UH medicine

July 2022

A Woman of Many Season

Barbara Bonfiglio made the Department of Medicine a welcoming place - for 48 years

Xerox queen. Work mom. Department historian. Grand Rounds organizer.

One woman filled all these roles, and then some – for 48 years. Her name is **Barbara Bonfiglio**, and she just retired as the academic education coordinator in the Department of Medicine, on the 3rd floor of the Lakeside Building at UH Cleveland Medical Center.

While 'academic coordinator' was her title, and she worked with medical residents, it doesn't begin to cover all she did. "She has been instrumental in the residency program and has always been a supportive ear to all who seek her counsel," says one colleague. "All the residents always had a place to go and someone to talk to."

Barb was also the person who could solve any problem, whether it required getting office equipment fixed, or a request to Protective Services for new codes on badges, baby-sitting or pet-sitting (the last two at her home, of course.)

She is the kind of person you meet at work, if you're lucky, once in your life, who is utterly dedicated and filled with compassion, and knowledgeable about everything that matters.

But the first time new residents meet her at a welcoming luncheon, they encounter someone who sounds like a tough enforcer. Each year, she'd give the class of residents – numbering about 80 - the following tips: "I need everyone's name, address and phone number," she said. "And if I call you, I need you to answer me, my page or my email. Don't ignore me. I'm not calling you to go out to dinner, I need information. And then, looking around the dining room, she'd add, "Also, clean your own plates, and put stuff in the trash, because your mom doesn't work here."

Once those points were made, her helpfulness shone through. And, says her co-worker and supervisor of 22 years, **Deena Segal**, "She was given the respect she asked for and deserved."

She is the kind of person "whose lists had lists," says Deena. Which was a good thing, because organizing Grand Rounds 52 weeks a year requires that kind of attention to detail.

Keith Armitage, MD, Program Director, Vice Chair for Education, has known Barb for many decades. "She has an incredible ability to connect with people and a deep compassion for others. The Department of Medicine is a family - and Barb was at the center of it for 48 years."

She also remembered not only every resident she worked with, even years before, but kept up with their families – she asked them to send in photos of their babies and children that she copied and displayed outside her office door.

And Barb is known for helping people whether it was in the scope of her job, or not. Often, she would receive patient phone calls that came to her line in error; she would call them back the next day and make sure they were directed to the right place.

She was feted on two occasions this spring – at an open house at her office and the May residents' dinner.

"For the dinner, we had a bobble head made of her, which was really cute," says Deena. "We sent out emails to prior residents who were in the program and put together a memory book with pictures people sent and snippets they wrote."

They remember her, just as she remembers them.

Caption: Recognition at the May residents' dinner. Barb with Drs. Keith Armitage and Robert Galatz.
Written by: Evelyn Theiss

Awards - Appointments - Publications

Multiple UH Hospitals Receive Recognition with Accreditation from The American College of Cardiology

Programs have proven exceptional competency in treating patients with chest pain and heart attack symptoms

Multiple University Hospitals (UH) Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute locations across Northeast Ohio have received recognition demonstrating expertise and commitment in treating patients with chest pain. This month, the sites were awarded Chest Pain Center Accreditation with Primary PCI from The American College of Cardiology (ACC). This accreditation was given based on rigorous evaluation of the staff's ability to evaluate, diagnose and treat patients who may be experiencing a heart attack.

Percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) is also known as coronary angioplasty. It is a non-surgical procedure that opens narrowed or blocked coronary arteries with a stent or balloon to relieve symptoms of heart disease or reduce heart damage during or after a heart attack.

UH Ahuja, Elyria, Geauga, Lake West, Parma, Portage, and St. John Medical Centers were reaccredited as Chest Pain Centers with Primary PCI. UH Cleveland Medical Center is also accredited in this area.

Hospitals that have earned Chest Pain Center Accreditation with Primary PCI have proven exceptional competency in treating patients with heart attack symptoms and have primary PCI available 24/7 every day of the year. As required to meet the criteria of the accreditation designation, they comply with standard Chest Pain Center protocols and procedures. These facilities also maintain a "No Diversion Policy" for STEMI patients. ST-elevation myocardial infarction, or STEMI, is a type of heart attack that mainly affects the heart's ventricles or lower chambers. No diversion means patients receive urgent treatment and are not transferred to another hospital for these symptoms.

"It's our mission to bring the highest quality care and procedures closer to where our patients live," said **Mehdi Shishehbor, DO, MPH, PhD**, President, UH Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute, and Angela and James Hambrick Chair in Innovation. "We want patients visiting any University Hospitals facility to receive the same, superior care. This accreditation shows the community that their hospital facility will provide first-class treatment, 24/7, any time they may need it."

