WHITNEY YOUNG HEALTH AROUND HEALTHCARE DESIGNED

WHITNEY WIRE

FEBRUARY 2025

Whitney Young Health's Monthly Employee Newsletter

February is National Children's Dental Health Month

National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM) observed each February, is sponsored by the American Dental Association (ADA) to raise awareness about the importance of oral health in kids.

WYH participates in NCDHM annually, and this year's activities include:

- Pop-up pediatric dental clinics with **Seal a Smile** on our Whitney on Wheels (WOW) mobile health unit.
  - Mon. 2/17 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM at Watervliet HC
  - Weds. 2/19 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM at Swinburne
- Dr. Rothas will be tabling at the **Troy Farmer's Market** from 9 AM - 2 PM on 2/8 & 2/22
- A month-long social media campaign featuring tips on dental care, brushing techniques, and more!

WYH Organizational Culture Journey

By Keith Bemis

In 2025, we continue our journey with the integration of our Values - Standards of Behavior and Leadership Principles into our performance evaluation. The updated performance evaluation will be conducted in February.

All employees on this performance evaluation will have a select set of WYH Values with corresponding Standards of Behavior. The values that were selected for this initial evaluation cycle:

Respect

We value the uniqueness and diversity of our patients and staff, and strive to provide an inclusive environment that treats each other with dignity and respect.

- **Be considerate.**
- **Accept others as they are.**
- **Value yourself and others.**

Integrity

We uphold standards of honesty, accountability and reliability in all that we do.

- **Be authentic.**
- **Be accountable.**
- **Be a trustworthy and dependable partner.**

Innovation

We actively promote change and dedicate time and resources to implement new and better ways to enhance our patients' health outcomes.

- **Be proactive in pursuing creative solutions.**
- **Be open to change.**
- **Engage stakeholders in continuous improvement.**

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WYH Organizational Culture Journey

Continued from page 1

All positional leaders on this performance evaluation will also have a select set of Leadership Principles - Expectations. The leadership principles that were selected for this initial evaluation cycle are:

Demonstrate and Foster Accountability

- **Fulfills job responsibilities without prompting.**
- **Serves as a role model in demonstrating the standards of behavior while providing guidance and support to their team members in their demonstration of the standards of behavior.**

Engage in Constructive Feedback

- **Provide feedback on a regular basis that is detailed and can be acted upon by others in a constructive manner.**
- **Seek out feedback on a regular basis on their performance and inquire about what they can do to support their direct reports, fellow leaders, and team members.**

By incorporating our Core Values and Leadership Principles into the performance evaluation process, we build accountability in a consistent and sustainable manner.

Employee Engagement

By Keith Bemis

Employee Engagement is on the 2025 Strategic Scorecard and our Quarter 1 goal is to: ***Develop action plan from employee engagement results and communicate to staff.***

We have been reviewing and analyzing the survey results with the Executive Team as we develop the action plan for 2025. This investment of time demonstrates the leadership principle: ***Utilize discernment.***

In January, we launched **Employee Engagement Messages**, a series to guide us through the data to help us understand the results and explain the rationale behind the action plan, including next steps.

Employee engagement is critical to our organizational culture as we perform the work of our mission, move forward on our vision, and demonstrate our core values every day.

We appreciate your continued support and collaboration in this important initiative.

Initial Messages:

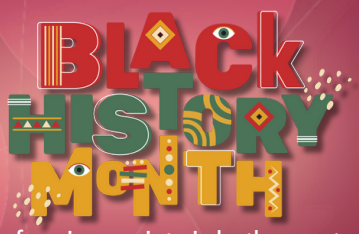
- Our Employee Engagement Score
- Meaningful Work – Career Development
- Belonging – Authenticity and Inclusiveness
- Employee Safety

WHITNEY YOUNG HEALTH

February 2025

Diversity, Equity & Awareness and Health Observances

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
All Jewish and Muslim holidays start and end at sundown. *Fasting may be required for observers of this holiday.						1 National Freedom Day Imbolc Pagan/Wiccan
2 Vasant Panchami Hindu	3	4 World Cancer Day	5	6	7 National Wear Red Day	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day National Condom Day	15 Parinirvana/ Nirvana Day Buddhist
16	17 President's Day	18	19	20	21 World Braille Day	22
23	24	25	26 Maha Shivaratri Hindu	27	28 Ramadan* **Begins** *at sundown* Muslim	



"Transforming society is both a protracted and intergenerational process."

