

## 2022 hurricane season: Time to prepare is now

By CINDY ABOLE

[aboleca@musc.edu](mailto:aboleca@musc.edu)

September introduced the Atlantic's first named tropical storm of 2022, and with the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona, which devastated Puerto Rico and Turks and Caicos Islands with flooding and damaging winds, late summer is often a vivid reminder of the damage these storms can cause and the importance of preparation for communities on the South Carolina coast.

"And the time to prepare is now," said Bryan Wood, MUSC emergency manager, Department of Public Safety.

Wood and members of MUSC's Office of Student Engagement participated in an annual hurricane seminar for students on Aug. 24. The team reviewed preparation basics, including establishing a hurricane plan, preparing a hurricane kit, explaining the use of Code Red Alerts and providing information related to Lowcountry storm shelters and managing pets during a storm. At the event, the first 25 students received a ReadyAmerica Emergency Kit, which included enough food bars and water pouches to last three days, gloves, light sticks, a survival blanket, a weather radio, a flashlight and an emergency plan. The event was sponsored by the Center for Global Health, Office of Student Engagement and Department of Public Safety.

Wood emphasized that all individuals and families should make hurricane preparations every year.

In 2019, Hurricane Dorian brought high winds and rain to the Lowcountry and Carolina coast, leaving 270,000 households without power.

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*Photo by Sarah Pack*

From left, Charles Schulze, MUSC Board of Trustees vice chairman; MUSC President David Cole; MUSC Health CEO Patrick Cawley; South Streets' Chris Randolph; Don Johnson, MUSC Board of Trustees member; Kiawah Mayor John Labriola and Seabrook Mayor John Gregg.

## 'We just needed it so badly': Groundbreaking for Sea Islands Medical Pavilion

By HELEN ADAMS

[adamshel@musc.edu](mailto:adamshel@musc.edu)

DeeDee and Chris Gibson have spent time on Kiawah Island, about 25 miles south of Charleston, for about four decades. "DeeDee and I built a house here, and one request she had was that we had a hospital close by for emergency needs," he said.

But there wasn't one. Now, thanks to the generosity of the Gibsons and other donors, that's about to change. The mayors of Kiawah and Seabrook islands joined leaders from MUSC on Sept. 8 to break ground

for the MUSC Health Sea Islands Medical Pavilion.

DeeDee Gibson, who with her husband contributed \$2 million to the project, was on hand to see it. "I'm just glad to be a part of it. We just needed it so badly."

The pavilion, on Seabrook Island Road near the Bohicket Marina, will serve Kiawah, Johns and Seabrook islands and the surrounding area. Patrick Cawley, M.D., CEO of the MUSC Health system, said the goal is to bring health care to the people who need it. "We would establish this by providing a 24/7 emergency room, more primary care, more specialty

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care and all of this would be backed up by a world-class academic health system.”

Here’s a little more detail about the features Cawley mentioned. The free-standing Emergency Department will have a helipad for people who need to be flown to MUSC Health’s downtown Charleston hospital, four exam rooms, two trauma rooms and fast-track triage, along with X-ray, CT scan and lab services.

Other services in the medical pavilion will include:

- ❑ Infusion.
- ❑ Cancer screening.
- ❑ Cardiology.
- ❑ Ultrasound.
- ❑ Ear, nose and throat.
- ❑ Orthopedics.
- ❑ Physical therapy.

David Cole, M.D., president of the Medical University of South Carolina, said the pavilion symbolizes the future health of the community and thanked everyone who helped make it possible.

“Your dedication to the health and wellness of this community will have an impact for generations to come. This marks a major milestone for this community and the many who will come after you and also the many who will serve here on a daily basis, certainly a beginning of a journey.”

That journey is possible due in part to the real estate investment firm South Street Partners. It donated the land for the medical pavilion and has strong ties to the area, including a luxury senior living site under development near the

medical pavilion.

But the journey to this point hasn’t always been easy. Charles Schulze, chairman of the MUSC Board of Trustees, noted the time and effort that have gone into it.

“As an Air Force veteran of the Vietnam war, I know the importance and necessity of teamwork. When you have a complex mission ahead of you, in those situations, your unity as a team is your biggest strength. And it didn’t matter where you live, where you were from or what your background was in our military. You learned that persistence, perseverance, collaboration and expertise are critical to the success of a mission,” he said.

“And it’s been no different in this case. When the board began to discuss the feasibility of this project, we knew it wasn’t going to happen without teamwork and vision. Not only from everybody at MUSC, but also from the community here in the Sea Islands.”

Leaders of those islands were happy to help realize that vision. They thanked MUSC Health for bringing badly needed care to the area.

