

summamagazine

WHERE COMPASSION
MEETS COMMUNITY NEED



A Fellowship to
Honor Dr. Kepley

The 10th Annual
Sapphire Ball

Exploring Apatone®

COMMUNITY

INVEST • ENGAGE • TRANSFORM

COMMUNITY BENEFIT SUMMARY 2009

“In a post-healthcare reform environment, the definition of community benefit will continue to evolve. But it’s evolving toward where we’ve been all along. Because at Summa, we do not believe that charity care alone is a sufficient standard by which to judge the benefit to the community from the hospital or health system.”

~Thomas J. Strauss, President and CEO, Summa Health System

Summa Health System believes community benefit goes far beyond the numbers.

We believe in the people, neighborhoods and communities of our region. We think about our work not only as physicians, health providers and administrators, but also as members of – and stewards of – the community.

That’s what community benefit means to Summa.

Visit thesummafoundation.org to view the 2009 community benefit report.

SUMMA MAGAZINE

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Thomas J. Strauss
President & CEO
Summa Health System

August A. Napoli Jr.
President & COO
Summa Foundation

Norman E. Wells Jr.
Board Chair
Summa Foundation

Jill Y. Stefancin
Director of Communications
Summa Foundation

Design and Layout
TRIAD Communications, Inc.

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Summa Foundation

525 East Market Street
Akron, Ohio 44304
330-375-3159 voice
330-375-3012 fax

thesummafoundation.org

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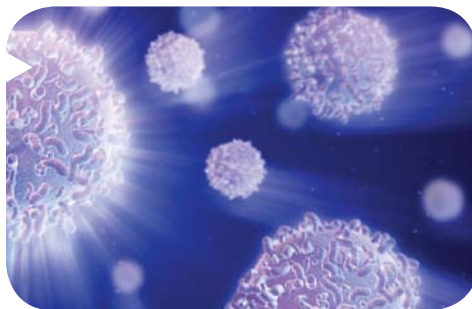
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Where Compassion Meets Community Need

Summa's new health facility – officially, the Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities Solutions – brings together a church, a civic-minded building company, and virtually every component of Summa Health System to serve a community whose needs, for far too long, have been unmet.



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"Magical" was the word most used by guests to describe the 10th annual Sapphire Ball, held on Saturday, September 11, 2010, at the John S. Knight Center in Akron.

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Dear Friend:

At Summa Health System, we often talk about those areas that distinguish us: Dedicated individuals. Nationally recognized hospitals. Innovative specialty areas. And, perhaps most importantly, a philosophy of bringing all these things together in service of the communities in which we live and operate.

This issue of Summa Magazine features pieces on each of those areas of strength.

We'll read about the impact that J. Patrick Flanagan, M.D., retired chair and residency director of Summa Health System's department of Orthopaedic Surgery, had on the career of a young resident and we'll spend a day in the shoes of Dr. Teresa (Tere) Koenig, to see how her relentless passion for excellence in healthcare has shaped her life.

We'll look Summa's pioneering work – from laboratory bench to bedside – on Apatone®, a new drug that has shown promise for treating cancer and for use in orthopaedics and wound healing.

We'll learn more about two tremendous acts of generosity and what they will mean for Summa. The Rice family's \$1 million gift to the Summa Foundation makes possible a new fellowship in orthopaedic education.

Another new endowed position, the Chair in Women's Health at Summa Health System, is funded by a \$1 million anonymous gift. The announcement of that gift was just part of the excitement at this year's Sapphire Ball; more details can be found inside this issue.

And our cover story demonstrates what is possible when we bring these distinct strengths together in service of a shared goal. It's the story behind the creation of the Summa Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities Solutions in West Akron – the result of a remarkable partnership between Summa Health System and The House of the Lord. The project is a testament, in bricks and mortar, of what is possible when groups come together to serve the needs of the community.

On behalf of everyone at Summa Health System and the Summa Foundation, I hope you enjoy the featured stories and I thank you for your support in helping to write even more of them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Strauss". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Thomas J. Strauss
President & CEO
Summa Health System



Donation Establishes Fellowship to Honor Dr. Kepley

When Summa Health System orthopaedic surgeon Robert Kepley, M.D., met a woman named Hanna Rice 20 years ago, he quickly admired the feisty, energetic 75-year-old.

With his warm, down-home style, Kepley got to know Rice – as he likes to do with all his patients. He followed her progress for two years before the pain in her hip became debilitating and he performed surgery to replace her hip and revitalize her life.

Even in hindsight, Kepley says he never could have imagined the phone call he would receive nearly two decades later. Hanna's son and daughter-in-law, Bob and Joyce Rice, and their family donated \$1 million to the Summa Foundation to establish the Robert F. Kepley, M.D. Orthopaedic Fellowship.

Each year, the 20 orthopaedic residents at Summa will have a chance to compete for research grants through the endowment generated from the Rices' gift.

"It kind of bowled me over," Kepley says with his trademark modesty.

With more research dollars flowing to illnesses like cancer, heart disease or diabetes, it's rare to get such a generous gift in an area like orthopaedics – and Kepley says he's never seen it happen before in his 30 years of practicing medicine.

In 2009 alone, Kepley performed hip or knee replacement surgeries for 750 patients. So while he remembers instantly admiring Hanna Rice's spunk at that first meeting, he also counted her among thousands of his surgery success stories. But to the Rice family, Kepley wasn't just any "cookie-cutter" surgeon.

Hanna's son, Bob, accompanied her to Kepley's office for that first meeting – as well as to almost all of her pre- and post-surgery appointments. At each appointment, Bob saw something in Kepley's style that he didn't always experience with other doctors.



And he witnessed the same thing every time, consistently.

“I think the word that just continues to come back to our mind is compassion,” says Bob Rice. “Dr. Kepley was just so compassionate from the get-go and so gentle ... There was no pressure, no selling, nothing except information and compassion. That’s what really drew us to him.”

Agreeing to the surgery wasn’t an easy decision. At one visit, Bob Rice posed a question to Kepley.

“I’ve never had a family member have this type of surgery before, so I said, ‘If this was your mother, would you recommend yourself?’” Rice says. “He’s a very humble man, and I didn’t realize that, so it was probably a tough question for him but he answered it immediately and said, ‘Of course, I would!’ And he said it very compassionately again and with great humility.”

That humility, Kepley says, stems from his early orthopaedic surgery fellowship training under a surgeon named Tom Mallory, M.D., who taught him the proper way to treat patients.

“Probably the biggest compliment I’ve had over the years is a lot of my patients, and some of my colleagues, view me as a family doctor of orthopaedics,” he says. “Dr. Mallory taught me compassion for the patient and not just the process of replacing their hip or joint. He taught me to learn about the patient, about them as a person, their families, what affects them emotionally, physically. And if you do those things and you really get to know your patient as a person, they do better as a patient, too.”

That’s a mantra that Summa’s attending physicians try to impart to residents. The Rice family’s gift will help in that area as well.

“The Rices’ award was based on Dr. Kepley’s care and that’s what we want to teach our residents – you make an impact on a person’s life

every time you step in the room to talk to them; every time you operate on them, you’re impacting their life, and you can do well, or you can not do that well. That’s really what we want our residents to learn,” says Jeffrey Junko, M.D., program director for Summa’s Orthopaedic Residency program. “You can teach somebody off the street to do a procedure, but it’s really that connection with patients that we want to make sure our residents understand.”

But the selection process has to do with qualities demonstrated by Kepley. To some, that philosophy of patient care might seem inconsistent with a gift focusing on orthopaedic research. However, investigating ways to improve clinical care and patient outcomes is only one area the grants might fund. Others research areas include basic science research, composite materials, cartilage growth or restoration, genetics or surgical techniques.

Residents will submit their research proposals annually in the spring. The Kepley Fellowships will be announced at the resident graduation ceremony in the summer.

“Research is critical in any medical field,” explains Michael Askew, Ph.D., director of the Walter A. Hoyt Jr. Musculoskeletal Research Laboratory, where many of the residents complete their research work. “There are so many opportunities today to further the ability of the orthopaedic surgeon to enhance the quality of life of patients because there are new materials, new procedures, new devices and new techniques that make things possible today that were not possible before.”

Askew says the fellowship will allow residents to work both in his lab and in clinical care at Summa Health System or its joint venture with the Crystal Clinic Orthopaedic Center, where most Summa orthopaedic physicians practice.

But the Rice family’s million-dollar gift is expected to have an impact far beyond the laboratory.

Summa's orthopaedic department chair Scott Weiner, M.D., says the gift could have a profound impact on the careers of residents.

"Hopefully it will encourage residents to get involved with research at an early stage and maybe go into academic careers where they can be great surgeons and great doctors, but also will contribute to the betterment of care in the long run by doing research," Weiner says. "Gifts like the Rices' will create that excitement at a young age where it becomes an important thing for them to do in the future."

