



Photo by Sarah Pack

Values in Action Respect awardees Keith Smalls, center, and Donnie Singleton, far right, proudly celebrate receiving their awards with first lady Kathy Cole, from left, nominator Dr. Ashley Hink and MUSC President David J. Cole at the Nov. 7 in-person celebration held in Charleston.

President's Values in Action Awards celebrate 'above and beyond employees'

BY CINDY ABOLE

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Each year, the MUSC President's Values in Action Awards (VIA) provide the opportunity for employees across the organization to be recognized for outstanding service and significant contributions to the campus community, representing MUSC's five core values, which fall under the categories of Compassion, Innovation, Integrity, Collaboration and Respect.

This year's event was held under the guise of a special MUSC OurDay digital transformation and leadership training meeting at the MUSC Storm Eye Institute Auditorium on Nov. 7 in Charleston. President David J. Cole M.D., FACS, kicked off the supposed training, surprising participants when he later shifted to recognizing eight award honorees as their nominators and employee work teams gathered for the awards.

For seven years, the president and first lady Kathy Cole have presented

the VIA Awards to honor MUSC employees from across the enterprise for their resilience, commitment and leadership. Awardees in the five categories each received award certificates and a memento and new to 2022, a \$1,000 bonus. The Impact Award was also presented for the third consecutive year. Similar to the VIA Awards, the Impact Award winner is selected by the president if a nominee has proved to go above and beyond to create positive impact for

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Make-A-Wish grants 4,000th wish at event at Children's Hospital

BY HARRISON HUNTLEY

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It was a ceremony fit for a princess on Thursday afternoon just outside of the MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital – a party complete with balloons, candy, cookies and a cake decorated with the characters from Disney's "Frozen." The occasion was a reunion, send off and above all else, a celebration. A young cancer patient, now in remission for the past year, was the recipient of Make-A-Wish South Carolina's 4,000th wish – a trip to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida.

Kiana was the guest of honor at Thursday's ceremony. The 7-year-old girl from Walterboro was nominated for Make-A-Wish three years ago as she battled leukemia. "She represents a lot of our kids in South Carolina," said Misty Farmer, president and CEO of Make-A-Wish South Carolina. "Hundreds of children have been waiting for their wishes because of the pandemic."

"I'm cancer-free," Kiana announced to her supporters at the wish reveal, which was met with joyous applause. She and her family feel that they have a lot to be thankful for and will head to Walt Disney World over the Thanksgiving holiday. Even though she was offered the chance to change her wish to something she could have enjoyed during the pandemic, Kiana had her heart set on going to Disney World and meeting Minnie Mouse and Princess Elsa. Thanks to donors from across

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Couple gives thanks
HCC program gives hope to patients.

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RECOVER Initiative
Long COVID study helps kids.

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Photo Provided

Kiana stands proudly with her MUSC care team and the Make-A-Wish South Carolina team.

WISH *Continued from Page One*

the Palmetto State, including MUSC, that wish is now a reality.

This is the first year MUSC has partnered with Make-A-Wish, meaning they can now host a wish granting ceremony at the Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital, which refers more patients to Make-A-Wish than any hospital in the state. "A lot of folks don't realize that we work very collaboratively with our medical community," Farmer said. "We want the introduction of that wish experience to be at the most beneficial time for that child as a part of their medical journey. We feel like we're part of the prescription for the kids by partnering with our community like this."

Make-A-Wish South Carolina has been granting wishes for 38 years, and

Kiana's wish marks the 4,000th for the organization, which is on track to grant over 250 in 2022.

Jacqueline Kraveka, M.D., said she's seen firsthand the impact a wish can have on her patients. "These kids go through so much, and these wishes are so great for them," she said. "Usually at the end of the treatment or when they're doing well, I've seen kids go to Hawaii. I had another patient who wanted to be a writer in Hollywood, and he went to Hollywood. They're very accommodating and are really just there for the kids."

Kraveka explained that the wishes can also make a difference for her team of caregivers as well. "We're there, oftentimes, when the kids are so sick. To see them well, to see them thriving and to see them having great experiences with their family is so awesome."



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AROUND CAMPUS

PEOPLE

J. Scott Broome



J. Scott Broome, CEO, MUSC Heath-Lancaster Division, was named the 2022 Drive to Zero Harm Leadership Award winner, presented by the South Carolina Hospital Association.

Broome, who joined MUSC Health in July 2020, was recognized for his leadership and commitment to a culture of safety through his focus on quality, patient safety and employee engagement throughout the organization.