“We look forward to having better availability of care, ranging from emergency room treatment to advanced diagnostics for the ailments, bumps, pains, scrapes, stings and strains that come with having an active and diverse population,” said Mayor John Gregg of Seabrook Island.

Kiawah Mayor John Labriola said he also looked forward to seeing the healing, restful green space and garden adjacent to the new facility that his town donated \$1 million for.



*Photo by Sarah Pack*

**MUSC Health CEO Dr. Patrick Cawley talks with Kiawah Island Mayor John Labriola and Kiawah Island administrator Stephanie Tillerson after the groundbreaking.**

MUSC is still raising money to build the medical pavilion. Of the estimated \$30 million needed, MUSC is committed to raising \$17 million in private support. So far, it has more than \$9.5 million in confirmed gifts, with many coming from local residents such as the Gibsons. They said it’s rewarding to be able to help.

“We’re really excited to be a part and contribute to MUSC and really look forward to having the medical needs met for everybody on Kiawah, Seabrook and Johns islands,” Chris Gibson said.



**Editorial Office**  
MUSC Office of Public Affairs  
& Media Relations, 135 Cannon  
Street, Suite 403C, Charleston, S.C.,  
29425

843-792-4107  
Fax: 843-792-6723

**Editor:** Cindy Abole  
[catalyst@musc.edu](mailto:catalyst@musc.edu)

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**2022 MUSC & MUHA Virtual Benefits Fair**  
**Live Webinar Sessions**  
September 26<sup>th</sup>- 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The University Human Resources Department will be hosting a Virtual Benefits Fair the week of September 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

The fair will include free live webinars with several vendors including AFLAC, AIG, Empower Retirement, MetLife, ASI Flex, TIAA and The Standard. Webinars will be held from 9am to 4pm EST.

Employees are encouraged to attend webinar sessions during the week of the fair to learn about plan changes effective January 1, 2023, retirement preparation, and vendor product offerings.

Direct any questions regarding the MUSC Virtual Benefits Fair to [benefits@musc.edu](mailto:benefits@musc.edu).







# Managing mental health, well-being of students a priority

By CINDY ABOLE

[aboleca@musc.edu](mailto:aboleca@musc.edu)

Managing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on MUSC's students has been compared with riding the twists and turns of a mental health roller coaster that can bring about elevated feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and fear in addition to feelings of depression, unworthiness and grief. In response, students, faculty and staff have worked together to provide a more supportive academic experience.

In 2020, with the campus closed to students and all classes immediately shifted to online learning, the troubles were just beginning. Not only did students struggle with uncertainty and changing public health guidelines connected with the coronavirus, many first- and second-year students voiced that they were struggling with home confinement, personal isolation and loss of interpersonal connectivity and interaction with their professors, mentors and peers — cutting short students' school expectations and experiences.

Throughout this time, one valuable resource that has been readily available for students is MUSC's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), an on-campus program that provides students with a variety of quality, confidential and evidence-based mental health services and support.

Gigi Smith, Ph.D., R.N., associate provost for Education Innovation and Student Life, supports CAPS' mission to assist all MUSC students, especially during the pandemic period.

"The pandemic came unexpectedly for all of us," said Smith. "We made a commitment to students when they were admitted to MUSC that we will provide the services and resources that they need to become the individuals they want to be. It's what we do."

## CAPS SERVICES

For more than two decades, the CAPS team has provided MUSC students with high-quality mental health services that are problem focused, offering a variety of evidence-based treatments. The team consists of 14 mental health care professionals, including a licensed clinical psychologist, professional counselors, doctoral-level psychiatric nurse practitioners, attending psychiatrists, part-time psychiatry residents and support staff to assist students in every step of their health care educational journey. These professionals are prepared to evaluate and treat anxiety, depression, substance use and other mental health concerns and crises. From the pandemic's beginnings, they also managed other issues,



*Photo by Sarah Pack*

**MUSC Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) team includes Dr. Akeya Harrold, from left, Chloe Connick, Dr. Alice Libet, Amy Horner and Dr. Donna Lee Williams.**

*"We made a commitment to students when they were admitted to MUSC that we will provide the services and resources that they need to become the individuals they want to be. It's what we do."*

**Gigi Smith, Ph.D., R.N.**

such as struggles with remote learning, quarantining, home confinement, fear of contracting COVID-19, social isolation and grief.

Students can self-refer or can be referred by a staff or faculty member. Students begin with an initial evaluation with a CAPS team provider and work with the provider to develop a comprehensive treatment plan in the context of a therapeutic alliance. CAPS provides individual mental health services; couples counseling; psychopharmacological management for problems like anxiety, depression, mood and eating disorders and insomnia; substance use treatment; suicide prevention; and other consultations. Students work with counselors of diverse backgrounds. Early in 2021, CAPS expanded their team to include two doctoral-level psychiatric nurse practitioners and now provides extended hours for student appointments.

