Hausman Fellowship inspires futures

When Margaretta Hausman was a patient at the MGH she made an observation – her fellow patients were of all races, backgrounds and religions, but the majority of her caregivers were not. To promote recruitment of minority nurses and meet the needs of a diverse patient population, she formed the Hausman Fellowship program.

Six years after its inception, 15 aspiring clinicians were honored at an Aug. 16 reception in the O’Keeffe Auditorium. The Hausman Fellows successfully completed a six-week program in which each student was paired with an MGH nurse mentor to provide meaningful clinical, practical and social learning experiences.

Kiera Hirayama’s call to nursing began in high school. Later, while working on a research project for Alzheimer’s disease, she was led to the MGH. A nursing student at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., (Continued on page 2)

Teaching in turmoil

THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM in Iraq, previously among the best in the Middle East, has been severely weakened over the last couple of decades because of spending cuts under the former Saddam Hussein regime. These cutbacks have particularly devastated the southern region, which now has some of the worst health conditions in the country.

One group working to improve these conditions is the International Children’s Heart Foundation (ICHF), which performs heart-saving surgeries on children with congenital defects. In conjunction with the organization’s outreach programs to improve overall health care for women and children in impoverished countries, an MGH-based nurse and physician team recently traveled to the Bint Al-Huda Maternity and Child Teaching Hospital in Nasiriyah to brainstorm solutions for the large number of maternal and neonatal fatalities in the region. (Continued on page 4)
Care Redesign Fair celebrates innovative improvements

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, teams of experts at the MGH and other Partners HealthCare affiliates have focused on finding ways to improve the quality and efficiency of care, as part of a comprehensive strategic care redesign program. From 9 am to 2 pm on Sept. 4, staff are invited to attend a special “Care Redesign Fair” under the Bulfinch Tent to learn more about the efforts of these 20 multidisciplinary teams and to hear from a national expert about why care redesign is the way of the future.

“We look forward to showcasing the many accomplishments leading to improved value for our patients developed by these incredibly hardworking teams since the program’s launch in 2010,” says Michael R. Jaff, DO, director of the MGH/MGPO Care Redesign initiative. “Leaders from MGH will also provide insights into how our efforts represent the prescription for success in the rapidly changing health care delivery environment.”

Across Partners, teams have developed and implemented recommendations for specific diseases and procedures involved in disease management – including colon cancer, coronary artery disease, diabetes mellitus and stroke. In 2011, the MGH began launching additional care redesign teams – including most recently, those focused on breast cancer, congestive heart failure, pain management, kidney stones and strategies to reduce readmissions across the MGH.

The fair kicks off with a poster session, followed by opening comments by Jaff at 10 am. He will then introduce keynote speaker David Longworth, MD, chair of the Cleveland Clinic Medicine Institute and team leader for the clinic’s Value Based Care initiatives program, who will provide insights into how care redesign has emerged as the major strategy of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Other presentations and a panel discussion with MGH and MGPO senior leadership will follow. Following closing remarks at noon, the poster session will continue until 2 pm.

“We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Longworth to the MGH and to highlight the great work of our care redesign teams,” Jaff says. “With the rich MGH tradition of providing world-class care for almost 200 years, this event will provide insights into how care redesign has emerged as the major strategy of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Other presentations and a panel discussion with MGH and MGPO senior leadership will follow. Following closing remarks at noon, the poster session will continue until 2 pm. “

Summer Jobs program creates opportunities for next generation of health leaders

MORE THAN 200 YOUNG PEOPLE, many dressed in hospital scrubs, filled the Starr Center on Aug. 14 to celebrate the end of the 23rd MGH Summer Jobs program. The annual event honored high school and college students who participated in the six-week educational and mentoring experience – overseen by the Center for Community Health Improvement – and the MGH staff who supervised them.

“We hope that you take back to your classrooms your interest in science and health experienced during your tenure at MGH. We need you, and we look forward to seeing many of you next year,” said MGH President Peter L. Slavin, MD.

Hermioni Lokko, MD, MPP, a second-year resident in the MGH/McLean Psychiatry Residency Program, served as the event’s keynote speaker. Born in Ghana, Lokko received her bachelor’s degree from Purdue University and her graduate public policy and medical degrees from Harvard. In her remarks, Lokko stressed the importance of believing in one’s capacity to succeed. “Success is attainable, regardless of your background,” she said.

During the event, Doris Dewing, a supervisor in Laboratory Support Services, and Kris Klincewicz, supervisor of Patient Transport, Specimen Pickup and Equipment Services, were recognized for their contributions to the program. Also honored were Mike Rubin and Valeria Lowe-Barhami, the principals of East Boston High and the Timilty Middle schools respectively, who were praised for their leadership and partnership with the MGH.

Summer Jobs program creates opportunities for next generation of health leaders

Hirayama said she is grateful for the fellowship opportunity. “I learned so much from these great nurses. To see the qualities of compassion and care they provided. This is the type of nurse I want to be.”

Following the ceremony, students were asked to speak about how the program has energized their future. “Last summer at this time I didn’t know I would be here today,” said Marie Etiene, a student at Simmons College. “And today I don’t know where I will be next year. All I know is that I want to make an impact in a positive way.”

