

# Notes

## Spiritual Care Service Newsletter

PROVIDING SPIRITUAL SUPPORT TO PATIENTS, FAMILY MEMBERS, AND STAFF

SPRING/SUMMER 2016

### Volunteer Spotlight | Marge Oishi

by Rev. Libby Boatwright



Since 2011, Marge Oishi has served as a Buddhist Spiritual Care volunteer, a member of the Volunteer Coordinating Council, and a volunteer trained to offer and complete Advance Health Care Directive for patients. I had the privilege of speaking with her about her time here at Stanford Health Care.

#### **How did you get involved with volunteering at Stanford?**

My husband and I moved to Sunnyvale from Marin County 10 years ago after retirement. We joined the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple when Rev. William Masuda was then the minister. He was instrumental

in getting the Buddhist community involved with the Spiritual Care program at Stanford. Several of our members were then volunteering here and since I felt comfortable in the hospital setting as a retired physical therapist, I decided to join them.

Recently, I was asked by the staff to assist with helping hospital patients complete the Advance Health Care Directives. I accepted because I felt that it is very important for everyone to think about all of the areas it addresses.

#### **What are some of the blessings of being a Spiritual Care Volunteer?**

Many times when entering a patient's room, I sense a feeling of apprehension from him/her. However, after explaining that I am a Buddhist Spiritual Care volunteer, big smiles and a sense of relief come from them. It is a wonderful feeling to sense that, especially

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**Stanford**  
HEALTH CARE

# Knowing Patients' Wishes Reduces Suffering

by Rabbi Lori Klein, Director



At every stage of life, people want a say in their medical treatment. They also want their decision-making methods respected whether that means following their individual choices or collective, family decisions. As spiritual care providers, we see patients, families, and staff

are more peaceful when the patients' wishes and values are followed. Too often, we witness suffering when family members or staff know a patient is receiving treatments at the end of their life that the patient would not want. Most Advance Healthcare Directives are too vague to guide the healthcare team.

The Spiritual Care Service is introducing a new method called What Matters Most, or Stanford Letter for Stanford

patients to record their wishes. Developed in consultation with community groups by Dr. VJ Periyakoil of Stanford Medicine, this easy-to-understand Letter allows the patient to make specific care choices. When we discuss the Letter with patients, we can talk about what relationships patients want to heal or honor, which milestones they want to reach, and what matters most to them. These are core spiritual concerns for all of us.

Anyone who wants to convert the Letter into an Advance Directive can do so easily by following the online instructions or attaching the Letter to an Advance Directive. We believe using the Stanford Letter will allow patients to feel more in control as they approach the most vulnerable time in their life.

To learn more about the Letter and complete one online, visit: [med.stanford.edu/letter/advancedirective.html](https://med.stanford.edu/letter/advancedirective.html) ■

# New Training Placements in Clinical Pastoral Education

by Rev. Landon Bogan, ACPE Supervisor & Associate Director for Clinical Pastoral Education



One of the core activities of our educational program is that of accreditation and certification through the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE). CPE students enroll to fulfill the educational requirements of

graduate schools, ordination committees, and professional licensing boards. The Summer internship is devoted to meeting the requirements for graduate students. The year-long residency provides the foundational education for professional roles in chaplaincy and spiritual care leadership.

This year, I am proud to announce the growth of our program for certifying professionals in chaplaincy and spiritual care education. First, we are starting a second-year

CPE specialization program with the addition of two post-residency Spiritual Care Fellows in Palliative Medicine and the Emergency Department. These fellows will build upon the basic chaplaincy skills introduced in the residency and deepen new skills specific to their specialty service areas. Second, we are expanding our Supervisory CPE course by adding another supervisory fellowship position. Our two supervisory fellows will be working toward certification as ACPE supervisors as they develop and test theories of supervision in the fields of personality, adult education, and theology. Together, we continue to grow through our mission to care, to educate, and to discover, and we are bringing great value to the field of professional certification and education. Please join me in welcoming our two new specialization fellows and our new summer interns.