"Our goal has always been to provide a tailored approach to care for each individual based on specific identified needs. It is not a one-size-fits-all approach," said Alice Libet, Ph.D., licensed clinical psychologist

and director. "Not every student needs mental health care, but it is a helpful resource for many of our students. MUSC's mental health services, like at other colleges and institutions in the country, were especially tested during the pandemic. Our team rose to the occasion and used confidential web-based resources to meet student needs, turning 'on a dime' and working from home, in closets and at kitchen tables to provide students with professional mental health services without interruption. I am exceptionally proud of the work, resiliency and dedication of this team."

According to Libet, the team responded to more than 1,195 unique students, providing 8,692 appointments during the pandemic, from spring of 2020 to today.

## PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH FOR STUDENTS

At MUSC and campuses across the country, student services leaders like Smith and Libet, along with college faculties and staffs, were reviewing mental health policies and practices for students and hosting frank discussions about the growing mental health crisis spurred on by the pandemic. They searched for solutions that would address the students' well-being as much as their learning and academic success. According to Libet, these health care students will someday be a significant part of health and wellness journeys for their own patients. For this reason, it is essential that students learn to prioritize their own physical and mental health.

CAPS licensed professional counselor Amy Horner and her CAPS colleagues also emphasized the value of providing campuswide mental health services and reducing the stigma that may sometimes make students

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# Study led by researchers finds long-term mental health issues following Flint water crisis

By HELEN ADAAMS

adamshel@muscul.edu

A study led by researchers at MUSC five years after the onset of the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, found a continuing “large unmet mental health need.” Dean Kilpatrick, Ph.D., principal investigator of the study, said past-year estimates of post-traumatic stress disorder and depression in Flint were substantially higher than those in Michigan, the U.S. and more than 20 nations included in an international study of PTSD and depression.

The resulting research article on Flint appears in JAMA Network Open, a peer-reviewed, open access journal published by the American Medical Association. The findings in that article are stark. One in five Flint residents surveyed, age 18 and older, suffered from major depression over the past year. One in four had PTSD. And one in 10 had both.

“If you still have PTSD or depression five years after something happens, it’s pretty much evidence that you either didn’t get the right treatment or you still need more treatment,” said Kilpatrick, a distinguished university professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

Or any treatment, period. Fewer than 35% of the people surveyed said they’d been offered mental health services related to the water crisis.

The team studying the long-term effects of that crisis included scientists from the departments of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Microbiology and Immunology and Public Health Sciences at MUSC along with researchers from Boston University and Dartmouth University.

They surveyed 1,970 people in Flint about the water crisis that began in 2014 when the city switched its water supply from Lake Huron and the Detroit River to the Flint River and failed to add anti-corrosives to the water. This caused lead and iron from old pipes to get into the

water supply.

People immediately started complaining that the water smelled, tasted and looked bad, but authorities told the public the water was safe to drink for more than a year. It wasn’t.

Doctors found high levels of lead in children, which can damage the central and peripheral nervous system, cause learning disabilities, affect growth, impair hearing and affect both the formation of blood cells and how they work, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The researchers found the contaminated water took a psychological toll as well. People worried about the effects on their health and the health of family and friends. And they weren’t sure how much lead they might have been exposed to.

“Just the very notion that ‘I may have been exposed and that I don’t know what the health effects are, but they may be bad and long-term’ – that’s enough to freak people out and create mental as well as physical stress,” Kilpatrick said.

Almost everyone surveyed had taken steps to reduce their risks from contaminated water – almost 80% avoided drinking it – but most still worried about health effects, including long-term implications.

Another key stress factor: People lost faith in their leaders. “Government officials were reluctant to recognize the fact that they had a widespread problem. And so they reassured people the water was safe, which basically turns out to be what many government officials tend to do. They often have difficulty initially admitting to themselves that they’ve got possibly a huge problem on their hands,” Kilpatrick said.

“So they try to deny it as long as they possibly can until confronted by it. And then they finally do announce it. But by that point, since they’ve told people, ‘You’re safe, don’t worry about it,’ for a good, long period of time, people have difficulty believing them.”



Photo by iStock

## Lead pipes being removed in Flint, Michigan.

*“Just the very notion that ‘I may have been exposed and that I don’t know what the health effects are, but they may be bad and long-term’ – that’s enough to freak people out and create mental as well as physical stress.”*

Dean Kilpatrick, Ph.D.

Early surveys by other researchers during and soon after the crisis began found raised levels of PTSD, stress, anxiety and depression symptoms. A pair of small surveys in 2018 and 2019 found mental health issues remained.

