

2019 Philanthropy
Highlights



WHERE
CARE
CHANGES
LIVES

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT MEDICAL CENTER FOUNDATION



You are elevating human lives.

You may never meet the people who are changed by your philanthropy, but every day, we do.

This is where care changes lives.

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DEDICATED TO ROBERT "BOB" MILLER:
FRIEND AND PHILANTHROPIST, 1935-2020.

In the following pages, you'll meet a few of the many people who are turning your incredible charitable investments into meaningful enhancements in patient care, research and education for the benefit of all who live in Vermont and northern New York.

With your partnership comes new possibilities, and greater hope.



From all of us, thank you.

Community's Philanthropy Touches Patients Daily



“To me the biggest impact the Miller Building has had on patients is that it has brought them a new level of peace.”

Milton Rosa-Ortiz, RN

Eagerness and camaraderie permeated the May 19, 2019 celebration of the June opening of The Robert E. and Holly D. Miller Building.

Nearly 200 Miller Building donors and UVM Medical Center staff gathered and heard poignant remarks from hospital and volunteer leadership about the significance of our community's philanthropic support and the impact the new facility would have for generations to come.



Grateful patients, families, caregivers, staff, faculty and local business owners were among the more than 1,300 individual donors who contributed to the Miller Building, making it a facility for our community from our community.

A View from the Miller Building

Milton Rosa-Ortiz, RN, studied to be an architect, but was called into nursing. “I felt maybe there was a possibility of me bringing light into people's lives when they were going through a dark space,” says Rosa-Ortiz.

Six years later, on the 5th floor of the Miller Building, Rosa-Ortiz cares for patients who are battling cancer. Daily, he witnesses the soothing benefits of the new facility.

“When you go into a patient room, you close the door and you can't hear the outside,” he says. “You don't hear those pesky hospital noises. You close the blinds and you can actually have darkness. It brings peace into patients' experiences that they didn't have before. And they are less anxious, and more rested and willing to push themselves a little further towards recovery.”

With only one patient in each room, conversations between caregivers, patients and their families can be more intimate. “It's easier for us to build trust with patients,” he notes. “And they get to keep their privacy.”

Rosa-Ortiz recalls a particularly difficult moment when a devastating diagnosis had to be delivered. “We were able to get everybody out of the room so it was just the patient, their partner, the doctor and me,” he shares. “We told the patient he was dying and in the quiet, still space he took in our words, took his time and finally said, ‘I know’. The space itself helped his transition happen smoothly. And with dignity.” ■



A Closer Look

- The device is made with silastic tubing, which is flexible, durable, biocompatible and FDA-approved.
- Ball bearings made of tungsten—a nontoxic metal known for its durability and high weight properties—are inserted in the silastic tubing, which is attached to the coiled end of the catheter. This increases weight and allows the catheter to partially uncoil to the correct length.
- The coiled end of the tube helps to keep the catheter from migrating out of the deep part of the pelvis to the upper abdomen, where it becomes less effective and often painful.
- The low profile of the device allows it to be placed percutaneously—through a needle puncture in the skin—which reduces the risks of leak of fluid, infection and bleeding.



Annual Fund Empowers Innovation

For patients undergoing peritoneal dialysis for end-stage renal disease, having a catheter that won't stay in place means pain, complications and more procedures. Thirty years ago, while in training as a radiology resident, Chris Morris, MD, first began to take a hard look at catheters, as he was often called in to fix their placement when they migrated from the lower to the upper abdomen. He quickly started to wonder: Is there a better way?

Fast-forward to 2019. Now an interventional radiologist at the UVM Medical Center, Morris is still treating patients with end-stage renal disease. He has also designed a prototype device to help eliminate catheter migration, using tungsten ball bearings encased in silastic tubing to weight the catheter, leveraging gravity to keep it in place.