Dirk Elston



Dirk Elston, M.D., professor and chairman of the Department of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery, has been awarded the American Academy of Dermatology's (AAD) 2023

Thomas G. Pearson Award. The award recognizes Elston's commitment and service to his specialty and the academy. Elston was selected for his contribution to the academy's educational mission through

his significant donation of time, contribution to the development of educational programs and coordination of educational activities. The award will be presented at the March 2023 AAD.

Joseph Scalea



Joseph Scalea, M.D., professor and vice chairman of innovation, Department of Surgery, was honored with the 2023 ASTS Rising Stars in Transplantation Surgery Award. The award recognizes

individuals who have made a significant, profound or potentially transformative contributions to the discipline.

Gerard Silvestri



Gerard Silvestri, M.D., Distinguished University Professor and the Hillenbrand Professor of Thoracic Oncology, Department of Pulmonary, Critical Care, Allergy & Sleep Medicine, was named a master

fellow by the American College of Chest Physicians. The award honors national and international Fellows of CHEST who have distinguished themselves by attaining professional preeminence.

Holiday break

The MUSC Catalyst News will not be published on Dec. 23 or Dec. 30 and will resume its bimonthly publication schedule on January 13, 2023.

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'Brave Maeve' helps MUSC S.C. Pediatric Burn Center, Shriners announce affiliation

BY HELEN ADAMS

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A little girl nicknamed "Brave Maeve" for her courage while she was being treated for a burn injury helped MUSC and Shriners Hospitals for Children launch a new affiliation to support the only statewide burn center for kids. The South Carolina Pediatric Burn Center is based at the MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital in Charleston.

MUSC President David Cole said the collaboration will ensure kids like Maeve always have access to the highest-quality treatments and research for burn care. "As a part of this affiliation, Shriners Children's has generously provided MUSC a \$3 million grant to establish the Shriners Children's Endowed Professorship in Pediatric Burn Care. This will have matching funds provided by MUSC. Together that makes an awesome forward leap in terms of the resources we have for our children."

Cole called it a great example of public and private entities coming together for an initiative that's in the best interest of the citizens of the state and region. "Together, our mutual goal is to establish cutting-edge research and the best-in-class pediatric burn care delivery for generations to come. The culmination of years of work, it represents a community that has come together and is working in partnership for the greater good."

The affiliation means an expansion of the existing burn care offered by the MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital, the only pediatric burn referral center in the state. Steven Kahn, M.D., serves as chief of burn surgery at the South Carolina Burn Center at MUSC Health. "When I first started doing burn care in the early- and mid-2000s, we were really focused on patient survival. Now we don't just want patients to survive. We want them to thrive, reintegrate in society and get back to doing everything they used to do," Kahn

said.

Patients such as Maeve Clark are thriving. Maeve's mother, Kaitlin Clark, described the scary day that led to her time in the burn unit. "After pulling unsecured hot tea off of the counter, she suffered second and third degree burns to about 20% of her body, her face, chest, back, left arm and hand. We were in our local community hospital within 15 minutes, and immediately upon arrival, transport was in motion for transfer here to MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital. It's about 50 miles from our home," Clark said.

"Upon arrival to MUSC, we were wrapped up in the confidence and compassion of the care here, from the ED to our admission to the pediatric burn center within their PICU," she said, referring to the pediatric intensive care unit. "I instantly knew we were in the right place for our little girl, the welcome and care that greeted us, letting us know that this is what they do."

Leslie Stewart, M.D., a member of the Board of Trustees for Shriners Children's, said MUSC is a good fit for an organization with a history of helping kids. "We started our first burn center, and we kind of argued about when it was, 1962, 1964, but we started taking care of burns back then. Since then, Shriners Hospitals for Children have treated thousands of burn patients from all over the world. More importantly, we have trained hundreds of surgeons in pediatric burn care, or many consider one of our hospitals one of the best pediatric burn hospitals in the world, if not the best. We currently have four burn centers, and now we'll be adding MUSC to our list with our endowed professorship."

Jerry Gantt, chairman of the Shriners Children's Board of Trustees, said the grant will help children beyond South Carolina. "We're here today to be able to make the world a better place through hope and healing that will come together



Photos by Sarah Pack

Maeve Clark, in her mother Kaitlin's arms, watches as a sign for the South Carolina Pediatric Burn Center is unveiled.



Shriner Dr. Leslie Stewart, at the podium, says his organization has treated thousands of burn patients from all over the world.

not only by MUSC but with the partnership and relationship that Shriners can bring to that organization to be able to make a shining light for kids in not only South Carolina but surrounding states."