But the researchers in the MUSC-led study wanted more data to see just how serious the long-term problems might be. So with funding from the federal Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime to the MUSC-based National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center, they set out to evaluate ongoing psychiatric issues in Flint residents, using standardized diagnostic measures. The NMVRC played a role because the Office for Victims of Crime specifically identified the need for better information about large events, such as the Flint water crisis, that aren’t mass violence but may

result in criminal charges.

They also looked at how previous exposures to stressful events affected people’s reaction to the Flint water crisis. That included a life-threatening illness, serious accident, previous disaster and/or physical or sexual assault. The study found these factors significantly increased the risk for suffering from mental disorders.

“Exposure to traumatic events is cumulative over time. So if you’ve had several of these highly stressful things in the past, that probably sets you up to respond more in the way of either developing PTSD or depression to some new stressor or making these problems worse if you’ve had these problems in the past,” Kilpatrick said.

People in lower income brackets and people who lacked social support were also more likely to struggle, the study found.

The scientists hope their findings will help guide what happens next for people suffering in Flint. “We’re going to set up a basic research program here at MUSC that looks at the effects of cumulative lead exposure by first integrating it with some other research that’s going on. But it looks like cumulative lead exposure affects not only kids, in terms of their cortical development, but it may well affect adults, particularly if lead stored in the bones



## MEET ZACH

**Zachary Driver****Department; Years at MUSC**

MUSC Midlands Division–Internal  
Communications; 1 year

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

*By keeping our care team members informed every day*

**Family and pets** *Husband, Chris; twin brother, Jake; dogs, Rambo and Oliver*

**What is your idea of a dreamjob**

*While I love working at MUSC Health, I would love to work for the Travel Channel as a host – mainly to see the world.*

**A unique talent you have**

*My sidegig is serving as the South Carolina Lottery host on TV.*

**What music is in your player right now**

*As a Nashville native, I'm always into country music.*

**Favorite football team**

*South Carolina Gamecocks*

**Favorite restaurant in Columbia**

*Bourbon*



## The President's Values in Action Award

Honoring five employees each year who help fulfill MUSC's vision statement, Leading Health Innovation for the Lives We Touch, by demonstrating the five MUSC values:

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- **Integrity**



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Visit [horseshoe.musc.edu/everyone/values-in-action](https://horseshoe.musc.edu/everyone/values-in-action) to learn more.



The Waring Historical Library

## Fall Event Calendar

September Student History Club Noon Lecture  
**The Mutter Museum: Historic Specimens and Current Medical Research**  
With Anna Divoky

Sept. 21 | 12 PM EST | Virtual

The Warren A. Sawyer Lecture  
**Treatment of Mental Illness**  
With Dr. Andrew Scull

Oct. 19 | 6 PM EST | Virtual

October Student History Club Noon Lecture  
**Diabetes in the American Century**  
With Dr. Richard McKinley Mizelle, Jr.

Oct. 26 | 12 PM EST | Virtual

November Student History Club Noon Lecture  
**Healing, Power, and Poison in Atlantic Slave Societies**  
With Dr. Chelsea Berry

Nov. 2 | 12 PM EST | Virtual

For more info and registration:



The Office of Student Financial Literacy presents:

## ON THE MENU



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# Pfizer COVID-19 bivalent booster now available at MUSC

BY CINDY ABOLE  
aboleca@musc.edu

The decision was easy for Charleston couple Katherine and Henry Dunbar, who visited MUSC's Rutledge Tower Vaccine Clinic in downtown Charleston. On Sept. 9, the Dunbars took turns receiving the Pfizer-BioNTech Bivalent COVID-19 vaccine for use as a booster aimed at Omicron's dominant subvariants BA.4 and BA.5.

For both it was their third booster but the first Omicron-specific booster, as it was just authorized for distribution by the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to supplement the original COVID-19 vaccines in America's fight against the coronavirus.

Katherine Dunbar got hers first. "My husband is a cancer survivor and has a low immune system, so we're very protective. I want to stay up to date for

both him and me. We're both of the mindset, 'We do what we can to make sure things get done,'" she said.

Rutledge Tower outpatient clinical pharmacist Jignesh "Jay" Patel, Pharm.D., elected to get his booster that same morning. Patel, who is part of the pharmacy team at the Rutledge Tower Vaccine Clinic distributing the new booster to employees and patients, also believes the decision to get the new booster is a "no-brainer" to him.

"I was first in line when the first COVID-19 boosters came out in late 2021," said Patel. "I believe in the science and know the booster works for me. I want to be protected and feel that the more people who are protected, the better off we are as a society."