-Malik Yakini

Observance Months

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Celebrating Black Health Heroes

In honor of Black History Month, we are featuring Black health visionaries making a difference in the lives of their communities and beyond.

Please click on the photos to learn more about the lives and accomplishments of each person featured, and click HERE to read about other Black public health icons.

Maj. Nancy Leftenant-Colon

First Black woman to serve in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps when it was desegregated after World War II

After graduating from her Long Island high school in 1939, Nancy Leftenant - Colon attended the Lincoln School for Nurses in the Bronx - the first school in the country to train Black women to become nurses.

She worked at a local hospital before joining the US Army Nurse Corps as a reservist in 1945, attending to soldiers injured in the war. The following year, while stationed at an Army Air Base in Ohio, she teamed up with prominent flight surgeon and Tuskegee Airman Vance H. Marchbanks Jr., and the two delivered and saved the life of a premature baby girl who weighed just three pounds, suffered from a Vitamin K deficiency, and wasn't expected to survive.

In 1948, after military segregation was ended, Leftenant-Colon applied for and received regular status in the Army Nurse Corps

In 1952, several years after the military deactivated the 332nd Fighter Group, which was the military's first Black pilots known as the Tuskegee Airmen, Leftenant-Colon became a flight nurse with the U.S. Air Force. After retiring from the military in 1965 with the rank of major, she eventually returned to Amityville and worked as the school nurse at her alma mater – Amityville Memorial High School – from 1971 until 1984.

Leftenant-Colon lived to the age of 104, passing away on January 8th of this year.

Malik Yakini

An activist serving as the Executive Director of the Detroit Black Community Food Security Network, Yakini recognizes the impact of white supremacy on the food system and works towards food security for the Black community.

Much of Detroit obtains its food from gas stations and convenience stores due to the lack of grocery store chains. Detroit's Black Community Food Security Network is involved with urban farming, youth programs, and community owned cooperative grocery stores; each of which are used as ways to empower and provide healthy food to the community.

He's now been working towards food sovereignty for Black folks in Detroit for decades. He describes food sovereignty as the condition that exists when a community can define and shape the system that provides their food.

"What we see now in Detroit's Black community is that 99% of the food that we consume comes to us from outside of our community," Yakini said. "It is sold to us by people who don't live in our community, and far too often who are not respectful of the people in the community."

"We are trying to develop people who will have a sense of dedication to not just themselves," said Yakini " but whose primary concern is to uplift the community that they're part of and by extension, the African world."

Loretta Sweet Jemmott

One of the U.S.'s most prominent researchers in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, with a particular focus on African American adolescents and adults.

Loretta Sweet Jemmott, PhD, an expert in health promotion research, is one of the nation's foremost investigators in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention. Using evidence-based, HIV risk-reduction interventions, she and her husband, John B. Jemmott, III, PhD, have attracted more than $150 million in NIH funding over the past two decades to design and test interventions to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among diverse populations in the U.S., Botswana, South Africa, Jamaica, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

She partnered with community-based organizations, from churches and clinics to barbershops, housing developments and schools, transforming her research outcomes for use in real-world settings. To date, eight of her evidence-based interventions have been designated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Adolescent Health for national and international dissemination used in 48 states across the nation.

After retiring from a successful 20-year tenure at the University of Pennsylvania, she joined Drexel University in 2015 as vice president for Health and Health Equity and professor in the College of Nursing and Health Professions.

Celebrating Black History Month

Our namesake: Whitney M. Young, Jr.

