

YOU'RE INVITED! Strike Down Barriers to Health Care 2022

Join us on Tuesday, October 11, 2022, 6–8:30 PM
at Lucky Strike Bellevue in Lincoln Square



Gary Renville
Executive Director
gary@projectaccessnw.org

Project Access Northwest is holding another fantastic fundraising event! Please join us at Lucky Strike Bellevue to bowl, play pool, network, visit with friends and learn more about the important work we are doing to ensure every person has access to appropriate health care.

Our fifth annual **Strike Down Barriers to Health Care** event will be held Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at Lucky Strike Bellevue in Lincoln Square (700 Bellevue Way NE, Suite #250, Bellevue). Join us from 6:00–8:30 PM to enjoy appetizers, hosted beer and wine, and an opportunity to spend time with health care leaders in our community.

And the winner is...

We'll also be presenting the **Andrea Castell Health Care Leadership Award** to an individual who works for improved health care access for all members of our community. We have been delighted and inspired by the nominations we received this year. We will be highlighting each of these worthy nominees in our social media accounts, so be sure to give us a follow!

- **Lise K. Alexander, MD**, Pacific Medical Centers
- **Deborah Jefferson, RN**, EvergreenHealth
- **Brian Knowles**, Executive Director, Bailey-Boushay House
- **Sonja Maddox, MD**, Pacific Medical Centers
- **Nancy Sugg MD, MPH**, Associate Professor & Medical Director of Harborview and Pioneer Square Clinic

- **Kathleen Wilcox**, Executive Director, African Americans Reach and Teach Health Ministry
- **Lisa Yohalem**, Chief Executive Officer, HealthPoint, CHC

You won't want to miss this fun evening!
Ages 21+ only

Visit panw.ejoinme.org for tickets and all the event details.



Pacific Medical Centers' Health Equity Team creates health care for all

By Dr. Sonja Maddox, Pacific Medical Centers, Health Equity Advisor Clinical Lead



Health equity means ensuring that every person has the opportunity to achieve the best health. **Pacific Medical Centers** (PacMed) understands that health disparities are preventable, and we recognize that these disparities exist due to systemic racism. PacMed acknowledges that until the inequalities to accessing health care are addressed, we will not see a long-term positive impact in our society.

To address health inequalities in a meaningful way, in 2020, PacMed created a **Health Equity Council**. The goal is to reduce barriers to care for our patients and seek opportunities to enhance health equity for our patients as well as our caregivers. With the creation of the Health Equity Council, PacMed rolled out the Health Equity Team. The Health Equity Team consists of two community health workers, a supervisor of social work and a clinical pharmacist who works closely with our primary care providers. The Health Equity Team identifies health disparities in our patient population, strategizes solutions and conducts outreach to help bring health to all. As PacMed's mission is to provide our patients with simply the right care, we are increasing outreach to improve the health of our patients.

We have three health care initiatives that the Health Equity Team is addressing; one is focused

on blood pressure control for the African American population. We are reaching out to patients that have identified as being African American or Black and who have a history of high blood pressure (hypertension). Normal blood pressure is below 120/80 mm HG. Blood pressure control is important to reduce a person's risk of stroke or heart attack over their lifetime. Our goal with the hypertension initiative is to learn more about the specific barriers that prevent our patients from controlling their blood pressure, and then to provide education and resources that will help them improve their health.

PacMed's other two health care initiatives are focused on colorectal cancer screening among the Latinx and the African American population. We are reaching out to patients who have identified as Latinx or African American/Black, who have not had an opportunity for colon cancer screening. Both African American and Latinx communities have lower colon cancer screening rates, leading to worse health outcomes. Colorectal cancer is the second-most dangerous cancer in the Latinx American. Among African Americans, colorectal cancer occurs more frequently, is more deadly, and is diagnosed at a higher rate before age 50. Regular screening for colon cancer saves lives.

