

## 'Revolutionary' partnership teams MUSC, Siemens Healthineers

*Partners intend to lead global change in health care system*

BY LESLIE CANTU

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Imagine a world where a patient's profile is completely digitized into a "digital twin," and a computer can run through thousands of other patients' digital twins to find the individual with the most similar profile and then tell doctors what worked for that individual so they can use the same treatment for the current patient.

Or a world where doctors can begin treatment on a stroke patient not within the current national average of 90 minutes but in a mere 20 minutes.

That world is one that MUSC and Siemens Healthineers hope to create together. The two organizations announced a transformational partnership Aug. 27 that is unlike any other in MUSC's 194-year history, according to David Cole, M.D., FACS, president of MUSC.

In front of a standing room-only crowd that included MUSC faculty, staff and board of trustees members, elected officials, business and state leaders, and leadership from the University of South Carolina and Clemson University, Siemens Healthineers and MUSC outlined their joint vision: create a blueprint for the rest of the world of a transformed health care system that provides safe, equitable, timely, effective, efficient and patient-centered care.

Creating a digital twin of a patient is a longer-term idea. If one takes a "crawl, walk, run" approach, then that idea is definitely at the "run" stage, according to Bernd Montag, Ph.D., CEO of Siemens Healthineers.

But reducing the time it takes to begin treatment for stroke patients is a project the new partners plan to begin immediately.

In the U.S., the current door-to-treatment average



From left, MUSC President David Cole, Siemens Healthineers CEO Bernd Montag, MUSC Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Lisa Saladin, North America Siemens Healthineers President Dave Pacitti and MUSC Health CEO and MUSC Vice President for Health Affairs Patrick Cawley announce their transformational partnership.

*Photos by Sarah Pack*

for stroke patients is 90 minutes, but faster treatment leads to better outcomes and survival rates. MUSC is already faster than the average but decreasing the time to 18 to 26 minutes could reduce hospital admissions by 383 days and save \$2.2 million in follow-up care and \$1.7 million in long-term disability for working age adults, according to MUSC researchers. It also would add 122 years to the lives of 363 South Carolinians.

The partners plan to accomplish this by re-engineering the stroke center process to take patients directly to the angiography room so real-time imaging can provide an accurate but faster diagnosis.

MUSC and Siemens Healthineers also plan to create a digital twin of the new MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital and Pearl Tourville Women's Pavilion, which will allow them to test processes and workflow changes in the digital replica before trying



People fill the auditorium in MUSC's Drug Discovery Building to hear the announcement and ask questions.

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Celebrating the life of a  
visionary former chairman.

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One challenge can open  
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# AROUND CAMPUS

## PEOPLE

### Susan Ackerman



Susan Ackerman, M.D., professor in the Department of Radiology and Radiological Science, has been elected by the MUSC Physicians Membership to serve as an at-large member director on

the MUSC Physicians board. Ackerman will serve through June 30, 2019.

### Felesia Bowen



Felesia Bowen, Ph.D., DNP, RN, associate professor, has been named director of undergraduate programs in the College of Nursing. Bowen earned her BSN from Tuskegee University, DNP from Fairleigh

Dickinson University in Teaneck, New Jersey, and Ph.D. from Columbia University. A veteran, Bowen was an Army nurse working active duty and reserves for 15 years. She is a nationally certified pediatric nurse practitioner. Her research focuses on pediatric asthma, trauma and health equity and health disparities.



*photo provided*

**Nurses with the MUSC Patient Access Center cooked and served dinner to guests and caregivers at the Hope Lodge in downtown Charleston. The facility provides lodging for cancer patients who receive treatment at MUSC Health and area hospitals. For information, call 843-958-0930.**

### Eva Greenwood



Eva Greenwood was named chief financial officer for MUSC Physicians. Greenwood, is vice chair of Finance and Administration and chief administrative officer for the Department of

Medicine at Boston University School of Medicine and Boston Medical Center. She also held the role of director of finance for the Boston University Faculty Practice Foundation. Greenwood will begin at MUSC at the end of September.

### Chris Pelic



Christopher Pelic, M.D., professor of psychiatry, was named associate dean of Graduate Medical Education (GME) Outreach and medical director for Telehealth GME in the College of Medicine. He will

work with the GME Office on general clinical education and research affiliation issues as well as develop and strengthen affiliations and partnerships across the South Carolina.

## EVENTS

### Black Ink Book Festival

The Charleston Friends of the Library will celebrate the works of African-American authors at Black Ink - Charleston's African-American book festival from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 8 at the Main Library, 68 Calhoun Street. Author Terry McMillan will be the keynote speaker. Other published authors will also be present. The festival's mission is to support local black writers and create a space for them to promote and share their work. For information, visit [www.charlestonlibraryfriends.org/black-ink-book-festival/](http://www.charlestonlibraryfriends.org/black-ink-book-festival/).

