 Ms are basically what Matters, where we align care with each older Veteran’s specific health goals and care preferences including, Medication, or the use of use Age-Friendly medications that do not interfere with



Inaugurating service on the VA Providence Age FIT, are, left to right, Assistant Nurse Manager **Lisa Mallette**, VA Providence Director **Lawrence Connell**, Nurse Manager **Ashley Spellman**, GEC Chief **Dr. Julio Defillo**, Nurse Practitioner Jennifer Hopgood and occupational Therapist **Haley Gardiner**. [PROVIDENCE VA]

what matters to the older Veteran, mobility or mentation across settings of care., Mentation (Mind) where we try to identify, treat, and manage dementia, depression and delirium across settings of care.

And lastly, Mobility, making sure older Veterans move safely every day to maintain function and do what matters.”

The wing is expected to care for 400 patients annually. ❖

Places

A Wish Come True expands to new location

WARWICK – A Wish Come True (AWCT) hosted an open house at their new location, 6 Jefferson Drive in Coventry, on September 20th. The new, state-of-the-art location is housed within Finetco's Corporate Headquarters thanks to the generosity of the Finnegan family. The space offers additional and enhanced offices, as well as unlimited potential for creating fun, interactive spaces for Wish Kids and their families while they struggle along their journey.

One of the highlights of the evening was the debut of the first project completed at the new space – the unveiling of the Nap's Nook Family Room. This recently renovated space includes areas for interactive play, and arts and crafts, as well as a TV and/or movie viewing area. It is also where Wish Kids and their families will view first-hand (on a beautiful mural) how exciting their Wish journey will be – from beginning to end. It also has a peaceful relaxation area, complete with a massage chair, for parents and caregivers to relax and unwind while staff care for their children.

The room is dedicated to honor the memory of **BOB NAPO-LILLO**, a passionate and generous supporter of AWCT. His family continues his legacy of selfless support, and his son, **STEVE NAPOLILLO**, is an active member of the AWCT Board of Directors. Napolillo, the Athletic Director at Providence College, spoke about what this room dedication means to him and his family: "To see this spectacular room and know that it will bring joy and comfort to Wish Kids and their families truly warms my heart. It means so much to me and my family that



The Napolillo Family visits the Nap's Nook family room, dedicated in memory of Bob Napolillo. [A WISH COME TRUE]

my father's legacy of compassion and kindness will live on in this room for years to come."

The evening also included many activities for Wish Kids and their siblings to enjoy including games, a car show, Disney characters, music, dancing, a petting zoo, and even some Providence College basketball players stopped by for a visit. Wish Kids were also asked to help lend their handprint to the Tree of Hope, located within Nap's Nook.

MARY-KATE O'LEARY, Executive Director of AWCT, announced they surpassed their goal of granting 40 wishes this year in celebration of their 40th anniversary! "We now have a waiting list and we have more than doubled the number of wishes completed last year." She believes this is just the beginning of many great things to come, stating, "The Tree of Hope is a special tribute to all past and present Wish Kids, and it will continue to grow with each Wish we grant."

AWCT Board President, **COLLEEN DUFFY**, has made it her personal mission to honor the memory of her daughter through the Meghan K. Duffy Memorial Foundation, which offers support to families facing financial hardship. This assistance includes helping to pay for groceries, electric bills, mortgages, or other unexpected expenses. She is delighted to see how the mission of AWCT has expanded to address the needs of Wish Families, "I am so pleased to witness the tremendous growth that AWCT has enjoyed, and this new space marks the beginning of an even brighter future. Wish Families need assistance beyond wish granting and AWCT has answered that call with innovative programming and now interactive, supportive spaces that allows us to fully support families on this difficult journey."

For more information on A Wish Come True, visit: www.awish.org. ❖



Places

Your Blue Store in Narragansett celebrates grand opening during 10th anniversary of retail outlets

PROVIDENCE – Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) has officially opened a Your Blue Store in Narragansett, providing the same convenient, face-to-face service in South County since its inception 10 years ago.

A grand opening ceremony for the Narragansett Your Blue Store was held on Sept. 28. Your Blue Store staff and BCBSRI leadership, including President and CEO **MARTHA L. WOFFORD** and board member and retired South County Health CEO **LOU GIANCOLA**, were joined by community leaders and officials, among them Town Council member **DEBORAH KOPECH** and Narragansett Town Manager **JAMES TIERNEY**.

Your Blue Store began as a temporary storefront in Warwick and now, in its 10th anniversary year, has opened its largest store, at Salt Pond Shopping Center, 91 Point Judith Road. The Narragansett store joins four other locations in Cranston, East Providence, Lincoln, and Warwick.