That shining light can have a big impact. Getting the best care for a burn injury calls for more than medicine. Maeve's mom said she was grateful to have a team that understood everything from how burn wounds progress, how children respond to the trauma, how to meet kids' developmental needs to

how the injury affects the family. "We're grateful to be here today at this special event that will only make the exceptional care we already receive here at MUSC even more," she said at the news conference announcing the affiliation, Maeve in her arms.

"While my husband and I will never forget the accident that happened to our daughter, we are glad to say that she almost certainly will because of the quality of care Maeve received here. She won't have to worry about her injury impacting her future."

MUSC psychiatrist studying psychedelics calls them potential catalysts for change

By HELEN ADAAMS

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Jennifer Jones, M.D., knows MDMA. “There is a local trial that I’ve worked on,” said the psychiatrist and assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at MUSC. The Phase 3 trial, the final step in the preapproval process, tested MDMA – a synthetic psychedelic also known as ecstasy and molly – as a treatment for people with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Yes, that means MDMA may become part of the therapy for certain conditions in the not-too-distant future. “If all goes according to plan, the Food and Drug Administration will be looking at the results in late 2022 or early 2023. So yeah, exciting times with MDMA-based work,” Jones said.

Exciting times for the field of psychedelics as a whole, too, from her perspective. Drugs outlawed decades ago are poised to make a comeback, with research reframing them as potentially beneficial instead of a bane, when used in therapeutic sessions for hard-to-treat mental health problems.

“There’s a couple of reasons for the renewed interest. One, culturally, people are more open, I think, to alternative treatments. And two, over the last 15 years, mental health has really undergone a renaissance in the way that we talk about it with one another. It’s not destigmatized entirely, but it’s much less stigmatized than it was.”

Jones said psychedelics were associated with the counterculture movement in the past, one of the key factors that led to laws against them. And concerns about psychedelics linger to this day. For example, the National Institute on Drug Abuse says MDMA bought on the street may contain other drugs the buyer doesn’t know about, including meth, heroin and cocaine. The agency also says psychedelics can have negative side effects such as a raised heart rate, nausea, panic, paranoia

and psychosis.

Jones is well aware of all of that. “In uncontrolled settings, there can be risk associated with the use of these substances. In a perfect world, individuals would only be using these psychedelics in a highly supportive context. But that’s not always the case. And there is potential for psychiatric harm, in theory, when it’s used in not supportive settings or by people with certain medical or psychiatric conditions,” she said.

“It’s really important to note that these can be thought of as catalysts for change, hopefully in a positive way. That change often comes through the therapy incorporated with these treatments and making sure that it’s safe.”

Jones said MDMA and psilocybin, the active compound found in so-called magic mushrooms, are the psychedelics getting the most attention from researchers, including some at MUSC. “We are still finalizing the details on psilocybin and MDMA trials. I think that that is something that we can safely say is in the works and will hopefully be coming in 2023.”

Psychedelics are believed to affect the brain’s serotonin receptors. Serotonin plays an important role in regulating mood, memory and perception. Jones said psychedelics may help people see things in a new way when combined with therapy.

“There are the effects of the compound, but really, it’s more about what the compounds are catalyzing for someone. They’re taking inventory of different areas of their life, where maybe things aren’t optimal. One of the reasons that I think that we see such wide effects for psychedelics on so many different conditions is that it’s not speaking probably as much to the underlying neurobiology as it is to helping people in the context of therapy to figure out what it is in their life that they need to move forward in. How do they need to change?”

Jones got interested in psychedelics’



Psilocybin, the active compound in magic mushrooms, and MDMA are the psychedelics getting the most attention from researchers.

“It’s really important to note that these can be thought of as catalysts for change, hopefully in a positive way. That change often comes through the therapy incorporated with these treatments and making sure that it’s safe.”

Jennifer Jones, M.D.

potential several years ago. “I did my residency training at MUSC in psychiatry and internal medicine. And then I did a postdoc fellowship on ‘the road less traveled in research.’ I was looking for new therapeutics for PTSD and substance use disorders. And I was reading through the older literature from the 50s and 60s, with ketamine and psychedelics, and even back then, the data was very exciting.”

Psychedelics have been around for

thousands of years, according to the American Psychiatric Association. Indigenous people have used them for healing and religious purposes. In the United States, the federal government funded more than 100 clinical trials testing psychedelics as a treatment for a range of mental health problems between the 1950s and 1970s until they were outlawed.

More recent research cited by the American Psychiatric Association found MDMA “had a large effect size” for people with PTSD, and psilocybin had “sustained and strong effects” in reducing depression in clinical trials.

