Listen rather than tell

“THE HALLS OF THE MGH have changed, people have changed, the country has changed, but the work that we do and the values that we have, have not changed,” said Darnell Williams, president and CEO of the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts and former manager of MGH Management Recruitment and Development in Human Resources.

Williams was the keynote speaker at the annual MGH MLK Gospel Celebration Breakfast on Feb. 1 in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The breakfast – sponsored by the Association of Multicultural Members of Partners (AMMP) – also featured empowering quotes from King and musical selections performed by the Gospel Unlimited Ensemble directed by Elder Hu White.

This year, a familiar face at the MLK breakfast was in for a surprise. Jeff Davis, who recently retired as the senior vice president of Human Resources, was honored with AMMP’s first Diversity Champion Award. Williams shared the impact that Davis had on his career and the fondness with which he looks back on his time working at the MGH. “Jeff and I would meet for lunch and discuss how to improve the MGH community,” Williams said. “We would discuss how to destroy walls of emotional indifference and perceived obstacles. Neither of us would come to the table with an agenda, instead we would just talk. A lot of successful programs came out of our dialogues.”

While accepting his award, Davis shared advice about leadership. “Good leadership is mostly listening rather than telling, and mostly following rather than directing. When you retire, people tend to credit you with things you didn’t necessarily do. All I have done is say ‘yes’ to the amazing ideas that people bring to me.”

During the event, another group of diversity champions (Continued on page 4)
Diversity and Inclusion in Action: Daniel Urizar, Environmental Services

HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK AT THE MGH?
I was born in Guatemala and moved to Providence, Rhode Island, when I first moved to the United States. I met my wife in Boston and we have been married for 10 years. My wife, Reina Maldonado, a medical assistant in Obstetrics and Gynecology, and her mother encouraged me to apply at MGH. They said this is a place with a lot of room for growth. I started working here in August 2011 part time in Environmental Services in the Emergency Department. After about a year, I got my first promotion. I chose MGH because it’s a big place full of opportunities.

HAVE THERE BEEN CHALLENGES ALONG YOUR CAREER PATH? IF SO, HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?
You will always hear a mix of positive and negative feedback. People told me that there were too many people in line for the promotion I applied for, or that I was too new here and should wait my turn. I didn’t listen and decided to focus on my goal to grow and build good relationships with my coworkers.

HAS YOUR CAREER TAKEN ANY SURPRISING TURNS?
With the support of my manager I was able to participate in programs like ESOL classes and the Be Fit Latino program. I completed both programs and became the chairman of Be Fit Latino. The success of Be Fit Latino opened another door for me as it introduced me to the Committee for Latino Initiatives. This program has added valuable skills to my professional development, requiring me to perform presentations in both English and Spanish to recruit employees to participate. Be Fit Latino has been so successful that it now has a waitlist for participation.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR ROLE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS HERE AT THE MGH AND IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY?
At the MGH, people come from all over. Part of our jobs is to make everyone feel welcome. Outside of work, I coach my son’s soccer team in West Roxbury. I also serve as a music instructor for a 20-member bilingual musical group with my community church. We often receive invitations to perform at music shows and out-of-state conferences. That always touches my heart because we need these sort of programs to build community.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THOSE LOOKING TO CREATE A MORE EQUITABLE ENVIRONMENT HERE AT THE MGH?
I learned from my parents that respect is the key to open any door in your life. They also taught me to treat people in a way they wish to be treated rather than treat people in a way they wish to be treated rather than the way you wish to be treated. At MGH, I think it is important to be willing to learn, accept feedback and listen to the concerns of those around you. Even the most enlightened individual can find opportunities for growth.

Diversity and Inclusion in Action is a new feature highlighting employee stories of inspiration, perseverance and management best practices in workforce development and diversity. If you know of someone who should be considered for the series, email a short summary to Emmanuela Menard or Dianne Austin, Human Resources.