For his part, Askew sees the potential impact of the gift reaching beyond Northeast Ohio.

"The sophistication of the research projects that this funding will enable residents and the attending staff mentors to get involved in will allow them to do state-of-the-art research," he said. "The results of these projects will not only be of value to the local community in terms of the service to patients, but they can have nationwide or worldwide influence on the practice of orthopaedics."

Even outside of Summa, the Rices hope that their gift reaches the community by inspiring residents to practice in Akron, improving patient care and possibly generating orthopaedic innovations that can be manufactured in Akron.

Bob Rice said giving back to the community was one of the family's main goals with establishing the fellowship.

"We don't know what we're going to find with this research," he said. "It could be as important and simple as how do we better communicate with that patient and provide them a better experience with their surgery and rehabilitation."

"The great thing about a gift like this is what it allows you to do in the research realm to advance ideas that ultimately benefit not only individual patients, but the community," explained Junko.

August A. Napoli Jr., president of the Summa Foundation, says the Rice family's donation is in line with the future direction of Summa.

"We'd like to move from becoming simply a very good community hospital that cares for the health status of the community to becoming a community-based academic medical center that maintains the highest quality care for the community and also teaches, researches and retains talent to build the economic vitality of the region," Napoli said.

At one point, Bob Rice admitted, he looked up at a building with a name on it and wondered what it would take to do that. But then he thought about his father's legacy of support to Summa dating back to the 1970s.

"We've been involved with Summa for many years, but we never really were, as a family, bricks-and-mortar people," Rice says. "The fellowship is a great vehicle to honor Dr. Kepley in a more ongoing, hands-on way and hopefully to provide a legacy for years to come. We wanted to intertwine the feeling of compassion with the science of research. So I think it really fits the goal."

In addition to honoring Kepley for the care of Bob's mother, the gift of a residency research fellowship hits home with Bob's wife Joyce. For more than 20 years, Joyce worked as a nurse at Summa, coordinating resident training by pairing residents with established physicians.

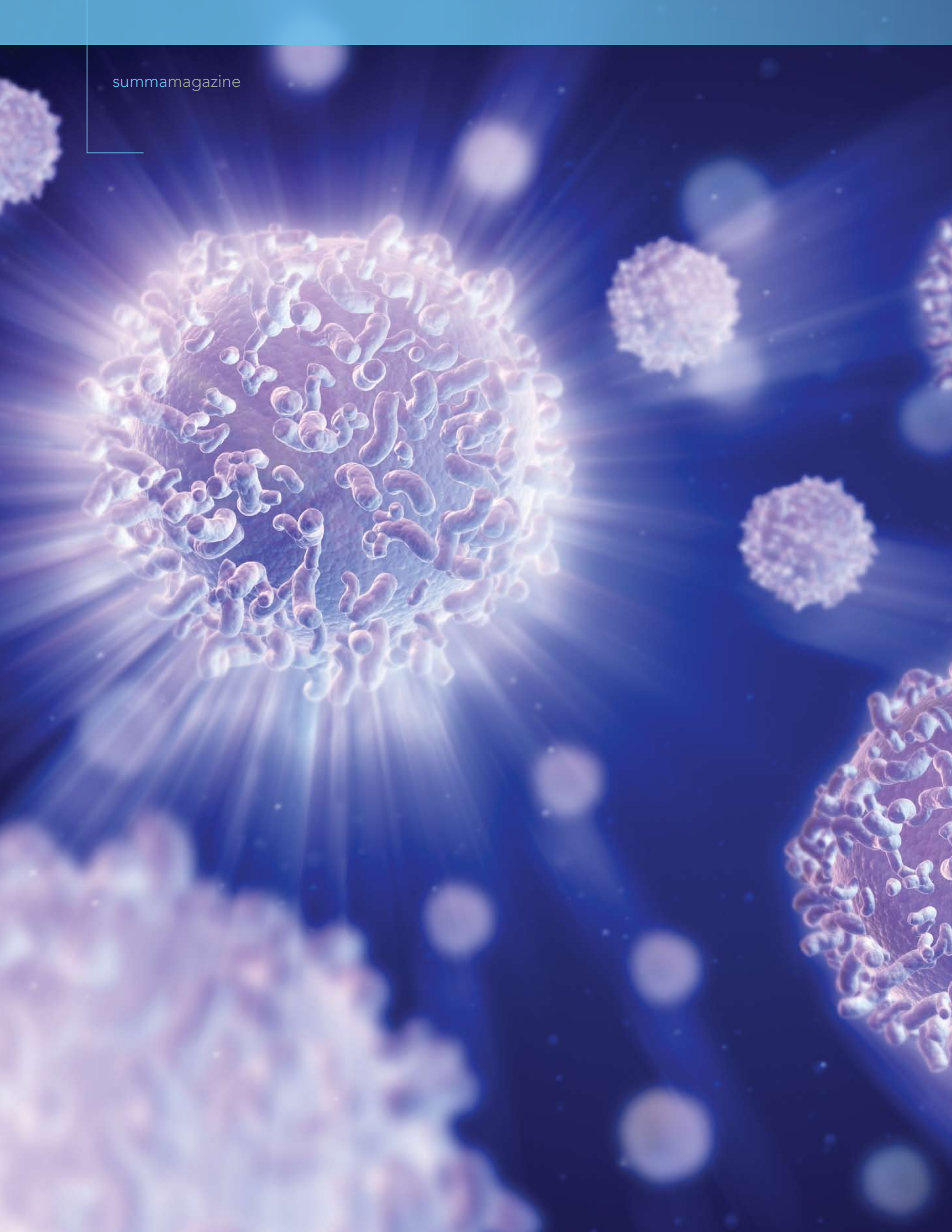
Today, Hanna Rice is 95 years old and doesn't get out as much as she used to, but she still has a special place in her heart for Kepley, the man who put the spring back in her step and gave her years of pain-free movement following the surgery.

"She was ecstatic," says Bob of his mother's reaction when he told her about the fellowship. "She really got on board when I said we wanted to encourage young physicians to follow in his footsteps and do the kind of compassionate medical work that he does."

While the fellowship honors one physician who touched the life of one patient, Bob Rice ultimately wants it to honor the entire community. And he hopes the gift from his family will encourage others in the community to give back, too.

◀ Heide Aungst







Exploring Apatone®

Summa Researchers Explore Apatone's Potential to Fight Cancer and Other Diseases

A group of Summa Health System researchers is developing a promising liquid crystal drug compound that is showing strong potential as a cancer-fighting, anti-inflammatory agent.

Apatone® is a combination of vitamin C and vitamin K3 liquid crystals that work together to target inflammation as a means of fighting disease and regulating abnormal cell activity. By altering the energy cycle within inflamed cells, Apatone can program cells to either repair or kill themselves. Any cell that produces the proteins associated with inflammation is targeted by Apatone, while healthy tissue is spared.

"Most anti-tumor drugs target dividing cells; Apatone targets inflammation," said James Jamison, Ph.D., director of Summa's Apatone Research Center and the research scientist leading the development of the compound. The nature of Apatone mimics a naturally occurring sugar, allowing Apatone to penetrate cells and interact with ease.

Apatone is being designed to function as an adjunct therapy that can be administered intravenously or orally to enhance the effectiveness of other treatments, such as radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Researchers are advancing the drug's ability to modulate and muzzle myriad cell signals that would otherwise activate the inflammation associated with a variety of conditions, from cancer to multiple sclerosis.



“Apatone appears to be a promising drug discovery that provides a safe, effective and affordable adjuvant treatment that materially improves standard clinical treatments with fewer side effects.” said Tom Miller, president and CEO of IC-MedTech, a San Diego-based biomedical and drug development company. “It is right on the cutting edge for development of better treatment of cancer and other diseases.”

Summa licensed the Apatone intellectual property to IC-MedTech in 2004 and continues to partner with IC-MedTech in the commercial development of Apatone. The company helps fund ongoing research and underwrites the cost of patent applications.

The Long Process of Drug Research and Development

The late Henryk Taper, Ph.D., a researcher at the Catholic University of Leuven in Brussels, Belgium, began research on the role of reactivation of nucleases in cancer remission in 1967, which led to the description of the vitamin C and K3 combination as an antitumor agent in his doctoral dissertation in 1975.

Over the course of nearly 20 years, Jamison, in partnership with Taper and Summa researchers Jack Summers, M.D., Ph.D., former chair of the department of urology, now retired; and Jacques Gilloteaux, D.Sc., now a professor of anatomy and cell biology at St. George’s University School of Medicine, United Kingdom, continued to develop the vitamin combination until it became known as Apatone in 2005.

To date, the majority of research has centered on cancer, focusing primarily on Apatone’s effect on urologic tumors including bladder, prostate and kidney cancer. Lab work on more than 30 human tumor cell lines has also shown that Apatone can successfully kill many other types of cancer cells as well, including those found in breast, colon, kidney and ovarian tumors.