## NEW SPECIALIZATION FELLOWS



**Alfred Amos, Spiritual Care Fellow in Palliative Medicine**, is from Agbor, Delta State of Nigeria and has been pursuing advanced studies in the U.S. since 2014. Alfred holds a Bachelor's degree in

Philosophy, Arts, and Divinity from the St. Joseph Major Seminary in Nigeria and two Master's degrees from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley. Fr. Amos is a Roman Catholic priest at St. Michael's Parish in Livermore, the parish chaplain for Knights of Columbus, and a volunteer priest in community hospitals. Alfred will finish his CPE residency at Stanford this Summer and enter his fellowship year. Fr. Alfred states, "I strongly feel called to the compassionate care for the sick, especially the dying and those who wrestle with end of life issues."



**Liz Hamill Howard, Spiritual Care Fellow in the SHC Emergency Department**, is a graduate of our 2015 Clinical Pastoral Education Residency class at Stanford Health Care. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree

from Dickinson College and a Masters of Music from the New England Conservatory of Music. After completing her CPE residency, Liz was selected as an interim chaplain in the ICU at SHC and has been engaged with the Letter Project led by Dr. VJ Periyakoil. Liz received her spiritual/formation training within Chagdud Gonpa, an international Nyingma Buddhist organization that upholds and preserves the arts, philosophy, and meditation practices of the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism. Under the guidance of Chagdud Khadro, Liz managed Dakini Music, a cultural preservation project which published audio collections of Buddhist educational materials. During this fellowship year, Liz hopes to explore Advance Care Planning for vulnerable populations in the ED, triggered-Palliative Medicine Interventions and Safety Checklists in the ED, and research literacy for Spiritual Care Specialists.

## 2016 SUMMER INTERNS



**David (Lowell) Chilton** just completed a year of Lutheran studies at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley. In the Fall, Lowell is moving to Concrete, Washington to serve as an intern pastor

and complete his Master of Divinity at Seattle University. Firmly rooted in the Lutheran tradition, growing up in the Southeastern United States, and living in Seattle for most of the last ten years, Lowell has developed a broad view of faith and spirituality, and a calling to ministry that bridges traditions. In his spare time, Lowell loves to read, cook fun meals, and mess around with computers.



**Emily Cohen** is a student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. For the past two years, she served as the Rabbinic Advisor for Bryn Mawr College Hillel and led Jewish teen trekking groups during summer breaks.

At Macalester College, Emily completed her Bachelor's and was a founding member of the Multifaith Council. She served as an outreach coordinator for the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life and interned at the St. Paul Interfaith Network. Before rabbinical school, Emily worked with an educational non-governmental organization NGO in rural China and with AmeriCorps in Minneapolis Public Schools. She is an avid musician, writer, and baker.

## 2016 SUMMER INTERNS CONTINUED



**Carol Herse** is returning to the Bay Area after completing her first year in the Master of Divinity program at Earlham School of Religion. A California native, Carol received a Bachelor of Arts in History and Biology from UC

Santa Cruz. A skilled horticulturist, she has owned and operated nurseries and assisted clients with landscape design. For seventeen years, Carol was deeply involved in canine search and rescue in the wilderness and disaster zones as a dog handler and trainer evaluating state and federal search dog tests. Carol has an unconventional religious background and values her participation in multiple traditions.



**Binh Tran** graduated in 2014 from Divine Word College in Epworth, Iowa, which he attended for discerning and pursuing priesthood. Binh is currently working on his Master of Divinity degree at Catholic

Theological Union in Chicago. As part of his formation, he believes that the CPE program will be a treasured opportunity for him to learn how to listen and empathize with people's struggles. One of his mottos is, "You can't appreciate the good days without the bad ones." Besides theological and spiritual readings, Binh also enjoys reading mystery and detective books in his spare time.



**Erik Khoobyarian**, a native of San Jose, is a Master of Divinity student at Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey. Erik graduated from Santa Clara University School of Law, and spent 12 years practicing

law in San Jose before being called to seminary and ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As a litigator, Erik focused on understanding his clients' needs and journeying with them through uncharted territory. He views his ministry very much the same way. Erik enjoys traveling with his family and friends, taking photos of nature, cooking, and gathering diverse people around the table for meals and conversation.