By Diann Boyd & Susan Lovelock

Whitney Moore Young, Jr., born in Kentucky in July of 1921, was a part of the **"Big Six"** Organizers of the Civil Rights Movement. Other members included Dr. Martin Luther Jr., James Farmer, A. Phillip Randolph, John Lewis, and Roy Wilkins. Each member helped shape the Civil Rights Movement through sit-ins, Freedom Rides, legislation and marches; including the historic March on Washington in 1963.

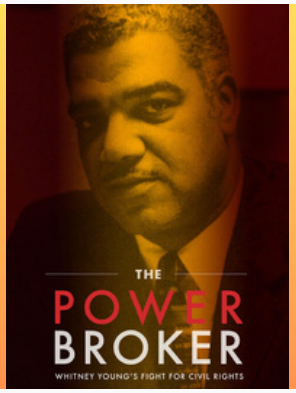
Whitney Young was a social worker by trade who rose to power in the civil rights movement through of his commitment to ending employment discrimination.

He also played a major role in reshaping and expanding **The National Urban League**, which was established in 1910 to help Black people find employment, housing, and other resources during the **Great Migration.** Under Young's leadership, the mission of the organization was "to enable African Americans to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power and civil rights." Whitney Young became the organization's executive director in 1961. Within four years, the NUL went from 38 to 1,600 employees and its annual budget rose from $325,000 to $6.1 million.

He also introduced the radical **Domestic Marshall Plan,** a 10-point plan created by Young to address poverty and racial inequality in the United States, calling for $145 billion investment to improve the education, employment & welfare of Black communities. In the years ahead, Young would continue to expand the mission of the NUL while also serving as a civil rights adviser to U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Whitney Young died on March 11, 1971, at the age of 49. He is believed to have drowned while swimming at a beach while attending a conference in Lagos, Nigeria.

Whitney Young (second from right) with Martin Luther King, Jr., President Lyndon B. Johnson, and James Farmer in the Oval Office.



To learn more about Whitney M. Young, Jr.'s history and place in the Civil Rights movement, click **HERE** to watch **The Power Broker: Whitney Young's Fight for Civil Rights.** This hour-long documentary was made by award-winning broadcast journalist, Bonnie Boswell, who is Whitney Young's niece.

WHITNEY YOUNG HEALTH

New Hires

January 2025

Samantha Almadovar	CPTS Program Manager
Kristyn Braswell	Information Assistant (IA)
Deja Favors	Medical Assistant
Hakimah Myrick	Medical Assistant
Brianna Norton	Physician
Suzanne Parker	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
Sarah Salvatore	Contracted PT
Kristie Snyder	RN Care Manager
Keesha Woods	Information Assistant (IA)

WYH PRIDE COMMITTEE

Pride Month isn't until June, but LGBTQAI+ and Pride-related events and activities happen year-round.

Join us as a member of the 2025 Pride Committee to help plan, promote and participate in Capital Pride, BIPOC Pride, Collar City Pride, and more.

To join or find out more, please contact Kayla Ardito at kardito@wmyhealth.org or ext. 5083

WYH Values & Leadership Workshops

SMART Goals Workshop

Wednesday, February 5, 12:30-1:30
900 Lark Board Room

Learn how to write goals using the **SMART** process: **S**-Specific; **M**-Measurable; **A**-Achievable; **R**-Relevant; **T**-Time-Bound.

Being a Leader

Thursday, March 13, 2:30-4:00
900 Lark Board Room

To register for these classes, please email Keith Bemis at kbemis@wmyhealth.org

Being a Leader, the foundational course required for all positional leaders and encouraged for aspiring leaders. This in-person class in a small group setting provides a shared learning experience about how to collectively engage and collaborate on how best to implement the leadership principles. Structured content with multiple prompts and activities facilitate discussion and engage participants in how to apply our leadership principles in their role.

Course Elements:

- Connect personal vision of leadership with our leadership principles.
- Engage in scenarios to demonstrate leadership principles and how to apply them in daily actions.
- Identify leadership development goals.
- Develop action plans to implement and/or improve operations guided by our leadership principles.

2025 Annual Attestations Due 2/7

All WYH staff must complete important educational updates in HealthStream by Friday 2/7.