But in a June 2022 document, the association also noted that research on psychedelics is still in a relatively early stage. Jones’ work is no exception. The data is still being analyzed in the MDMA trial she mentioned. But the psychiatrist is encouraged to see psychedelic-assisted therapies, with their potential to help ease several hard-to-treat mental health problems, getting a serious shake.

If they do become approved treatments, they will join ketamine, which is already

MEET EMILY

**Emily Aubin****Department; Years at MUSC**

MUHA Supply Chain Management; 5 years

How are you changing what's possible at MUSC

By finding ways to improve our departmental culture in Supply Chain. For a long time, we've been considered "underdogs." We have so many great people, services and ideas within our team, and not everyone gets to see or hear about them. I'm continually working to establish trust, reliability and an overall sense of teamwork between clinicians and us to ensure patient needs are met correctly.

Pets *A quirky lab mix named Willow. She's 1-1/2 years old and a rescue puppy.*

Favorite holiday tradition

Christmas trivia with my family. I can't help but smile thinking of all the fun times we have had playing, even if it gets a little competitive.

Your idea of a dream vacation *Traveling around Europe and seeing all the various cultures*

Words of advice

"It takes nothing to be kind to others, so treat everyone how you would want to be treated if you were in their shoes."

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Time: 12:00pm

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*It will change your holiday
experience this year!*



Changing What's Possible

CATALYSTS *Continued from Page Four*

in use in psychotherapy at MUSC Health's Centerspace Clinic. What's the difference between the substances? According to a report in Psychology Today, "ketamine works by relaxing the brain's inhibitory architecture," whereas "psychedelics work by overriding it."

Jones put it this way: "I usually frame this idea as while ketamine works mostly on a different type of neurotransmitter than MDMA and psilocybin, all of these compounds can have psychedelic effects, depending on the dose that is taken."

She said she's excited to see where research on psychedelics goes next. "These therapies have been studied in many conditions, including depression, PTSD, obsessive compulsive disorder, substance use disorders and anorexia as well as for wellness optimization. Seeing psychedelics in the context of helping people, which is what I love to do — help people figure out what part of their life they'd like to seek progress in and helping them to figure out how to get there — that's every clinician's dream."

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All submissions must be received by **Wednesday, December 1, 2022 at 11:59pm**



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Medical University of South Carolina

Husband, wife face respective cancer diagnoses with thanksgiving, humor

By LESLIE CANTU
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Kerry Hardy shouldn't be here. He shouldn't be going to work teaching day cares and church groups how to do CPR; shouldn't be watching his youngest, his 11-year-old son, grow up; shouldn't be endlessly teasing his wife.

Seven years after being given two years to live, Kerry Hardy shouldn't be here.

But he is.
Thanks to clinical trials that he enrolled in at MUSC Hollings Cancer Center under the care of oncologist John Wrangle, M.D., Kerry is continuing to live his life, celebrating milestones with all four of his sons and dealing with the ups and downs of lung cancer along the way.

"We never thought we'd see seven

years. Ever," said Kerry's wife, Beth.

During these last seven years, not only have they continued to pursue new and different cutting-edge therapies, but they also dealt with Beth's breast cancer diagnosis in 2020.

The weight of it all could be overwhelming at times. The Hardys leaned on faith, family and friends.

LIFE WITH CANCER

"You absolutely cannot do it on your own," Beth said. "When people say, 'Let me know what I can do' – they truly don't come to you and say that without meaning it. And so, call them up and say, 'I need you to come get my children because I need an hour to sit in the bathtub and cry.' And you need to do that – because it's OK. It's OK to pull into the Food Lion parking



Photo by Clif Rhodes

Beth and Kerry Hardy's roles were reversed when he, a lung cancer survivor, became her caregiver when she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

lot sometimes and sit there and cry by yourself. You need that, and it's OK to do that."

Kerry's stage 4 lung cancer diagnosis in 2015 was a shock. He'd never smoked.

He appeared to be healthy, except that he kept landing in the hospital with pneumonia. That shouldn't have been

See **HUMOR** on page 10

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~ David P. Kent



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Children help quest for answers about long COVID

By HELEN ADAMS

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Although she's never had COVID, 3-year-old Scarlett Flack is part of a national effort to help scientists understand its long term effects. But that's not what the little girl focused on as she lounged on an exam bed in the MUSC Children's Health R. Keith Summey Medical Pavilion in North Charleston.

"Stinky feet," she said happily, wiggling her rainbow-colored boots at Ron Teufel, M.D.