For more information about the Hausman Fellowship program, contact Deborah Washington, RN, PhD, director of Diversity for Patient Care Services, at 617-724-7469 or dwashington1@partners.org.
**Hear to listen**

**WHAT IS IT LIKE TO HOLD A HUMAN HEART?**

“In the figurative sense that is what we do here at the MGH,” said Rev. John Polk, DMin, BCC, director of the MGH Chaplaincy. “We hold people’s hearts in our hands.”

Earlier this month, Polk delivered an MGH Senior HealthWISE lecture, “The Experience of a Chaplain: Finding Comfort and Strength.” Having come to the MGH last July, he spoke about how his first year with the Chaplaincy involved critical and delicate work, particularly in the days and weeks following the Boston Marathon bombings. “Terrorism was unfamiliar territory,” said Polk. “But we provided a listening ear and a comforting presence for the wounded, their families, the hospital staff – and for each other.”

The MGH Chaplaincy follows a protocol like the rest of the medical world, Polk said. The chaplains conduct assessments of each patient, develop a care plan, utilize best practices, work collaboratively, focus on outcomes and document work. “We believe everybody believes in something, so everyone can benefit from spiritual care.”

Each board-certified chaplain at the MGH serves all traditions, cultures and beliefs and is trained to support the belief system of the person being served without imposing their own beliefs. “Never do chaplains attempt to convert anyone to anything. We come to be with those who are suffering – to ‘hear’ not to ‘fix,’” Polk said.

During his presentation, Polk described a chaplain’s work as a collection of true, real-life stories – noting one event that occurred when he worked in Missouri, and resulted in one of the most profound experiences of his life. A 30-year-old man with a badly diseased heart was waiting in the hospital for a transplant. Polk waited with him. After three months, a new heart finally arrived, and Polk was on the list to observe the transplant.

Polk said, “The surgeon removed the diseased heart and handed it to a nurse who asked me if I would like to see it up close. The nurse not only showed me the heart but placed it in my hands. The heart was still moving, quivering – almost beating.”

For more information about the MGH Chaplaincy call 617-726-2220 or visit http://www.mghpcs.org/chaplaincy.

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**Blessed blankets**

“EVERY STITCH is a prayer, and the hands creating the shawl are praying for the healing of the shawl’s eventual recipient,” says Rev. Patti Keeler, of the MGH Chaplaincy. Nearly 200 shawls were recently blessed in the MGH Chapel representing a practically infinite amount of prayers for recovery. The shawls were knitted and crocheted by church groups, MGH staff and patients in the hope that each patient or caregiver who received one would find comfort in the shawl’s well-wishes.

A major contributor to the number of shawls blessed this year was Stephen Soldano, who has personally donated more than 700 shawls in the past four years – including 160 at the recent ceremony. The blessing tradition became an important part of Soldano’s life in 2009 following the death of his best friend. That year Soldano crocheted 162 shawls: one for each and every infusion nurse who had cared for his friend during treatments at the MGH Cancer Center. In return, he asked the nurses to give the shawls to patients in need of extra comfort.

Soldano, who is now legally blind, was taught by his mother to crochet as therapy for progressive blindness. Now, many years and hundreds of thousands of stitches later, Soldano has developed his own unique pattern – when the shawls are draped around wearers, angel wings appear to spread across their shoulders.

Prayer shawl donations have arrived from Virginia, Maine and New Jersey – some of which were given to ICU nurses to provide comfort during the difficult time following the Boston Marathon tragedy.

“There are always more people in need of kindness and peace,” says Katrina Scott, staff chaplain.
Teaching in turmoil
(Continued from page 1)

Mimi Pomerleau, NP, of the MGH Institute of Health Professions, and Brett Nelson, MD, MPH, global health faculty in the Department of Pediatrics and the Department of Emergency Medicine, spent a week at Bint Al-Huda earlier this month observing the hospital’s current maternal and newborn health care services. “Brett and Mimi have the ‘on the ground thinking’ and passion that is critical in reversing this horrible situation,” says William Novick, MD, ICHF founder.

During their stay at Bint Al-Huda, Nelson and Pomerleau interviewed clinicians and administrators, coordinated small-group educational discussions and observed maternal and newborn care. “My goal as a nurse is to improve the health of women and their newborns, “ Pomerleau says. “It shouldn’t matter where you live; every mother and baby deserves good care.”

Among the greatest difficulties, Pomerleau says, is the hospital’s lack of formal training. “They have the resources, but their problem is their education system. Brett did a mini education session and the next day – with a little bit of encouragement – nurses and physicians were changing their techniques. It gave us hope.”

Though Nelson has worked in dozens of resource-limited countries worldwide, this was his first visit to Iraq. He says the trip highlights the MGH’s dedication to improving health care not just locally, but on a global scale. “One of MGH’s founders said it best, ‘When in distress, every man becomes our neighbor’; and certainly the individuals in Iraq have clear need. It was a wonderful opportunity and honor to work with them and learn more about their needs.”

With the ICHF’s support, Nelson and Pomerleau’s findings will be submitted to the Iraqi Regional Healthcare Directorate in an effort to implement new training, better clinical care and equipment at Bint Al-Huda. “Our trip with the ICHF speaks to who works here at MGH – people that care,” Pomerleau says. “Our hope is that we can advocate and build interest in newborn and nursing care in developing countries around the world.”