A grant from the UVM Medical Center Fund allowed Morris to complete a safety evaluation and cadaver feasibility project. Both had positive results; he recently submitted a paper for publication and a U.S. patent application has been filed. Because the weighted catheter reduces the risk for complications, it may allow more patients to choose peritoneal dialysis—which can be done at home—as opposed to the more costly, hospital-based hemodialysis.

Morris says he's grateful for the grant funding that got the project started, as well as the patients who donated their bodies to science.

"I now have evidence and preliminary findings that show the potential of this device so I can apply to some of the more competitive grants and get one step closer to bringing this technology to patients," he says. ■

What does a gift of even \$25 do?

80% OF THE GIFTS TO THE UVM MEDICAL CENTER FUND ARE UNDER \$100. WITH OVER 1,200 DONORS CONTRIBUTING ANNUALLY, THIS FUND FUELS PIONEERING, EMPLOYEE-LED INITIATIVES THAT DELIVER NEW KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT PATIENT AND FAMILY WELLNESS AND CARE.



L to R: Madison Daly, MD; Michael Carson, MD; Noah Rohrer, MD; Nick Alsofrom, MD; Chance Sullivan, MD; Aaron Blau, MD

Physicians Seed Emergency Medicine Residency Fund

By establishing or donating to endowments, donors ensure that funding is available in perpetuity.

ENDOWMENTS TO SUPPORT RESIDENTS: **13**

ENDOWMENTS TO SUPPORT NURSING EDUCATION: **23**

In June of 2019, six newly-minted physicians arrived at the UVM Medical Center from across the U.S. to begin their training as the first cohort of emergency medicine residents. The group has embarked on a three-year residency program that is breaking new ground for its scope and emphasis on practice in resource-limited settings.

“Few programs in the country allow residents to train in an academic tertiary care center environment, plus a rural environment, plus a community environment,” says Ramsey Herrington, MD, Emergency Medicine division chief.

In addition to time at UVM Medical Center’s Emergency Department, residents complete multiple rotations at two UVM Health Network locations: Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin, VT, and Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital in Plattsburgh, NY. The group hones their clinical decision-making through advanced training in wilderness medicine, global health and point of care ultrasound.

To help offset the financial burden on visiting medical students, Emergency Medicine faculty members established a new endowment to encourage fourth-year medical students from underrepresented backgrounds to spend a month rotating at UVM Medical Center, with an aim to recruit and retain them as practitioners in the Network. “Residents tend to stay in the areas in which they train,” says Herrington, adding that the current residents are strong indicators of what’s to come.

“They’re super bright and enthusiastic,” he says. “They have a strong work ethic. Knowing they’re going to be working in our Network—it’s very exciting.” ■

Philanthropy Fuels Workforce Development

Imagine being highly skilled and respected in your field for ten years. Then one day you transfer to a new department only to find yourself unable to determine your role. You ask, but even your colleagues aren’t sure.

Do you muddle through? Return to your old department? Or do you step into the uncertainty, connect with peers at other institutions, explore successes from around the nation, and with philanthropic support—thanks to a Frymoyer Scholars Grant and a UVM Medical Center Auxiliary Grant—design and launch a program that delivers clarity, improved quality and career-sustaining satisfaction?