### 9/11 Memorial Concert

The Summerville Orchestra will host a free 9/11 concert at 7:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.), Sept. 7 at Summerville Baptist Church, 417 Central Avenue, Summerville. The event honors and recognizes the U.S. military and first responders.

### Charleston Water Week

The Charleston Area Sports Commission and the Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Board hosts Charleston Water Week, Sept. 8-12. The event highlights dozens of activities around the Lowcountry's waterways from sailing and boat cruises around area harbors and waterways to kayaking and waterskiing down tidal rivers and creeks. Visit [www.charlestoncvb.com/water-week/#events](http://www.charlestoncvb.com/water-week/#events).

## MUSC CATALYST news

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### MUSC Veterans Resource Group to meet Sept. 27

MUSC VETS is a new resource group for veterans, veteran family members or anyone who would like to be involved in working and supporting activities around MUSC and the Tri-county community.

Meetings are held every fourth Thursday of each month from 3 to 4 p.m. in 247 North Tower, Main Hospital. The group is working

to improve recruiting, retention, engagement and recognition of veterans in our workforce, patient population and community. Members participate in recruiting and job fairs, managing the MUSC Veterans Day program and developing an educational curriculum for leaders at MUSC. Email Chad Breedon at [breedenc@musc.edu](mailto:breedenc@musc.edu).

# Lowcountry Heart Walk celebrates 25 years: Are you ready?

With more than 100 teams and a goal of 1,000 walkers from MUSC participating in the annual AHA Heart Walk on Sept. 29, we want to make sure everyone is ready for the three-mile walk. The best way to prepare is to start now. The sooner you get going, the more time you'll have to build up your endurance and make sure you'll really be able to enjoy the walk.

We would like to challenge each team captain to encourage their members to begin a walking program, either as a group or individually. Walking is simple, free and one of the easiest ways to get more active, lose weight and become healthier. Beginners can start walking any time and regular walking 30 minutes or more can contribute to better health. In addition to reducing the risk for heart disease and stroke, walking helps with mental and emotional health by increasing the production of endorphins, boosting energy levels and reducing stress levels. Did you know that participating in the Heart Walk will earn you 25 points for the Imagine U Challenge? The Heart Walk falls under the "train and participate in a 5K" category. Make sure

your prospective co-walkers know about this.

## OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION WELCOMES NEW WELLNESS COORDINATOR

Kaitlin DaPore brings more than five years of leadership experience within the South Carolina wellness community to MUSC. She served as director of a Charleston area farm-to-school based nonprofit organization in addition to being a board certified health and wellness coach through the National Consortium of Health and Wellness Coaches and Emory University. She is a New Hampshire native and graduate of the College of Charleston and is fueled by a passion for empowering people with better health. Through her nonprofit



DaPore

management experience and work as a health and wellness coach, DaPore has worked directly with hundreds of individuals and community organizations to develop and implement programs that make achieving optimal health both accessible and sustainable.

Having stepped into the wellness coordinator role only weeks ago, she already has begun to take MUSC employee wellness opportunities to new heights, enthusiastically engaging employees and the MUSC community at large in several wellness initiatives, such as Imagine U and Exercise Is Medicine.

Additionally, DaPore will be representing the Office of Health Promotion on several committees throughout the enterprise to further the impact of our various wellness initiatives on campus and beyond, including the MUSC Urban Farm, Greenberg Greenway Committee, Physician Wellness Committee and Student Wellness Committee, among others.

DaPore will be sharing a weekly newsletter detailing the various health and wellness-related events and opportunities for engagement happening

## MUSC Health & Well-Being

By Susan L. Johnson,  
Ph.D., MUSC Office of  
Health Promotion



on campus and beyond. Sign up to receive "Wellness this Week" weekly updates here: <https://bit.ly/2LGPObx>.

### Top 10 Reasons to Walk

1. Reduce risk or manage Type 2 diabetes
2. Strengthen your heart
3. Improve cognitive function
4. Strengthen bones
5. Reduce risk of cancer
6. Improve flexibility
7. Burn calories
8. Lower risk of stroke
9. Reduce symptoms of depression
10. Reduce stress

## PARTNERS *Continued from Page One*

them in the real world.

The MUSC Health hybrid operating room, an OR integrated with an imaging room, will also be reengineered, said Patrick Cawley, M.D., CEO of MUSC Health and vice president of Health Affairs, University.

Cole said that MUSC and Siemens Healthineers have worked together for two decades and in that time have found their values and purpose align.