The bivalent booster can be administered at least two months after completing the primary vaccination series. Patients 12 years and older, who are not moderately or severely



Photo by Cindy Abole

**Henry Dunbar receives the new Pfizer bivalent booster from pharmacist Jessica Roller at the Rutledge Tower Vaccine Clinic.**

immunocompromised, can receive the booster at the Rutledge Tower Vaccine Clinic, by appointment and walk-ins, and at MUSC Health primary care clinics, by appointment only.

Sean Nelson, director of the MUSC Health-Charleston Division Ambulatory Services Primary Care, spoke about the strategy behind the vaccine booster

distribution.

"Our goal was simple — as soon as the vaccine was made available to MUSC Health, our objective was to make sure that our clinics and providers had access to the vaccine to begin administering to patients. Starting in October, our goal

See **BOOSTER** on page 8

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# 'Champion for Hispanic heritage' embraces diversity efforts at MUSC

By HELEN ADAMS

adamshel@musc.edu

When public health scientist Hermes Florez, M.D., Ph.D., decided to move from Miami, where Latinos are the majority, to Charleston, where they make up a much smaller percentage of the population, some friends were surprised.

"A lot of my former mentors said, 'Are you sure that that's the right move for you? And I said, 'Why not? It's a great opportunity.' There are a lot of misconceptions about the deep South. I realized that Charleston is quite diverse and you really can embrace those values."

Florez, born in Venezuela, is proud to be part of that diversity. "I am very honored to be a champion for Hispanic heritage," he said, as the nation prepared

to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

Florez brings that sensibility to his role as chair of the Department of Public Health Sciences at MUSC, where he works to improve the health of people of all backgrounds.

"I fully embrace diversity, equity and inclusion in the Department of Public Health Sciences and the College of Medicine's initiatives. I've had the opportunity to address some of the challenges that the Hispanic community has for access to care with my work at the free medical clinic on Johns Island and for the prevention and management of diseases that are more prevalent in Hispanics such as obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes."

Florez, an endocrinologist, volunteers

See **CHAMPION** on page 10



Dr. Hermes Florez, chair of the Department of Public Health Sciences.



Charleston County Probate Court's FREE Virtual and In Person Estate Administration and Estate Planning Workshops Hosted by Probate Judge Irv Condon

## WHEN:

Monday	September 26	10am	Virtual via Zoom
Thursday	September 29	10:30am	Poe Library, Sullivan's Island
Thursday	September 29	6pm	Main Library, Calhoun St. Meeting Room B
Friday	September 30	10am	Charleston Convention & Business Center, Meeting St.

For September and October times and to register, go to <https://ccprobate.charlestoncounty.org/irvcondonfreeworkshop>.  
OR: Email or call Jamie Robinson at [jrobinson@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:jrobinson@charlestoncounty.org) or 843-958-5036.

Recorded versions are available at <https://ccprobate.charlestoncounty.org/estate-planning.php#importance>.

"These workshops are helpful for families who have lost a loved one and are going through the Probate process," said Judge Condon. "They're also helpful for anyone interested in Probate or estate planning and are very educational for new residents. I am honored to demonstrate our electronic easy filing system for citizens and attorneys, the first and only program in a South Carolina Probate Court. We are accessible 24/7 anywhere in the world, except North Korea (no internet allowed there)."



Judge Irv Condon

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**WATER** *Continued from Page Four*

starts leaching out of the bones and into the rest of the body. It can affect your cortical functioning at that point, possibly leading to early dementia and things like that, as well as other health problems,” Kilpatrick said.

“Through this Flint study, we’ve gotten interested in this whole area of integrating measures of cumulative lead exposure into other studies that look at potentially traumatic events, that look at your exposure to various kinds of things. How do all of those things interact, maybe, to increase the likelihood that you’ll have some mental health disorders, not to mention some of the cognitive functioning disorders or other health problems?”

He said study findings also make it clear that local, state and federal governments need to work together to offer more mental health services in Flint.

But he said the researchers also noticed something positive that speaks to the strength of Flint, a city that’s been through a lot in recent years and has seen people pull together. “It’s important to point out that not everybody got PTSD or depression, and not everybody still has it. So that shows the resilience of a lot of people in Flint who are able, despite all of this adversity, to manage to get the help they need, maybe from other friends, from family, from the community.”

**BOOSTER** *Continued from Page Six*



*Photo by Cindy Abole*

**Katherine Dunbar receives the Pfizer booster from pharmacist Dr. Ashley Tallent at the MUSC Rutledge Tower Vaccine Clinic.**

will be to provide the bivalent vaccine along with the influenza vaccine for our patients as well,” said Nelson.

Plans for distribution of the bivalent booster were also announced and have been expanded to MUSC Health’s Florence and Lancaster divisions.