## Mark Your Calendar

### EID CELEBRATION

July 12, 4:00pm–6:00pm  
Hospital Atrium

### SUKKOT

October 16–23  
Plaza behind the Cancer Center

### SOUNDING THE SHOFAR

September 29, 12:00pm  
Hospital Atrium

# Journeying Through a World Within the World

by Father Samuel Oppong Nkansah, BCC



The hospital can be a world of its own where real but rare happenings perform a synchronic dance, altering our streams of experience. I love this pastoral journey through a world within the world.

In the hospital, every patient, loved one, and staff takes

a journey from the known to the unknown. It can be guided by a GPS to direct us and fill us with well-springs of emotion, spirit, mind, and body. As a chaplain, I accompany people to set their own GPS in the most hopeful manner possible for them.

A native of Ghana, West Africa, and the first of seven children, my upbringing took place within an extended family. Interactions with peers offered me the chance to participate in several religious practices (Christian, Muslim, and indigenous traditional) and community festivities. My schooling was interspersed with

hunting, farming, and helping my maternal uncles brew gin. I learned about herbal medicine and the art of storytelling from my grandparents. Their stories presented nature as a cosmic book. These stories taught me to be human, disciplined, patriotic, and imaginative. Today, I love traditional drum-language, singing, and cultural dancing, all of which enliven my public celebration of the Eucharist.

The search for meaning took me through Teachers' College of Education and Catholic seminaries in Ghana and Nigeria. While pursuing my Master's in Philosophy at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley, California, I volunteered for chaplaincy work at St. Luke's Hospital, San Francisco. My interest grew in pastoral care for the sick. I also came to Stanford Health Care with pastoral and academic experience from the San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, and Alta Bates Summit Medical Center in Berkeley. ■

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## Volunteer Spotlight continued from page 1

if followed up by a pleasant conversation, interchange of stories, thoughts, and ideas.

When talking to patients, I feel that I learn so much more from them about myself and the world than I could ever teach them. I feel that they are giving me a gift.

### **Are there any stories you wish to share that were especially meaningful?**

They are all meaningful whether there is sadness about their condition or if there is a good prognosis. Just being able to share in their moment is meaningful to me.

### **What are some of the challenges to your work?**

Logistics is the greatest challenge; getting to the hospital in heavy traffic, trying to connect with a patient who is busy with other services, or is asleep.

On the other hand, the staff and volunteers at Stanford are the best! They are always pleasant and helpful, making it easier to offer my services.

*Thank you Marge for your faithful service to our patients, staff, and fellow volunteers! ■*

# 190 volunteers

helped provide spiritual care this past year. Jewish, Catholic, Interfaith, Interdenominational Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and Episcopal volunteers representing 41 religious traditions and 23 languages visited patients and their loved ones, assisted patients with Advance Directives, and sat vigil with dying patients.

## Special thanks to:

- Our Volunteer Coordinating Council members Brenda Avery, Penny Barrett, Mahesh Bhavana, Tom Brosnan, Sherifa Ibrahim, Tom Jackson, Abdul Majid, Marge Oishi, Jonathan Parnell, Pamela Ranganath, and Isabel Tagle who performed innumerable tasks to produce volunteer training events and holiday celebrations, help set policy and schedules, and mentor new volunteers.
- The long-serving volunteers who mentor new volunteers in their first patient visits.
- Jewish Chaplaincy volunteers who offered treats and ritual items during Purim and Passover.
- Sammy Rahmatti for videotaping volunteer training sessions.
- Muslim volunteers who offered break-the-fast treats during Ramadan and created meaningful Eid celebrations.
- Ron and Elaine Andrews, Tom Brosnan, Kate Buckley, Teresa Budzich, Mark Busbin, Sue Sweeney, and Isabel Tagle for supporting our Catholic volunteers during a year of transition.
- Heida Ernest for distributing inspirational Care Notes on the hospital floor and mentoring new NODA volunteers.
- Advance Directive volunteers who trained for the “Stanford Letter Project” quality improvement study.
- Dave Bunker for producing an updated area clergy book.
- Christian volunteers who served nearly 900 people on Ash Wednesday.