"We anticipate that our global work will be nothing short of transformational, remolding and establishing health care processes, systems and structures in ways that are life altering and, we expect, lifesaving. Our advances will be designed with scalability and replication capability so we will start here, echo across the state, and have an impact across the world," Cole said.

Montag said the two organizations need each other in order to achieve their goal of transforming health care. A dialogue is necessary between the experts in medicine and the experts in technology in order to make real the possibilities of the digital revolution, he said.

For a long time, Siemens focused on technical improvements – making an MRI faster or a CT scan more accurate. And while these are important topics that Siemens Healthineers will continue to work on, they don't address the bigger problems, Montag said.

"It is not only about improving the machines. It is about changing the entire system and having as an endpoint not only a better product but better medicine," he said.

Cole and Montag were joined in a Q&A session by David Pacitti, president of Siemens Medical Solutions USA, Inc., and head of Siemens Healthineers North

America; Lisa Saladin, Ph.D., executive vice president for academic affairs; and Cawley.

Saladin and Cole said they're excited about the opportunities the partnership will provide, exposing students to cutting-edge technology and allowing doctoral students to conduct research

to show whether the clinical changes that MUSC makes have an effect on patient outcomes. In addition, Cole said, the students themselves are a source of transformational ideas.

"They're going to help us see the future," he said.



# Former otolaryngology chair remembered for his leadership

By CINDY ABOLE

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Warren Young Adkins Jr., M.D., former chairman of the Department of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery at MUSC, died at his home on July 26, following a long illness. He was 78.

Fondly remembered by colleagues, resident physicians and staff for his dedication to his patients, excellence in teaching and leadership, Adkins was praised for his vision and growth, especially the department's hearing research program, said Paul R. Lambert, M.D., Department of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery professor and chairman.

"Dr. Adkins was a highly respected colleague at MUSC, but even more impressive was his standing as a dedicated and effective leader nationally. He served on the board of directors for his specialty's most important governing bodies and societies. He was an incredible man, and we will miss him dearly," Lambert said.

College of Medicine Dean Raymond DuBois, M.D., Ph.D., acknowledged the Adkins' death in August.

"Dr. Adkins is remembered by many at MUSC. We are grateful for his dedication to MUSC and his many patients. We extend condolences especially to his family," said DuBois.

Adkins was born on April 8, 1940 in Atlanta, Georgia. The son of Sarah Cannon Adkins and Warren Young Adkins Sr., he grew up in Hemingway, South Carolina. An athlete and Eagle Scout in his youth, Adkins attended the University of South Carolina and later graduated from the Medical College of South Carolina. A member of the Phi Rho Sigma Fraternity and Alpha Omega Alpha honorary medical society, Adkins completed his internship in general surgery and residency in otolaryngology in 1970 at the University of Florida in Gainesville. He completed a fellowship in temporal bone histopathology in 1973

at UCLA. He served in the U.S. Army, attaining the rank of major, and stationed at Fort Jackson in Columbia during the Vietnam War.

In 1973, Adkins joined the faculty at MUSC in the Department of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery. Within five years, he was named chairman of the department, becoming, at age 39, one of the youngest chairmen of an otolaryngology department. Adkins remained chairman for 20 years and retired in 1998. Throughout his tenure at MUSC, leaderships credited him with developing a nucleus of talented clinical faculty as well as leading a top clinical training program for residents. He was also recognized for establishing the department's hearing research program, guiding it to become one of the top 10 research centers in the country, said Lambert.

Above all, Adkins enjoyed seeing

## Tributes for Dr. Adkins

I first met Dr. Warren "Deke" Adkins in 1986 as a wide-eyed visiting junior medical student from "up north." The department was very different back then and has changed quite a bit over time. Deke never did. He was a kind, quiet and caring man when I first met him way back when and was that same great man last time we spoke.

*Mark J. Hoy, M.D.,  
Department of Otolaryngology-Head  
and Neck Surgery*

Dr. Adkins was always a pleasure to talk to when I first joined the department. He always made me and my wife feel welcomed. He was always gentle with his words; yes, always a gentleman. He will be sorely missed at department functions.

*Joshua D Hornig M.D.,*



*Photo provided*

## Dr. Warren Young Adkins

patients, operating and teaching residents. He authored more than 100 articles in scientific journals and wrote a book chapter. Among many organizations, he was a member of the Bronchoesphological Society, Deafness Research Foundation, American Laryngology Association, the

*Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgical  
Oncology*

I was privileged to be a resident under Dr. Adkins. Some may not be aware he was widely regarded as "the nicest ENT chair in the country." He truly cared about all of the men and women he trained. When Hurricane Hugo took all of my material possessions, he gave me a check to help piece things back together. He was always dedicated to his patients' welfare. We had a lot of fun, and I will always remember him fondly. I will never forget how he let me perform a cochlear implant (skin to skin) on my last day as a resident.