"Are these stinky toes?" Teufel asked with a smile as he prepared to do an electrocardiogram, or EKG, to measure the electrical activity of Scarlett's heart. It was one of several measurements his team took for a study called the RECOVER Initiative. RECOVER stands for Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery. It's funded by the National Institutes of Health.

"Most people think of COVID as a

So what is long COVID?

Common symptoms include:

- ☐ Coughing.
- ☐ Feeling short of breath.
- ☐ Losing sense of smell.
- ☐ A change in ability to taste.
- ☐ Fever.
- ☐ Body aches, headaches, chest pain or stomach pain.
- ☐ Brain fog.
- ☐ Trouble sleeping and/or fatigue.
- ☐ Mood changes.

very acute illness, but we've really learned that symptoms often linger beyond four weeks, which is the criterion for long COVID in this study" Teufel said. He saw plenty of children suffering from COVID as he served as the director of Pediatric Hospital Medicine at the MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital through the pandemic. He's



Photo by Sarah Pack

Scarlett Flack, 3, laughs during an appointment with Dr. Ron Teufel. Scarlett is participating in a study looking at the effects of long COVID.

also discussed the illness with students, residents and fellows as a professor of pediatrics at MUSC.

Now, Teufel brings that experience and

knowledge to the study of long COVID in children. The research involves approximately 35 sites across the country,

See **STUDY** on page 11



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-Nancy L.



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Photo by Sarah Pack

Dr. Chip Norris, second from right, receives the Values in Action Impact Award presented by Kathy Cole, from left, Dr. Stephen Duncan and President David Cole.

VALUES *Continued from Page Eight*

perseverance, compassion, positive, dependable and respectful are some of the words shared by colleagues to describe Salzer, wrote Tricia Adrales Bentz, Clinical Trials Office administrative director.

“Your dedication, commitment and collaboration with others have shown that it takes people like you to build a team that is so impactful. You are our ‘shining star’ that we really want to emulate, and we’re so thankful and proud that you’re on our team, and we want to recognize that. There are so many moments where you’ve been our unsung hero, and we want to sing your praises today,” Bentz said.

RESPECT

Donnie Singleton and Keith Smalls are both client advocates for MUSC’s Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program, a hospital-based program that aims to reduce the odds of revictimization and improve physical and social mental health outcomes after a young person is shot. The program is part of MUSC Health’s adult and pediatric Level 1 trauma centers.

Ashley Hink, M.D., trauma surgeon and medical director of MUSC’s Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program, recruited both Singleton and

Smalls when the program launched in the summer of 2021 and wrote nomination letters for both for the VIA Awards.

“Donnie embodies Respect. He exemplifies what it means to show respect to our patients, colleagues and community members through his work as a client advocate. He was our first member of this very new program and was doing this work in multiple ways in the Charleston and North Charleston communities before stepping into this role. I recruited Donnie to join our effort, as he has a passion and dedication for violence intervention, and provided a formalized opportunity to do this work serving our community. He stepped into the role with patience and ease and has, from day one, prioritized supporting our patients. He goes above and beyond for our patients in providing them support and navigating and accessing resources to meet their needs and risks. He sees value in all individuals, often speaks about how many of the at-risk teens he serves haven’t felt valued or respected in their lives.”

Turning to Smalls, Hink continued to sing her team’s praises. “Keith’s passion and commitment to the work of violence intervention and prevention is impressive. His dedication to supporting the patients we serve as our trauma center is truly inspiring and is noticed by

all who meet him. Keith goes above and beyond for the patients who come into our trauma center, showing compassion and education to them the moment they arrive and beyond discharge from the hospital. He commits to coming in early to visit his patients, responding to trauma alerts and pages at all hours of the night and doesn’t think twice when it comes to participating in after-hour work events from providing mentorship to patients, team meetings, legislative meeting and community events.

Tatiana Davidson, Ph.D., was the third employee to receive the Respect award.

Davidson was recognized for her numerous digital health initiatives to address behavioral health needs of traumatic injury patients and the health needs of firefighters.

As an associate professor in the College of Nursing, Davidson is co-director of the MUSC Trauma Resilience and Recovery Program, an innovative technology-enhanced clinical service launched in 2015 as a model program at MUSC and adopted by 11 other trauma centers in the Carolinas under her leadership as principal investigator of two Duke Endowment grants. She’s also director of the MUSC Center for Firefighter Behavioral Health.

Colleague and mentor Kenneth Ruggiero, Ph.D., professor and SmartState chairman for the Technology Applications Center for Healthful Lifestyles in the College of Nursing, wrote Davidson’s nomination letter, describing the commitment, collaboration and resourcefulness of his colleague. “Where Dr. Davidson has excelled in a unique way is in her successful efforts to promote adoption and adaptation of digital health resources in a wide range of diverse settings and with diverse populations. Without her dedication and commitment to meeting these unique needs of diverse settings and populations, the reach and impact of the digital health resources we have launched over the past decade would have been far less significant,” said Ruggiero.