Heartfelt holiday
Love was in the air – the love of sugar that is – on Valentine’s Day during the “Sweets & Selfies” event sponsored by the PUPP (Police Uniting with Pediatric Patients) program. On Feb. 14, patients – including Elizabeth Rufo, below, with McGruff the Crime Dog, and Haley Osborn, 12, above, with officer Matthew McGue – and their families joined MGH police officers to decorate cupcakes with pink, red and white frosting and top them with heart sprinkles and conversation heart candies. McGruff made an appearance to take selfie photos, complete with Valentine-themed photo booth props. The PUPP program is a partnership between MGH Police, Security and Outside Services and the MassGeneral Hospital John Hancock Child Life and Wellness Program.

Bringing home the hardware
Two members of the New England Patriots Super Bowl Championship team touched down at MassGeneral Hospital for Children on Feb. 14 for a victory parade. Players Duron Harmon and Deatrich Wise Jr., with the Lombardi Trophy in hand, visited pediatric patients – including Madison Rifkin, 3, below – and their families, signing autographs and handing out Patriots goodie bags.
Running for Rachel

FOR BIANCA MARTINEZ and her best friend Rachel Hunt, running the Boston Marathon always seemed like a distant dream. The running duo – Martinez an aspiring physician and Hunt an aspiring nurse – were known for their 5 am runs during their undergraduate years at Texas A&M University. Their many late nights together included studying, drinking too much coffee and talking about running. Those runs and late nights unfortunately ended the day after Hunt’s 23rd birthday, when she died from brain cancer.

“It was Rachel’s dream to run the Boston Marathon,” says Martinez, who will run her first marathon as part of MGH’s Pediatric Hematology & Oncology Marathon Team. “I can only hope that by running this marathon, I am doing her an honor, as well as helping the millions of children who are currently battling cancer.”

Thanks to a partnership with John Hancock, the Fighting Kids’ Cancer, One Step at a Time team has raised more than $14 million in recent years to support the pediatric hematology-oncology program at MassGeneral Hospital for Children. The money supports cutting-edge research and clinical studies to help improve cure rates and provide the best treatment possible to the hospital’s youngest cancer patients.

“During our undergrad years when the Boston bombing occurred, I remember Rachel and I running as far as our legs could take us,” says Martinez. “The day following the marathon, we were wearing our blue and yellow attire to represent Boston and all those who we had lost. I now find myself living in Boston, a place that Rachel dreamt of living and working, and no matter where I go, I take her with me.”

Martinez works at a biotech company whose mission is to advance cancer care by helping physicians match patients to more treatment options as well as accelerating the development of new therapies through genomic profiling. Her goal is to get into medical school and eventually become one of those physicians.

“The most significant lesson I’ve learned so far from friends I have lost to cancer is to never take anything for granted,” Martinez says. “So often we hear this phrase, but it is not until you lose something so valuable that you truly understand the meaning. Live each day to the fullest and never be afraid to chase your dreams.”

In addition to the Pediatric Hematology & Oncology, Emergency Response and Home Base teams – sponsored by John Hancock – runners also will support the Run for MGH team, which raises funds for hospital programs close to their hearts, including Caring for a Cure, cystic fibrosis, Down syndrome, the Lurie Center for Autism and the Mootha Lab.

Footwear with flair

JOREN MADSEN, MD, DPHIL, director of the MGH Transplant Center and co-director of the Center for Transplantation Science, received a special pair of sneakers for his birthday this year, designed by his niece Kendall Gregory, a graphic design student at Boston University.

“I started by incorporating a series of transplant-related images and symbols, such as the MGH shield,” says Gregory. “From there, I sketched out a couple of shoe mock-ups before outlining the final design in pencil and tracing with thin black lines before coloring in and creating patterns to surround the images.” Gregory has designed more than 20 pairs of custom sneakers, with each taking 8 to 10 hours to complete.

“This was such a wonderful birthday surprise capturing my passion for transplantation, surgery, science and the MGH – all in a pair of shoes!” says Madsen, who displays them proudly in his MGH office.
NANCY MccLEARY, RN, and her daughter Margaret “Meg” Mc Cleary, RN, share the same last name – and a shared career in Cardiology at the MGH. Meg is clinical nurse manager for the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, where tests and procedures are performed to diagnose and treat cardiovascular disease. Nancy works as a nurse and counselor in MGH Cardiac Rehabilitation, a program that addresses treatment and prevention of heart problems through diet, exercise and mindfulness tools. In recognition of February as Heart Month, MGH Hotline asked the mother-daughter duo to weigh in on what calls them to cardiac care.