I remember a funny story. Many years ago, Deke saw water skiing in a movie, so he brought his own skis. But the movie did not show how to get up on the skis. He tried repeatedly to launch off the beach but was unsuccessful until he finally figured out how to start from the water!

American Board of Otolaryngology, Charleston County Medical Society, S.C. Medical Society and an emeritus member of the American Otological Society.

It was through Adkins' leadership that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded a coveted grant to the research division of the department in 1987. The grant provided ongoing basic research support in the communicative sciences.

During his 25 years at MUSC, Adkins trained 50 residents. In 1996, former residents helped establish the Warren Y. Adkins Society to continue the support, mentorship and education of future otolaryngologists. The department also created the Warren Y. Adkins Lectureship, which is part of a national meeting hosted annually at MUSC. The lectureship has been presented by some of the country's top ENT surgeons who hail from programs such as Stanford, Harvard, Cornell, Duke and Johns Hopkins universities.

Adkins' wife, Margaret "Skippy" Canady Adkins; children Warren Young Adkins III and Stella Adkins Gadsden (Christopher); brother Clifford Cannon Adkins (Evelyn); and other family survive him.

*Tom Funcik, M.D.,  
Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck  
Surgery*

I was so saddened to hear about Dr. Adkin's passing. He was a very special person to me and helped me in so many ways, which included getting a general surgery residency at the University of Florida, the same institution where he did his otolaryngology residency. That ultimately allowed me to get an otolaryngology residency at MUSC. He was a true Southern gentleman physician. He will always be the perfect role model for how I want to treat my patients, colleagues, students, residents and employees. I have always thought about him every single day since my residency, and I know that I will continue to do so in the future.

*John Foster, M.D.,  
Spartanburg & Greer ENT and former  
resident (1988-1991)*

## MEET SHIAYA



**Shiaya Brown**

**Department; How long at MUSC**  
*MUSC Health Patient Access Center; one year*

**How are you changing what's possible at MUSC**

*Going above and beyond to make sure that the patient is scheduled in a timely manner with the appropriate doctor*

**Family**

*Fiance, Jermane; children, Ty' Ashia, Tyshaun and Harmony Damair*

**A unique talent you have**

*Yoga*

**Favorite football team**

*Dallas Cowboys*

**Last book read**

*"Worth the Wait" by Jamie Beck*

**Favorite place in the world**

*Punta, Dominican Republic*

**Favorite quote**

*"The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary." — Vince Lombardi*

## SCTR Scientific Retreat on Opioids Research

Friday, October 26, 2018

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### Keynote Speakers



Joshua D. Lee, MD  
 Associate Professor,

Departments of Population Health and Medicine  
 Director, Fellowship in Addiction Medicine  
 New York University and Langone Medical Health

**Morning Keynote Address:**

Opioid Treatments in Primary Care and Criminal Justice

Betty Tai, PhD

Director, Center for Clinical Trials Network  
 National Institute of Drug Abuse



**Afternoon Keynote Address:**

An Update on the National Institute on Drug Abuse Clinical Trials Network: The HEAL (Helping to End Addiction)

For more information contact:  
 Dayan Ranwala, PhD, at SCTR  
[ranwala@musc.edu](mailto:ranwala@musc.edu) or  
 (843) 792-1498



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 MUSC Wellness Center - Janis Newton and Tatiana Baier, PhD

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- Participants must be motivated to make friends AND must be respectful of others
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September 18 - November 6

Tuesdays

4:30-5:30 pm

Registration Fee: \$75

Other Options to Improve  
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 \* Individual Training  
 \* Telehealth Fitness Sessions

Questions? Contact Carrie Papa 843-876-1507; [papa@musc.edu](mailto:papa@musc.edu)



