CHA’s 98th Annual Meeting: Standing Up for Communities, Caring for Patients, Fighting for Fairness – Every Day, Every Hospital

The Connecticut Hospital Association welcomed more than 550 hospital CEOs, senior hospital administrators, physicians and other key decision makers, along with award winners and patients and staff who stood up for hospitals this year, to its 98th Annual Meeting, held June 28, 2016, at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington.

Outgoing Board Chairman Bruce Cummings, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, said Connecticut hospitals have achieved much over the last year in the areas of quality and patient safety, mental health, population health management, and as advocates for their patients, staff, and communities. He highlighted, among other things, the decreasing rates of serious safety events, a continued focus on issues related to health equity, and the successful outreach that has been made through the Connecticut Asthma Initiative.

“These are just some of the ways we are achieving better care for our patients and communities,” Mr. Cummings said. “They illustrate our collective vision for the future of better healthcare in Connecticut. They demonstrate our commitment to working together, and our determination in the face of many challenges.”

Mr. Cummings also thanked the patients and hospital staff who participated in CHA’s advocacy campaign and were recognized at the Annual Meeting as Hospital Champions, saying their contributions were an important part of the hospitals’ cooperative efforts to combat state budget cuts and taxes. That cooperation, he added, was crucial to the overall mission.

Incoming Board Chairman David Whitehead, Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer, Hartford HealthCare, thanked Mr. Cummings for his leadership over the last two years, saying that he has united Connecticut’s hospitals around the common goal of achieving a sustainable healthcare environment during turbulent economic times.

Mr. Whitehead also said he is aware that the turbulence is not over, and that his leadership – like Mr. Cummings’ – will be focused on those challenges.

“Over the next two years, we will contend with an election year, a new biennium budget, intensifying fiscal challenges facing hospitals, and a still rapidly changing healthcare landscape in Connecticut,” Mr. Whitehead said. “My pledge to you is two-fold: to continue our unified front, and to develop a Medicaid delivery model that is rational and supported. Our Connecticut hospitals continue to drive change, improve care, and reduce costs.”

Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA, highlighted how hospitals’ work in quality and patient safety is transforming care and setting Connecticut hospitals apart as leaders at a time when both the economic and healthcare landscapes are shifting.

“Patient care is safer because of Connecticut hospitals’ absolute commitment to changing culture and eliminating harm. And despite the challenging fiscal environment for hospitals, the commitment to safety as a core value never wavered, but instead has increased as we expand high reliability to other practice settings and we focus on sustainability.”

After the business meeting, which also included the presentation of the Annual Meeting awards, attendees heard from guest speaker Jon Meacham, the Pulitzer Prize-winning presidential historian and Contributing Editor at TIME. Mr. Meacham, who is a regular guest on Morning Joe, is the author of Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush, Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power, and American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 2009.

Describing the current presidential election as a “little vivid” and a “remarkable moment in American history,” Mr. Meacham said we can use the past to put the present in perspective as we struggle to understand a shifting and unpredictable political landscape.

“It is unquestionably an unconventional moment, and that makes people uneasy,” Mr. Meacham said.

One of the most important things to remember, Mr. Meacham said, is that great leaders, like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, were just regular human beings doing the best they could. What made them great, he argued, was that all of them, to varying degrees, mastered the means of communication during their era, and were able to admit and learn from their mistakes.

“The miracle of history is not that we were led in the past by these mythical giants but by real human beings,” Mr. Meacham said. “If they were human and they could do it, we are human and we can do it.”

America’s challenge, he said, is to remember that “we have always been stronger the wider we open our arms.”

CHA gratefully acknowledges the generous Annual Meeting sponsorship of our Platinum Sponsors, SKD Knickerbocker and Wells Fargo, Private Bank.
CHA Welcomes the Newly Elected Members of its Board of Trustees

At the CHA Annual Meeting, David A. Whitehead, Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer, Hartford HealthCare, began his two-year term as Chairman of the CHA Board of Trustees. He succeeds Bruce D. Cummings, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, who will now serve as Immediate Past Chairman.