To all of our volunteers who provided support **3,963 days**, visited **35,014 rooms**, met with **46,878 patients and family members**, and offered the Blessed Sacrament to **11,890 people**, we thank you.

## Of Beauty and Majesty

by Chaplain Bruce Feldstein, MD



In a 2006 Gallup poll of 1,004 adults, 33% of Americans said the following statement “applies completely” to them: “I have had a profound religious experience or awakening that changed the direction of my life.” (1)

I am discovering how responding to the call to healthcare and ministry means putting myself in

suffering’s way, sometimes in horror’s way. And yet, there is even more to be discovered.

Early in my year of chaplaincy training, I accompanied Father Hester to the bedside of a young woman about to receive a lung transplant. She was sitting bravely, surrounded by her family. When it came time for a prayer, Father Hester invited me to join hands next to him. I listened as her loved ones spoke, “What I appreciate about you is... I always remember... Please

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know... I wish for you... I hope for you... I love you.” Tears were shed by everyone, including by Father Hester! How unprofessional I thought at first until I looked at the others and saw their esteem for him going up, not down. In that moment, I realized that tears were not a sign of weakness. On the contrary. He stood with them

in the midst of all the emotional fire, with a courage and strength that allowed for tears. There the chaplain stood, grounded in that holy place of, “I am here with you,” a moment of sustaining beauty and majesty. ■

(1) *“When You Hear a Call to Your Life’s Work”*

*by Clare Ansberry, Wall Street Journal, 5/11/16*

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## An Oasis of Peace

by Spiritual Care Service Staff

The hospital chapel, located on the first floor outside the D1 patient unit, is a welcoming, calm space for expressions of diverse spirituality. It is shared by patients, families, and staff alike who come for meditation, prayer, or simply to sit and be. This past year, we have made some meaningful additions.

We have installed a small Tabernacle to contain the blessed Sacrament offered to our Catholic patients. We have affixed a Qibla sign to help our Muslim visitors direct their daily prayers toward Mecca. We have expanded our open bookcase to contain more holy books for people of many religious traditions. Dr. Al Spivak’s beautifully handmade colorful ceramic

bowl is now on display as a symbol of our ongoing commitment to multi-faith spiritual care. It was originally donated to The Jewish Chaplaincy at Stanford Medicine.

Stanford community members including Stanford University’s Father Xavier Lavagetto are now celebrating a weekly Catholic Mass on Wednesdays at 3:00pm. The Muslim community gathers for a weekly congregational prayer on Fridays at 1:15pm.

The chapel is always open. Come and visit. You are always welcome. ■





**Stanford**  
**HEALTH CARE**

**Spiritual Care Service**

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## Healthy Spirits and Resiliency

by Rev. Susan L. Scott



In the past few years, Spiritual Care Service has participated in more ways to help the staff with their resiliency and care of their souls. Currently, Lori Klein and Samuel Nkansah are working with staff members in an ICU to promote resiliency in stressful situations.

At least once a quarter, a chaplain in each patient unit plans a “Tea for the Soul” for the staff. It is an opportunity for the staff to take a short break, have a cup of tea and maybe a cookie, and just talk with each other about how it’s going. Our creative chaplains transform break rooms into a welcoming space using music, aromatherapy, tablecloths, battery-operated candles, flowers, and music video.

Schwartz Rounds is another way the hospital and Cancer Center provide support for staff. Schwartz Rounds is designed for staff to review cases and focus on how to take care of themselves. Frederico Borche-Gianelli and I participate in the planning committees

for these rounds. At the Cancer Center in South Bay, Taqwa Surapati provides a spiritual care message, a breathing exercise, or a gratitude practice during morning huddles.

Occasionally, a nursing unit will have a difficult week and a chaplain will come to meet with the staff to help them express and process what happened. We are also available on a one-on-one basis when a staff member has a special need. There are times when staff members are surprised by a death of a colleague. Chaplains are available to meet with them and facilitate a memorial service if appropriate. ■