<http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/hsc/Programs>

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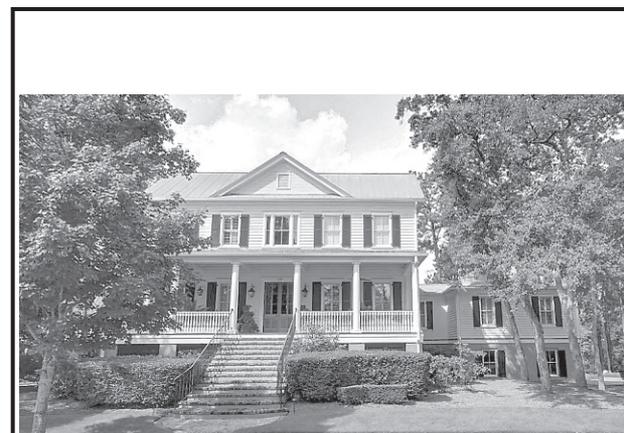
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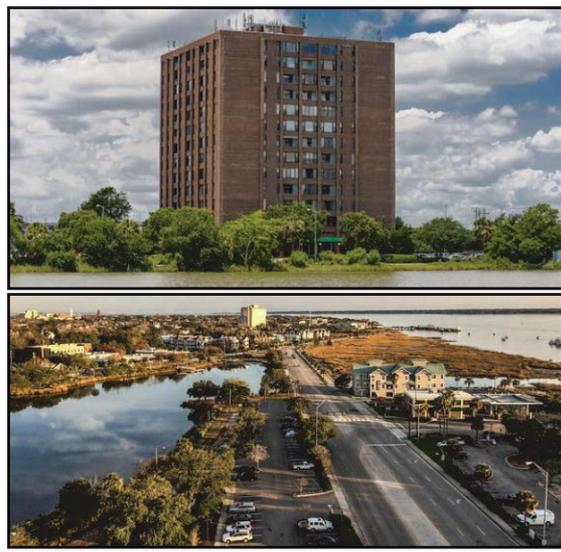
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### OT STUDENTS ASSIST AT SURFERS HEALING CAMP



Photo Provided

MUSC Occupational Therapy students spent their first day of class at Folly Beach helping 100 children with autism enjoy a fun day at the beach with the group Surfers Healing. The effort was part of College of Health Professions' professor Dr. Patty Coker-Bolt's class that gave students a glimpse of what pediatric therapy like as well as see how children with disabilities can achieve great things with the guidance and help of others.

# “My Reviews Speak for Themselves”

## David Kent

*“I would highly recommend David Kent. He is incredibly knowledgeable and extremely accommodating. He truly has the buyers' best interest at heart and is a pro at negotiating.”*



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# Imagine U — Small changes, big rewards

BY MIKIE HAYES

hayesmi@musc.edu

"If it weren't for the pickle on this Chick-Fil-A sandwich, I wouldn't know a veggie if it bit me."

"I sleep with my cell by my pillow and checked email three times last night."

"My stress level is through the roof — deadlines are killing me."

"I didn't leave my desk for five hours yesterday; if sitting is the new smoking, I'm doomed."

Sound like you? Between work, traffic, kids, the house, the pets, it's easy to run out of bandwidth.

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's comprehensive study, "How's Life? 2017: Measuring Well-being," life satisfaction in the United States has declined over the past 10 years from an average of 7.3 to 6.9 on a 10-point scale. Moreover, this statistic was twice the average decline of 40 other industrialized countries.

The lack of work-life balance, the study found, plays a large role in the discontent Americans feel — long



Photo by Sarah Pack

**MUSC Wellness Center director Janis Newton, center, leads a Tae Bo demonstration at the July 11 Imagine U Kick off event at the Horseshoe.**

hours, job stress and not enough free time account for the malaise many feel.

See **WELL-BEING** on page 9

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**WELL-BEING** *Continued from Page Seven*

In today's fast-paced, do-more-with-less world, that applies to most working Americans. If you are among them, typically running 90 to nothing, maybe it's time to take a minute to imagine the toll that's taking on your health and your happiness — not to mention the happiness of those around you.

**TURN IT AROUND WITH IMAGINE U**

From TV's Dr. Oz to Gwyneth Paltrow's website Goop to MUSC's Imagine U, "well-being" is a concept that is trending. But what is it, exactly?

A combination of being happy, healthy and comfortable, well-being is a physical, mental and psycho-social journey of sorts, the arrival at which could well be the antidote to stress, lethargy or "dis-ease" you're longing for, said Susan Johnson, Ph.D., director of Health Promotion and co-chair of the Imagine U implementation team.

And before you say, "There is literally no time left in my schedule for me," maybe there's more than you think — maybe just enough to do just one thing.

The Imagine U team at MUSC went all-in to create a fun and simple MyQuest program that will guide you through a plan to achieve the well-being that matters to you.

Last spring, phase 1 of "Imagine U: Building Well-Being Together" was launched, and employees were asked to complete a confidential health risk assessment. The response was even better than anticipated, said Janis Newton, director of the MUSC Wellness Center, who along with Johnson helped actualize Imagine U, an outcome of Imagine MUSC 2020.

More than 43 percent of the MUSC community completed the HRA — the nationwide average falls under 30 percent.

"We hoped it would be well-received," Johnson said. "This program touches every aspect of our well-being. We're so lucky there's a sincere commitment from senior leadership to create a true culture of health and greatly improve the well-being of our workforce. MUSC leaders often say employees are our most important asset. A program like Imagine

U truly reinforces that belief."

Newton agreed. "We call ourselves the MUSC family, and with that comes the responsibility of caring about the health and well-being of this work family," Newton said. That means creating a space for work-life balance — real strategies to help the MUSC family achieve real well-being."

When phase 2 kicked off recently, the real excitement began, Newton said.

"Most people have something they want to improve in their lives, some lifestyle change that could lead to positive well-being," she said. Imagine U is here to help. There is a whole spectrum of fun and helpful challenges designed to help people take back control and make the changes they want to see. I guarantee people will get excited about doing one challenge and want to try something else. People are trying things they've never done before."

Her goal, she said, is to figure out how to use the Holy Spokes bike share program. "I've never done it before, but it's time for me to get out of my comfort zone and just do it. And I'm going to feel good about it. Imagine U is about building confidence and self-efficacy — that core belief in in our ability to achieve goals. Just do one thing," she urged. "One. If you do, you'll be on your way."

If you hear "well-being challenge" and think you have to eat green beans all day, or train for a 5K or never have another martini, don't worry. That's not what this program is about. Imagine U challenges aren't about unrelenting deprivation or torturous exercise or even kale, unless, that is, you want to eat kale. The challenges offer tools that will help you take small but meaningful steps that become part of your day-to-day life and maybe even lead to big changes. This self-guided program can result in more energy, strength and flexibility, along with the ability to decompress, move more, eat healthier meals and get better sleep.

Say you want to train for a marathon. There's a step-by-step challenge. Maybe you're contemplating bariatric surgery — there's a challenge for that, too. You want to stop smoking, unplug from the digital world or purchase local vegetables? Imagine U has ways to get you there as



*Photo provided*

**University employee Nancy Lemon Carney, left, at a book signing event, juggles being a full-time graphic artist, book author, wife and mother. She has made time for exercise and wellness with the MUSC Imagine U program.**

well, and along the way, participants earn 5 to 25 points per challenge, and incentives like stadium chairs, yoga mats and cash make it all the more rewarding. A mere 25 points qualifies a participant for a prize.

**THE WHY**

The reasons for taking part in the challenges are personal and run the gamut — employees cite unplugging from social media to upping daily steps, being present, eating less salt, even getting more sleep.

Think you don't have the bandwidth to start a challenge?

That's what Nancy Lemon Carney thought. A full-time graphic artist at MUSC, her second job is book illustrator/ author. She wrote and illustrated her first published children's book recently and spent summer months at signings. This month, she's illustrating a picture book and designing a page for Highlights Magazine. In the last few weeks, volunteer efforts saw her reading to kids at school and drawing with kids visiting the Charleston Animal Society. Her online shop offers totes, murals and bedding that feature her colorful, whimsical designs. Oh, and she's also a wife and mother of two kids under five.

Fit and animated, she could be the poster child for perpetual motion. But looks can be deceiving. After the birth

of her second child almost two years ago, it was nearly impossible for her to find time to fit in fitness or really even her own needs, she said. An athlete growing up, she excelled in many sports, and as an adult she loved to run and ride horses — soon, however, chasing kids and deadlines became her reality.

"I was grappling with how to fit more activity into my day and concentrate more on my health. I wanted to find something doable — be doing something active. I was excited to find Imagine U. It kicked my butt back into gear," she said, laughing. "There are so many challenges to choose from, and they help me do my job better. It's actually really validating."

Carney read through the challenges and saw a number of small adjustments she could make in her day to be more active and present. Already, she's earned 90 challenge points and is on track to earn 150 by the end of the first quarter. With a reminder on her computer, she stands up every 20 minutes and looks away from her computer screen for two minutes.

Every hour, she stands for 10 minutes. Sometimes she'll stretch or do a few minutes of desk yoga or meditation. Instead of picking up the phone, she makes a special point to walk around the office and touch base with colleagues.

See **WELL-BEING** on page 11

# MUSC student gains research experience through survey

## *Survey seeks to quantify LGBTQ community in Tri-county*

By LESLIE CANTU

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Jessica Giblin took her first step toward a Ph.D. when she enrolled in Trident Technical College some 30 years after dropping out of college. Now, she's getting hands-on experience conducting research with a leading role in a community needs assessment of the Tri-county LGBTQ community – and she's still only an undergraduate.

Giblin is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Studies through the College of Health Professions. It's still a new program – the first cohort of two students graduated last spring – but the opportunities offered by the program and MUSC are amazing, Giblin said.

One such opportunity was the LGBTQ community needs assessment, a survey that is attempting to assess the state of the LGBTQ community in Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester counties. It's rare that an undergraduate is able to participate in such a project from beginning to end, said Lauren Gellar, Ph.D., director of the Division of Healthcare Studies.

Gellar got involved in the project in January when she learned from Chase Glenn, executive director of the Alliance For Full Acceptance (AFFA), that the alliance was planning a survey in partnership with the College of Charleston Community Assistance Program (CAP) and the Joseph P. Riley Center for Livable Communities.

Gellar offered her assistance. When she mentioned the survey to Giblin, Giblin was eager to take part. Gellar wrote a proposal to her department and was able to include Giblin as a research assistant on the project.

The result has been that Giblin has been able to apply topics she's learned in class – evaluating published data, program planning, creating a community needs assessment, recruitment, conducting research, survey design,

analyzing data, and disseminating findings – to a real-world survey.

The team designed the community needs assessment, first, to provide demographic information about the LGBTQ population here and, second, to uncover challenges or issues the community might face.

The survey asks about relationships, education, work experience and access to health care, Giblin said.

"Those are not questions the LGBTQ community has been asked before in the Tri-county area. Every survey I've ever seen directed at the LGBTQ community was in regard to their sex lives. We're getting beyond those questions and getting to the root of some of the determinants of their health and the quality of their lives," Giblin said.

Giblin, Gellar, and AFFA are focusing on recruiting people to take the survey, while CAP focuses on the methodology.

CAP Director Ali Titus said the team looked at similar surveys conducted in Spartanburg as well as in Chicago and Birmingham, Alabama. She praised those researchers for being willing to share some of the pitfalls they encountered and their lessons learned. One of the difficulties the previous researchers experienced was getting a representative sample of the LGBTQ population to respond. CAP's strong collaboration with researchers from the previous studies greatly assisted in the development of the research plan and targeted recruitment efforts.

Each week CAP produces a report with a breakdown of respondents by age, race and income and then benchmarks that against census data for the Lowcountry, under the assumption that the LGBTQ community should reflect the demographics of the general community. When researchers see they're falling short in collecting data about a group, the recruitment team can re-assess their efforts.

Giblin said the team knew going in they would face challenges in collecting



*Photo by Sarah Pack*

**Jessica Giblin, left, is getting hands-on research experience as an undergraduate thanks to Dr. Lauren Gellar, Division of Healthcare Studies. To take the survey, visit [the-lgbtq-survey.com](http://the-lgbtq-survey.com).**

data from people in rural areas, those who remain "closeted" and the aging, as well as ethnic minorities who might have language barriers or experience particularly strong social stigma in their communities. As a result, they've promoted the survey at specific pride events, community gatherings, potlucks and speaker events and have worked to partner with businesses, health care providers, government agencies and social influencers.

Titus said the survey currently is online only. However, the Chicago researchers ended up developing a paper version when they fell short of respondents over the age of 55 and ethnic minorities, so that remains an option here as well.

Once the survey closes on Oct. 20, the team will conduct focus groups to delve deeper into the answers, and Giblin will be involved there as well.

Gellar said all the students in the healthcare studies program have opportunities to conduct projects in the community. One student, for example, is working on developing health education about Group B strep for pregnant women.

Most of the students in the program are nontraditional, adult students, Gellar said. Giblin, for example, had a long and successful career culminating as an operations manager for a vacation rental company on Kiawah Island. But she eventually decided she wanted something

more meaningful and realized she would need to go back to school to change her life direction. That's when she enrolled in Trident. The majority of her classmates also come from the technical college system. Many have already been working in health occupations for five to 10 years and aspire to attend graduate school at MUSC.

Gellar said the division is still working to expand the program. She recognizes that MUSC can be intimidating to nontraditional students but said their years of work experience are invaluable. As the program graduates more students, she expects to show that these students can go on to graduate programs.

Giblin said she loves the conversations that result from the diversity of backgrounds and professions in her class – it's almost like working interprofessionally, she said.

"It's just been an amazing experience. It's been beyond my expectations. To be able to learn from people with such diverse backgrounds – that was not something I experienced at college the first time, 30 years ago," she said.

She hopes the LGBTQ survey will provide a platform for increased dialogue and attention on LGBTQ perspectives, issues and needs in the region. The experience has solidified Giblin's determination to complete her doctorate, she said, and she hopes to continue her studies at MUSC.

**WELL-BEING** *Continued from Page Nine*

During her lunch hours, she walks the medical mile or indoor wellness walk. Her lunch hour is sacrosanct. She finds that working through lunch is actually counterproductive.

"I have to have that one hour to myself. If I didn't keep that bit of time for myself, I'd go crazy. I am more creative and efficient if I walk away and walk."