PacMed knows that there are disparities between the care that diverse communities receive. We believe our health equity initiatives will help identify local barriers and close the gap for our patients. Ultimately, the learning from our efforts will lead us to providing better care, not only for select groups, but for all PacMed patients.

PacMed has nine convenient locations that are staffed by a comprehensive network of more than 168 primary and specialty care professionals, who are committed to providing the highest-quality medical care and to developing a compassionate, long-term relationship with our patients.



Pacific Medical Centers is a King Pin sponsor for our 2022 Strike Down Barriers to Health Care event. To learn more, visit panw.ejoinme.org!



Specialty health care funding will serve low-income patients

Kaiser Permanente will fund specialty care coordination for hundreds of patients in Washington over the next three years

Kaiser Permanente in Washington announced this month a **\$725,000 grant** to support Project Access Northwest's **Specialty Care Coordination Program**, with funds to be distributed over a three-year period.

Recent studies reveal that more than 785,000 people in Washington live in poverty, and 428,000 did not have health insurance in 2021. People with difficulty accessing specialty care may not receive equitable health care.

Project Access Northwest collaborates with the health care community to meet the needs of low-income and uninsured individuals with limited access to specialty care. Our care coordinators help patients navigate the complex health care system and connect them with compassionate doctors willing to provide the specialty services they need.

"Kaiser Permanente doctors and clinicians have donated their time to provide hundreds of visits for Project Access Northwest patients per year, including 197 in 2021," said Christine Chauvet-Pizzute, MD, senior director of specialty care at Kaiser Permanente in Washington. "We are proud that this funding will add more providers to the specialty care network each year for three years, adding hundreds of new appointments to serve patients and contribute to better health outcomes in these counties."

"With this three-year grant, Kaiser Permanente has made a significant investment in the health of our community," said Gary Renville, executive director of Project Access Northwest. "We are proud to partner with Kaiser Permanente on the critically important work of improving health care access for the most vulnerable patients who so desperately need care."

Kaiser Permanente has provided more than \$1.7 million in funding for Project Access Northwest since 2016, in support of our mission to improve community health by connecting those most vulnerable to vital health care services.



Prathiba Pinnamaneni, Sr. Community Health Program Manager at Kaiser Permanente of Washington, announced the grant at our recent Leadership Circle meeting.

Connecting patients to the specialty care they need

Vulnerable patients in need of specialty care are referred to Project Access Northwest from primary care providers at **Federally Qualified Health Centers**, including **Country Doctor Community Clinic, HealthPoint, International Community Health Services, Neighborcare Health, Sea Mar Community Health Center, and Seattle Indian Health Board** in King County; **Peninsula Community Health Services** in Kitsap County; and **Community Health Center of Snohomish County and Sea Mar Community Health Center** in Snohomish County.

Project Access Northwest works with all of the region's major health care systems and a network of more than 1,760 volunteer providers in King, Kitsap, and Snohomish counties to connect those who are referred to appropriate care in more than 50 specialties — **all at no cost to the patient.**

Since 2006, Project Access Northwest has provided specialty care access to more than 43,000 low-income or uninsured individuals, living at or below 300% of the federal poverty level.

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Gary Renville

Executive Director
Project Access Northwest

Leadership Circle event explored impact of missed cancer screenings



After two years of virtual engagements, we were thrilled in July to host our Leadership Circle event at the historic Washington Hall, located on the south side of Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood.

Executive Director Gary Renville welcomed our guests and graciously thanked them for making the effort to be there in person. It was wonderful to see so many of our friends in attendance, including **Verdant Health Commission, Kaiser Permanente, UW Medicine, Companis, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research, Northwest Kidney Centers, Genentech** and others.

He then turned the focus to the recently released image from the James Webb Space Telescope, noting the many layers of stars and galaxies we can see — and how each layer supported the next. Ultimately, he likened the many layers from that image to the many moments and people that have helped shape Project Access Northwest into the organization it is today.

