

Touchpoints

A newsletter of the Kenneth B. Schwartz Center

*Dedicated to
strengthening the
relationship between
patients and
caregivers*

An evening of connection!

ON OCTOBER 23, a capacity crowd of more than 1,200 friends and supporters of the Kenneth B. Schwartz Center gathered for its eighth annual dinner at the Copley Westin Hotel. The evening is always a special time when guests unite around the mission of the Schwartz Center to bring compassion to the vanguard of health care. Chaired by three couples who are longtime supporters of the Center – Rich and Kris Doherty, Tom and Jackie O’Neill, and Steve and Peggy Tringale – the dinner was an enormous success.

Ellen Cohen, Board president, welcomed the audience and asked that they join the Schwartz Center in rededicating itself to a health care world that is “passionate for a purpose.” Board Chair Andrew Dreyfus followed, affirming the Schwartz Center’s charge “to quietly rewrite the rulebooks of American health care, putting compassion and connection back in the center of the patient care experience.” In recent months, the Center has allied with organizations responsible for accrediting health professionals and residency training programs, which now require

that clinicians learn skills to communicate and empathize with their patients. Dreyfus announced that this fall the Schwartz Center will award a competitively chosen grant to the hospital that presents the most creative proposal for teaching these skills to residents (*see article on page 4*). Dreyfus concluded with an update of the Schwartz Center’s programming activities, including the Schwartz Center Rounds® which now take place in 36 hospitals in nine states and have doubled in the past two years.

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Compassionate Caregiver Award, the dinner featured the video “Someone Who Cares: Three Portraits.” Guests quickly became immersed in the three powerful stories of patients whose caregivers have been nominated for the award. The video focused on Dan Fenn, whose mother was cared for by gerontologist Alan Abrams, MD, Cambridge Health Alliance; Peter and Tracy Norman, whose infant son was cared for by Beth Aldridge, RN, Children’s Hospital
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For your convenience, we have enclosed an envelope should you wish to make an end-of-year donation to the Schwartz Center. You may also donate by credit card via www.theschwartzcenter.org
Thank you for your support.



Compassionate Caregiver Award winner Paula Rauch, MD, Massachusetts General Hospital, with Board member and dinner chair Rich Doherty

— *An evening of connection*

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Boston; and Judie Jones, a formerly homeless woman whose primary care physician is Roseanna Means, MD, Women of Means. They each described what they felt made their caregivers compassionate. When the video ended, there were few dry eyes in the audience, and guests contemplated the importance

of caregivers who help patients and their families feel less alone and more hopeful during their struggles.

Following the video, Marilyn Yager bade farewell as the outgoing executive director of the Schwartz Center and announced that this year's dinner raised \$640,000, bringing the total for the year to \$1.1 million, a new record

for the Schwartz Center.

Dinner chair Rich Doherty, senior vice president of public affairs at Caritas Christi Health Care, took the podium to announce the winner of this year's Compassionate Caregiver Award, made possible by a grant from Lilly Oncology. Doherty, a longtime friend of Ken Schwartz, reminded us



Clockwise from top left:
 Schwartz Center Board member Tom Sellers (left) and Howard Koh, MD, Harvard School of Public Health
 Ben Vereen, guest performer

Standing left to right: Mike Corrigan, Aventis Pharmaceuticals; Rebecca Suk, MD, MGH; Kevin Heist, MD, MGH; Maureen Sullivan, Aventis; Ann Tousignant.

Seated left to right: Lecia Sequist, MD, MGH; Thomas Sequist, MD, Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates; Sarada Gurubhagavatula, MD, MGH

Finalists for the Compassionate Caregiver of the Year Award from left to right: Jim O'Connell, MD; Beth Aldridge, RN; Joanne Wolfe, MD; and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Breast Care Team Judi Hirshfield-Bartek, RN, Susan Cohen, Hester Hill Schnipper, MSW, and Susan Troyan, MD

Standing left to right: Lidia Schapira, MD, MGH; Michael Goldstein, MD, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; Ellen Fitzgerald, RN, MGH, and Schwartz Center Board liaison; Barbara Novak, Kathy Stark, Brian Denton, and David Moores, all of Pfizer.

Seated left to right: Alexie Cintron, MD, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; Kathleen Sheehan, RN, Brigham & Women's Hospital; Mary Buss, MD, Dana-Farber and BIDMC; and Stephen Reale
 Barbara Hazard Mumro, PhD, Boston College Connell School of Nursing (second from left) with MGH Institute of Health Professions staff (from left to right): Inge Corless, RN, Ann Caldwell, and Mary Carey

of Ken's "heightened appreciation of what he termed those 'moments of engagement' – that deep and real connection with his caregivers – that brought him healing and hope." After recognizing the four finalists for the award (see box, page 4), Doherty introduced the winner, Paula Rauch, MD, chief of the child psychiatry consultation service at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). Doherty quoted a

man grieving the loss of his wife, a longtime patient of Rauch:

"Paula is the source for much of our hope as a family; not the false hope that all would end well, but the real, enduring hope that she and our team of doctors would never, ever abandon us."

In her acceptance, Rauch, who developed the MGH program Parenting at a Challenging Time (PACT), stated that "Compassion is moving toward the suffering person not turning away from him or her." When asked why she chose to work with seriously ill children, young adults, or parents with cancer, Rauch answered: "Turning away would not make the pain feel less real to me. The only choice is to go to them and learn together what will make a difference."

Tom O'Neill, dinner chair and CEO of O'Neill and Associates, introduced the evening's entertainer, Tony and Emmy Award winner Ben Vereen, who sang several moving songs, including "The Impossible Dream" and recalled his own health care experiences following a severe car accident.