**Humanitas**  
Vol. 27

**Submit Your Creative Works by  
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# Quarterly I am an MUSC Innovator Awards presented

## Staff Report

The MUSC Office of Innovation is proud to recognize Christy Huggins and Casey O'Neill, Ph.D., as the September 2022 recipients of the I am an MUSC Innovator awards. Sponsored by the Office of Innovation, the I am an MUSC Innovator campaign is designed to raise awareness of the many forms that innovation can take, to inspire others and to recognize individuals or teams that are making impacts, publicly.

Huggins and O'Neill represent the Center for Academic Excellence and Writing Center. Huggins, an administrative coordinator, has been with MUSC since 1989. O'Neill, an assistant professor, has been with MUSC since 2015.

The innovative duo tackled an online pain-point brought about as a result of the campus being shut down in March of 2020, due to the pandemic, and created a remote supplemental instruction system. With about 400 students enrolled in Supplemental Instruction, MUSC's small-group tutoring program, for their courses and about 150 student tutors who are trained and paid to lead these small group learning sessions, the two needed to figure out a way to move their in-person sessions online and fast.

"Prior to March 2020, nearly every tutoring session was held in person, and student tutors would submit their timecards and session reports to us in person," said O'Neill. "Within the span of one week, Christy and I had to transform the entire meeting and payment process into a virtual experience. I searched educational literature to rebuild the tutor training to include best practices for virtual teaching and learning."

After doing so, O'Neill informed the students enrolled in small groups that their sessions would be moved online and worked to ensure everyone could access and use the virtual meeting platform used by MUSC. The next step was to reach out to accounting partners and design an entirely new workflow

for the hiring and payment processes that involve students submitting their tutor applications and timecards/session documentation through MUSC's Box platform.

Currently, supplemental instruction is now larger than ever, giving students the options of tutoring through an online process (Teams/Zoom) or in person. The program used to serve an average of 300 to 400 students each semester and typically hired between 120 and 150 peer tutors to lead sessions. Now, they regularly receive over 800 requests for peer tutoring from MUSC students and hire and train more than 200 peer tutors each semester.

"We appreciate the support of our director, Tom Smith," said the two. "Without his help and advocacy, this program would have failed to be able to handle the increase in student demand. We also appreciate our colleagues Nell

Piedmont and Kathleen Williams in Accounts Payable, Tonia Brown in Human Resources and Rhonda Walters in Education Innovation and Student Life for all of their dedication and help in making this enormous undertaking a huge success."

Each quarter, the campaign showcases educators, researchers, care team members and service team members enterprisewide who have been nominated for the impact they have made in the area of innovation.

Nominations are solicited by and submitted to the chief innovation officer



and evaluated based on the merits of the innovation, including potential impact and unique factors that contributed to the innovation. Nominations are solicited on a quarterly basis but may be submitted for consideration at any time.

Do you know someone who should be recognized? Fill out and submit a nomination form.

### AWARD CRITERIA

To be eligible for the I am an MUSC Innovator campaign, the individual or team must be:

- Employed by MUSC or attend MUSC as a student.
- Acknowledged within the organization for the creation of an idea, product or process that can solve a problem or create a new opportunity.
- Recognized as collaborative, respectful, adaptive to change and committed to quality care.

## SERVICES *Continued from Page Three*

reluctant to seek therapy.

In addition to pandemic-related issues, such as isolation and vaccine efficacy, the team has addressed student issues like self-doubt and imposter syndrome — the feeling of not being worthy or not having the having the knowledge or skills to work in a career for which they are training.

"Mental health services for students are needed today more than ever. With MUSC's level of high-caliber students who are studying to become health care professionals, students struggle with recognizing their own self-care and being human. They are saying, 'How am I supposed to help my patients if am not able to help myself?' It is so important to recognize that helpers can need help too. Mental health problems do not discriminate," said Horner.

The CAPS team responds to self-referrals by students as well as referrals from college faculty, administrators, preceptors, staff and fellow students if they sense a student is in distress.

The CAPS team also works closely with the campus' Behavioral Support and Intervention Team, a group composed of faculty representatives from each college who work to identify and assist students in distress and intervene when needed to help to maintain a safe campus for everyone. They receive reports of students in distress and encourage others to recognize, respond, refer and report.

CAPS is an especially valuable service for the colleges and their student affairs teams navigating help for their students. Since the spring of 2020, there has been a marked increase in student appointments and consultations, especially due to the pandemic and unsettling world events.