Additionally, CHA members elected trustees and officers for the CHA 2016-2017 Board of Trustees. John M. Murphy, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, Western Connecticut Health Network, was elected Vice Chairman of the Board and Chairman of the Committee on Patient Care Quality. Christopher M. O'Connor, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Yale New Haven Health, was elected Treasurer. Peter J. Karl, President and Chief Executive Officer, Eastern Connecticut Health Network, was elected Secretary and Chairman of the Committee on Government. Patrick A. Chamel, President and Chief Executive Officer, Griffin Hospital, was elected DNS Board Chairman. Christopher M. Dadlez, President and Chief Executive Officer, Trinity Health - New England, was elected Chairman of the Committee on Population Health. Elliot T. Joseph, President and Chief Executive Officer, Hartford HealthCare, was elected Chairman of the Committee on Hospital Finance. Marna P. Borgstrom, Chief Executive Officer, Yale New Haven Hospital, and President and Chief Executive Officer, Yale New Haven Health, was elected Member At Large. Kurt A. Barwis, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bristol Hospital, was elected CEO Forum Chairman.

Newly elected or re-elected trustees include: Vincent G. Capece, President and CEO, Middlesex Hospital; Judith A. Carey, RSM, PhD, Board Member, Trinity Health - New England; Christopher Dadlez, President and Chief Executive Officer, Trinity Health - New England; William M. Jennings, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bridgeport Hospital; James Mitchell, PhD, Secretary, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital; and James E. Shmerling, DHA, President and Chief Executive Officer, Connecticut Children’s Medical Center.

Other members of the 2016-2017 CHA Board include: Rohit Bhalla, MD, Vice President, Quality & Chief Quality Officer, Stamford Hospital; Anne Diamond, JD, CNMT, Chief Executive Officer, UConn John Dempsey Hospital; Jeffrey A. Flaks, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Hartford HealthCare; Jennifer Jackson, President and CEO, CHA; Stuart G. Marcus, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, St. Vincent's Medical Center; Kevin A. Myatt, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, Yale New Haven Health; Colleen O. Smith, RN, Healthcare Consultant, Nursing Consulting Partners; Darlene Stromstad, President & CEO, Waterbury Hospital; and Chad W. Wable, President and Chief Executive Officer, Saint Mary’s Hospital.

CHA is grateful for their valuable service and important contributions.

CHA Awards Highlight Healthcare Leaders and Heroes

Middlesex Hospital; Lawrence + Memorial Hospital; Stuart Rosenberg, President of Johnson Memorial Hospital; and a host of healthcare heroes and hospital champions were honored at the CHA Annual Meeting for their dedication to improving the health of Connecticut residents.

CHA presented Middlesex Hospital with the 2016 John D. Thompson Award for Excellence in the Delivery of Healthcare Through the Use of Data for its project, High Reliability Processes to Improve Care for the Early Identification and Treatment of Sepsis. Read more here.
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CHA and the Connecticut Department of Public Health presented Lawrence + Memorial Hospital with the 2016 Connecticut’s Hospital Community Service Award for a seven-bed Respite Care Unit at the Homeless Hospitality Center in New London. Read more here. Watch a video about the winners here.

Lawrence + Memorial Hospital won a Connecticut’s Hospital Community Service Award for its Seven-Bed Respite Care Unit.

The American Hospital Association Grassroots Champion Award, created to recognize hospital leaders who effectively educate elected officials on how major issues affect the hospital’s vital role in the community, was presented to Stuart E. Rosenberg, President, Johnson Memorial Hospital. Read more here. Watch a video here.

Stuart E. Rosenberg, President of Johnson Memorial Hospital, received the AHA Grassroots Champion Award.

An inspiring and committed group of 10 Healthcare Heroes were honored this year. Read more about them by clicking here.

Healthcare heroes were honored during the award ceremony. Left to right, Lenworth Jacobs, MD; Keith Grant, BSN, RN, CIC; Steven Schutzer, MD; Kelly DePanfilis, RN; Jeanne Kessler, RN; Laurel Holmes, MSW; Sherri Roller, RN, MSN; Anita Kelsey, MD; and Hank Schwartz, MD.

Also honored were the patients, nurses, doctors, and volunteers who advocated publicly for hospitals prior to and during this year’s legislative session. These Hospital Champions appeared on TV, radio, print, and digital ads, and told their personal stories to the media.

Patients and families honored as Hospital Champions at the Annual Meeting.

Congratulations to all CHA award winners.