In July 2007, the Food and Drug Administration approved Apatone’s orphan drug status, a designation that allows physicians to use Apatone for the treatment of metastatic or locally advanced inoperable bladder cancer.

How It Works

Apatone works to selectively lower the level of compounds in tumor cells that protect against chemotherapy, weakening cancer cells and making them more susceptible to treatment. This increases the effects of treatment, lowering the doses necessary for effective treatment.

“It primes tumor cells to be killed by chemotherapy and radiation,” Jamison said.

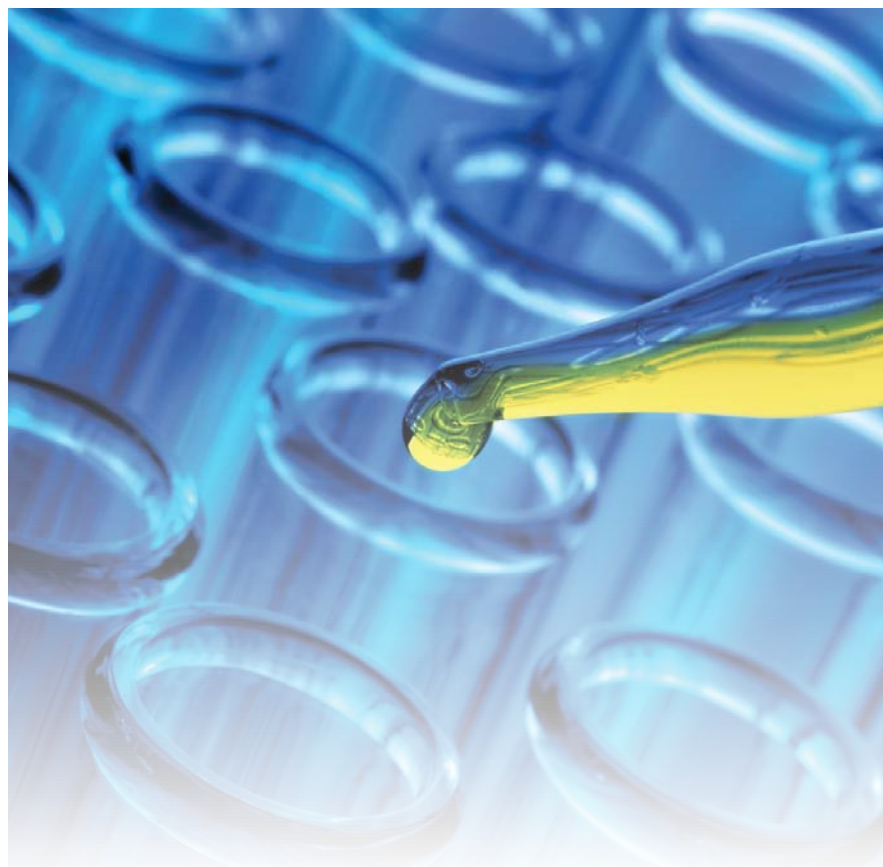
The basis for this is that Apatone resembles glucose, the primary source of energy for tumor cell activity. Rapidly dividing tumor cells rely heavily on glucose for fuel and are full of channels that are fooled into ingesting Apatone.

Once inside cancer cells, Apatone induces oxidative stress, which is a disturbance in the pro-oxidant—antioxidant balance. The process weakens tumor cells, breaking down their defenses and eventually leading to their death. Normal, healthy cells remain intact. The only side effect noted in clinical research has been GERD or gastroesophageal reflux disease.

The first FDA-approved clinical trial for Apatone showed promising results. In 2005, during a phase I/IIa clinical study conducted by Summa and William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan, 17 patients with end-stage prostate cancer were given daily doses of an oral form of Apatone for 12 weeks to prevent tumor growth between chemotherapy treatments. At the conclusion of the 12-week treatment period, 13 of 17 patients responded favorably and no adverse effects were reported.

“The results showed that Apatone was able to delay the progression of the disease,” said Karen McGuire, a graduate student in the Apatone Development Center.

In a second trial (performed independently of Summa) among patients with advanced prostate cancer that had spread to the bone and was resistant to hormone therapy, Apatone produced an immediate and statistically significant drop in tumor cell numbers as well as significantly lower levels of prostate-specific



antigen (PSA), a protein made by the prostate. Men with prostate cancer often have elevated PSA levels because cancer cells produce an excessive amount of the protein.

“These results led researchers to conclude that Apatone could be emerging as a new antitumoral chemotherapy,” Jamison said.

The work in cancer has spawned exploration of Apatone in other clinical areas. A pilot project evaluating Apatone’s ability to heal wounds and its potential use in a therapeutic, biodegradable bandage is under way with Chun-che Tsai, Ph.D., of Kent State University (KSU); Yang Yun, Ph.D., of The University of Akron

(UA); and Vivian von Gruenigen. M.D., chair, department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and medical director of Women’s Health at Summa.

Likewise, research into Apatone’s possible orthopaedic applications is growing.

Improving Orthopaedic Surgical Outcomes?

Researchers in Summa’s Walter A. Hoyt, Jr. Musculoskeletal Laboratory are testing Apatone’s ability to reduce inflammation in patients who have undergone hip or knee replacements and develop an inflammatory reaction to the prosthetic material or wear debris associated with prosthetic joints.



This painful condition can be debilitating and hard to treat, causing swelling and redness in the area around the artificial joint and hindering a patient's ability to move or stand. Over time, cells in the bone near the implant begin to break down, resulting in bone loss and loosening the implant.

"A small, but significant percentage of all joint replacement patients develop a reaction," said Ivan A. Gradisar, M.D., former director of research for the department of orthopaedic surgery and former medical director of the Hoyt lab.

These patients have few alternatives for treatment. Available anti-inflammatory treatments like cortisone shots have side effects. Some patients ultimately

choose or require joint revision surgery, but that can be costly and painful and the results are generally not as good as the original procedure.

In the Hoyt lab, researchers are evaluating Apatone's ability to target the cells producing inflammatory proteins and shut down the mechanism that controls inflammation. Suppressing the inflammatory signals sent by these cells would help them grow more normally in the presence of a joint implant, reducing inflammation and preventing additional bone loss.

"We believe Apatone will relieve some inflammation, possibly extending the life of an artificial joint," said Deborah Neal, a biomedical and research technologist at Summa who is working on Apatone research for both cancer and bone applications.

The researchers have been encouraged by their initial lab investigations. Analytical tests have shown that in cells exposed to metal wear particulate, Apatone dramatically reduced the key inflammatory material by approximately 30 percent. Similarly, the subsequent cellular release of inflammatory signaling chemicals in inflamed cells was reduced by approximately 50 percent when compared to untreated cells, said Mark Kovacic, B.S., a Hoyt lab research associate.

Building upon these findings, researchers launched an FDA-approved clinical trial evaluating Apatone's ability to control inflammation and improve the outcomes of patients who undergo knee and hip replacements and develop a negative reaction to joint implants.

"We need to figure out a way to block the reaction caused by wear particles," said orthopaedic surgeon Thomas Bear, M.D., the clinical study's principal investigator. "We have excellent data to suggest Apatone works to prevent this process from taking place."

The new study will enroll 60 orthopaedic implant patients who develop inflammation and pain that is not due to infection. Half of the enrollees will be given a daily dose of oral Apatone and half will receive a placebo for 13 weeks. Blood specimens and samples of synovial fluid surrounding the joints will be taken at the beginning of the trial and the end to compare the level of inflammation and bone loss to assess Apatone's effect.

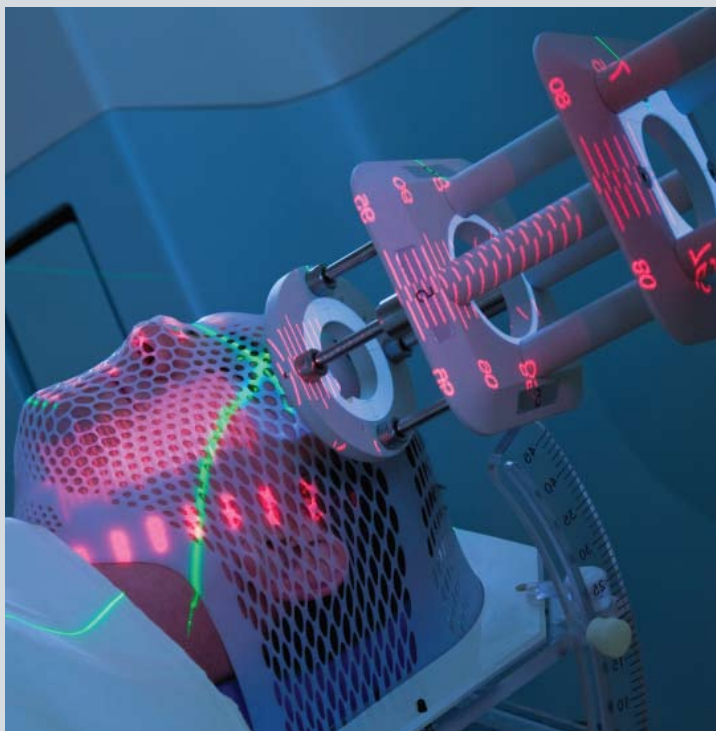
The Hoyt lab's basic and clinical Apatone research is funded in part by a \$200,000 grant received from an outside-Ohio foundation, as well as funding from the Summa Foundation.