Read the full article here.

Research News

New study finds COVID-19 booster increases antibodies by more than 85% in nursing home residents and their caregivers

Results suggest this highly-vulnerable population could be significantly better protected

The pandemic has hit nursing home residents especially hard, with a disproportionately large share of COVID-19 infection and mortality rates in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

But new research from Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in partnership with Brown University shows that high levels of Omicron-specific immunity can be achieved in nursing home residents and their caregivers with a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, also known as the booster shot.
The findings were published this month in the journal eBioMedicine, part of The Lancet network.

Researchers examined blood samples from 85 nursing home residents and 48 healthcare workers in Ohio who received the COVID-19 vaccine booster to determine the level of neutralizing antibodies present. Neutralizing antibodies are protective proteins produced by the immune system in response to vaccination and can be analyzed to determine the length of time it takes for immunity to diminish.

The study found that Omicron-specific antibodies reached detectable levels in 86% of nursing home residents and 93% of healthcare workers after receiving the booster shot, compared to just 28% of nursing home residents and healthcare workers after the initial two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series. This high neutralization level occurred two weeks after the booster.
Despite nursing homes acting as an epicenter of infections and deaths throughout the pandemic, one in eight nursing home residents and one in nine staff members have not been fully vaccinated, according to the AARP.
David Canaday, MD, lead study author and professor at the School of Medicine, said the results highlight the importance of booster vaccinations—not only for nursing home residents, but also for the general population.

"There are tens of millions of community-dwelling older adults similar to the nursing home population but are living at home," he said. "This data shows this group of frail, older adults with similar clinical and functional limitations would benefit immensely from a booster vaccination. The data also shows that healthcare workers achieved a significant elevation in antibody levels after receiving a booster. Many of these workers are healthy, middle-aged adults similar to the general population."

Read the full article here.

Education News

University Hospitals and Northeast Ohio Medical University Announce Newly Expanded Affiliation Agreement

Broadens collaboration and expands clinical opportunities for students to address the health care workforce shortage

University Hospitals (UH) and Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) have announced a new affiliation agreement that supports the joint aim of developing leadership and deploying a transformational workforce who heal, teach and discover, and care for the underserved populations within both Cuyahoga County and other Ohio counties.

The agreement expands an affiliation that began in 2012 and has included clinical rotations for NEOMED students enrolled its Colleges of Medicine and Pharmacy, and among various specialties such as Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Ob-Gyn, Pediatrics, Psychiatry and Surgery. UH also supports programs in NEOMED's College of Graduate Studies including its Master of Medical Science in Anesthesia and Master of Leadership in Health Systems Science.

The new five-year agreement, effective July 1, 2022, establishes joint oversight of financial investment and program development in six key areas of collaboration that include and extend beyond providing program rotations and other learning experiences for NEOMED students; educational activities, leadership and faculty development, innovation, research, clinical activities and workforce development.

"Collaboration, with a focus on diversity and innovation, is the only way to improve health for all communities, particularly in Ohio where health disparities continue to be a critical problem," said NEOMED President John Langell, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H., M.B.A. "This new level of collaboration between UH and NEOMED will allow us to provide a better educational experience, conduct more impactful research, and deliver better service to our communities."
Under the agreement, UH will increase the number of clinical rotation opportunities and practice experiences for NEOMED students at UH locations and invest in onsite facilities for students and faculty at the UH Cleveland Medical Center main campus.

Read the full article here.

Welcome to the Department

Nidia Binaj, MBA
Operations Analyst Special
Project Coordinator
Department of Medicine

Upcoming Events

Recurring Events (Zoom information sent out weekly)

Tuesdays @ Noon - **Medicine Grand Rounds Seminar Series** (September - May)
Wednesdays @ Noon - **VA M&M Conference**
Fridays @ Noon - **UH M&M Conference**

Recent Medicine Grand Rounds

View

Edgar Lerma, MD, FACP

"Approaches to Prevent and Treat Chronic Hyperkalemia

View

Celina Cunanan, MSN & Patrick Runnels, MD

"Won't You Be My Neighbor? UH's Role in Addressing SDOH to Achieve Health Equity in Cleveland"

View

Siba P Raychaudhuri, MD

"T Cell Targeted Therapies in Autoimmune Diseases"

View

Marjorie Greenfield, MD

"Career Development and Academic Promotion"

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To contribute, email: Matthew.Zelesnik@UHhospitals.org

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