

Partners' 23rd Tribute Dinner Honors Two Remarkable Healthcare Leaders

Magic was in the air at the Beverly Hilton Hotel as *Partners' 23rd Annual Tribute Dinner* got underway. Following days of dismal weather, the afternoon was bright and cheery, which set an inviting stage for the evening to follow. Guests were clearly anticipating the event that has become one of California's premier health care-related recognition events and the two titans to be honored as focus of the festivities.

After posing for *Partners'* photographer, each of the just under five hundred guests wound their way to the outdoor Wilshire Garden patio for late afternoon conviviality before heading to the International Ballroom for a warm "welcome" from *Partners'* Board Chair Katherine Kirchhoff and *Partners'* President and CEO, June Simmons.

Early remarks noted the numerous organizations that had made the evening possible after which the first recognition of the evening began. Introducing Johnese Spisso, sharing background on her accomplishments at UCLA, was Dr. Michael Steinberg, Professor and Chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He spoke at length in both warm and personal terms regarding Spisso's background and why she was a perfect recipient for the prestigious "Vision & Excellence in Healthcare Leadership" award.

This award is presented annually to a leader in California's health care community who has made a significant impact on aspects of care. Spisso was the 23rd recipient of this annual award.

continued on next page



Johnese Spisso, President of UCLA Health, CEO of UCLA Hospital System and Associate Vice Chancellor of UCLA Health Sciences was honored with *Partners'* prestigious "Vision & Excellence in Healthcare Leadership Award." Pictured from left to right: Jennifer Heenan, a Partner at Spencer Stuart and Chair of *Partners'* Dinner Committee., Dr. Michael Steinberg, Professor and Chair of the Department of Radiation Oncology in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, Johnese Spisso, President of UCLA Health, June Simmons, CEO of Partners in Care Foundation, and Katherine Kirchhoff, Managing Director at Cain Brothers and Chair of *Partners'* Board of Directors



Robert K. Ross, MD, is President and Chief Executive Officer for The California Endowment. He was honored with *Partners* 2023 “Lifetime Achievement” Award. Pictured from left to right: Katherine Kirchhoff, Managing Director at Cain Brothers and Chair of *Partners*’ Board of Directors, Hector De La Torre, Executive Director of Gasol Foundation US, Robert K. Ross, CEO and President of The California Endowment, June Simmons, *Partners*’ CEO and President, and Jennifer Heenan, a Partner at Spencer Stuart and Chair of *Partners*’ Dinner Committee.

In remarks following Simmons presenting her with the award, Spisso said recognition from the Partners in Care Foundation is “an incredible honor, not only for me but for our whole organization. Everything that their mission stands for – the alignment of not only healthcare but the social determinants of health and providing care for all, particularly underserved populations – aligns with our mission at UCLA Health.”

In discussing Spisso’s selection as an honoree, *Partners*’ CEO and President June Simmons said “we have worked with UCLA Health for many years and have seen in Johnese Spisso a kindred spirit. Her belief that an organization needs to live up to its mission in serving the community is an impressive standard, and one we embrace wholeheartedly. She embodies what our Vision and Excellence in Healthcare Leadership recognizes.”

Spisso is a nationally recognized academic healthcare leader with more than 40 years of experience. She leads UCLA’s hospital system consisting of the UCLA Ronald Reagan Medical Center, UCLA Mattel Children’s Hospital, Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA, UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center, the expansive network of over 200 UCLA Health primary and specialty care clinics throughout Southern California, and the

UCLA Health Homeless Health care program and the Faculty Practice Group.

In addition to her leadership at UCLA, Spisso is active in the community and has served as the Los Angeles Community Chair for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society’s Light the Night Walk, as well as the Los Angeles Community Chair for the American Heart Association’s Go Red for Women Luncheon.

Of equal note that evening was the after-dinner presentation of *Partners*’ Lifetime Achievement Award to Robert K. Ross, MD, President and CEO of The California Endowment for his commitment to expanding equity and inclusion in the community. Dr. Ross is the third recipient of this distinguished honor in *Partners*’ twenty-five-year history.

Throughout his tenure as President & CEO at The California Endowment, Dr. Ross has advocated for and funded efforts to build a “Health for All” system across the state, ensuring prevention, community wellness, and access to quality health care for all Californians.