The Apatone research has become a major area of concentration in the Hoyt lab because of its potential for significant clinical value. It comprises one of seven basic research projects and one of eight clinical studies within the lab, while occupying nearly 25 percent of researchers' time.

"If this effort results in the means by which the bone loss issue can be minimized in the total knee and total hip replacement population, the value would be enormous," said Michael Askew, Ph.D., the Hoyt lab's scientific director.

"Apatone products are very exciting," said Scott Weiner, M.D., chair of Summa's department of orthopaedics. "If using Apatone is a way to improve patient outcomes, that's exciting to me." The department performs an estimated 2,000 joint replacement surgeries annually, he said.

Future orthopaedic research likely will expand to examine Apatone's effect in the treatment of bone cancer patients and to evaluate its potential as a prophylactic agent, to ward off joint inflammation before it has a chance to develop.



Collaboration Benefits All

Expanding Apatone's application from cancer to bone was the result of Summa's own internal mechanism for promoting and disseminating information about research throughout its organization – its bimonthly Community of Research luncheons. The gathering gives Summa researchers a venue for presenting their work in front of other investigators and physician colleagues, fueling the potential for greater research collaborations.

Nearly four years ago, Askew was in attendance at the luncheon where Jamison presented his work on Apatone. He and other researchers from the Hoyt lab realized Jamison and his group were working on the same cell material that orthopaedic researchers were studying in the

hope of finding a way to better control inflammation.

The difference was that researchers in the Hoyt lab were looking to grow cells in spite of the presence of irritating metal particles, whereas Jamison and his colleagues were manipulating the same factor as a means of killing cancer cells.

What has ensued since the fateful luncheon is an ongoing collaboration and sharing of information among researchers that benefits both cancer and orthopaedic disciplines.

"The collaboration between the laboratories allows us to create something that is bigger than any of us could have achieved on our own," Askew said.

Aside from collaborating within Summa and IC-MedTech, the Apatone development team works continuously with investigators from the Northeastern Ohio Universities Colleges of Medicine and Pharmacy (NEOUCOM), KSU and UA to better understand the basic biology and the scope of Apatone's potential applications.

Research is under way between Summa, KSU and UA to develop a new drug delivery system that is capable of more effectively transporting Apatone to targeted cells, enhancing its clinical effectiveness. Similarly, Jamison, Tsai and their colleagues are examining how Tolecine, a liquid crystal pharmaceutical developed at KSU, can work in combination with Apatone to boost its clinical effectiveness.

LIQUID CRYSTAL TECHNOLOGY

Liquid crystals are a state of matter whose properties fall between those of a liquid and solid crystal and are most commonly associated with modern electronic displays, computer monitors, watches, cell phones and other high-tech gadgetry.

However, liquid crystal molecules are also found throughout nature in cell membranes, proteins, cholesterol, nucleic acids and other organic materials, making them the perfect ingredient for the development of liquid crystal pharmaceuticals or LCs, an emerging type of drug therapy.

“Liquid crystal pharmaceuticals are an untapped frontier from which many new and exciting treatments can emerge,” said Chun-che Tsai, Ph.D., a Kent State University chemistry professor specializing in the research and development of liquid crystal technology. “By expanding the application of liquid crystal technology we’re trying to develop less toxic, more effective treatments.”

Mirroring the body’s own cellular infrastructure, liquid crystal pharmaceuticals provide a physiologically compatible basis for safely delivering more targeted treatment to specific cells, including cancer cells.



These regional collaborations have been supported in part through a recently awarded Collaborative Research & Development Grant from the Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron (ABIA), a collaboration of complementary research, education and health institutions launched nearly two years ago to generate “the next generation of life-enhancing and life-saving innovation for the 21st century.”

“Such collaborations are critical in order to engage and synergize the expertise of many individuals from differing disciplines throughout the region who contribute to maximizing the potential of Apatone to impact patient care,” said Steven Schmidt, Ph.D., vice president, Clinical Research & Innovation at Summa.

Summa has received \$100,000 from the ABIA in support of the wound healing portion of the Apatone research. The Summa Foundation funded nearly \$1.5 million for Apatone research between 1999 and 2009, Schmidt said. In 2010, the foundation awarded Jamison’s lab an additional \$154,077. IC-MedTech and private donations also generate continued research funding.

The Importance of Research Funding

Because drug development is extremely expensive, efforts are ongoing to secure funding for Apatone's continued development, and that could be one of the biggest factors determining how quickly Apatone is brought to market.

In developing Apatone, Summa is seizing an opportunity to pioneer a new pharmaceutical technology during a time of growing interest in the development of naturally based compounds with fewer side effects.

Effectively controlling the cellular mechanisms that drive inflammatory responses, as Apatone aims to do, helps unlock the potential for treating and managing all types of diseases and chronic conditions characterized by inflammation, a biological response to harmful stimuli and cell damage.

In this light, expectations for Apatone's potentially broad clinical applications and commercial return are high.

"Modulating the process of inflammation is central to the treatment of a lot of disease states," Schmidt said. "We want this technology to succeed."

◀ *Raquel Santiago*

A STRONG COMMITMENT

Apatone is the only technology Summa has licensed for commercial development, a key step in accelerating the rate at which a promising research initiative can be developed into an effective therapy that is more widely accessible to patients. The research has produced a growing patent estate with many significant drug development opportunities ahead.

In July, IC-MedTech filed for two more new international patents on Summa's behalf. The nature of the patent is not yet disclosed publicly. While IC-MedTech pays for development of the patents, Summa is the owner.

"We hope this intellectual property strategy will ultimately provide more funding for the research and development efforts at the Apatone Development Center," said Tom Miller, president and CEO of IC-MedTech, a San Diego-based biomedical and drug development company. Presently, Summa holds five patents for Apatone technology.

Apatone-related work will focus on gathering additional basic and clinical research data to grow opportunities for expanded basic and clinical research and to generate the funding necessary for bringing a drug to market, Dr. Jamison said.

The commitment to reaping Apatone's potential economic return locally is strong.

"While the future is difficult to predict, it is our intention to do everything in our power to ensure any testing and/or production facilities and new jobs that accrue from Apatone technology remain in Ohio, especially in Akron," Dr. Jamison said.

WHERE COMPASSION MEETS COMMUNITY NEED





Summa's new health facility – officially, the Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities Solutions – will not only serve as the anchor tenant in a new development. It will be a place where cutting-edge, population-based research is translated into individualized care; where compassion meets community need; where a church, a civic-minded building company and virtually every component of Summa Health System come together to serve a community whose needs have been unmet for far too long.

THE RISING

Come off Ohio Interstate 77 at Vernon Odom Boulevard, turn the corner and drive up Diagonal Road to where it meets South Hawkins Avenue. Here you'll find cranes, earthmovers, rebar and concrete – a new structure rising from a lot that had long been abandoned.

In addition to retail space and affordable housing, the \$11.4 million complex being constructed will house a health center – an integrative, interdisciplinary, one-of-a-kind collaboration between Summa Health System; an Akron-based developer; and the owner of the land, a non-denominational church located across the street from the structure, called The House of the Lord.

The project is called the Village at New Seasons, after the title of a 2000 album by gospel artist Israel Houghton. And just as Houghton's title track says, the new complex presents a new horizon, a new day.

Four years ago, the South Hawkins shopping center sat vacant. Empty storefronts collected dust and graffiti. Piles of rubbish grew.

But the neighborhood's sense of abandonment went beyond the plaza's shuttered windows and peeling paint. West Akron is home to some 20,000 residents, most of them African-American, many affected by obesity, hypertension and diabetes. For years, the neighborhood was medically underserved.

Limited health care facilities in West Akron meant that if people got sick, they had to find a ride or take a bus to the city center. Some residents wound up in the emergency rooms at Summa Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals—some because of non-urgent issues, others because they had no alternative for care, and many more because of conditions that were preventable but had gone untreated for too long.



There were a few doctors who practiced in the vicinity, but “they were overwhelmed on a daily basis,” said Dr. Demond Scott, the Summa physician serving as director of the facility. “They had more people waiting to be seen than they could possibly see.”

According to the Akron Health Department's Office of Minority Health, African-American adults in Summit County are much more likely to be uninsured than white adults. They are more likely to die from diabetes or conditions brought on by high blood pressure. In some neighborhoods, African-American life expectancy is a nearly a decade shorter than that of whites.