### PANDEMIC NEEDS

Cathy Worrall, Pharm.D., associate dean for admissions and student affairs in the College of Pharmacy, oversees four cohort classes — approximately 350 pharmacy students — and is acutely aware of the stress that pharmacy students have endured during the pandemic, from managing tough didactic course work while transitioning to remote learning

to coping with challenges during clinical rotations and managing patients' fears and pandemic anxieties.

"Students' mental health issues seemed to have exploded beyond typical issues, especially early on in the COVID pandemic and afterward. Students came forward with their needs, and it was easy to refer them to the CAPS team for help and support. CAPS did a great job pivoting to be able to offer their services virtually for students who needed to meet with them. All of our students were able to get the support they needed at the time," said Worrall.

She was most impressed with CAPS' proactive approach during the pandemic as leaders created more programming that addressed self-care topics on mental health and mindfulness practices and coping strategies and exercises, plus they offered professional wellness resources that students could access and practice 24/7.

Another helpful tool introduced by CAPS and the Behavioral Support and Intervention Team is the Red Folder

See **SERVICES** on page 10



## CHAMPION *Continued from Page Seven*

at the Barrier Islands Free Medical Clinic on Fridays. He also sees patients at the Ralph H. Johnson Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center. That's on top of his busy schedule leading the public health sciences department, where he has overseen important changes during his first two years.

"The department has stepped up to the plate to fulfill its academic mission. We have gone through the accreditation of our public health program, national accreditation with the Council of Education for Public Health. We have also improved in our ranking on NIH funding," Florez said, referring to the National Institutes of Health. The NIH funds research through grants to institutions such as MUSC.

"We moved from No. 20 in public health funding from the NIH nationwide to No. 16. That's a great team effort. I'm not taking credit except that I'm a cheerleader I promote and provide any resources that we have at the chair's office."

He's currently waiting to hear if the NIH will fund a proposal to enhance MUSC's recruitment of minority faculty in biomedical research. "This is going to be a \$10 million of energy investment for our faculty across all the colleges. This was an initiative with all the deans

expressing support for great research team from different clusters," Florez said.

"We have the cancer and inflammation. We have the aging and neuroscience. We have cardio metabolic health, and also the population health and data science, unique strengths that we have in MUSC. And I was blessed to be part of the team leading the efforts for a successful submission. So hopefully in a few months, we'll see the response. But I said to the team, regardless of whether we get the funding, I'm willing to invest \$1 million on my chair package toward that."

Florez is also trying to get more young people from minority groups interested in public health science. "We go to the high schools here. You go to the community. You incentivize them. You say, you have the opportunity to participate in topnotch research at MUSC and obviously with other academic partners across the state then you sort of nurture them through college, and then eventually they will come hopefully to any of these colleges in MUSC and maybe do graduate studies, postgraduate training, and then the pipeline for minority faculty. And then we have the critical mass."

Florez said his department is already expanding its programs, preparing to offer a master of public health degree online and a certificate in population



*Photo by Sarah Pack*

**Dr. Florez examines Octavio Carrillo-Lopez, looking for signs of neuropathy, at the Barrier Islands Free Medical Clinic on Johns Island.**

health. "Those are among the ways to address the needs of the workforce training in South Carolina and beyond."

Public health science involves preventing diseases, helping people live longer and improving health by addressing environmental threats. It uses a combination of epidemiology, biostatistics and health services to achieve those goals. Florez has a strategy to bring together more experts in those areas. "We're building the team, addressing the needs on environmental health and all these different omics:

genomics, metabolomics, you name it."

As he builds that team, he's leading by example. "It is important to give the opportunity to minority faculty, staff, students and community partners to appreciate that one of their own, in this case a Hispanic public health physician scientist, can respond to the call to serve as a leader."

*If you're interested in getting involved and observing National Hispanic Heritage Month, visit <https://education.musc.edu/students/ose/diversity>.*

## SERVICES *Continued from Page Nine*

— an icon on the University home page that provides information for faculty, staff and students regarding behaviors and symptoms of concern and provides a list of resources to help. This tool urges the MUSC community to "See Something. Say Something. Do Something," and the page offers information, resources, appropriate referrals and campus phone numbers to help users.

Perhaps one of the toughest times during the pandemic, according to Worrall, was when the students transitioned back into the classroom last fall. CAPS responded with educational presentations on time management, stress reduction, sleep disorders and other valuable subject matter.

"It is the University and our college's goals for students to focus on self-care and well-being and scheduling time to manage and prioritize that," Worrall said. "All of us are hoping that now that students have experienced a year of transition back to in-person

activities, we will see improvements. I am hoping that with all these things in place, our students are now in a better place today to move forward."