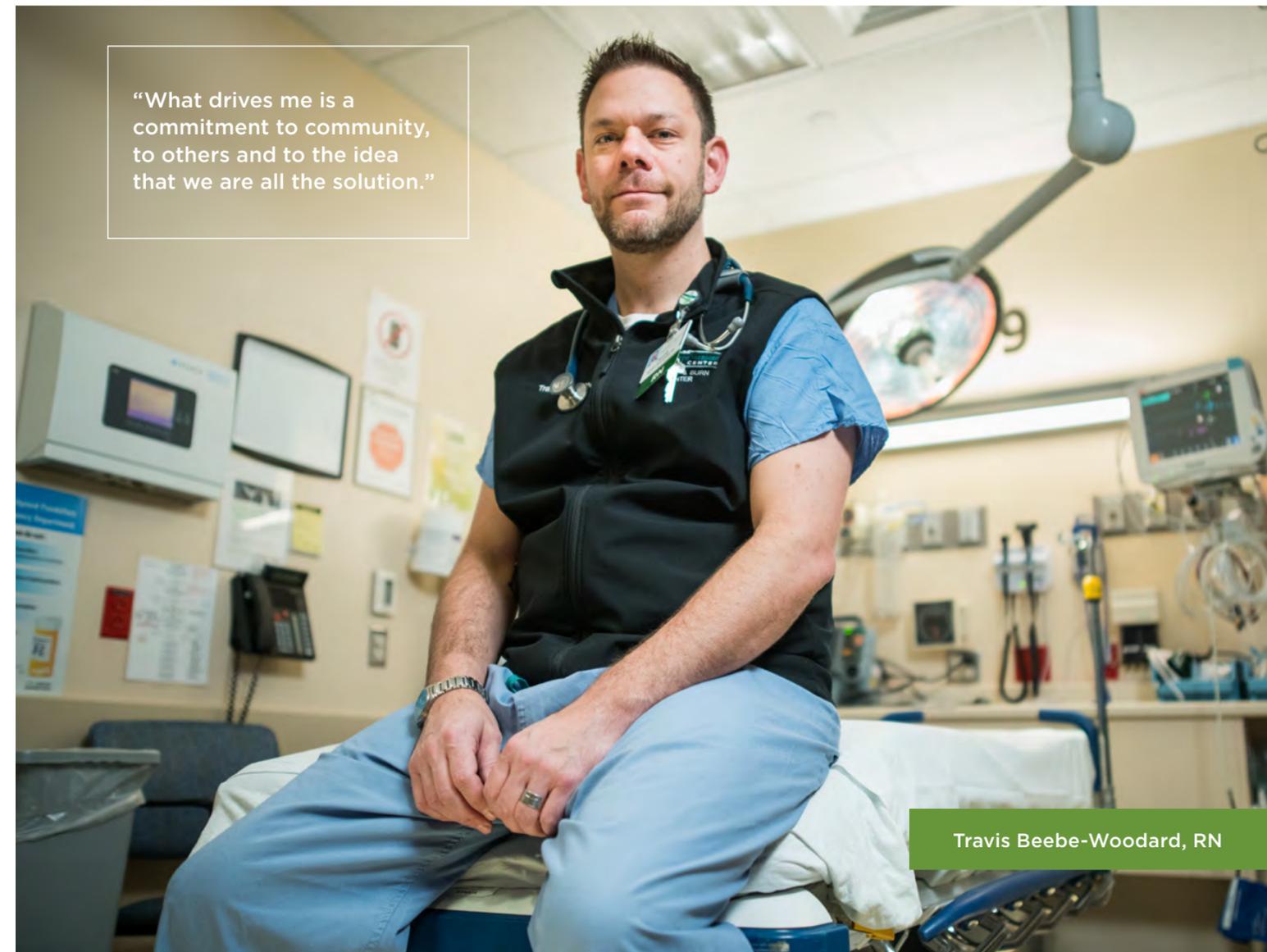
After his transfer from intensive care to emergency

medicine, Travis Beebe-Woodard, BSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, TCRN, chose the latter. “I didn’t want others to feel the way I had. It was wildly uncomfortable,” he says.

As a result, the UVM Medical Center is now one of a handful of U.S. hospitals with a Trauma Nurse Fellowship that supports the transition of practice for both new and experienced nurses moving into emergency medicine. Fellowship participants become not only trauma specialists but also members of a core body of nurses committed to training others.

“We’re at a time in our industry when we’re asking nurses to push the practice forward. To incorporate the newest evidence to improve patient outcomes. To conduct nursing research. To define ‘what is best practice,’” he says. “If nurses are to fulfill this challenge, we have to invest in them.”

