

Community Update

A Report to the Greater Westchester Community

www.nyp.org

Winter 2010

Inside



Crafted from the Heart

Pg. 2 **Staff Profile: Robert Belo, Carpenter & Craftsman**



Message to the Community

Pg. 2 **Philip J. Wilner, M.D.**



On the Move for Memory

Pg. 3 **NYP employees get moving to fight Alzheimer's Disease**



Community Lecture Series

Pg. 4 **March 2010 Lecture Series**

Health Tip

Fostering a Healthy Self-Image

By Parinda Parikh, M.D.

How do we define body image? In general terms, it is one's own perception of appearance, attractiveness, size and shape. This is easily influenced by our family members, peers, the media and many other biological, psychological and social factors. It can directly and indirectly affect our moods, self esteem and levels of confidence and performance, and can greatly impact how

(continued on pg. 3)

Good News for Older Adults

Since its founding more than 20 years ago, the Weill Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/ Westchester Division has made great strides in treating older adults suffering from depression and other mood disorders. In fact, medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both has been shown to improve symptoms of depression in more than 50% of adults 60 years of age and older. Recently, the Institute announced it had received the largest grant in its history: \$10 million over five-years from the National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) to advance the understanding of geriatric depression and how it can be successfully treated.

"This grant enables us to improve treatments and increase the percentage of patients who benefit from them," said Dr. George Alexopoulos, founder and director of the Weill Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry and the grant's Principal Investigator.

The grant comes at a critical time. The elderly population in the U.S. is growing exponentially and is expected to increase 37% by 2020, when roughly one

out of every four Westchester residents will be over the age of 65. It is estimated about 15% will develop depression, which can be potentially life-threatening for some and can place considerable stress on family members. "For this reason, geriatric depression research is emerging as a national priority," Dr. Alexopoulos explained.

For more information on symptoms of depression, see page 2.



At press conference announcing the National Institutes of Mental Health \$10 million grant were (l-r): Mae Carpenter, Commissioner, Westchester Department of Senior Programs and Services; George Alexopoulos, M.D., founder and Director of the Weill Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry and New York State Senator Suzi Oppenheimer.

The Institute is seeking people over the age of 60 to participate in research to help reduce the burden of depression in older adults. To learn more, call 914-997-4331 or 1-800-NYP-1902 for a confidential screening.

Hope for Those with Eating Disorders

For more than 30 years, the Westchester Division has been a leader in treating individuals with life-threatening eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorder. Building on that tradition of care, the Hospital recently opened *The Outlook at Westchester*, a new specialized inpatient eating disorders program – the only one of its kind in New York State and one of only a few in the nation, where patients with acute eating disorders are provided a level of care that is unavailable in a general psychiatric unit. The Outlook's multi-disciplinary treatment team includes psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nursing staff, nutritionists and therapeutic activities specialists who look at the care of the whole person, while paying special attention to family

members who can play a critical role in the recovery process.

The completely refurbished unit is spacious and comfortable, with 17-beds for 11 adults and six adolescents, and designed

with patients' needs in mind. It is the key clinical component of the newly integrated Center for Eating Disorders, a joint collaboration among

continued on page 3



Evelyn Attia, M.D., Director, Center for Eating Disorders at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital (holding scissors), joins colleagues in the ribbon cutting ceremony for *The Outlook at Westchester*.

A Message to the Community



Philip J. Wilner, M.D.

As we mark the start of the New Year, we embark on another exciting chapter in our history, with several promising initiatives underway at the Westchester Division. As in the past, we take pride in being able to serve individuals and their families in our community with valuable resources to foster and maintain a healthy life.

This Fall, a \$10 million grant was awarded to the Weill Cornell Institute for Geriatric Psychiatry from the National Institutes of Mental Health to advance their pioneering work in treating depression and other mood disorders in older adults. The Geriatric Institute, housed at the Westchester Division for the past 20 years, has made tremendous strides in our understanding of the brain mechanisms of older adults. With an estimated one in four Westchester residents expected to be over the age of 65 by the year 2020, the work from this grant addresses a major public health issue that impacts so many of us.

We are also pleased to announce the recent opening of *The Outlook at Westchester*, the only specialized psychiatric inpatient eating disorders program in New York State and one of only a few in the nation to treat adolescents and adults. An estimated one in twenty women and girls at some point in their lives will struggle with anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating and other severe eating disorders. The newly relocated and beautifully refurbished program is part of a joint endeavor between NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical College and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, in affiliation with the New York State Psychiatric Institute, bringing together talented professionals from each to collaborate on the research and treatment of eating disorders patients.