IMPACT

For the President’s VIA Impact Award, the Coles selected Russell “Chip” Norris, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Regenerative Medicine and Cell

Biology.

Stephen Duncan, D.Phil., professor and chairman of the Department of Regenerative Medicine and Cell Biology, wrote the nomination and spoke at the awards celebration about Norris’ many attributes as an outstanding research scientist and collaborator.

“Chip excels at team science, is extremely collaborative and can compete at the very highest level. Many of his studies have been so impactful in the community,” said Duncan.

Norris’ primary research focus is studying the mechanisms underlying cardiac valve disease and more recently, Hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (hEDS). Norris established multiple international collaborations between basic scientists and physician scientists that led to the identification of a series of genes whose expression contributed to cardiac valve formation as well as new biomarkers for rheumatoid disease, working with scientists in Europe, Africa, Brazil and the United States, including MUSC.

For his work with hEDS, a connective tissue disorder that can effect every organ system in the human body, Norris was inspired to study details and the impact of this disease through Cortney Gensemer, Ph.D., a then-doctoral student diagnosed with EDS who works in his lab. He wanted to understand this chronic disease and its effects on men and women and their quality of life. In a 2018 study, the Norris lab was the first to identify a gene mutation association with hEDS and has since been recognized as leaders in EDS research.

“It’s so rare to see somebody that can take truly fundamental studies that you make in the laboratory and bring in all these people to see its impact in a positive way with patients. Chip really has done that with his work,” Duncan said.

Following the presentation of the awards, Cole thanked all award winners, nominators and other supporters.

“All of you can see the incredible dedication and talent here that represents MUSC. I thank each one of this year’s award winners for making a significant impact and for who they are, how they carry themselves and what they do.”

Cultivating mental well-being through the holidays

During the holiday season, many look forward to festivities with friends and family. But for others, this time of year can be a great source of stress, anxiety and depression.

There are a variety of factors that can bring on holiday anxiety and depression. Some people experience increased financial burden due to travel, gift or hosting costs. Others may feel overwhelmed as the holiday season often includes a packed calendar of parties, performances and traveling that can be difficult to balance with everyday responsibilities and self-care as well as loneliness for those who are missing loved ones.

The increased activity associated with the holiday season can certainly be a great source of joy; however, it is important to plan and strategize ways that you can cope with challenges and reduce levels of anxiety and stress in the months ahead.

MUSC's employee well-being program, Imagine U, contains a wide variety of resources and challenges designed to promote psychosocial well-being. The following are several strategies and

associated Imagine U challenges that you can place in your mental and emotional well-being toolbox as you move through the busy and often stressful weeks ahead.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

In addition to professional mental health care, mindfulness can be an extremely valuable mental wellness tool. Certain practices can be particularly helpful if you are traveling or running on an unusual schedule, particularly app- and mobile-based platforms that you can utilize on the go during the busy holiday season.

- Participate in the "Try a Daily Wellness App" Imagine U challenge and earn points for engaging with an app that promotes mindfulness and provides brief guided meditations such as HeadSpace or the Calm App.

- Download and try the free "Healthy Minds App," a science-based meditation app that provides both traditional and moving meditation practices.

AVOID USING ALCOHOL AND FOOD FOR COMFORT

- While using food and alcohol for

comfort or escape can seem appealing, particularly during the holiday season where social gatherings are frequent and sometimes stressful, substance use or emotional eating can ultimately worsen your issues. Studies have indicated that there is a 20% overlap between people with anxiety or mood disorders and substance use disorders, and substances can exacerbate symptoms. When you feel you need a relaxation aid, you can instead turn to a mindfulness tactic or other healthy coping mechanism instead.

- Participate in the "Avoid Stress Eating" and the "Alcohol Risk Reduction" Imagine U challenges to identify health-promoting ways to manage stress and avoid stress related consumption.

GET MOVING OUTDOORS

Many individuals struggle with depression during the winter months because of a lack of exposure to bright lights as well as decreased physical activity due to colder temps, less daylight and busy calendars. Numerous studies have pointed to the mental health benefits of spending time

MUSC Health & Well-Being

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Health Promotion



in nature, including stress relief, better concentration and improved energy, in addition to the highly correlational relationship between physical activity and mental health. There is no doubt that physical activity, particularly in nature, can be highly beneficial for both physical and mental well-being as well.

