

Appointments

South County Health appoints four providers to oncology service line

WAKEFIELD — As South County Health recently announced the appointment of four providers across its oncology service line, strengthening capabilities in medical, radiation, and surgical oncology.



Nancy McKinney, MD

Medical Oncology

NANCY MCKINNEY, MD, a board-certified hematologist and medical oncologist who has been caring for patients in the Cancer Center as a locum provider since October 2024, has officially accepted a permanent position with South County Health.

Dr. McKinney has over 20 years of oncology experience, including clinical roles at Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center, and the

Hudner Oncology Center at Saint Anne's Hospital.

With a renewed focus on continuity and expanded access, South County Health also welcomed **MICHELLE VIVEIROS, DNP**, an advanced practice provider with over 25 years of healthcare experience, with a strong background in oncology nursing and a patient-centered approach.



Michelle Viveiros, DNP

Radiation Oncology

JAMES ASSIF, MD, a radiation oncologist, will join the oncology team in August. Dr. Assif will work at South County Health Radiation Therapy, further expanding access to expert radiation services in our community.

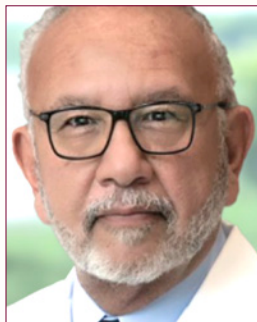


James Assif, MD

Surgical Oncology

Additionally, long-time medical staff member **N. JOSEPH ESPAT, MD**, has accepted a position as

surgical oncologist at South County Health. Trained at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Dr. Espat has more than 35 years of surgical experience and held various leadership roles, including most recently serving as the Chair of Surgery Department and Chief of Surgical Oncology at Roger Williams Cancer Center. He will officially join the team in August. ❖



N. Joseph Espat, MD

AMA announces leadership roles for 2025–2026

CHICAGO — The American Medical Association (AMA) introduced the 21 members of its Board of Trustees for the coming year following elections held during the annual meeting of the AMA House of Delegates. They are:

BOBBY MUKKAMALA, MD, an otolaryngologist from Michigan, was sworn in as AMA president for a one-year term. He succeeds **BRUCE A. SCOTT, MD**, an otolaryngologist from Kentucky. With the conclusion of his presidential term, Dr. Scott is the AMA immediate past president.

WILLIE UNDERWOOD III, MD, MSc, MPH, a urologic surgeon from New York, was voted president-elect of the AMA. Dr. Underwood will become AMA president in June 2026.

DAVID H. AIZUSS, MD, an ophthalmologist from California is the new chair of the AMA Board of Trustees.

TOLUWALASÉ A. AJAYI, MD, a pediatrician, adult and pediatric palliative medicine physician, and clinical translational researcher from California, is the new chair-elect of the AMA Board of Trustees. ❖

Recognition

Yashaswini Singh, PhD, named 2025 Aspen Ideas Health Fellow

PROVIDENCE – **YASHASWINI SINGH, PhD**, assistant professor of health services, policy and practice at the Brown University School of Public Health, has been named a 2025 Aspen Ideas Health Fellow by the Aspen Institute.

Its 2025 Fellows, a group of 100+ leaders from some 71 cities in 26 states in the US and four other countries around the globe. Nominated by senior Aspen Institute staff, Aspen Ideas: Health advisors, previous Fellows, and many others, these trailblazers were selected for their significant accomplishments and proven ability to transform ideas into action.

“I am excited to bring my ideas about the corporate transformation of medicine to the Aspen Ideas fellowship,” Dr. Singh said. “This year’s conference theme, Payoff: Investing in Health, closely aligns with my research interests and expertise that examines how market forces, such as health care consolidation and private equity investments, shape health care delivery and access.”



[PHOTO COURTESY OF KENT HOSPITAL]

Total Joint Center at Kent awarded The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Advanced Total Hip and Knee Replacement Recertification

WARWICK — The Total Joint Center at Kent Hospital announced that it has again earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Advanced Total Hip and Knee Replacement Recertification. The recertification follows a rigorous, unannounced on-site review, during which Joint Commission experts assessed compliance with advanced disease-specific care standards, including the use of evidence-based clinical practices, coordinated multidisciplinary care, and patient education and outcomes tracking.

“The Gold Seal of Approval® is a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to providing safe and effective patient care,” said **JENNIFER LA LUZ**, Executive Director of Operations at Kent Hospital. “This recertification reaffirms our dedication to delivering outstanding orthopedic outcomes and our ongoing efforts to meet the highest standards of care for our patients.”

“This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire team,” said **BRANDON LENTINE**, Medical Director of the Total Joint Center. “We are honored to receive this recertification and will continue to strive for excellence in joint replacement care.”

The Joint Commission's Advanced Certification in Total Hip and Knee Replacement is awarded in collaboration with the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons and is considered the premier credential for joint replacement programs in the United States. ❖



[PHOTOS: BROWN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH; ASPEN INSTITUTE]

In June she joined more than 100 Fellows from around the world for the Aspen Ideas health conference in Colorado: a renowned event dedicated to elevating thought leaders and driving progress in public health.

“I am thankful to my collaborators and students who have contributed to my work and thrilled to be a part of this important conversation alongside leaders who are reimagining what our health system can and should be,” Dr. Singh said.