HOW DID YOU CHOOSE A CAREER IN CARDIOLOGY?

Nancy: Early in my career I worked on a cardiac surgical floor, and along with one of my friends on staff, we initiated an exercise and relaxation class for post-op patients getting ready for discharge. I fell in love with teaching and Cardiac Rehab was a natural next step. Essentially, we are coaches who help cardiac patients learn about their disease, what they can do to lower their risk and overall reach a higher level of wellness.

Meg: I started my nursing career in a Neurosciences ICU at Georgetown University Hospital. I enjoyed learning cardiovascular concepts more than Neurology where everything felt like a gray area – no pun intended. I eventually aspired to work in an area where I could develop more rapport with my patients and see them improve.

I transitioned into procedural nursing by working in Interventional Radiology. When I moved back to Boston in 2013, I felt inclined to try Cardiology. The Cardiac Cath Lab married my interests in fast-paced ICU-level care, procedural nursing and Cardiology. My mother’s path and love for the MGH Heart Center certainly influenced my decision. Now I enjoy sharing patients with my mom and seeing her in the halls of MGH.

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR JOB?

Nancy: The most gratifying part of my job is making close connections with my patients. I feel blessed to be at a job where I may have made a small difference in someone’s life and well-being. I also enjoy being part of the ever-changing landscape of Cardiology treatment.

Meg: As a staff nurse, I love working seamlessly as a team during emergencies, like a well-oiled machine. In my role as nurse manager, I enjoy witnessing our staff interacting with patients, giving them a sense of ease in an anxiety-provoking procedural environment. Moreover, I appreciate working on initiatives to improve patient care on a systems level, including redesigning our response to inpatient heart attacks and improving efficiency in our cath lab operations.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU WOULD SHARE ABOUT TAKING CARE OF YOUR HEART HEALTH?

Nancy: I believe making your own self-care a priority is the single most important way to take care of your heart health. We will then take the time to exercise, eat well and nourish our souls with meditation and mind/body practice. First though, we have to believe we are important enough to do this.

Meg: She stole my answer! The most important thing in optimizing heart health is reducing stress and inflammation. One can achieve this by nourishing the body and mind via a plant-based diet, consistent cardiovascular exercise, daily (“ish”) meditation and adequate sleep. Easier said than done, but worth the effort!

— MLK

(Continued from page 1)

who said ‘yes’ to service was recognized as the 2019 YMCA Achievers, each nominated for their accomplishments within the MGH and in their communities. This year’s recipients were Asha Abdulahi, surgical technician, Operation Room Nursing Service; Efren Flores, MD, Radiology; Junie Joseph, patient service coordinator, Cancer Center; Matthew Heron, support service team manager, Patient Care Services; Pamela Cazeau, associate director, Development; and Saheeda Mohammed-Kelly, RN, Labor and Delivery.

For more information about AMMP, visit the organization’s page on Apollo, the MGH intranet.

— NCH opening

(Continued from page 1)

of more than 185 mph. All mechanical systems have been installed on the roof, rather than in a basement.

Also celebrated during the opening was the unprecedented $120 million capital campaign – the largest in Nantucket history – that allowed the new campus to be built free of debt and with no taxpayer dollars. Following the completion of the new hospital project, NCH will use the remaining capital campaign funds to build new staff housing units to help address the island’s affordable housing crisis, fulfilling the promise of the new facility.

“We felt that building a true campus with not just a cutting-edge hospital, but also on-site housing, would give us flexibility for our staff that we never had in the past,” said Bruce Percelay, chairman of the hospital’s capital campaign, whose family provided the lead $10 million gift for the new facility with the condition that the campaign would also include staff housing. “We are proud to have been a part of an island-wide effort that will change health care delivery on Nantucket for the next generation.”