- Participate in the "Volunteer at the Urban Farm," the "Bike to Work" or the "Involve the Whole Family in Moving More" challenges to boost your vitamin D and your mood this holiday season.

For more information on MUSC's employee well-being program, Imagine U, and to access the entire catalog of challenges on your desktop or mobile device, visit www.musc.edu/iu.

HUMOR *Continued from Page Six*

happening for someone in his early 50s so his doctor investigated further. That's when he was diagnosed.

About 10% to 15% of people diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer have never smoked. Never smokers might develop lung cancer because of exposure to secondhand smoke, radon or other environmental factors, or, like Kerry, they might have a genetic mutation that predisposes them to lung cancer.

Kerry, who lives in Augusta, Georgia, immediately began searching for someplace that could offer hope. As an NCI-designated cancer center, Hollings could offer access to clinical trials and the latest therapies that aren't yet widely available. Kerry advises anyone else facing a diagnosis to similarly seek out care, even if it means traveling past the local hospital or doctor's office.

"I love a local oncologist," he said. "They're wonderful people, but they don't have all the tools in their toolbox that a Dr. Wrangle will have. There's just a lot of things out here that people have to get out and see what's available. And I'm living proof of that. I would not be here if we would have stayed at home."

At Hollings, Kerry was the second patient in a clinical trial to take a drug combination developed at Hollings by Wrangle and Mark Rubenstein, Ph.D., a former colleague at Hollings with whom Wrangle still collaborates. The combination, a PD-1 checkpoint inhibitor combined with a new and powerful immune stimulation drug, ALT-803, shrank Kerry's tumor by 30% and kept him stable for a few years. When that treatment stopped working, as the researchers expected it eventually would, Wrangle was prepared with another option, the Hardys explained. For the past two years, Kerry has been in a clinical trial for a drug specifically

"Beth has been my rock. And she's a bulldog. And when I'm really sick is when she's been the best, because there have been times I've been lying in bed and can hardly open my eyes, and she's out there getting things done."

Kerry Hardy

developed with his genetic mutation in mind – something that feels almost miraculous, given how rare the mutation is.

Through all of this, Beth was Kerry's caregiver and advocate. She jokes that she walked into every appointment with a four-inch three-ring binder, writing

down everything that was said and double-checking the facts on her own.

"Beth has been my rock. And she's a bulldog," Kerry said. "And when I'm really sick is when she's been the best, because there have been times I've been lying in bed and can hardly open my eyes, and she's out there getting things done."

Beth said she's motivated to ensure that Kerry gets the best possible treatment – always.

"He often says, 'These people are the ones who are sticking me with needles. So just remember that and try to be nice,'" she joked. "I am, but I ask the questions because at the end of the day, he's my person. I just want the best."

Turning the tables

Their roles were flipped, though, when Beth learned that she had breast cancer.

Beth admits that she skipped screening mammograms for the first few years of Kerry's illness.

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STUDY *Continued from Page Seven*

including MUSC Children's Health. The goal is to represent a range of experiences with the virus, so it includes both people who have had COVID and kids, like Scarlett, who haven't, for comparison.

Teufel said his team is still looking for more kids and their caregivers to participate in the study. You can apply to join by emailing Tyler Kasmarcak (kasmarca@musc.edu) or Teufel (teufelr@musc.edu). "We need a diverse group of participants in this study to really understand how COVID-19 affects the general population of children."

The goal is to involve up to 20,000 children and their caregivers across the country. They'll answer surveys, use safe at-home kits to get small amounts of blood and spit and may also be asked to come in for checkups or other tests. "Many of the tests are optional for younger children, and if a patient cannot complete a test, it's all right; we are just trying to get as much information as possible," Teufel said.

Teufel said without such research, it's hard to know if kids have long COVID. "In the hospital, we treat COVID all the time, but we don't necessarily know what happens once patients go home."

He wanted parents to know that while the study does not include treatment for long COVID, it can give

them important information about their children's health. "If you end up demonstrating that you have long COVID, we do a fair amount of testing that I think can help you understand how much it's affecting your child. We do pulmonary function tests. We do neurocognitive testing to see if it's affecting both your lungs and the way that you concentrate."

The study also collects about 2 milliliters of saliva, which in older kids takes about two to five minutes to complete. Scarlett looked skeptical as Teufel showed her the container she'd use for that. "You know how you spit out toothpaste? We'll just collect as much as we can in this little vial," Teufel told her.