For more information, visit: <https://www.aspenideas.org/articles/2025-aspen-ideas-health-fellows>. ❖

Recognition

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of RI recognized as one of the 50 most community-minded companies in the US

PROVIDENCE — Points of Light, the world's largest organization dedicated to increasing volunteering, has named Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) a 2025 honoree of The Civic 50, which through an annual survey recognizes the top community-minded companies in the United States.

For more than a decade, The Civic 50 has served as the national standard for corporate citizenship and showcases how leading companies are moving social impact and community to the core of their business. This comprehensive survey for companies with annual revenues of at least \$1 billion evaluates the scale, sophistication and impact of their employee volunteering, community engagement and corporate philanthropy work.

"We're extremely proud to be among just 50 companies in the country to receive this prestigious recognition. It's especially meaningful to us because we are deeply rooted in Rhode Island and serving our communities is at the core of everything we do," said BCBSRI President and CEO **MARTHA L. WOFFORD**. "From investing in organizations that deliver school-based mental health support to assisting nonprofits building affordable housing to deploying hundreds of our associates for volunteer projects around the state, we are highly focused on fostering healthy communities."

Through its BlueAngel Community Investment program, BCBSRI actively partners with non-profit organizations across the state to support their efforts

to advance the health and well-being of Rhode Islanders. Focus areas include affordable housing, food security, and mental health of children, families, and older adults.

In 2024, BCBSRI associates gave 9,293 volunteer hours' worth an estimated \$292,000. All together last year, the company's philanthropy benefited 265 non-profits and an estimated 264,000 Rhode Islanders.

Last year, BCBSRI held its 13th annual Blue across Rhode Island day of service. More than 550 associates fanned out across the state in organized teams and spent the workday completing projects for organizations that applied for volunteer help. Blue across Rhode Island is one of the largest company-sponsored volunteer events of its kind in the state.

Another annual BCBSRI community initiative is the RI Life Index, a survey that gathers Rhode Islanders' perceptions about their ability to be healthy and well. In 2024, for the sixth consecutive year, the survey explored such topics as affordable housing, food security, cost of living, job opportunities, and education. The Index, a partnership with the Brown University School of Public Health, guides BCBSRI's philanthropy and its results are shared with elected officials, community advocates and nonprofit organizations, many of which serve on the Index's advisory coalition.

"Being named to The Civic 50 reflects our deep commitment to community and our desire to have a meaningful social

impact," said **CAROLYN BELISLE**, vice president of corporate social responsibility at BCBSRI. "Our focus on philanthropy and volunteering strengthens not only who we are as a company but also how we serve our members and neighbors every day. We're grateful to our colleagues who generously commit their time and energy and to the community-based organizations with whom we partner to improve Rhode Islanders' quality of life."

JENNIFER SIRANGELO, president and CEO, Points of Light, said, "In an ever-evolving landscape, companies are looking to ensure that they can meet the needs of their communities, customers, and stakeholders. Companies like Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island are leading the way in showing how social impact benefits their employees' well-being, strengthens the communities where they do business, and brings value and meaning to their work. Their efforts provide a model for others looking to bring the benefits of volunteering and social impact to their workforce and they're extremely deserving of this recognition."

The Civic 50 survey is administered by True Impact, and the results are analyzed by VeraWorks. The survey instrument consists of quantitative and multiple-choice questions that inform the scoring process. The Civic 50 is the only survey and ranking system that exclusively measures corporate community engagement. ♦

Recognition

Providence Veterans find way to serve again, this time through research

PROVIDENCE — Recently **KENNETH LEWIS** became the 5,000th Veteran from the Providence VAHCS to join the Million Veteran Program (MVP), the VA's largest research effort. MVP is working to improve Veteran lives by studying how genes, lifestyle, military experiences, and exposures affect health. More than 1,073,000 Veterans across the nation have already joined MVP.

"We are most grateful to the 5,000 veterans in VA Providence Health Care System, who have joined MVP. They are helping us make important discoveries toward improving Veteran health," said **SATISH SHARMA, MD**, the local site investigator and a professor of medicine at Brown University's Alpert Medical School.

In a statement, the Providence VA noted that, "Thanks to Veterans like Kenneth and the more than 1,073,000 Veterans nationwide, we understand certain health conditions better than ever before. Already, we have supported the largest genetic studies to date on posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), major depression, and heart disease. Other areas we're researching include tinnitus, cancer, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, Gulf War Illness, endometriosis, and suicide prevention." ❖



VA Providence's **Dr. Gaurav Choudhary** (left) and **Sarah Richer** (right) present Veteran **Kenneth Lewis** with a certificate of appreciation for being the 5000th Veteran from VA Providence to join the Million Veteran Program (MVP).

Drs. Kwon and Renaud named Health Policy Scholars by ACS

CHICAGO — The American College of Surgeons (ACS) has named 18 surgeons 2025 Health Policy Scholars. They attended the June Leadership Program in Health Policy and Management presented by The Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University in Waltham, MA.

Each scholarship included participation in the weeklong intensive course, followed by a year's service in a health policy-related capacity for the ACS and the surgical specialty society that is co-sponsoring the awardee.



Steve Kwon, MD



Elizabeth J. Renaud, MD

Representing Rhode Island this year are:

STEVE SUNG KWON, MD, MPH, MBA, FACS a surgeon at the Roger Williams Medical Center in Providence and recently promoted to Associate Professor of Surgery at Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine (Americas Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association Health Policy Scholar).

ELIZABETH J. RENAUD, MD, FACS, a surgeon at Rhode Island Hospital and Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence (New England Surgical Society Health Policy Scholar). ❖