Both of these noteworthy services continue to make significant contributions to the field of mental health, helping to restore quality of life for so many individuals in our community and beyond. As we look forward to the warmer months ahead, we welcome you to our campus and hope you can join us for our Spring Community Lecture Series this March, outlined on page 4.

Sincerely,

Philip J. Wilner, M.D.

Vice President & Medical Director

Staff Profile: Robert Belo Hand Crafted from the Heart

When Robert Belo joined the Westchester Division as a staff carpenter in November 2002, the Hospital gained much more than a skilled craftsman. Over the past 7 years, this employee's lifelong passion for creating beautiful and functional objects, as well as his generosity of time and spirit, has proven to be a true gift to patients, staff and visitors alike.

Among his duties, the young craftsman has worked on a number of projects as part of the long-range goal of establishing a more warm and welcoming environment in the hospital. The centerpiece of this effort was a makeover of the lobby in the main building, adding several features to enhance the comfort and feel of the setting, including a 60-foot fish tank, an information kiosk, a new mental health resources center and an Interfaith Chapel.

Through his work, Robert became inspired by the concept of "patient-centered care," which the Hospital has embraced since becoming the first freestanding psychiatric facility in the nation to join the Planetree Alliance, a not-for-profit group committed to delivering healthcare in a more personalized way.

He learned that the name Planetree comes from the roots of modern Western medicine; Hippocrates is said to have sat under a sycamore tree as he taught some of the earliest medical students in ancient Greece. A year ago, Robert came up with the idea of creating a three-dimensional hand carved



Robert Belo
Carpenter & Craftsman

Planetree logo from pieces of wood left over from other Hospital carpentry projects. With the blessings of Hospital administrators, he got down to work in his private workshop in Hawthorne, New Jersey and began crafting the rich, dark wooden art that is now a focal point of the reception area.

By gluing and pressing pieces of pine together and then using an enlarged tracing, he carefully fabricated and assembled the pieces of the lettering and intricate details of the tree that comprise the logo. The flawlessly smooth surface is the result of extensive and painstaking hand sanding and the application of more than a dozen coats of specialized lacquer. Reflecting on his labor of love, which took an estimated 200 hours out of his own time, he said: "If you love what you do in



your work, as I do, then you soon realize that it doesn't really feel like work at all."

On December 15, 2009, Robert Belo was applauded by his colleagues at the Westchester Division for his extraordinary contributions to the healing environment. He was named this year's recipient of the annual Pandorf award, which recognizes employees for a superior job performance.

(continued from pg. 1)

Common Symptoms of Depression

The following are the most common symptoms of depression:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Loss of interest in activities once previously enjoyed
- Excessive crying
- Increased restlessness and irritability
- Decreased ability to concentrate and make decisions
- Decreased energy
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- Increased feelings of guilt, helplessness, and/or hopelessness
- Weight and/or appetite changes due to over- or under-eating
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Social withdrawal
- Physical symptoms (i.e., chronic pain, headaches)

For a diagnosis of major depression to be made, an individual must exhibit five or more of these symptoms during the same two-week period. The symptoms of major depression may resemble other psychiatric conditions. Always consult your physician for a diagnosis. For more information on NYP programs and services, call 1-888-694-5700.

News Makers

Robert Bristow, M.D., Medical Director of Emergency Management at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital

presented "Swine Flu: The Facts on Protecting Yourself Without Panic" as part of the Hospital's Community Lecture Series at the Westchester Division in October. His talk attracted teachers, health care workers and other members of the community eager to learn about infection prevention during the current H1N1 flu pandemic.



On the Move for Memory



On October 4th, NYP/Westchester employees and family members joined hundreds of area residents in the annual Alzheimer's Association of the Hudson Valley's Memory Walk, which raised thousands of dollars to advance research and care for all of those affected by Alzheimer's Disease.



Access for All

In November, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at the Westchester Division co-sponsored a conference at Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital in Manhattan on Communication Access to Health Care for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People. Opening remarks were provided by NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital President and CEO, Dr. Herbert Pardes, with a sign language interpreter to his right.