"The saliva collection is primarily to have genetic information," Teufel said in a separate interview. "That way, we can test in the future, accessing the genetic information to see if it's related to long-term effects of COVID. But we want parents to know that the RECOVER biorepository has gone to an impressive length to ensure that your genetic information is kept separate from your name and other personal health information. It's kept very secure and is not shared in any way outside of this study."

The research is part of a larger effort by MUSC Health and MUSC Children's Health that began early in the pandemic to answer some of the pressing questions about COVID and find treatments. That

includes research on vaccines for children and adults, a first in nation treatment for the COVID complication MIS-C, convalescent plasma, COVID's effects on cancer patients and whether hospitals were following national guidelines for treating children with COVID.

Krista Flack, Scarlett's mother, said it's important to her family to be part of that research to study a virus that's had such a powerful impact on people's lives. "I work in health care. I work with kids with disabilities. I'm an occupational therapist, and my husband works in emergency services. So all through the pandemic, we've been working. We haven't been able to stop our jobs."

Teufel hasn't stopped working either. He called the research rewarding. "I think it is it's exciting to be a part of a study like this to try to answer these questions. I also think that that's the type of patient that we're looking for - patients who are curious and want to contribute to understanding this a little better. Because we don't have these answers, and it would be nice to know because COVID - it's not totally going away."

Scarlett doesn't know about all of that. But she does have an answer to another question important in a 3-year-old's life.

"What's your favorite color?" Teufel asked her.

"I love the whole rainbow," she said.

"I love it," the doctor said with a huge smile.



Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

ROLE MODEL

ACTIONS	GUIDE	POSITIVE
ADULT	INFLUENCE	QUALITIES
ASPIRE	INSPIRE	REACH
ATTITUDE	INSTRUCT	STUDENT
BEHAVIOR	LEADER	TEACHER
CHILDREN	MENTOR	TRAITS
GOAL	MODEL	WORKFORCE
GUIDANCE	OVERCOME	

U	M	I	C	Q	E	M	G	F	A	S	P	I	R	E	S	S	T	W	T
D	U	N	N	B	T	V	H	B	E	K	V	K	P	E	G	L	E	K	T
S	E	C	R	O	F	K	R	O	W	N	D	C	M	E	E	L	O	R	R
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D	U	E	T	C	U	O	B	E	H	U	D	I	P	C	S	E	N	A	L
A	T	H	D	E	N	I	M	R	I	U	E	B	O	V	N	F	H	I	D
C	S	F	V	U	V	E	D	D	E	S	Q	L	V	H	O	C	C	N	V
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T	E	A	C	H	E	R	L	T	S	N	E	P	A	C	A	L	K	Q	D
I	P	T	M	H	U	K	U	V	A	O	I	T	O	H	R	U	M	L	A
C	S	S	W	V	G	R	B	D	D	G	P	M	A	Q	R	O	U	O	M

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HUMOR *Continued from Page Ten*

“Because things were so tenuous with Kerry’s care, and things were kind of scary — he was very, very sick for the first two or three years of the diagnosis, and chemo was rough. I sort of went into survival mode — head in the sand,” she said. “If there was anything wrong, I didn’t want to know because then I didn’t have to deal with it.”

That wasn’t necessarily the best approach. When her doctor insisted she get a screening mammogram, Beth learned that she had breast cancer. “Now I’m a huge proponent of mammograms because a mammogram saved my life. It caught it early enough,” she said.

Although the cancer was in an early stage, Beth opted to go directly to a double mastectomy. At that point, their youngest son was 8 years old, and all he had known was having a father who was in and out of treatments for cancer. He was terrified of seeing his mom sick as well. Beth decided that rather than deal with chemotherapy and radiation and

the associated side effects, she would have the surgery.

She advises other caregivers to make time to care for themselves as well.

“I just want to pour all my energy into taking care of Kerry,” she said. “But if I don’t take care of myself, I can’t take care of (him), and I can’t take care of the other people who are depending on me.

“I’ve got to be the best I can be for myself and take care of myself. Doing the well visits, the mammograms, the colonoscopy — the things that really aren’t the fun things, but they are the things that we have to do just to keep ourselves healthy.”

Beth said that caregivers must make time to seek out support, including logistical, emotional and spiritual support.

“Feeding your soul and your emotional side is hugely important,” she said.

Through it all, the Hardys have continued to laugh.

“Laughter is what gets you through it,” Beth said. “So, we’ve learned not to take ourselves very seriously at all. It’s faith, family, laughter and hope.”



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Menu Christmas Day Buffet

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Spiral Ham	Steamed Broccoli
Rice Pilaf	Assorted Dessert & Salad Bar
Mashed Potatoes	Dinner Rolls
Baked Macaroni and Cheese	
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