In recognition of this work, Beebe-Woodard received the 2019 Distinguished Trauma Certified Registered Nurse Award from the Board Certification for Emergency Nursing and the Society of Trauma Nursing. ■



“What drives me is a commitment to community, to others and to the idea that we are all the solution.”

Travis Beebe-Woodard, RN

Free to Be

“She was a joyous child,” Timna Dulmer says of Perrin. “She’d jump up and down, up and down and wave her arms. I’d ask why and she’d say, ‘Mommy, how are people going to know I’m happy if I’m not jumping?’”

Perrin, assigned male at birth, by the age of four was inviting people she’d just met “to call her a girl if they wanted”. When her kindergarten teacher asked the class to draw a picture of what they hoped to be when they grew up, Perrin drew a girl.

“My husband and I started to realize there might be more going on than we understood,” Timna said.

“I like Hello Kitty,” Perrin announced in third grade, then began lobbying to wear a dress. These incredible moments of clarity from Perrin pointed to a destination for which there seemed no clear path. And for the most part, the Dulmers were navigating it alone.

Perrin’s selection of a frilly pink backpack for second grade and her persistent requests to wear dresses impelled Timna to reach out to Perrin’s teacher and principal. Their response? “We are here to support Perrin and your family no matter what Perrin wears to school.”

It was as if a door opened for the Dulmers who quickly expanded their support system. From the philanthropy-supported Transgender Youth Program at the UVM Children’s Hospital to Outright Vermont, a nonprofit that builds safe, healthy environments for LGBTQ youth, the Dulmer family found allies and resources. Today, Timna volunteers as a Patient and Family Advisor to assist other patient families with transgender children.

“Every time we said yes to Perrin’s requests, it just increased her sparkle, her joy. She was slowly teaching us that this was what she needed; this was who she really was,” said Timna.

“I would much rather be a girl,” Perrin declares proudly.

And so she is. ■

From the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):

TRANSGENDER YOUTH HAVE HIGH RATES OF DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, SUBSTANCE USE, SELF-HARM AND SUICIDALITY. AAP’S POLICY EMPHASIZES A GENDER-AFFIRMING MODEL OF CARE AND ACCEPTS THAT GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION ARE NORMAL ASPECTS OF HUMAN DIVERSITY.

“We try to support our daughter at every turn. It’s how all children should grow up.”

UVM Children’s Hospital’s Transgender Youth Program

- Supported by the Children’s Miracle Network Fund and the UVM Medical Center Fund.
- Opened in 2016.
- Currently serves 100 VT and northern NY families.
- 4-5 new patient referrals each month.
- Some families travel up to 4.5 hours so they can be seen in the clinic.

Perrin and Timna Dulmer

The desire to give back—to assist humanity—is a value that transcends age.

Maddy McKinley was diagnosed with lymphoma at age 4 and given a 10 percent chance of survival. Chemotherapy didn't resolve it. A transplant failed. And because she was so little and frail, radiation wasn't an option.

"I was very active around my disease. I memorized my allergies. I knew what drugs I was on. Doctors would come in and ask my parents to talk with them in the hall and I'd say 'Talk here. No matter what you're going to tell them it's going to be me that it happens to'."

Despite relapsing throughout middle and high school, McKinley was cancer-free when she enrolled in UVM's College of Nursing and Health Sciences in 2012. By then, she'd already been fundraising for cancer organizations for over a decade.

"All my life, my family, the hospital and my friends have rallied together to try to get me healthy," she says. "I believe in giving back."

As a student, she made Dean's List while studying the science of diagnosing and evaluating serious illnesses like cancer, and despite her own relapse sophomore year, McKinley helped build RALLYTHON, UVM's Miracle Network Dance Marathon, into a signature fundraiser for the UVM Children's Hospital. "Watching good people do good for others. Watching students help other children. Participating

in something you're super passionate about...it's just an amazing feeling," she says.