During the summer, members of the CAPS team met with Worrall and other college leaders to assess students' needs and obtain their feedback. In August, the team returned to presenting in person at new student orientations for all six colleges. The team now plans to continue with its monthly educational presentations on various topics and include a licensed therapy dog — a sheepadoodle named Atlas, who belongs to psychiatric nurse practitioner Akeya Harrold, DNP — in some upcoming CAPS events.

"Of course, CAPS could not be successful without support from Smith and the Provost's Office," said CAPS counselor Horner. "They helped us recognize and evaluate our needs, expand services and recruit our needed practitioners. All this has been great recognition of the importance of mental health to our student population and supportive of our goal of providing excellent services to MUSC students."

## **Sept. 30 deadline set for 2022 MUWC Scholarships, open to MUSC students**

The MUWC Women's Club is offering its annual scholarships to MUSC students from all six colleges for the 2022-23 academic year. The amount available to award this year is approximately \$15,000, in total. All full-time MUSC students (second year and higher) are eligible to apply. Deadline for submission is 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 30. Completed applications should be submitted to [muwcscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:muwcscholarship@gmail.com).

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah A. Imam M.D., Chairperson, MUWC Scholarship Committee, at [muwcscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:muwcscholarship@gmail.com).



## HURRICANE *Continued from Page One*

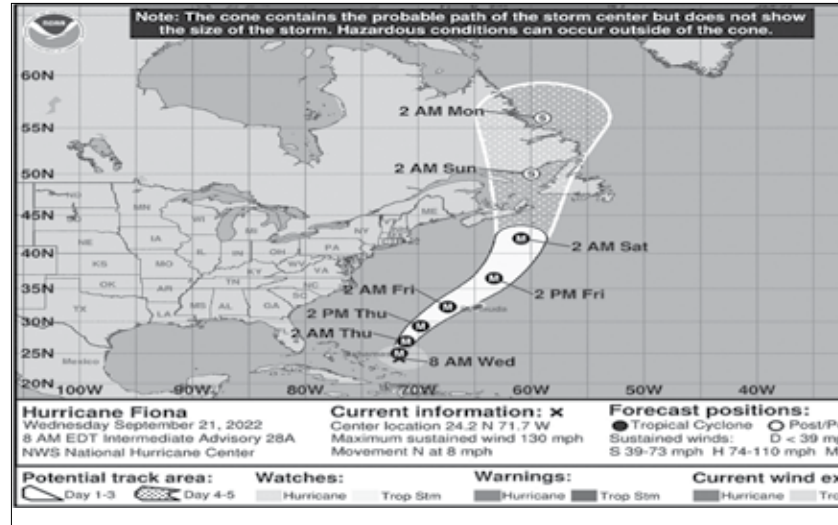
### Prepare a Hurricane Kit

Create a hurricane kit using a plastic tote filled with enough supplies for three days. Contents of the kit should include:

- ☐ Water — 2 gallons of water per person per day, which includes 1 gallon for drinking and 1 gallon for general use.
- ☐ Food — plan for a three-day supply per person, including high-protein, nonperishable items.
- ☐ Flashlight/lanterns and batteries.
- ☐ Weather radio and batteries.
- ☐ First aid kit.
- ☐ Toilet paper.
- ☐ Miscellaneous entertainment in case of a loss of power: deck of cards, games, etc.

If a hurricane warning forecasts a threat that most likely will affect this area, Wood recommends elevating readiness and doing the following:

- ☐ Fill prescription drugs.
- ☐ Have cash on hand.
- ☐ Fill cars with gas.
- ☐ Prepare detailed video documentation of your home, inside and outside, including contents, using a smartphone.



**Latest coastal watch warnings and forecast cone featuring Hurricane Fiona in the Atlantic ocean.**

*Photo Provided by NHC/NOAA*

Wood recommends the resource [HurricaneStrong.org](https://hurricanestrong.org), a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)- and NOAA-sponsored website, from which to download a family hurricane preparedness guide and the hurricane safety and preparedness checklists, when starting your preparation.

MUSC students and employees are encouraged to download and use MUSC Alerts — an emergency notification system through the MUSC Alert System that includes SMS text messaging, voice messaging and desktop alerts for updates on storm progress, campus preparations and related announcements.

A valuable statewide hurricane resource is the South Carolina Emergency Management Division's S.C. Emergency Manager Mobile app, which is downloadable via the Apple App Store and Google Play. It helps users to build an emergency plan and provides Zone evacuation updates, closings and delays in addition to emergency shelter locations and other resources.

"These are all practical tips and activities that anyone can do now, or anytime, to ensure they're ready for hurricane season," Wood said.



### Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Level: Beginner

			1		4			
	1			9				3
7			3		2		5	8
		8				4	1	
				3	8			2
4				7				
	5			4	6		9	
	4	7	2		5	3	8	
1						5	7	

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