“There’s no better way to celebrate Your Blue Store’s 10th anniversary than to open yet another Your Blue Store! It’s truly remarkable that in just 10 years, we’ve opened five locations, from Blackstone Valley down to our southern coast,” said **MELISSA CUMMINGS**, BCBSRI executive vice president and chief customer officer. “I often get asked what someone can do in a Your Blue Store and the simple answer is, lots of things! From free educational and fitness classes to face-to-face help with plans and benefits

to meeting with our clinical staff, the success and popularity of these stores is directly linked to the value of being a locally based insurer and what differentiates Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island from any other.”

Your Blue Store teams are adept at simplifying the complicated aspects of health insurance and speaking to customers in plain language (whether that’s English, Spanish, or Portuguese). Members can visit Your Blue Store with benefit questions, for help finding a doctor, to take a fitness or healthy living class, enjoy a cooking demonstration, or to talk to a nurse or dietitian to create a meal plan or find ways to save on medications. Your Blue Store also provides a great way to learn more about BCBSRI health plans.

Your Blue Store offers:

- One-on-one consultations to review plans and benefits
- Bill payment for Medicare Advantage and individual plan premiums
- Fitness classes and well-being workshops
- Immunizations and screenings
- Onsite nurse case managers and dietitians to help manage ongoing medical challenges
- Connections to local resources for housing, transportation, and food insecurity
- Friendship, support, and a sense of community.

For more information, visit www.bcsri.com/yourbluestore ❖



A ribbon-cutting for the new Your Blue Store in Narragansett included, left to right, Narragansett Town Council Member **Deborah Kopech**, Narragansett Town Manager **James Tierney**, BCBSRI President and CEO **Martha L. Wofford**, Narragansett Your Blue Store Manager **Donna Therrien**, and **Paul Ryan**, BCBSRI managing director of consumer insights & engagement.

Places

Women & Infants opens new 21-bed Medical/Surgical Care Unit

PROVIDENCE – Women & Infants Hospital held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of a new inpatient service enhancement unit to provide high-quality comprehensive post-surgical and medical care to our patients.

The unit, located on the 4th floor of Women & Infants Hospital, will allow doctors in the Emergency Department to admit patients with a range of medical issues that we previously would have needed to transfer to a partner hospital.

“Take, for example, a patient who comes to our Emergency Department needing to be admitted with pneumonia. Before, we would have transferred the patient to another hospital. Now, we can provide that care right here at Women & Infants in our new unit; in the same hospital the patient already knows and trusts. We will see the patient through,” said **NEJAT ZEYNEOGLU, MD**, Chief Medical Officer.

In addition, Women & Infants has added to the staff, with new hospitalists and nurses, as well as other support positions to enable the growth and management of surgical and medical inpatient admissions. It has also strengthened the partnership with Brown University and Lifespan, using Brown Physician Group as additional staff in the Emergency Department and utilizing a wider network of emergency medicine physicians. ❖



Providence VA invests in mental health services with new facility

PROVIDENCE – As demand grows for mental and behavioral health services for veterans, so do services.

“We currently have a little over 10,000 of our veterans enrolled in mental health services here in Providence,” said **LAWRENCE CONNELL**, Director of the VA Healthcare System. “We want to be the gold standard for where veterans get their care. Every year we put in about 85 to \$100 million into new construction and improvements here to the VA medical center,” said Connell.

Last year, a new building dedicated to veterans with mental health challenges went up.

“So this is some of our more severe mentally ill veterans with larger struggles who prior to that were in a trailer and this has been a really nice message for them to go from a trailer to this beautiful new space where it shows that they’re important, they’re valued,” said **DR. JENNIFER LAMBERT**, associate chief of staff for mental health and behavioral science services at the Providence VA.

And now they’re breaking ground on phase two.

“It’s going to be about 14,000 square-feet of additional space.

We’re investing \$14 million in this new building. And it’s going to be kind of like a one stop shop for mental health services,” said Connell.

“The new phase is going to be for our health care for homeless veterans program and our PTSD program as well as our readjustment counseling program so veterans that are all post 9/11 and also for neuropsychology which helps our older veterans,” said Dr. Lambert.

This second phase is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

And it’s not the only project in the works.

“A little over a year from now we’ll break ground on a brand new emergency department which will double our capacity as well as a brand new MRI tower which is going to give us two state-of-the-art MRI’s here, just here in Providence,” said Connell.

“They’ve made some great sacrifices and this is a benefit that they’ve earned and we want to make sure that they get the best care that they can possibly get.” ❖