- **WYH NYS Sexual and Other Workplace Harassment Education - (Employee or Supervisor Version) - 2025** **Required annual education in New York State.**

NOTE: *If you were hired earlier this month, you will not see this on your "TO DO" list since you have already completed it as part of new hire education.*

- **WYH Policy Attestations and Employee Handbook - 2025**
  This updated version includes updated policies and the updated 2025 Employee Handbook.
- **WYH Naxalone Nasal Spray**
  For employees who need to complete an annual education on the use of Naxalone Nasal Spray.
- **WYH Code of Conduct for Custodians of People with Special Needs - 2025**
  For employees who need to complete an annual review of the Code of Conduct for Custodians of People with Special Needs.
- **WYH Policy Attestation – 2025 – Corporate Compliance Confidentiality**
  For employees who need to complete an annual review of the Corporate Compliance Confidentiality policy.

If you are going to pause while completing a course, please exit out of the course so that you don't lose your progress. HealthStream will automatically log you off after a certain amount of time even though the course is still open.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Keith Bemis at kbemis@wmyhealth.org.

HOW TO RESPOND TO US CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION (ICE) IF THEY COME TO A WYH FACILITY

From a memo sent on 1/29/25 by Vicki Junco, our Director of Risk Management and Corporate Compliance, offering guidance on proper response to ICE agents if they enter any WYH building

- Confirm their identification (picture ID) and ask the reason for their visit
- Have them wait in a closed room, if possible, while you contact a supervisor
- Contact **Vicki Junco (x4454 or 518-948-1943)** or **Robert Coyle (x4453 or 518-948-3185)**
- Do **not** accept, read or respond to any paperwork they show you (subpoena, warrant). Just ask them to wait.
- ***You can:***
  - Move patients to a private area such as an exam room
  - Protect patient information by securing computer screens and not discussing patient information
  - Ensure there is no patient information within sight

Learning About PAs

PAs (Physician Assistants) are vital members of Whitney Young Health's team of providers, yet many people don't know a lot about the profession, PAs proper titles, or what they do.

What is a PA?

PAs are medical providers who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and often serve as a patient's principal healthcare provider. With thousands of hours of medical training, PAs are versatile and collaborative. PAs practice in every state and in every medical setting and specialty, improving healthcare access and quality.

The PA Abbreviation

When you are writing, use "PA" as the title of the profession, not "physician assistant," If you have to spell it out to help an audience that doesn't know, only use "physician assistant" once in parentheses after the first PA reference: e.g., "PA (physician assistant)." After that, use "PA."

The PA Title

To promote uniformity of address in clinical and other settings, use PA as the title before the person's name, for instance, "PA Pam Smith" or "PA Smith".

What PAs are NOT

PAs are not assistants to physicians. There is no possessive apostrophe in the title of the profession - the word "physician" in "physician assistant" is not possessive or plural. PAs collaborate with physicians and often serve as the lead on care coordination teams and see patients in all settings without a physician present. In fact, in many cases, a PA may be the a patient's only health care provider.

PAs are not mid-level providers, physician extenders, or non-physician providers. These terms are inaccurate and minimize the expertise of PAs.

UWGCR Launches Free Tax Prep Program

United Way
of the Greater Capital Region

The **United Way of the Greater Capital Region (UWGCR)** has launched VITA, their annual tax preparation assistance program for those with a household income less than $67,000 per year.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is a collaborative effort of UWGCR, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, Congressman Paul Tonko, Assemblymember John McDonald, Albany County, the Town of Colonie and the IRS.

VITA is among the primary ways UWGCR creates pathways to financial security by connecting Capital Region families and individuals to resources that empower them to thrive.

Last year, VITA helped over 5,400 local residents file their returns, securing $6 million in refunds and saving $1.6 million in filing fees. VITA's IRS-certified volunteers are specially trained to ensure residents receive all the tax credits they qualify for, including the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit—key tools for helping working families escape or avoid poverty.

To learn more about this program and how it may help you or the people we serve, click HERE.