Eating Disorders *(continued from pg. 1)*

NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical College and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Dr. Evelyn Attia, a leading authority on eating disorders, serves as The Outlook's Director. She is also the Director of the Columbia Center for Eating Disorders at the New York State

Psychiatric Institute and holds academic posts in psychiatry at both Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and Weill Cornell Medical College.

Eating disorders affect an estimated 10 million American men, women and children. "Everyone is touched by someone

whose health and well being are being threatened by this serious illness. The Outlook reaffirms that with effective treatment, recovery is possible and people do get better." Dr. Attia said.

For more information on The Outlook, call 1-888-694-5700.

Health Tip

Fostering a Healthy Self-Image

(continued from pg. 1)

we feel about interacting with others. Some of us are continuously struggling with perfectionism as it relates to body image, at times fighting to be flawless and perfect. This makes us vulnerable to ongoing negative self assessments, constant self-criticism and perceived experiences of failure.

So, what can we do about these experiences? First, we can learn to focus on what makes us special as a person; our individual attributes and characteristics that make each one of



Parinda Parikh, M.D.
Unit Chief
The Outlook
at Westchester

us unique. We can train ourselves to be proud of our accomplishments, which will better help us enjoy interactions with others. For many people, spending extensive time comparing themselves to others leaves them with a feeling that they can never measure up to the other person, especially when it comes to money, material possessions or physical attributes. One way to achieve a healthier sense of self is to avoid comparisons, and simply learn to accept yourself as you are. We can also halt feelings of negative self-image by learning how to graciously give and receive compliments, refrain from fantasizing and catch ourselves from unrealistic desires.

Learning to establish a harmonious and healthy relationship with food is also an integral component of a healthy body image. Using food to manage intolerable emotions such as anger, rage, disappointment, loss, guilt, trauma and exaggerated feelings of pleasure and happiness sets us up for eating disorders and related struggles. On the flip side, learning to enjoy the food we eat when we eat it, and avoiding gimmicky diet fads is enormously helpful in fostering a positive body image.

Parinda Parikh, M.D. is the Unit Chief of the newly opened inpatient Eating Disorders program, The Outlook at Westchester. For more information on The Outlook and other eating disorder services at NYP/Westchester, please call 1-888-694-5700.

Community Lecture Series

No Fee • No Registration • Free Parking • Refreshments Served

MARCH 2010

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

Creative Approaches to Reducing Stress and Tension in Everyday Life

Jmel Wilson, M.Ed.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10

Healthy Brain, Healthy Body: Fostering a Positive Self-Image in a Perfection-Preoccupied World

Parinda Parikh, M.D.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17

Tough Love: Dealing With Difficult Family Situations

Gerard Treacy, LCSW-R

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

Music and Moods: An Interactive Piano Performance by a Broadway Conductor-turned-Clinical Psychologist

Jeremy E. Stone, Ph.D.

All presentations will take place from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Auditorium located on the second floor of the Main Building with the clocktower.

For further information and directions, call (914) 997-5779 or visit www.nyp.org.

NYPH Speaker's Bureau

NYPH offers speakers for your organization, school, or business group to discuss topics such as eating disorders, depression, anxiety, stress management, and other issues concerning emotional health.

For more information, call the Public and Community Affairs Office at (914) 682-6991.



For the sixth consecutive year, New York-Presbyterian ranks among the nation's top hospitals, according to the 2009 US News and World Report Best Hospitals edition. The Hospital ranked #1 in New York and #6 in the nation.

Printer-
Insert your
permit
number.



Location & Directions

- **From I-287 West.** Take Exit 8W, keep in left lane, turn left at traffic light onto Bloomingdale Road. Continue to next traffic light (Maple Avenue), then turn left into the Hospital entrance.
- **From I-287 East.** Take Exit 8 and follow Route 119 (Westchester Avenue). Turn left at Bloomingdale Road. Turn left at next traffic light, Maple Avenue, then turn left into the Hospital entrance.
- **From Hutchinson Parkway South.** Take Exit 23 (Mamaroneck Avenue) towards White Plains. Drive approximately three miles to right fork (Bloomingdale Road). Turn right at the third traffic light into the Hospital entrance.

Community Update

Photos by John Vecchiolla



As part of our commitment to the health of all of our patients, staff and visitors, the Westchester Division is now a smoke-free campus.

New York-Presbyterian
The University Hospital of Columbia and Cornell

The Westchester Division
21 Bloomingdale Road
White Plains, NY 10605