Introducing Dr. Ross to the audience was his longtime friend and colleague Hector De La Torre, Executive Director of Gasol Foundation US. A former member of the California State Assembly from 2004 to 2010, De La Torre spoke about Dr. Ross’ personal and professional passion for expanding access to healthcare.

In remarks following his acceptance of the award, Dr. Ross said, “An equity approach should be part of all healthcare delivery, whether it is COVID vaccines, diabetes management, asthma management or stroke prevention and care. There should be full and unapologetic inclusion.”

Through The California Endowment’s 10-Year Building Healthy Communities effort, Dr. Ross leads the foundation to support the engagement and leadership capacity of young people and community residents to fight for improved health and wellness at the community level. He also served as a founding board member of Covered California, which was responsible for the successful implementation of the Affordable Care Act in California.

“The selection of Dr. Ross for *Partners*’ Lifetime Achievement Award reflects his distinctive powerful role in boldly advancing the vision of transforming resources for underserved communities by supporting grassroots leadership for a healthier California and a healthier America,” said *Partners*’ President and CEO June Simmons. “We respect and celebrate the work he has done at every stage of his career to ensure that barriers to equity are removed and that access to services is available to all in need.”

As in past years, the evening was capped with a joyful musical celebration provided by national performers Jonathan & Nadira Butler. Video of each award being presented is available online, and can be found at:

Johnese Spisso:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=aw_-ZaF_kDI

Robert K. Ross, MD:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=mLgGVSjVx1c

Partners’ 24th Annual Tribute Dinner will take place once again at the Beverly Hilton Hotel next June 10, 2024.

Helping Seniors Track Medications for Potential Harmful Problems

Partners’ HomeMeds program offers a review for older adults taking more than five types of medications. One of our subscribers is Pathlights, a social care organization based in Palos Heights, Illinois. They utilize HomeMeds for their clients diagnosed with various chronic health conditions and that take multiple medications at once.

“Taking all this stuff, medications, OTC, drops, creams – they can be interacting with each other, and you don’t know about it,” a Pathlights care coordinator shares.

Through a HomeMeds coach home visit, the participant receives a summary of their medications. If a therapeutic duplication is discovered, it alerts a pharmacist for a review and issues a report including suggested modifications.

Emily Wetherholt, a pharmacist at Walgreens who is on the board of the Illinois Pharmacists Association, reviews medication lists for HomeMeds.

“About one-third of health errors are medication errors,” she says. “A lot of times a patient will have multiple prescribers but have the same pharmacy. More recently, people are told to use mail order or multiple pharmacies, so we may not be catching things.”

She highly recommends organizations to utilize HomeMeds to double check their client’s medications and reduce potential adverse effects.

Learn the full article here: bit.ly/3PstqXm

Donate Now
picf.org/donate

Partners at Work in the Community

When A Simple Pain Isn't Simple at All

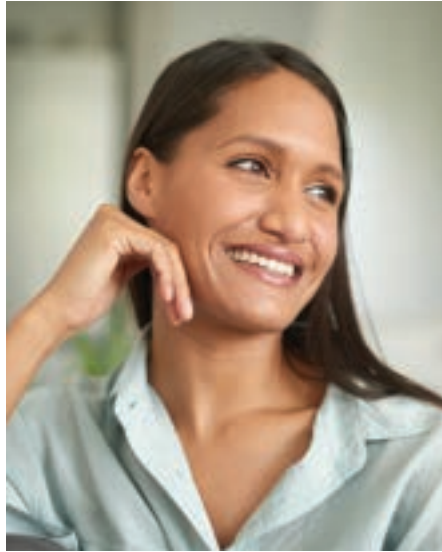
Grace was having a difficult year. Things in her life had been improving, but then, at twenty-eight-years-old, she began periodically experiencing intense stomach pains, nausea, and vomiting. The events were turning her world upside down and were so frequent she had begun to take the pain for granted.

Grace's health plan had initially referred her to the *Partners'* ECM program the year before in 2021. Her health challenges at the time included diabetes and hypertension. Her first conversations with a *Partners'* Care Coordinator helped her focus on chronic disease self-management as a means of dealing with those conditions.