“I heard, over and over, that getting care was a hardship,” said Bishop Joey Johnson, senior pastor at The House of the Lord. “Folks knew they needed medication but hadn't been able to get or fill a prescription. They had nagging troubles, but hadn't been to see the doctor in months.

“I don't think it's an exaggeration to say it was a tragedy.”



Paul Testa and Bishop Joey Johnson

THE REALIZATION

If anyone was meant to bring the plaza back to life, it would be someone whose line of work involves salvation.

In 1974, Johnson founded The House of the Lord with a congregation of four. Today, the church has a 4,000-member congregation, a charter school, after-school programs and activities for seniors – not to mention a loyal following on Twitter, Facebook and radio.

For a time, The House of the Lord had dedicated its ministry to “soul care,” as Johnson put it – “getting people’s souls saved.” But the more he came to know his congregants and his community, the more he realized that his parishioners’ needs went beyond what they sought in the pews.

“The Bible talks about people as body, soul and spirit – not separate parts, but integrated parts,” Johnson said. “It became clear to me that our work was incomplete if we only focused on the soul and the spirit – if we neglected the house where the soul lives.”

The bishop saw two glaring needs in the community: one when he looked down from the pulpit at his congregants, one when he looked across the street to the dilapidated shopping center – the need for healthcare, and the need for renewal in a long-neglected space.

Years ago, The House of the Lord had purchased the land where the shopping center stood. But the church was unable to raise the funds to develop the property and so the plaza remained vacant.

What if? The bishop wondered. What if a house of worship dedicated itself not only to soul care, but also to healthcare? What if a church’s contribution to the community went beyond its four walls? And what if an abandoned space could be brought back to life, with a new sense of purpose?

A VISION COMES TOGETHER

With the seed of an idea in mind, Johnson approached an organization that shared his church’s commitment to caring for the community: Summa Health System.

Over the previous 15 years, Summa and The House of the Lord had developed a robust partnership. The church teamed up with Summa’s department of Community Benefit and Diversity to organize health initiatives, including health screenings, education sessions and jointly-sponsored, citywide minority health fairs.

This year, for example, Summa and The House of the Lord partnered with the American Diabetes Association and the American Heart Association to launch the Monica Gardner Diabetes Legacy Project – a “faith-based approach to diabetes” that includes weekly classes and monthly screenings at the church. The pilot project has already yielded results, producing significant decreases in participants’ blood sugar, abdominal girth and blood pressure.

“These efforts were more popular than we could have ever imagined,” said Roxia Boykin, MPA, RN, vice president of Community Benefit and Diversity at Summa. “They’re important initiatives that are clearly making a difference for many in the community. But even beyond the results that they’ve produced, the programs really shone a light on the tremendous need for more health services in West Akron.”

So when Johnson contacted Summa CEO Tom Strauss with a proposal for expanding the two organizations’ partnership, Strauss had already begun to understand the need in the community.

As Strauss put it, “Summa’s goal is to care for our community – to improve the root components of health and not simply to treat the sick. When I became aware that a big part of the

community wasn’t getting the care they needed, my first thought was that Summa could be part of the solution.”

Boykin’s office commissioned a survey of over 900 House of the Lord congregants, asking about healthcare accessibility in the area. The responses confirmed an overwhelming need for additional health resources in West Akron. Many participants did not have easy access to primary care and as a result, wound up obtaining acute and emergency treatment from clinics, emergency departments or urgent care facilities.

“Once Tom became aware of the severity of the situation, I didn’t have to do a whole lot of selling,” Johnson said.

With Strauss’ blessing, the bishop’s proposal grew into a concrete plan: together, Summa and The House of the Lord would build a health clinic in the heart of West Akron, in the long-vacant South Hawkins plaza.

A PARTNERSHIP GROWS

Building an entirely new health facility would require the expertise of another division of Summa – Summa Physicians Inc.(SPI), led by Dr. Cliff Deveny.

Deveny had built health practices before, and he knew that simply inserting a new facility in the decaying shopping plaza wouldn’t work. The entire plaza required significant renovations. The bishop knew it, too. But even putting a new roof on the place was going to be prohibitively expensive.

So Deveny placed a call to his friend Paul Testa, CEO of Testa Builders.

The Akron-based, family-owned company had worked closely with Summa during the creation of SPI, as well as a number of other projects. But Testa notes that the relationship goes back even further than that.

The hospital where he was born was none other than Summa St. Thomas. “We have a longstanding relationship with Summa,” Testa said, “and in many ways, now it’s come full circle.”

Testa and Deveny sat down with representatives from The House of the Lord. They listened to the numbers, the facts and the stories. By the meeting’s end, Testa was on his feet – asking questions, offering suggestions and promising that Testa Builders “would play a role, any role in getting this thing off the ground and up and running.”

With Testa’s help, The House of the Lord expanded its vision for the plaza to include retail space and affordable housing for senior citizens – another longtime dream of the bishop’s. Testa envisioned new spaces – libraries, computer rooms, a rooftop garden – that would foster a renewed sense of community, as well as greater access to services for residents in the neighborhood. In turn, the new complex would be eligible for grants for low-income housing and mixed-use development.

Testa secured HUD grants from the State of Ohio, tax credits for mixed-use and support from nonprofits as well as

applying for other sources of financing. “And on top of everything, he put down a lot of his own money,” Deveny noted.

When he first sat down with the bishop, Testa remembers, “I told [Johnson], ‘this is going to be a long process. It isn’t going to be easy. We’re going to be courting for a long time before we walk down the aisle. But I believe in this project. I believe this community needs it. And I believe that we can do this together.’”

Summa’s involvement would be essential, Testa knew. At that initial meeting, he told the others, “The other tenants won’t be able to cover the cost, at least not initially. And the church won’t be able to go it alone. Summa is going to have to shoulder the lion’s share of this project.”

Strauss’s enthusiasm was undimmed. He gave his word that Summa would commit to opening a facility in the building – however long it took Testa and The House of the Lord to get things up and running.

“That’s how I knew that Summa was all in,” Johnson said. “They were as committed to this project as we were.”

In 2009, Summa delivered on its verbal agreement with The House of the Lord

and signed a 10-year lease agreement for 10,000 square feet on the ground floor of the plaza.

In turn, as Testa predicted, Summa’s commitment has brought in other tenants and partners. An orthopedic supplier is signing a lease, and a home healthcare group is prepared to do the same.

In the end, as Testa tells the story, “It came down to Summa. It was Summa’s risk to take. That’s what they did, and that’s what has made everything possible.”

For Summa, the reasons for partnering with The House of the Lord and opening the health center were clear: it was true to Summa’s mission of offering care to all who are in need and it was an investment in preventive and primary care. It was, as Deveny said, clearly the right thing to do.

“Take Summa’s philosophy of stewardship in every community in which it operates,” Deveny said. “If we invest in primary care and start to deal with these issues on the outpatient side, we will keep these patients from showing up as patients in our emergency room or in our cardiovascular area.”



“Summa’s goal is to get the right care to the right patient at the right time,” added Michelle Blanda, M.D., chair of the department of emergency medicine at Summa Akron City Hospital, Summa St. Thomas Hospital and Summa Western Reserve Hospital. “And certainly, in a significantly underserved population, the most effective way to deliver care to patients is to provide it where they live and worship.”

“It’s the smart thing for us to do,” Deveny said. “But it’s also a matter of who we are – an organization committed to working beyond the four walls of our hospitals.”

MORE THAN JUST MEDICINE

Of course, a commitment to 10,000 square feet does not a medical office make.

That’s when Summa Foundation sprang into action. Once the health system had committed to the space, and Testa had committed to its construction, the new office would have to be staffed, supplied and readied for operation.

Tracy Carter, Summa Foundation’s director of Government Affairs and Health Policy enlisted the help of Congressman Tim Ryan (OH-17), Congresswoman Betty Sutton (OH-13) and other members of the Ohio delegation in securing a federal appropriation for the purchase of equipment and medical supplies. The \$247,000 grant covered the purchase of computer monitors, desks, examination tables, an ophthalmoscope, a centrifuge, an EKG machine, and other equipment.

Most importantly, the Foundation set about finding the right person to run the new facility.

Enter Dr. Demond Scott.

Growing up in a predominantly black neighborhood in Adamsville, Alabama, Scott had firsthand experience with the realities of health disparities – differences in health status and health outcomes along racial and ethnic lines. And in his own family, personal losses brought home the consequences of inadequate preventive care – a great-grandmother who passed away in her 60s, an uncle who died in his mid-40s, a cousin who died in his early 30s – all due to chronic illness.

“From the start, I had an interest in prevention and primary care,” said Scott, who completed his residency at Summa. “I had an interest in health disparities. That interest has deepened with my research and my training, but it’s also very much a part of who I am.”

In Akron, he chaired a local coalition of health, social service and cultural organizations called the Minority Health Roundtable. Over and over, at town meetings at community centers and libraries, Scott heard about the need for additional health services in West Akron neighborhoods.