"We know that the start happened around many a conference table to discuss potential solutions to the challenge of accessing specialty services for low-income, uninsured and vulnerable patients ... and we are inspired by all the stars in our own orbit."

We were privileged to have curated a panel discussion, with the help of **Ryan Whisnant**, of American Cancer Society, and **Paul Castonguay**, Director Healthcare Market Seattle & Alaska at Genentech, about the impact of missed cancer screenings, both on our clients and our hospital partners. The panel was moderated by **Greg Scully**, of 501Commons. The panel experts included **Vicky Fang, MD**, University of Washington Medicine; **Jovanna McKinney**, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center; and our own Operations Nurse **Andrea Castell, RN**. The knowledge and passion our panelists showed about this important and timely topic was truly inspired.

As with each Leadership Circle Event, we like to take a moment to spotlight someone who works closely with us to help strike down barriers to health care. This year, we invited **Martha Hopley**, a Project Access Northwest social worker and care coordinator, to share her story.



About the Leadership Circle

The Project Access Northwest Leadership Circle is a group of our most committed donors who partner with us in time, talent and treasure. They are thought leaders, donors, friends and powerful advocates of our organization.

To learn more about how you can become a member of our Leadership Circle and make an impact in the access to health care in our region, please contact Michael Welke, interim Director of Development, with any questions: michaelw@projectaccessnw.org or 206.858.4191.

Special event for committed donors



Welcome new staff members



Calisa Grant

Calisa Grant — our first staff member to reside in New York, specifically Brooklyn — joined our staff as a new **care coordinator** in early April. She will focus her care coordination work in Snohomish County, with the following medical specialties: ENT, GYM, Urology, GS, Hand/Plastics, General Surgery, Pulmonary Medicine, and Nephrology.

Calisa has a background rich in community outreach and care coordination. In high school, she worked with Ground Work for Success, where she gained first-hand experience with social services and learned what community means. She traveled to New Orleans and helped families directly impacted by Hurricane Katrina. These valuable experiences ignited her passion for community work.

Previously, she worked as a care coordinator with Seamans Society for Children and Families, working directly with foster children aged 3–13 to coordinate mental health care and other vital services throughout New York City.

Outside of work, Calisa enjoys spending her time out on her stoop, talking with friends and passersby, especially during the summer months. If there's a neighborhood festival, you are guaranteed to find her there. Calisa spent a few years on the pitch, playing both soccer and rugby, but she has retired her cleats!

Noel Scott joined our staff as a new **care coordinator** in early April. Noel recently relocated from Texas to Indiana.

Noel will focus her care coordination efforts in King and Snohomish counties, specializing in Podiatry, Endocrinology, Colorectal, DentistLink, Infectious Disease, Neurology/Neurosurgery, and Dermatology.

Noel comes to Project Access Northwest with a passion for infectious disease, with a long-term goal of landing a career as a public health advisor with the World Health Organization. She hopes to gain a better understanding of health terminology and learn more about the provider's perspective.

Noel's interest in infectious disease was inspired when she was watching the television program *Chasing Mummies*. One episode focused on disease — and the seed was planted.

Noel attended Indiana University, where she studied global health. She has a strong background in care coordination that dates to her time as a case manager for patients living with HIV. She learned to understand the needs and concerns of each of her patients — always keeping in mind the sensitive nature of the work she is doing, with empathy at the forefront of every interaction.

Noel appreciates any time she can get outdoors and hike. She never has to hike alone, as she has a cat who loves to hike! If there isn't time for hiking, she loves spending time with her friends.

We are grateful to have Calisa and Noel join our organization. We know their dedication and experience in care coordination will help our most vulnerable neighbors get the health care they deserve.

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OUR MISSION

Project Access Northwest will improve community health by connecting those most vulnerable to vital health care services.

We invite your comments and questions.

Visit projectaccessnw.org to learn more.