Being part of the state's ECM program is highly beneficial. It provided Grace with a free glucose monitor to keep track of her blood sugar level and made available educational resources on diet and nutrition for diabetes. "Those resources really helped me stay healthy," she explained. "They also prevented any complications from the disease."

Grace's Care Coordinator also discussed with her the importance of annual eye exams for adults with diabetes and arranged a referral for her to see an optometrist. That visit checked for signs of retinopathy and diabetic macular edema, which is common for people with diabetes.

Things changed and started going downhill during June of 2022, when Grace began experiencing stomach pains that regularly landed her in the emergency room. A round of diagnostic imaging at the local hospital showed that a gallstone was present, and it was causing Grace's gallbladder to expand in size. It was that expansion causing Grace's bouts of pain, nausea, and vomiting.



What she had all along thought was "just stomach pain" turned out to be gallbladder inflammation and close to rupture.

Grace had been unsure about having the imaging done, being unsure about the cost. Her *Partners* Care Coordinator talked it through with her, and strongly encouraged her to have it done so she could find out what was behind the pain. According to Grace "Without that extra push," she said, "I might not have taken the next step and ended up in a very different circumstance. The *Partners* team really looked after me."

When her doctor saw what was visible in the diagnostic images, he immediately determined that Grace needed to go into surgery as

soon as possible because she was close to a ruptured gallbladder.

Grace was nervous and fearful about the surgery, but she knew it was the best decision for her health. The surgery was a success, and Grace has been recovering well. Only once in the past three months has she returned to the hospital, and that was to retrieve new medication. This has significantly reduced Grace's medical costs while improving her health.

According to Grace, "I was fortunate to have the *Partners* in Care Foundation helping me through these issues, and a Care Coordinator helped me advocate so strongly on my behalf. My doctor told us that if the complication had been overlooked any longer, it would have been life threatening."

These days Grace is feeling healthier than ever with an effective nutrition plan for her diabetes, and no more stomach pain or nausea since the successful gallbladder removal surgery.

Partners Offers Free Job Training and Incentives for California Caregivers

The demand for Community Health Workers in California is soon going to outstrip the number of people currently trained to provide those services. That will be a problem for the State's growing population of older and frail residents.

Recognizing this looming threat, the State of California has made funding available, and the *Partners* in Care Foundation expanded its Work Force Development Training Center. We made broadly available our latest curriculum, which focuses on classes and training geared towards individuals pursuing the profession of Community Health Worker (CHW).

This newest set of classes is offered through California's CalGrows Workforce Training and Development Program. In addition to the breadth of available classes and the combination of online and in-person opportunities, it is possible for learners to receive up to \$6,000 in financial incentives and career pathway development benefits.

Registration is now open for interested individuals.

Additional information and links to the online registration page are available at

www.picf.org/workforce-development-training-center/about/

"We want to train the workforce today that will be needed tomorrow," explained *Partners* in Care Foundation President and CEO June Simmons. "As California's population continues to get older and frailer, the need for Community Health Workers and related individuals just gets bigger."

The CalGrows initiative is specifically geared towards making courses available to non-IHSS caregivers who are working with older adults and people with disabilities, as well as helping support Californians on a path to a career in health care.

"As we look into the future, it is clear the current workforce is not large enough or prepared to provide the care that will be needed by a growing older adult population in California. CalGrows is one more step our agency is taking to grow the number of individuals

trained and prepared to deal with that challenge," explained Simmons.

"A key aspect of our program will be expanding existing asynchronous on-line training modules," explained Dianne Davis, *Partners'* VP responsible for the Workforce Development and Training Center.

"This will allow us to combine learning modalities including remote, self-study, and hosted small and large group meetings, as well as in-person trainings. We want individuals to be successful in their effort to learn, and we believe offering a variety of learning options will contribute to that success."

"Another important aspect," she continued, "is the ability for learners to collect stipends while they are studying. This removes a significant barrier for many."

CalGrows seeks to help build individual skill sets, job satisfaction, and professional growth opportunities, helping further careers and the retention of skilled, experienced non-IHSS caregivers for older adults and people with disabilities.

continued on next page



Partners' Workforce Development Training Center offers education on what it means to be a Community Health Worker and training on the practical skills needed to do the job effectively. *Partners* offers training in engaging e-learning modules covering the background knowledge base of community health work as well as foundational CHW skills and best practices.