RALLYTHON is UVM's Miracle Network Dance Marathon, a movement uniting college and high school students, giving them leadership, teamwork and nonprofit business experience while raising funds for their local Children's Miracle Network Hospital. ■



"I think there's always going to be more we can do—as a society and as people—to take care of each other."

Maddy McKinley '16, philanthropist

Glow Stick Ceremony

Glow sticks light the room at RALLYTHON. First, the participants who've been patients at the UVM Children's Hospital crack their glow sticks. Then, those with family members or friends who've been treated crack theirs, followed by anyone who knows someone who's been a patient—until the entire room is flickering in light.

"It's about silence and recognizing that everyone knows someone affected by what you're doing tonight," says McKinley. "It's an amazing ceremony. 500 people in the room and you could hear a pin drop."

RALLYTHON 2019 :

\$123,219 RAISED BY 740 UVM STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND STAFF



"I feel fortunate to have lived in this community for a long time. My husband and I built friendships and connections I treasure. To thrive, a community needs a hospital that feels like it belongs to the people. A place where family members, friends and neighbors take care of each other. A place that's integrally tied to the health and well-being of all residents. Volunteering, serving on the Board and investing philanthropically in the UVM Medical Center has been my way of saying 'This is important. I believe in this.'"

Vermonters Bolster Pediatric Leukemia Research

There's a special passion behind Dr. Jessica Heath's research, fueled by parents who have lost children to pediatric leukemia. They see hope for other families in her work to find new treatments for high-risk patients who don't respond well to traditional chemotherapy.

Her lab relies almost entirely on philanthropic support, much of it from those same Vermont families mourning the death of their children. Major benefactors include the Emily Lyman Foundation, founded by a Vermont family to honor their daughter who died from leukemia at 15 years-old, and the Sean Patrick Waldron Fund, also established by a Vermont family in memory of their son. Vermont native and golf pro Keegan Bradley has also hosted an annual golf tournament that has supported her research.

As an early career researcher, Heath says this funding has been critical while she works to secure major grants from sources like the National Institutes of Health.

"It's allowing the science to move forward and is also helping us train the next generation of scientists," says Heath, a pediatric hematologist and oncologist at the

UVM Children's Hospital and an assistant professor of pediatrics and biochemistry in the UVM Larner College of Medicine.

Her team—which includes a doctoral student, technician, and several UVM undergraduates—continues to make progress in what Heath describes as an "up and coming field" focused on how cancer cells interact with bone marrow. Her time treating patients in the clinic keeps the goal front and center: Giving every child the chance to grow up.

"We've had some nice examples recently of new treatments that have increased survival rates for certain types of leukemia," she says. "We haven't hit the ceiling—we just need new approaches." ■

From the National Cancer Institute:

CHILDHOOD LEUKEMIA REPRESENTS **24.9%** OF ALL NEW CHILDHOOD CANCER CASES.

MEDIAN AGE AT DIAGNOSIS: **6**

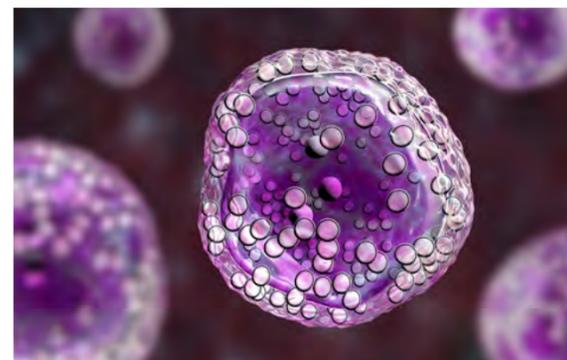
MEDIAN AGE AT DEATH: **11**

PERCENT SURVIVING FIVE YEARS: **84.1%** (2009-2015)



A Closer Look

About 15 percent of children with the aggressive, but curable T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia don't respond well to traditional chemotherapy. Why? Focusing on the bone marrow microenvironment may lead to answers. Heath has pinpointed two proteins that are altered through a specific genetic mutation within the leukemia cells. The goal is to better understand this mutation, which may help to identify existing drugs that can be used as targeted therapies.