These tweaks to her workday soon lead to changes at home. She was interested in improving what her family eats and got into meal planning. She is also planning to join a community-supported farm. Her family eats a lot of produce, and it seems like a great way to try locally grown vegetables.

Imagine U is now a family affair, with Roselee, almost 5, and Gabe, not quite 2, joining in with mom to move more. "I always told myself there wasn't enough time. The truth is there is time, you just have to make the important things like your health and well-being priorities."

Newton is proud of what Carney has accomplished in the past months and the creative ways her challenges have spanned all four categories:

- Nutrition/Weight Management
- Physical Activity
- Preventative Care
- Psychosocial Health

"Nancy is killing it," Newton said. "I hope people see if she can do it, they can do it and will try one challenge. With 102 challenges to choose from, there is literally something for everyone. The program is designed so everyone can be successful."

Employees are letting them know what types of challenges they want. Newton said one mindfulness course filled up in record time and got terrific feedback. People want more of that, and so it will be offered again in October.

People are also excited that cancer researcher Sundar Balasubramanian soon will be teaching a 30-minute breathing class during lunch. For those who want to balance mind, body and spirit, this is the perfect challenge.

Rather get outside and commune with nature? A crowd favorite every year, the American Heart Association Heart Walk offers a chance to absorb some Vitamin D and give those gluts a workout, all while earning 25 Imagine U challenge points.

**ICING ON THE CAKE**

Imagine U should be fun, Newton said. "This should be something that makes your life easier, not more stressful. There's a true benefit to these challenges. The challenges are fun and house all the information you may never knew existed. There is so much health-related information in one place, just go look at it and see all there is to offer – even if you just do one challenge or don't do a challenge. This is a choice. You've got

*"This should be something that makes your life easier, not more stressful... There is so much health-related information in one place, just go look at it and see what it has to offer – even if you do one or no challenges. This is a choice. You've got choices."*

**Janis Newton**

choices."

The prizes also add to the fun. From guest passes to the Wellness Center, coupons for Urban Farm crops and Sodexo Mindful Meals vouchers to padfolios, cutting boards, lunch coolers and messenger bags, there is something for everyone. Next spring, they will also offer Charleston RiverDogs tickets.

## John Nicholas Vournakis Memorial Symposium set for Oct. 5

*Staff Report*

A memorial symposium to commemorate the life and accomplishments of John Vournakis, Ph.D., will take place from noon to 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 5 in the MUSC Hollings Cancer Center.

Vournakis, who died early this year, was a long-time member of the MUSC community, serving both as a faculty member and founding board member of the MUSC Foundation for Research Development. In both roles, he mentored and supported the research of numerous MUSC faculty, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Through his work and numerous founding leadership positions in the biomedical technologies industry, he was the epitome of the creative scientist who served as an early pioneer in bridging the gap between basic science in academia and therapeutic development by industry.

Aptly titled "The Interface between



**Vournakis**

Then there are the drawings. Each quarter, everyone who earned 25 points will be entered. The winner gets \$100 and the top point earner wins \$100. Then, at the end of year, there will be an additional \$500 drawing for everyone who earned 25 points. Again, the top point earner also wins \$500. The first round of prizes and recognition begins in October. The team hopes the incentives and drawings will encourage more people to get involved.

Beginning with the new year, Imagine U will include team and departmental challenges. "This year, New Year's resolutions can be even more enjoyable with partners and colleagues to compete alongside of and with," Johnson said.

Carney plans to stick with Imagine U for the long haul. "I love to stay healthy, but it's a tough job with two kids. It feels so good to accomplish these things. All I did was start one, and I had so much fun. I had no idea it would lead to three then four then more. I love that MUSC not only talks about wanting healthier employees but it's helping us get and stay healthy by actually providing the tools, support and encouragement we need to actually do it."

Biotechnology and Business," the event will be a remembrance of the life of John Vournakis, the people he motivated and their shared important work. Discussions will focus on the important role he played in science and business, a model of entrepreneurship in the academic environment, and as an MUSC faculty member, founding FRD board member and National Academy of Inventors fellow. Participating speakers will include members of the academic community and his biomedical industry colleagues, as well as those who have collaborated or trained with him and have been the beneficiaries of John's scientific guidance and valued friendship.

In the spirit of John's rich and proud Greek heritage, the event will continue the ancient Greek tradition of "symposium" with enlightening speeches, stimulating discussions and libations and a reception immediately following the program.

For all who would like to contribute, the FRD has created an endowment in his honor, which will provide a yearly award of up to \$25,000 to support the research of a MUSC faculty member with a project proposal that best represents the opportunity to translate a biomedical invention into the marketplace. For more information, contact Debbie Salvo at the MUSC Foundation office at 843-792-3250.

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