With the support of Strauss, Deveny, Johnson and other stakeholders, Scott merged his vision with that of Summa Physicians Inc. and The House of the Lord. He began to sketch out a bold mission that went beyond simply providing care; one that would use the facility to study, reduce and eventually eliminate health disparities in Summit County.

In this work, he found the perfect partner in another Summa physician: Dr. Teresa Myers.

Myers grew up on the east side of Cleveland, the daughter of a church pastor. Her father, like Bishop Johnson, saw an opportunity for his church to play a role in his congregants’ health and recently opened a clinic. Myers spent many years unofficially helping people in the church and volunteering at area health clinics.

“Every member of The House of The Lord that I’ve met – some of whom are my current patients – has been elated about the clinic,” Myers said. “Their enthusiasm is contagious.”

The Summa Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities Solutions will provide primary care services, conduct community health outreach and identify public health solutions through research, education and area partnerships with other public health organizations. Accordingly, Summa’s space at New Seasons will include not only primary care offices, but also rooms for community programming and research on health disparities.

The Center’s services will be tailored to the needs of the community, Scott said. He envisions group counseling sessions for patients suffering from common ailments such as hypertension or diabetes. Other sessions may include information about nutrition, weight loss and exercise. Classes might range from cooking classes to walking programs.

“Rather than just doing traditional 10 to 15 minute, one-on-one visits with patient and physician, we can create a setting where patients learn from doctors and learn from each other,” Scott said. Patients and other residents might eventually be trained as community health workers who can share their knowledge with their peers.

“As we teach patients, we’re hoping that those patients will themselves become leaders in the community and spread that knowledge and share it with others,” he added. “That’s really a key piece here – empowering patients to play an active, even proactive, role in their health care.”

He also sees a future in which health services are delivered by multidisciplinary teams – so that when patients visit the Center they can meet with their physician, as well as with a social worker, a dietician and other caretakers.



Teresa Myers, MD

Edward Scott, MD

DOCTOR

Dr. Teresa Myers and Dr. E. Demond Scott

These services will be complemented by the Center's research on health disparities. "While traditional healthcare programs focus only on clinical and physical factors, the Center will address all components of wellness," Myers said, "including the social and environmental determinants of health." The Center will track and report health trends in the neighborhood, measure the impact of community programming, and research best practices for delivering care. Each aspect of the Center's mission will feed into the other in contributing to community health.

"Summa Foundation has committed to funding Dr. Scott's vision," said Andrea Calo, the grant and proposal developer who spearheaded Summa Foundation's work on the Center. To that end, Summa Foundation has made a grant of \$500,000 to use over the next three years to hire administrative and research staff and cover the costs of community programming.

"It's a project that really speaks to the core of the Foundation's mission," said Kathy Taylor, executive director of development for the Summa

Foundation. "It's about transformation through service, for the good of the community. That's a mission we're incredibly proud to support."

"We're hopeful that we can make a positive difference in the community," Scott said. "And we're hopeful we can also do some good beyond this neighborhood."

After all, he said, "the specifics of interventions are based on the needs of the community being served, but the theories behind interventions are general. So there may be some lessons we learn that are unique to West Akron, unique to this region. But as far as determining solutions to health disparities, we hope that we'll be able to take what we accomplish and learn here, and apply it beyond this city and beyond this county."

For Summa, the Center is an opportunity not only to teach and to give back, but also to learn and grow. Scott and Deveny are especially enthusiastic about the prospect of teaching programs for Summa residents and interns. The facility will be an opportunity for doctors in training to experience the reality of

health disparities and health challenges in communities across the country, Scott said – a "merger of public health principles with primary-care practice."

The bishop acknowledges another, less direct contribution. "These things go well beyond skin deep," he said. "But the fact is, this is an 80 percent African-American neighborhood. That's why I advocated for the hiring of minority doctors."

"The research is clear," Boykin explained. "For patients, being able to receive treatment from caregivers and providers who look like them, who understand where they're coming from, it can make all the difference in the world. It's critical in terms of the patient feeling safe, feeling trusted, feeling like they're in credible hands."

And, the bishop added, "Think about what it'll be like for children in this neighborhood to come into the Center and see doctors who look like them. Think about what it'll mean for the way they think about their futures, about their potential."





A NEW SEASON

Four years ago, the residents of West Akron looked at the shopping center on South Hawkins Road and saw a broken-down, worn-out space. Johnson agonized about his parishioners' overwhelming need for health services. And Scott and his colleagues at Summa wondered how they might bring their skills and strengths to bear against the health disparities they saw in their own city.

But come the beginning of 2011, the Village at New Seasons will be open for business and for occupancy. And across the street from The House of the Lord, there will be a new anchor in the community: the Summa Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities Solutions.

When the Center opens its doors, patients will walk into a facility that represents the hopes, dreams and efforts of a diverse coalition. Bishop Joey Johnson, whose vision spurred

the project's founding. Paul Testa, who invested time, energy and resources to lifting up a long-neglected part of his city. Dr. Demond Scott, whose dedication to easing health disparities has been a driving force for the Center's realization. And leaders throughout Summa – from Tom Strauss to the office of Community Relations and Diversity, to Summa Physicians Inc., to Summa Foundation – all of whom took a risk and delivered on the health system's promise to provide care to all who are in need, no matter what it takes.

"It's a partnership I'm so proud of that I can't even begin to put words to it," Strauss said. "It's been a privilege and a pleasure, being involved with this undertaking. It'll be a day to remember, when the Center opens its doors for the very first time."

For Scott, that undertaking has been an opportunity "to do something

different than what has traditionally been done in medicine. It's an opportunity to demonstrate a new approach to providing care – bringing it directly to the community and enabling people to take a real role in their own health."

In the end, Johnson said, the partnership that has made everything possible – a new health center, a new community center, a new season – can be traced to one thing: compassion. "Compassion is at the heart of what hospitals do every day," Johnson said. "It's what we do in our ministry, too. Compassion drives us, too. And now it's brought us all together. It's the reason this project is going to change lives and change the community. Just you wait and see."

◀ Jeff Nussbaum & Julia Lam



Retired Orthopaedic Surgery Chairman Receives Award from Arizona Medical Association

It's an honor for a doctor to be recognized for career achievements, but even more satisfying when that honor comes with the gratitude of a former medical resident who is now practicing in her chosen field.

J. Patrick Flanagan, M.D., retired chair and residency director of Summa Health System's department of orthopaedic surgery (1984-December 2003), received the Arizona Medical Association's President's Distinguished Service Award in June 2010.

The annual award recognizes a physician's lifelong dedication to medicine, patients, community and organized medicine. As outgoing president of the Arizona Medical Association, Beth A. Purdy, M.D., had the opportunity to select the award recipient. In 1997, Purdy became the first woman to complete Summa's orthopaedic residency program.

"As president, I was given the opportunity to honor someone who represented the greatest impact upon my career and life," Purdy said in her remarks at the Phoenix Country Club in Phoenix where Flanagan was honored. "That person, Dr. Patrick Flanagan, gave me a chance, equipped me with the necessary tools and sent me out with his life as the example of what medicine can be when practiced right."

Flanagan worked as an orthopaedic surgeon in the Akron area for more than 32 years. In addition to serving as chair and residency director of Summa's department of Orthopaedic Surgery, he was also chair of the department of orthopaedic surgery for Northeastern Ohio Universities Colleges of Medicine and Pharmacy (1993-2005), and served in various other educational and administrative capacities throughout his career. He is warmly regarded for his "Ten Commandments For Residents" and his diplomacy.

Flanagan retired in 2004 and currently works part-time as medical director for the hyperbaric oxygen unit in Summa's Wound Care Center.

Purdy credits him with admitting her to Summa's orthopaedic residency program after 20 other programs had

declined, presumably not because she was unqualified, but because she was a woman.

Despite having what Flanagan calls an "outstanding medical school record," Purdy says everywhere she went, she received strikingly similar feedback: "We had a woman here and..." No one seemed willing to take a chance on helping fulfill her wish of becoming an orthopaedic surgeon, one of the most male-dominated medical disciplines.

That is, until she met Flanagan.

She first met him in 1991 upon arriving at Summa Akron City Hospital for a transitional residency, in the hope of eventually entering the orthopaedic residency program. She recalls meeting Flanagan at the orientation luncheon and saying, "I'm Beth Purdy and I want to be in your program." Flanagan responded, "You don't have to impress me, just everyone else."

That quick conversation was enough for him to take interest and track her progress as she completed her transitional internship on the Internal Medicine Service. He wanted to be able to assess her qualifications fairly when the time came to decide about admitting her to the orthopaedic residency program.

During that time, Flanagan says, "my medical colleagues never missed an opportunity to sing her praises and insinuate that she was far more intelligent than many of my residents (at the time)."

That was no small matter. "In those days, a woman candidate for orthopaedic residency had to be light years better than her male counterparts," Flanagan said.