Alumnus Gift Leads UVM Research Transformation

Biomedical science and technology change people's lives for the better. Physicians and scientists at UVM are key agents of that change, spurring world-class developments in such areas as cardiovascular, cancer, neurobehavioral and health care delivery research. A leadership gift from Steven Firestone, MD—an alumnus from the UVM Larner College of Medicine Class of 1969—sets the stage for construction of a new 60,000 square foot biomedical research facility on campus. To be named the Dr. Frederick and Mrs. Bobbie Firestone Medical Research Building in honor of Firestone's parents, the building will feature state-of-the-art, flexible, collaborative spaces that share resources efficiently and foster innovation and discovery.



You Answered the Call

On June 30, 2019 *Move Mountains: The Campaign for The University of Vermont* officially came to a close.

Throughout this collaborative campaign between UVM and the UVM Medical Center, your incredible generosity and partnership demonstrated what is possible when people with common interests and passions come together in support of a shared goal.

Together, your contributions have:

- Removed financial barriers for learners;
- Changed how medical education is conducted;
- Augmented academic and clinical excellence among faculty;
- Pushed scientific discovery forward;
- Enhanced program support for patients and families; and
- Transformed our health care environment.

On behalf of all who are impacted by your generosity, thank you.



Kevin

Kevin McAteer, *Chief Development Officer*
Academic Health Sciences Development
and Alumni Relations
(802) 656-4469
Kevin.McAteer@uvmhealth.org



UVM MEDICAL CENTER: **\$66,546,616**

LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE: **\$209,684,826**

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES: **\$14,150,313**

Total Raised 7/1/11 - 6/30/19:

ACADEMIC HEALTH SCIENCES: **\$290,381,755**

“Patients at the hospital are also neighbors, families, friends and our children’s classmates. We are a closely connected community. Charitable giving to UVM Medical Center is an investment in the well-being of our entire community, which we are proud to be a part of.”

– Steve Leffler, MD, President and COO
UVM Medical Center

“It is powerful to see the extraordinary investment and dedication of our donors translate directly into new opportunities for our students, new pathways in our research and new approaches in our teaching. Philanthropy is helping us prepare a generation of skilled, compassionate, socially responsible physicians who will help create a healthier world.”

– Richard L. Page, MD, Dean
UVM Larner College of Medicine

“Philanthropic support of UVM’s College of Nursing and Health Sciences during the campaign demonstrated how deeply beloved the College is and how central the nursing and health sciences professions are to patient- and family-focused care. The College is well-positioned to play its important role in the national health care landscape.”

– Scott Thomas, PhD, Interim Dean
UVM College of Nursing and
Health Sciences

PHOTO CREDIT: JAMES P. RATHMELL, MD

Talented Alumni Pay It Forward

Larner Loan Recipient Champions Health Equity

As a child, James Huang, MD, witnessed his parents' struggle to access the health care they needed, memories that now fuel his life's work.

"Both of my parents are deaf, and were also immigrants," says the 2009 graduate of the UVM Larner College of Medicine. "Seeing the different systems that both elevated their health and put up barriers to their health has motivated me to think through how we can make health equitable for everyone."



James Huang, MD '09

Now a family medicine physician with Unity Health Care, a federally qualified health center in Washington D.C., Huang is tackling pressing community needs. In 2016, he founded the CODA (Comprehensive Medical Care for Deaf Adults and Children) Clinic. The 50 staff members provide culturally appropriate care, while a partnership with Gallaudet University—the nation's first university designed to be barrier-free for deaf students—expands the clinic's reach. Huang is also working to increase access to healthy food through a produce prescription program for immigrant families. In 2018, he was named an Atlantic Fellow for Health Equity through the George Washington University Workforce Institute. Today, he's a leader in a global network focused on eradicating health disparities.

