

# Grey Matters

Newsletter of Givens Brain Tumor Center

WINTER 2023

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## News Updates

### Givens Brain Tumor Center

Allina Health Institute of  
Neuroscience, Spine and Pain

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## Dr. Andrea Wasilewski

### Medical Director



Hello! I hope you have all been staying safe, warm and had the opportunity to be surrounded by family and friends over the holiday season. This is my second winter in Minnesota, and I am fully embracing the cold making an effort like many to participate in some beloved winter activities including skiing and ice fishing. As I start my second year here at the Givens Brain Tumor Center I am filled

with admiration for our incredible staff, providers and most importantly our patients. I thank you all for allowing us to enter your lives in partner with you along your brain or spinal cord tumor journey. Each and every patient I see inspires me in a new way and I am excited to catch up with many of you to see what you have been up to this winter.

This Grey Matters issue contains a wealth of information. You will hear from several of our patients regarding their journey through brain cancer diagnosis treatment and beyond.

You will also meet new additions to our team, Michelle Picconi APRN, CNP, who has been working with us as a nurse practitioner since August, and Becky Moore, LGSW, social worker, also since August. Michelle will work alongside myself and Patti Bruns, APRN, CNS to support our patients. We are very excited for the enthusiasm and level of care that Michelle and Becky bring to our program, and I look forward to all of you meeting them!

You will hear from Dr. Peter Lee and learn about the role of neuroradiology, specialized radiologists, who review complex neurologic images of the brain and spinal cord. Neuroradiologists

interpret x-rays, CT and MRI scans and work closely with our team to diagnose tumors and monitor their response to treatment.

Dr. Jerry Halsten, Neuropsychologist, explains his role with our clinic conducting neuropsychological assessment services to individuals who are currently being treated for brain tumors or who have undergone treatment in the past. He works with the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute (CKRI) and will refer patients to various CKRI providers such as psychology, physical therapy, occupational therapy and or speech therapy. Our research team supports the many exciting clinical trials options we have available for patients with glioblastoma. In addition to our study portfolio, I am pleased to announce that the Givens Brain Tumor Center is now integrated with Metro Minnesota Community Oncology Research Consortium (MMCORC) to offer a host of treatment-based and supportive care clinical trials through partnership with the National Cancer Institute. This new partnership will allow access to many new and interesting studies for patients with various tumor types.

I hope you find this issue informative, and I look forward to seeing you in the clinic soon! This newsletter is for you! Please share ideas or questions we can address in future issues!

Dr. Wasilewski



### The Givens Family

Mike Givens, who lost his battle with brain cancer in 2015, was a hero in every sense of the word. He and his wife, Linda, co-founded the 501(c)3 MG Charities, which held fundraising events around the country. Mike and Linda were self-made entrepreneurs in the Midwest and the driving force behind raising and donating over \$10 million to charities around the country over the past 20+ years.

Since 2016, MG Charities has donated \$1.85 million to the Givens Brain Tumor Center. Their annual Mind Over Matter charity golf event was held at the Wayzata Country Club during previous summers, raising money to benefit brain cancer research and patients currently being treated for brain cancer. Mike's legacy lives on through the charity work that continues in his honor. Mike and Linda's daughter, Megan Givens Laatsch, continues their legacy of service with involvement with the Allina Health Foundation.

# Editor's Column

## Editor's Column



### Deborah Jones, Care Guide

We had a lovely, warm Autumn with unusually balmy weather spoiling us into thinking winter was not coming! As I am writing this, we are experiencing our first significant snowstorm. The

snow is beautiful and peaceful, but is making for very difficult, slow travel and commutes. Winter is our time to bundle up, stay cozy, and keep our inner light glowing.

For some of us, however, this time of year can be a difficult time emotionally and practically. It is a time of year when we experience darkness and cold and a holiday season fraught with so many expectations. I am reminded of the word Hygge which is a Danish way of living to find contentment and a sense of coziness particularly during the cold and dark winter months. So perhaps we can all find ways to be cozy. Enjoy a warm drink, a glass of wine, and snuggle up with a warm blanket, maybe a fire in the fireplace, and read a book or watch a movie. Light some candles and enjoy a cozy candlelit meal with friends or family. Find time to enjoy simple, slow down, and just "be".

We are busy here at the Givens Brain Tumor Center with new staff, new patients, and always looking forward to welcoming YOU! You are our priority!

This Grey Matters issue offers more patient stories and more information about our neuroscience partners who are part of the extended team caring for you. This collaboration with other providers is critical to your overall care. Our vision is to provide the best technology, treatments, and clinical studies for you, our patients and your loved ones. We have shortened the format of our newsletter and include our usual resource information on our website [www.allinahealth.org/givens](http://www.allinahealth.org/givens). We are planning to create an online newsletter which would be emailed to you and available on our website. What are your thoughts? Do you have a preference?

We would love to hear from you. Tell us what is on your mind and what is important to you. What are your questions? What would you like to see addressed here? Would you like to share your story? Let us know. We will be back when the weather is warmer!

In the meantime, stay warm and cozy, safe, and strong!

Deborah Jones

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## Stop guessing, start finding your way in our metro hospitals with our free Allina Health mobile app



Download the Allina Health app today from the [Apple App Store](#) for Apple devices or [Google Play](#) for Android devices and start using it to navigate to and while on our three metro hospital campuses.

# Staff Announcements

## Becky Moore, LGSW



I am the new Givens Brain Tumor Center and Memory Center Social Worker here in the Neuroscience Institute! I attended undergrad at Winona State University, and University of Wisconsin Madison for Graduate School (Go Badgers!!). I have worked for the past three years as an inpatient medical social worker on the Oncology and General Medical-Surgical units here at Abbott. I have always loved working with people, and providing support to those in need of it, which prompted me towards the field of Social Work. I look forward to supporting and making connections with you.

Growing up I lived in a few different countries in Europe until the age of 14 when I moved to Minnetonka, Minnesota. After a few moves, I now live back in Minnetonka with my husband, four stepchildren, and fluffy cat Wendell. We keep pretty busy with playing outside, collecting Pokémon cards, and visiting our beloved Grandma and Grandpa across the street. In my free time I enjoy playing piano, watching the Great British Bake Off, and having bonfires in our wooded backyard.

## Michelle Picconi – APRN, CNP

It has been a pleasure to meet so many of you already! I am excited to join the Givens team and am very humbled at the opportunity to participate in your care.

A little about me...

I am originally from Denver, Colorado and moved to Omaha, Nebraska for college. I attended Creighton University, earning my nursing degree in 2011. Following graduation, I returned to Denver working as a nurse on medical/surgical/oncology, hematology, and bone marrow transplant units. Working so closely with cancer care patients, I found myself wanting to further my medical knowledge and obtain a wider scope of practice to better serve patients. With that in mind, I headed to graduate school at Regis University in Denver, CO. I received my Nurse Practitioner degree in Family Practice and found myself moving to Rochester, MN for a nurse practitioner job at the Mayo Clinic – it is true when they say you never know where life will take you! I had a wonderful experience working with the inpatient hematology team and am grateful for the solid foundation as a nurse practitioner the opportunity provided. I was looking for a new challenge and was lucky enough to find the perfect fit and team here at Givens! I love staying active with yoga, spin classes (I gave into the 2020 Peloton craze), biking, and stand-up paddle boarding. I travel as much as possible and am very lucky to have family and close friends all over the country to visit. March madness is my absolute favorite time of year - Go Jays! I love reading a good book on the beach and a home cooked Italian meal.



# Patient Stories

## Jana Campbell

### “Love Living Life”



Jana is the mother of 3 children – Barrett, Brayden, and Justine - and is married to her husband Brent. Jana and Brent were originally from the Twin Cities and moved to the Brainerd Lakes area in 1998 where they enjoy the scenic lakes and

surrounding beauty of the area. They have many friends and “love living life” in Brainerd.

In 2001, Jana was experiencing bad headaches when her doctor recommended that she have an MRI. A mass was found in her brain and on December 26, 2001, she had her first surgery. The neurosurgeon removed a tumor the size of a squished ping pong ball. She was diagnosed with a right temporal mixed grade 2 oligodendroglioma. She had a year of temozolomide chemotherapy. Their children at that time were 9, 6, and 4 years old.

For the next 15 years, Jana and Brent led a very active life with their children, going to the cabin, and attending and participating in their children’s activities. Jana continued to take very good care of herself walking, working out, spending time with friends. She worked at the Brainerd Eye Clinic for 20 years.

Dr. Trusheim, her neuro-oncologist, continued to see her regularly during the duration. She had recurrence later in 2014, which was treated with another year of temozolomide.

In 2020, early into the COVID pandemic, she had another recurrence in the right temporal area. A biopsy and the pathology report reported a grade 4 astrocytoma. In May 2020, Jana had her second surgery to remove the old tumor bed of the now known Grade 4 astrocytoma. She had 6 cycles of temozolomide.

In March 2021, Jana had multi focal recurrence in the right parietal and right cerebellar hemisphere of her brain with more rounds of chemoradiation treatment, then Keytruda infusions, and in June of 2021, Avastin infusions were added due to more progression. She had dramatic results. She also started the Joe Tippens protocol which she continues today.

Social distancing during those years added another layer to her progression and treatment. It was very tough having to keep distance between her and her loved ones.

Jana looks forward to her daughter Justine’s plans to be married in September 2024. She also enjoys every opportunity she gets to spend with her sons, both of whom live out of state.

As of now, the tumors remain stable while she continues to focus on physical and occupational therapies. She did have a small stroke earlier this year likely caused by the numerous treatments she has had over the years.

Jana continues to work at remaining positive, while hoping and praying that through working with Dr. Wasilewski she will continue to see positive results in the future.

# Patient Stories

## Nancy Groen

### “Everyone is so special”



Nancy met her husband, Gary, at Bemidji State University. During their junior year on September 11, 1971, they were married in Minneapolis.

They owned two different homes in Richfield while raising their children, Katie and John. When they moved to their second Richfield home where they lived for the next 30 years, they always hosted an annual party on Christmas Eve which continued until very recently. They currently live in a condominium in Edina, after 5 years in Otsego for Gary's work.

When their children were both in school Nancy fell into work with a public relations firm Mona, Meyer, McGrath, and Gavin (now a part of Weber Shandwick). Her first project was for the University of Minnesota football team when Lou Holtz came to Minnesota to coach the Gophers. Nancy loved working at Mona Meyer McGrath and Gavin because their culture was inclusive and “you are all important and part of the family”. