From The Heart

How much of our work, relationships, conversation and dedication takes its inspiration from the heart?
—By CEO, Lia Spiliotes

“Put your heart into it.”
“I just don’t have the heart to…”
“He’s such a big-hearted person.”
“I say this from the heart.”
“Follow your heart.”
“A good heart is better than all the heads in the world.”
“Wild thing, you make my heart sing.”

The language and inspiration that comes from the heart reminds us that our tickers are more than just vital organs. The heart is the vessel for much of what makes us human and humane. So, along with the usual medical and lifestyle reminders for heart health, we invite you to focus on the heart in other, non-medical ways.

We know through research that social connections, community activities, loving relationships and even pets are good for our hearts and our health. We know that to have a broken heart can be devastating – but that our hearts are strong, they can heal and move us forward.

Beyond the essentials of good nutrition and exercise, how else are you taking care of your heart? Do you have family and friends to share your lives with? Do you have passions, interests and activities that make your heart sing? Do you share yourself with your community, through volunteer work and community engagement?

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Mission Moment

Jignesh Mahida: Trust is the Most Important Thing in Health Care

When he first settled in the Berkshires in 2009, Jignesh Mahida found CHP while seeking health insurance help. Soon after, he became a CHP patient and in 2017, he was hired as a medical assistant at our Great Barrington Health Center.

Today, Jignesh is the first person to greet many CHP patients when they arrive for an appointment: he updates medical history, checks blood pressure, weight and temperatures. His work prepares health care clinicians for their patients’ visit.

When he’s not at his day job, Jignesh is at work operating Mountain View Motel in Great Barrington with his family. He grew up in Gujarat, India and was educated as an electronics engineer, but his plans changed and he immigrated to the
Donor Spotlight: Chez Nous  
*Community Night at Chez Nous French Bistro*

For Rachel Portnoy and Franck Tessier, a culinary couple and owners of Chez Nous Bistro in Lee, weekly Community Dinners during winter are their way of contributing. On winter Wednesdays, they translate their expertise of preparing delicious food in their charming restaurant into philanthropy by contributing their dinner profits to local non-profit organizations. On Jan. 22, almost 80 people turned out for a lovely evening in support of CHP. Diners enjoyed such specials as home-made pate, braised duck and a scrumptious white bean cassoulet.

“CHP is one of the organizations that we have always supported, so it was just natural that we would include CHP in a Wednesday dinner,” said Rachel. “We focus these nights on local organizations, and we try to be diverse in our reach often focusing on local families, and especially those serving kids. CHP is one.”

CHP is grateful to Rachel and Franck, and to Chez Nous staff, for their generosity and creativity in our community, and for their gift to CHP. If you have a creative way of giving back we’d love to hear about it. Contact Betsy Strickler, Chief Communications Officer, at BStrickler@CHPBerkshires.org

In a region rich with nonprofit organizations, generosity is delivered in creative and delicious ways.

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**Our Mission...**

*CHP’s mission is to improve the health of people throughout the Berkshires by delivering exceptional, compassionate health care.*

As a federally qualified health center, we care for patients and work with families whose needs are not always reimbursed by health insurance. Your support matters. Please donate today at chpberkshires.org/donate.
From The Heart
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February is American Heart Month, a time we are reminded to focus on the health of our hearts. After all, heart disease is the number one cause of death in the U.S. I urge you to do all you can to keep your tickers healthy and, well, hearty.

Every day at CHP I see proof that our hearts are in our work. Caring for our community comes from the heart. This month, please join us at CHP in taking care of the “heart” part of your heart. You will be all the better for it.

From the heart,
Lia Spiliotes, CEO

Mission Moment
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U.S. in 2001 to join his wife, Rita in Pennsylvania. He worked there for a medical supplies packaging business. A few years later, a Berkshire-based cousin and hotelier encouraged him to move to the Berkshires. In 2009, he and his family, including his parents, bought the Mountain View Motel. In 2014, Jignesh added a second job to his life: he became a certified nursing assistant at a nearby skilled nursing facility.

As a CHP patient and observer of CHP’s impact in our community, he knew this was where he wanted to work. In May 2017, he was hired.

“I was watching all of the ways CHP was serving the community. It was and is phenomenal,” said Jignesh, who is still a CHP patient. “These are very helpful people, and I believe I am helpful in caring for patients.”

At CHP, his priority is helping patients feel at ease. His easy manner and caring demeanor create a sense of calm and well-being that improve the patient experience.

But his CHP advocacy doesn’t end with the workday. One story he shares: A former motel guest had been preparing to move to Great Barrington for work, and he referred her to CHP for both insurance and health care.

“Now, when I go to buy wood pellets at the store where she works, I say hi to her, and we talk,” he said. “This is a small way that I serve my community.”

“Trust is the most important thing when you are working in health care.”

-Jignesh Mahida

“If you find it in your heart to care for somebody else, you will have succeeded.”

- Maya Angelou
By The Numbers:
Heart Health in the USA

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men, women, and people of most racial and ethnic groups in the United States.

- One person dies every 37 seconds in the United States from cardiovascular disease.
- About 647,000 Americans die from heart disease each year—that’s 1 in every 4 deaths.
- Heart disease cost the United States about $219 billion each year from 2014 to 2015. (This includes the cost of health care services, medicines, and lost productivity due to death and Coronary Artery Disease)
- About 18.2 million adults age 20 and older have coronary artery disease.
- About 2 in 10 deaths from coronary artery disease happen in adults less than 65 years old.
- In the United States, someone has a heart attack every 40 seconds.

https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts

CHP EXECUTIVE SPEAKER SERIES

We were thrilled to host Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services, Marylou Sudders, as our 2019 guest speaker sharing updates and insight from the statehouse. Her remarks were as poignant as they were entertaining.

“I am humbled that not even with $19 billion is every child safe from harm; that four people die every day in this great commonwealth from an opioid overdose; that there are profound disparities in health and educational outcomes depending on one’s zip code.”

-Marylou Sudders

Gifts & Grants

CHP Receives Local Cultural Council Grants to provide unique experiences for children. As the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, the Local Cultural Council (LCC) Program enriches the cultural life of cities and towns across Massachusetts.

Thanks to the generosity of the Alford-Egremont Cultural Council, the Stockbridge Cultural Council and the West Stockbridge Cultural Council CHP is able to partner with the Berkshire Botanical Garden to present a parent-child gardening series in late Spring.

Play N Learn is a free CHP parent-child pre-school program that helps children transition to pre-school. Due to the grants offered by the LCC program our Play N Learn class enjoyed local educational field trips. The Lee Cultural Council and the Mount Washington Cultural Council made a visit to the Baby Animal exhibit at Hancock Shaker Village possible. And the Lenox Cultural Council funded a field trip to Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.

CHP is Awarded an Expansion Grant from the Massachusetts Medical Society and Alliance Charitable Foundation

CHP has expanded the geographic reach and impact of our Family Services programs to the Central Berkshire Region due in large part to a generous $10,000+ grant received from the Massachusetts Medical Society and Alliance Charitable Foundation. Through a partnership with the Dalton Community Recreation Association (CRA), CHP Family Services is now offering services and programs on-site at the CRA to positively impact the social determinants of health for area children and families. Free family support programs and services include a clothing exchange, emergency food, diapers, case management, parent education and workshops, Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Baby Box workshops, and the Western Massachusetts Mobile Food Bank. Contact us for more information regarding our expanded services. 413-528-0457.

Community Health Programs invites you to share your CHP story.

We are seeking medical and dental patients, Family Services clients, and others to tell their stories about their experience with CHP. Our communications/marketing team, staff and board of directors rely on your feedback to help us raise awareness about our work. Written testimonials, video interviews, a "patient story" for our website or newsletter helps bring our work alive in the community.

If you are a patient or client and willing to participate, or if you have questions, please contact Betsy Strickler, at bstrickler@chpberkshires.org, or call 413-528-9311 xt 1178  Thank you!
Thanks to a MassHealth grant of nearly $150,000 Berkshire Fallon Health Collaborative (BFHC) clients will benefit from enhanced nutrition services with transportation assistance and improved food access options through a new CHP Family Services program. The Flexible Services Nutrition Program’s expanded nutrition education, cooking classes, food pantry access, food vouchers and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) memberships will broaden CHP Family Services’ outreach to BFHC members. People experiencing food insecurity, individuals with high A1C levels and high risk pre-natal women will benefit.

“We are now participating even more directly in looking at the social and environmental factors impacting health, both in our medical practices and inside Family Services,” said Lia Spiliotes, CEO of CHP. “This new program, in partnership with BFHC, is a tool for helping people in our community whose health may be compromised due to nutrition challenges and food access issues.”

The MassHealth Delivery System Reform Incentive program grant was awarded to BFHC. The larger portion of the grant for nutrition assistance is being implemented by CHP Family Services, a collaborative partner; other local agencies received funds to assist with housing services. BFHC is the region’s Accountable Care Organization, which administers health coverage for MassHealth patients. BFHC members interested in participating may call 413-528-0457.

The Nutrition Club

Food, Farms & Nutrition:
Grant Expands Access to CHP Nutrition Programs, Food and CSA Farm Shares

“Healthy food and good nutrition can influence overall health and wellness. This program is a great help to our team in reaching more people with services – and good food.”
— Michelle Derr, CHP Family Services Director

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