“Participant learning is reinforced and enriched with live instructor led discussion groups,” explained Davis, “where they are challenged to think critically about how they will apply what they have learned in their roles as professional CHWs.”

Leveraging decades of experience in providing support to underserved populations, *Partners* has

developed a curriculum that will offer learners the perfect balance of important high-level information and practical skills. According to Davis, plans call for making the course available in Spanish the fall of 2023.

Partners in Care Foundation is one of seventy-six organizations across California that received a grant through the CalGrows Innovation Fund earlier this year.

Grants were awarded to diverse organizations with innovative ideas to offer training and incentives for the direct care Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) workforce and unpaid family and friend caregivers.

Life is Better at Home

Partners offers two valuable programs that help people at risk of nursing home placement stay in their home and community.

Partners' Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) keeps frail elders out of nursing homes

by arranging for essential supportive services that keep seniors safely at home. MSSP empowers the frailest of them to live independently at home in their communities. Our care managers, nurses, and social workers design, implement, and monitor customized non-clinical care



plans based on comprehensive assessments, then arrange whatever is needed for a dignified aging experience.

Our Home and Community-Based Alternatives (HCBA) Waiver allows Medi-Cal beneficiaries with high-level care needs to continue living at home or in the community by identifying and ensuring they receive services that will sustain their health and safety outside of an institution.

The HCBA Waiver provides care management services to persons at risk for nursing home or institutional placement. Care management services are provided by a multidisciplinary care team comprised of a nurse and social worker, which coordinates Waiver and State Plan

services (e.g., medical, behavioral health, In-Home Supportive Services, etc.), and arranges for other available long-term services and supports available in the local community.

Care management and Waiver services are provided in the Participant's community-based residence. This residence can be privately owned, secured through

a tenant lease arrangement, or the residence of a Participant's family member.

If you know someone at risk of needing nursing home care who might benefit from these services, please contact us today to apply for help or learn more about each program:

Phone: 818.837.3775

Email: mssp@picf.org or HCBA@picf.org

Or visit our website at www.picf.org

Recent Events

Informational Salons Kick Off *Partners'* 25th Anniversary Celebration

Three past and present members of *Partners'* Board of Directors generously hosted intimate salon events during the past few months raising awareness among agency supporters and friends about *Partners'* upcoming 25th Anniversary celebration in October.

At each, *Partners* President & CEO, June Simmons, talked about the agency's new initiatives, programs, and plans for the future. The venues also led to much reminiscing on the early days of *Partners* and the incredible journey that has led *Partners* to today's crucial role. Those in attendance clearly enjoyed the experience and *Partners* is grateful for the opportunity

to introduce new friends to our important mission and accomplishments.

Our sincerest thanks to current Board members Jerry Sullivan (and wife Wendy Sullivan), Jamey Edwards, and founding Board member Scott Gaudineer (and wife Leslie Gaudineer) for their gracious hospitality at the Sullivan home, the Brentwood Country Club, and the Annandale Country Club in Pasadena.

If you are interested in attending a future informational salon, please contact Karen Schneider, Vice President Development, at kschneider@picf.org.



Brentwood Country Club Salon, May 18, 2023



June Simmons, Sheila Minton, Sajid Ahmed, Jamey Edwards



Annandale Golf Club Salon, July 9, 2023



The Sullivan Home Salon, April 30, 2023



Gordon Johnson, Barbara Schnell, Leslie Gaudineer



Nancy Flores, Karen Schneider, Richard Flores



Partners in Care
FOUNDATION™

Driving the new shape of care

PO Box 25614
Pasadena, CA 91185
818-837-3775
www.picf.org



Donate Now
picf.org/donate

©2023 Partners in Care Foundation



25th Silver Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, October 29, 2023

The Luxe Sunset Blvd Hotel • 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM

Announcing Partners in Care Foundation's 24th Annual Tribute Dinner

Honoring:

Gustavo Valdespino

President & Chief Executive Officer of Valley Presbyterian Hospital

with the prestigious *Vision and Excellence in Healthcare Leadership Award*

and

Martha Santana Chin

Medicare and Medi-Cal President at Health Net

with the distinguished *Champion for Health Award*

June 10, 2024 • 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

The Beverly Hilton Hotel

To learn more or make reservations: www.picf.org/events/tribute-dinner/