

Volunteer Newsletter

Fall 2023

Volunteer Program News

This quarterly newsletter highlights volunteer programs and Northwestern Medicine news.

During this season of gratitude, we wish to thank all of our volunteers for their compassion, generosity and dedication. We are grateful to our more than 1,200 volunteers currently serving across NM. The Volunteer Services staff wishes you a happy Thanksgiving and joyful holiday season.

Can Acupuncture Help Your Heart?

NM Study Reveals Acupuncture's Potential in Improving Outcomes After Cardiac Surgery

Heart surgery is a lifesaving procedure, but it can contribute to physical discomfort and side effects like [atrial fibrillation](#) (irregular heartbeat), which can lead to [stroke](#). Acupuncture, a potentially effective treatment for heart rhythm disorders, pain and nausea, is now being studied for use after cardiac surgery at Northwestern Medicine.

"ACU-Heart is a clinical trial designed to assess the feasibility of daily acupuncture in the hospital setting after open-heart surgery, which has not been examined to date," says lead investigator [Kim L. Feingold, PhD](#), a cardiac psychologist and the founder and director of [Cardiac Behavioral Medicine](#) at Northwestern Medicine [Bluhm Cardiovascular Institute](#) at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

[Read more about the study.](#)

Diabetes Medications for Weight Loss

What You Need to Know

You may have heard about the class of Type 2 diabetes medications called glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists being used for weight management treatment in people who may or may not have diabetes.

[Veronica R. Johnson, MD](#), a physician who specializes in obesity medicine at Northwestern Medicine, answers common questions about these medications and weight loss.

Read more: [Diabetes Medications for Weight Loss | Northwestern Medicine](#)



Volunteer Spotlight: Noel Storm

Front Desk, Wig Boutique and
Support Group Volunteer
Living Well Cancer Resources

What has your volunteer experience taught you?

Being a volunteer at Living Well has been a wonderful, heartwarming experience. It has taught me to be more accepting of others, no matter where they are in their cancer journey. Also, I have become a better listener and learned more patience dealing with others.

How has volunteering impacted you personally?

Volunteering has shown me what's important in my life. I don't take things so seriously and try to live each day to the fullest.

Hispanic Breast Cancer Clinic Provides Specialized Care for Patients

In the United States, breast cancer incidence in Hispanic and Latin American women is 28% lower than in non-Hispanic white women, who have the highest incidence rate. Despite these lower occurrence rates, Hispanic women are more likely to be diagnosed with late-stage breast cancer. At this stage, cancer is harder to treat, which means Hispanic and Latin American women have a 30% higher mortality rate from breast cancer. These numbers highlight the significant health inequities this population faces when it comes to accessing high-quality breast cancer care and screening.

“What we see in the Hispanic community is that the women are being diagnosed at later stages, even though their diagnosis tends to be at a younger age,” says Claudia Tellez, MD, a medical oncologist at Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. “And because they’re being diagnosed at a later stage and often with more aggressive types of breast cancer, their prognosis is less favorable.”

Dr. Tellez is working to change this by offering Hispanic patients better access to breast cancer screening, treatment and research with the recently launched Lurie Cancer Center Hispanic Breast Cancer Clinic at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

“Many Hispanic women in Chicago struggle to access care or are not receiving the highest standard of care because of language barriers, financial limitations and other factors,” says Dr. Tellez, who is the medical director of the clinic. “Our team is dedicated to addressing these disparities and improving access by providing culturally sensitive care, bilingual support and educational resources tailored to the needs of Hispanic patients.”

Excellent Communication Guides Excellent Cancer Care

Led by Dr. Tellez, who is a native of Colombia, the Hispanic Breast Cancer Clinic offers personalized care from a multidisciplinary team of breast cancer experts, supportive care specialists and administrative staff who all speak Spanish. All patients have a core clinic team that includes a physician, nurse, medical assistant, social worker and research assistant.

[Learn how the Hispanic Breast Cancer Clinic is providing specialized care.](#)



Julie Schroeder and Anne Kryger
West Surgery Volunteers
Central DuPage Hospital



Guido Di Domenico
Outpatient Desk Volunteer
Central DuPage Hospital

NM Hospitals Ranked Among America’s Best

Northwestern Medicine is proud to have **five** hospitals ranked among “America’s Best” by *U.S. News & World Report*, 2023 – 2024.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital is the only Illinois hospital on the honor roll for **12** straight years and is nationally ranked in **11** clinical specialties, including:

- Diabetes and Endocrinology
- Cardiology and Heart Surgery
- Gastroenterology and GI Surgery
- Geriatrics
- Neurology and Neurosurgery

Read more: [Northwestern Medicine U.S. News & World Report, 2023 – 2024 Rankings](#)

Encourage your friends and family to join our volunteer team. They can learn more at: nm.org/volunteer

Why Magnesium Matters

Magnesium is an essential mineral that plays an important role in hundreds of your bodily functions, yet almost half of people in the United States do not consume enough in their daily diet. “This can set the stage for more chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and osteoporosis,” says Bethany M. Doerfler, MS, RDN, a clinical research dietitian at Northwestern Medicine Digestive Health Center. Read more:

[Why Magnesium Matters | Northwestern Medicine](#)