Behind Huang's advocacy work is strong support from his medical alma mater. A low-cost loan from the Larner Loan Fund—founded by Robert Larner, MD'42, and augmented by alumni and friends—as well as several alumni-established scholarships eased his debt burden, allowing him to pursue his passion for a just health care system.

"I still appreciate that generosity," he says. ■

Across America, a major deterrent to pursuing and attaining a college degree is affordability. At UVM, donor support is making a huge difference.

Number of Scholarship Funds and Low-Cost Loans:

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES: **40**

LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE: **128**

Scholarship Recipient Bridges Clinic and Schools

At one point during her pursuit of a Master of Science in Nursing from UVM's College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Libby McDonald, APRN, maxed out on loans and had to work two jobs in order to meet her education and living expenses.

"As a student, you sometimes don't know how you're going to get through the semester financially," she says. "Then you find out you're getting a scholarship

and it's like, 'Ok, I'm going to make it!'"

After graduating, McDonald, a Michigan native, decided to stay in Vermont and work as a nurse practitioner for the UVM Children's Hospital, dividing her time between the pediatric primary care clinic and Burlington public schools.

"The opportunity for care coordination is amazing. I work really closely with pediatricians but also with school nurses and guidance counselors. With all those perspectives, we get an incredible picture of what is happening for a child and what they most need from us," McDonald says.

This "triage" approach also helps prevent at-risk youth from slipping through the cracks.

"In the clinic, we screen families for social determinants of health, like food insecurity and housing instability, but also depression, violence and substance use. It gives me valuable context for when I'm in schools and I see that a particular child has missed appointments with the nurse or missed school altogether. It tells me that action is needed, whether by the clinic or a social worker. Making such connections can ultimately have a huge impact on children's lives," she says. ■

"We're expanding our reach with children; in some instances, broadening their safety net. I love being part of that."

The UVM Medical Center, including the UVM Children's Hospital and the UVM Cancer Center, is a not-for-profit hospital that depends on private philanthropic support to achieve its mission.

Thank you!

2019 UVM Medical Center Foundation Board Members

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**Completed term, June 2019*

2019 Philanthropy Highlights

EDITOR & PRINCIPAL WRITER
Annie Seyler, UVM Medical Center Foundation

CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Erin Post, UVM Larner College of Medicine

DESIGNER
Ann Howard, UVM Larner College of Medicine

PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHER
Andy Duback, Andy Duback Photography

Volunteers: Giving Talent and Time

"I have spent at least half my life in the hospital. It has truly become a second home. The patients and the people who work there have become a second family and you always support those you love."

- Frank Ittleman, MD

"I am very interested in making sure people have good, available health care. It's important to me to give back to the community both financially and with my time and experience."

- Stephany Hasse

"The doctors are incredible and bring the highest level of excellence to our community. What also impresses me is the way the senior management team leads. It's the kind of organization you naturally want to be a part of, so my family and I support it every way we can."

- Kate Laud

"When you see people coming and going from the hospital... knowing that you had a small part in making their lives better is inspiring."

- Chip Spillane

"When my husband and I moved from Southern Vermont to Burlington in 2008 we were planning for the next 20+ years. Comprehensive medical care was at the top of the list. Participating on the Foundation Board is an honor."

- Sally Wichert

THE
University of Vermont
MEDICAL CENTER
FOUNDATION

The Academic Health Sciences Development and Alumni Relations team secures and manages private philanthropic support for the UVM Medical Center, including the UVM Children's Hospital and the UVM Cancer Center; the UVM College of Nursing and Health Sciences; and the UVM Larner College of Medicine. Our collaborative work involves close partnerships with leadership, clinicians, faculty and a vast, dedicated community of donors.

The University of Vermont Medical Center Foundation
Courtyard at Given 3N
111 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 656-2887
development@uvmhealth.org



UVMHealth.org/MedCenterFoundation



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