Steve Tringale, dinner chair and managing partner of Hinckley, Allen and Tringale Health

Strategies, wrapped up the exhilarating evening with the parting remark, "Tonight's success is not only a tribute to Ken, his vision, and the ongoing work of the Schwartz Center, but to all of us who recognize the need to renew ourselves and to do better."

OUR HEALTH CARE WORLD

I have twin passions – politics and health care. The past four years with the Schwartz Center have been a wonderful sabbatical from politics. Now I have made the difficult decision to return to Washington, DC, where I will participate in both arenas. My past columns have been about important health care trends and their relationship to the Schwartz Center's mission and programs. This last column gives me the chance to express my personal thoughts about the Center and its work.

In a sense sickness is a place more instructive than a long trip to Europe, and it's always a place where there's no company, where nobody can follow.

– Flannery O'Connor

I arrived at the Schwartz Center in October 1999 with enthusiasm and ideas but no real understanding of the patient experience. I had read Ken Schwartz's story, but now know that I did not really understand. This quickly changed during my early months as I listened to the stories and experiences of patients, clinicians, and the extended Schwartz Center family. I then began to truly comprehend the real loneliness of illness: although patients are surrounded by clinicians, health care personnel and often friends and family, they still feel vulnerable and isolated. Hence, the Center's first priority.

We are most deeply asleep at the switch when we fancy we control any switches at all.

– Annie Dillard

Doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals are bright and capable people whose desire to master the science of medicine can lend a false sense of control. As an observer of Schwartz Center Rounds at many different institutions, I have heard clinicians talk about their sudden realization when caring for a patient that they had doubts about what they were doing. The full sense of responsibility hits them and the need to regroup themselves in the human side of medicine must be learned and, in some cases, relearned. This need is intrinsic in the work of the Schwartz Center.

The notes I handle no better than many pianists. But the pauses between the notes – ah, that is where the art resides.

– Artur Schnabel

During my four years as Executive Director, I learned that the relationship between patients and their caregivers – those moments of connection and compassion – are the "pauses" between the notes. The desire to help people motivates each new generation of health care professionals. Those who miss the "pauses" lose their direction and often burn out. But when they find those moments, they feel re-engaged. Most importantly, they begin to pierce the isolation and fear that are so much a part of the patient experience.

I have been honored to work with the Center's Board and dedicated staff and a truly wonderful group of friends and supporters. I believe we share the view of Dr. Francis Peabody who said, "The secret to the care of the patient is 'caring' for the patient." My work here has challenged me in a way that no other job has and the experience has given me a fuller and more meaningful life.

I thank you for your commitment to our mission and for being a part of the Schwartz Center's success. With my heartfelt gratitude,

Marilyn Yager

Marilyn Yager
Executive Director

Touchpoints

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COMPASSIONATE CAREGIVER OF THE YEAR AWARDEE 2003: PAULA K. RAUCH, MD

The Kenneth B. Schwartz Center established the annual Compassionate Caregiver Award in 1999 to honor caregivers in Massachusetts who display extraordinary compassion in caring for patients. Support for the award is provided by Lilly Oncology.

Since finishing her fellowship in child psychiatry, Paula Rauch, MD, has devoted her career to caring for children and families facing life-threatening illness. Dr. Rauch, chief of the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Child Psychiatry Consultation Service, founded Parenting at a Challenging Time (PACT), a unique parent guidance program that provides individual and group parenting support by expert child psychiatrists and psychologists for cancer patients, their spouses and children. Dr. Rauch takes the time to talk with families, offer perspective, and remind people that in the face of sadness and terror, there is hope. A physician close to Dr. Rauch said, "Ask yourself who in the health care industry is helping to replace terror with hope. The hope that your kids will remember you; the hope that they will take something positive away from the experience; and most of all, the hope that your kids will love life and not feel cheated. It's Paula Rauch who is providing hope and we are all better for it."

Congratulations to the four finalists for the award who are also distinguished by their extraordinary contribution to compassionate caregiving:

- **Elizabeth S. Aldridge, RN**, a nurse in the Inpatient Oncology Unit at Children's Hospital Boston who cares for severely ill children and infants;
- **Beth Israel Deaconess Breast Care Team**, a multidisciplinary group that offers a complete range of diagnostic and treatment services to women with breast cancer;
- **James J. O'Connell, MD**, president of Boston Health Care for the Homeless, a doctor who provides ongoing care to many men and women who live on the streets of Boston; and
- **Joanne Wolfe, MD, MPH**, a pediatric oncologist and hematologist at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Children's Hospital Boston who treats children with life-threatening illnesses.

See www.theschwartzcenter.org for more information on the award finalists and winner.

To receive a copy of the video "Someone Who Cares: Three Portraits," please call (617) 724-4746 or email schwartzcenter@partners.org.

BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER RECOGNIZED FOR RESIDENCY TRAINING

In June the Schwartz Center announced an exciting new initiative to bolster recent regulatory efforts to teach the next generation of physicians to communicate more empathically with patients. In 2002 the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) instituted new requirements on communication competencies for residency training programs. The Schwartz Center's Call for Proposals – sent to every residency training program in New England and every hospital conducting Schwartz Center Rounds – offered \$35,000 to the most creative but realistic proposal that responds to the new requirements. A group of five Schwartz Center Programming Committee members and two outside experts from the ACGME and Association of American Medical Colleges reviewed the 13 proposals received and chose Boston Medical Center (BMC) for the award. The proposal involved a collaborative effort among the Departments of Medicine and Otolaryngology and the Office of Graduate Medical Education. The program, which could be a national model, will build on existing BMC curricula in communication skills and will be taught to all 651 BMC trainees. For more information on the award, visit www.theschwartzcenter.org