Purdy followed up her 90-minute residency interview with a letter saying that if she got the opportunity, she would "wake up every morning with the goal that upon completion of my residency it could be said, 'We had a woman here, and she was excellent'."

Her exceptional performance throughout her transitional year ultimately earned her a slot in Summa's orthopaedic residency program. She says she never forgot Flanagan for the lessons she learned while in his program – first and foremost, to do what is right for the care of every patient, including those who are most difficult to treat, not coincidentally his first commandment to residents.

"He asked me questions along the way that I didn't have the wisdom to ask myself," Purdy said in honoring Flanagan. "He saw in my future the continuous battle of being the odd one out, and he did his best to prepare me well."

Today, Purdy is an orthopaedic surgeon specializing in upper extremity surgery, particularly hand surgery. She is one of 19 physicians comprising The Orthopedic Clinic Association (TOCA) in Phoenix, the first medical practice in Arizona to specialize exclusively in orthopaedic surgery.

Flanagan believes the honor she presented him with brings things full circle.

"To be so honored by someone I have trained validates my career in a fashion that cannot be quantified, especially since it was bestowed by the First Lady of Akron Orthopaedics."

Following in Purdy's steps, a second woman completed Summa's orthopaedic residency program in 2009. Two women are currently among the residents in the program. The American Medical Association estimates that women comprise only 11 percent of the orthopaedic residents in the United States.

◀ Raquel Santiago



10TH ANNUAL
Sapphire Ball

BENEFITS WOMEN'S HEALTH AT SUMMA

"Magical" was the word most used by guests to describe the 10th annual Sapphire Ball, which took place Saturday, September 11, 2010, at the John S. Knight Center in Akron. Nearly 700 partygoers danced the night away while enjoying specialty drinks and appetizers, dinner, and silent and live auctions.





A \$1 million anonymous gift to establish an endowed chair in Women’s Health at Summa Health System was announced at the Ball, whose proceeds benefitted women’s health programs and services. “We are thrilled and deeply honored to receive this generous gift because it will play a vital role in advancing our commitment to the health and well-being of the women we serve,” said Thomas J. Strauss, president and CEO, Summa Health System. “It truly is a testimony to the quality of care our clinicians and caregivers provide to our patients and underscores the confidence our community has in Summa.”

Dr. Bernadine Healy, world-renowned cardiologist and healthcare advocate, was presented with the inaugural Innovation in Healthcare award by Vivian von Gruenigen, M.D., chair, department of obstetrics and gynecology and medical director of women’s health at Summa Health System and Savannah Brinson, community volunteer and patron chair of last year’s Sapphire Ball.

Mary Ann Jackson, chair of the event, deemed the “party with a purpose” an overwhelming success. “It was a pleasure to work with such an outstanding committee and raise funds that will impact women and families in our community in such a broad manner,” she said.

From “adult” flavored snow cones, to dancers with twirling ribbons, to an eight-foot tall bouquet of glass flowers, the Knight Center was transformed into a wonderland of sensory delights. A moving commemoration of 9/11 took place as arriving guests were offered a glass pebble to toss into a reflecting pool of water as a symbol of remembrance.

Major benefactors of the evening included Brennan, Manna and Diamond/Signet Enterprises, GOJO, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company and Welty Building Company.



Summa Health System Unveils 2009 Community Benefit and Economic Impact Reports

Summa Health System delivered \$2.86 billion in total economic impact and provided \$110.8 million in community benefit to area residents in 2009, said President and CEO Thomas J. Strauss at the 2010 Community Leadership Briefing on Friday, October 15, 2010. "We are proud to confirm that, once again, Summa increased its community contributions and economic impact in 2009," he said. "As the area's largest employer, we take our responsibilities seriously and have a deep and continuing commitment to providing social and economic support to the community."

More than 200 business, government, civic and community leaders attended the event, where the health system's Economic Impact and Community Benefit reports were unveiled.

Susan Dentzer, editor in chief of Health Affairs Journal and nationally recognized health policy journalist, delivered the keynote address, discussing the national elections and the effect their outcomes will have on

healthcare reform and what it means to the consumer.

"There will be a number of post-election skirmishes at the state and federal levels around implementation and funding, and the lawsuits challenging individual mandates of healthcare reform are likely to reach the Supreme Court," Dentzer said. "But regardless of who the big winners are this November, the more popular aspects of healthcare reform – particularly reforms in insurance coverage – look like they are here to stay."

The forum, moderated by Carlos Jackson, senior associate director, Federal Relations, American Hospital Association, included remarks from Kevin Barnett, vice president, Community Benefit, Research & Health Policy, Public Health Institute, who noted that reducing health care costs will require collaborative approaches to address the causes of health problems in local communities.

"Visionary leaders recognize health reform will eventually shift financial



incentives away from filling beds and towards keeping populations healthy. This will require us to understand and address the causes of health problems in the community context," said Barnett. "Collaborative approaches to community benefit will help hospitals build internal capacity and brings together our resources and expertise to solve persistent health problems."

Strauss concluded by telling the audience that Summa looks forward to continuing in its role as the region's healthcare leader in the new age of healthcare.

"No longer is community benefit defined only in the amount of charity care provided, number of health screenings administered or dollars invested – it's also the number of lives saved, communities transformed and jobs created," Strauss said. "Health systems such as Summa play a vital role in advancing community health, economic development, medical education and research priorities, and we look forward to continuing our commitment to the people in our communities."

To receive a copy of the 2009 Community Benefit Summary or the Economic Impact Summary Report, contact the Summa Foundation at 330-375-3159.



Top row, l to r: Thomas J. Strauss, Vincent Sobocinski, Kevin Barnett
Middle row, l to r: Carlos Jackson, Bishop Joey Johnson, Gary Earl, August Napoli Jr.
Seated, l to r: Tracy Carter, Susan Dentzer, Roxia Boykin

Teresa J. Koenig, M.D., M.B.A.

A Day In The Life





5:15am A typical day for Teresa J. Koenig, M.D., M.B.A., starts at 5:15 or 5:30 a.m. And there it ends.

Because there isn't much typical about her days, which can take her from Akron to Canton, Cleveland or Columbus, and may involve her in insurance issues, patient care or planning strategy for healthcare delivery.

Koenig (pronounced KAYnig), senior vice president and chief medical officer of SummaCare, the insurance arm of Summa Health System, says her days don't follow a predictable pattern.

"I've learned to live in chaos," quips the slight doctor as she hovers between her desk and a meeting table during an interview later in that "typical" day, checking her Blackberry® as she spoke.

But chaos is not an accurate description for Koenig's work day, which is highly organized, built around her roles as a business executive, physician, mother of two daughters, wife of a Summa oncologist, community volunteer and board member.

And dog lover, although her husband, Joseph M. Koenig, M.D., takes on the chore of walking their labradoodle and Yorkshire terrier early in the morning. That gives Koenig time to check her emails, work out on an elliptical trainer, or until this fall, share breakfast with her younger daughter, Taylor, who is now a freshman at Georgetown University.

During the long day ahead, Koenig stays in touch with her family by calling or texting. Her older daughter, Kristin, a graduate of Georgetown, just began medical school at The Ohio State University College of Medicine.

7:00 - 9:00am Depending on her schedule, she may start the day in Akron at SummaCare's offices in downtown Akron or at meetings in Cleveland or Columbus. Or, she may check on a patient at Summa Akron City Hospital.

An internal medicine specialist with Summa Physicians, Inc., Koenig graduated 25 years ago from OSU's medical school, where she was class president and where she and Joe met as classmates ("We couldn't stand each other when we first met," she confides.)

"We were very middle, middle class," she says. Scholarships and two or three jobs helped her get through Youngstown State University.

After medical school and marriage, she and Joe considered offers to practice in South Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania and various Ohio cities. But they had both interned and completed residencies at Summa Akron City Hospital – he was chief resident in internal medicine – and that proved a powerful draw. "We came here and we loved it," she says.



She had gone to OSU as an undergraduate, earning her bachelor's degree magna cum laude in 1981 after three years, so that she entered medical school a year early. She had dreamed of going to medical school since the age of five.

She grew up in tiny Campbell, Ohio, east of Youngstown, where her father lost his business when the steel mills closed and deflated the economy of Campbell.

After her residency, Koenig planned to take a fellowship in rheumatology at University Hospitals of Cleveland; Joe had a fellowship at the Ireland Cancer Center there. But when her daughter was born prematurely, she deferred her fellowship so that she could spend time with her newborn. She practiced medicine locum tenens – covering for other physicians at Summit County Internists and Associates when they were absent. In the process, she began to understand the business side of a medical practice as well.



She also realized that rheumatology was “too close to home” and she could not be objective about it since she has had rheumatoid arthritis since she was 12.

Instead, she came back to Summa Akron City Hospital to teach and become involved in the start-up of SummaCare.

Noon Koenig often has lunch at her desk if she’s at SummaCare – maybe preparing soup mix kept in her desk drawer or running downstairs for a sandwich from Subway or Einstein’s.

She was first drawn to the newly formed company in the early 1990s, not long after Summa Health System was created from the merger between Akron City and St. Thomas Hospitals. She was asked to write about quality issues and processes for SummaCare’s licensing application as a new insurance company. Total Quality Management (TQM) and other systematic approaches to quality management were attracting new attention in medicine, and it was a subject that caught her eye. She had also developed interests in the health payment system, its relationship to care delivery and Medicaid managed care.

She started with SummaCare in 1992 as assistant medical director, then became acting medical director, medical director, and in 2000, chief medical officer and senior vice president.

As her involvement with SummaCare grew and she took on greater responsibilities, Koenig decided that she needed more background in business. She returned to school and in 1999 earned an MBA from Baldwin Wallace/NEOUCOM’s healthcare executive program.

The company grew, too. As the insurance arm of Summa Health

System, it provides insurance, PPO (preferred provider) and HMO (health maintenance) services in 18 counties of Ohio and, through a sister company, Apex Benefits Services, in other states, including Florida, Vermont and Virginia. It currently has \$480 million in revenues and insures 170,000, with 50 member hospitals and a network of more than 7,000 healthcare providers.

The core of its business remains local, even as it expands, “because we believe healthcare is local,” Koenig says. Last fall the company won national recognition from the Health Industries Research Company for its effective disease management programs (asthma, heart failure and diabetes.) It has been highly ranked for the past five years by U.S. News & World Report and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), based on areas such as customer experience, preventive services, its NCQA accreditation scores (“excellent”) and how well the plan takes care of people with existing conditions.

Quality management issues continue to absorb her attention; SummaCare is now adopting the Lean methodology and techniques of improving performance derived from Japanese automakers.

Afternoon Koenig’s day may include a meeting of the Ohio Health Care Coverage and Quality Council, established a year ago by the Ohio General Assembly in response to Gov. Ted Strickland’s executive order. Its task, now complicated by federal healthcare reform, is to determine how to improve the coverage, cost and quality of Ohio’s health insurance and healthcare systems.

Koenig is on the board and is a member of two task forces – one on payment reform, the other on medical homes, a term referring to the network

of people who care for a patient. In addition to a doctor, that may include staff and maybe even a dentist or chiropractor – the term is still open to definition.

Koenig is both encouraged and frustrated by coming changes in the healthcare system.

“A lot in reform is good – as well as a lot that’s bad,” she says.

She believes that the critical piece is to blend the delivery of quality, evidence-based healthcare with affordable cost. That may seem obvious, but it requires fundamental changes in the mindsets of both physicians and patients.

For patients, it may mean a change in lifestyle – more activity or a healthier diet, for example, and taking on more self-responsibility for health management. Patients will need to be more than “downstream observers,” she says.

“I firmly believe that more than half of our medical issues are related to our lifestyle,” she says.

For doctors, it may mean relinquishing a long-held assumption that “I am the doctor and I know what’s best.”

Today, doctors are being trained to collaborate with a team of providers. She has a more formal description for it – integrating the bio-psychosocial needs. It’s the direction that medical care is headed, but getting there takes adjustments.

The changes she sees coming mirror her own dual interests in the business and quality sides of healthcare delivery. She calls it medical economics, defining it as integrating evidence-based clinical medicine with affordable cost.

“This is what I so much believe needs to change through healthcare reform,”

she says. “You’re looking at that cost and quality to get value.”

“If you don’t blend, you’ll never get there,” she adds.

4:30 - 5pm When her youngest daughter was playing high school sports, Koenig would leave work to get to the games. After dinner at home, she would pick up the threads of work again at 8 p.m., sometimes until the early hours of the morning, although she tried to get to bed by 11 p.m. At times, she’d fall asleep on the couch earlier in the evening.



Balancing her intense schedule of work, community and family requires both organization and flexibility.

“I’ve been blessed. My husband puts up with the crazy hours – and he’s a great dad,” she says.

Joe, in turn, calls her “an amazing person,” highly organized and committed.

“She knew everyone’s schedule and would figure out the way to make things work.”

He adds: “Tere has always made time for me and our children. She never took the easy way out by saying she was too busy.”

That includes giving back to the community. Their daughters attended Our Lady of the Elms School, and Koenig was on the school’s board for seven years, earning a recognition award for her service. She has also been awarded for outstanding community service by Akron Summit

Community Action, Inc., and she was in the Leadership Akron class of 2002-2003.

She also coached Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) basketball and softball for several years. She played sports herself – track and tennis at Ursuline High School in Youngstown. She values “learning to work within a team.”

But her proudest achievement is raising two girls. Their photos crowd the surface areas of her office, and she readily relates their achievements.

Evening Koenig wonders how her evenings will change, now that her daughters are no longer at home. The temptation will be to stay at work until 8 p.m., she says.

The challenges and changes coming in healthcare delivery in the U.S. are still being gauged by patients and doctors and can seem overwhelming at times, she admits.

“You have to have a whole strategy,” she says. Planning for it is part of her job.

“Our goal is to support care delivery between the providers and the patient,” she says.

Change is never easy. She recalls one of the first quality programs she started for providers, back in the 1990s, to help them better organize their records of patient contacts. In some doctors’ offices, the existing system consisted of index cards thrown into a manila envelope.

But the recommendations weren’t always welcome. She got a letter from one doctor: “Dear Mrs. Koenig, go back to baking cookies.”

Yet three months later, when he was up for review by an insurance company, the same doctor asked her team to evaluate his practice beforehand.

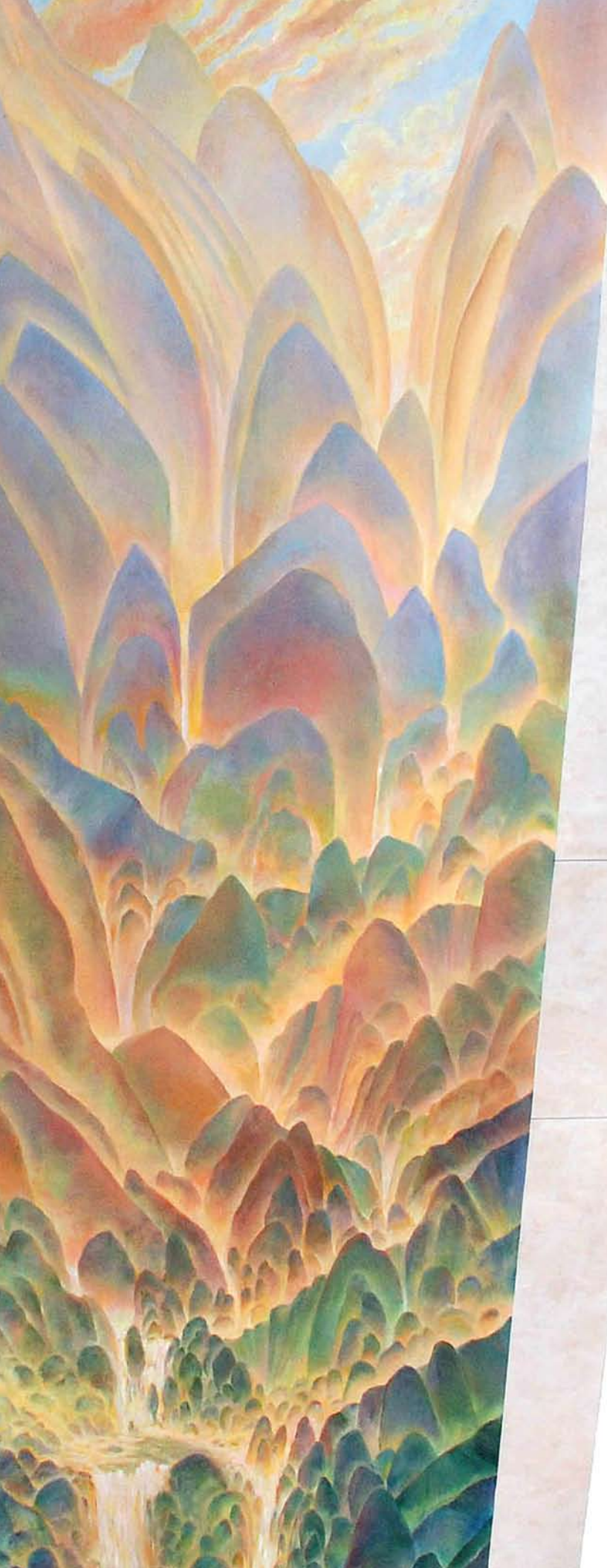
Quality management has evolved since then – the next level will be examining results, she believes – how does a particular test ordered by a doctor affect a patient’s outcome, for example.

The prospect of continuing change seems to energize her even more.

“If I didn’t have the quality edge, I wouldn’t work here,” she says.

◀ Lucinda Weiss





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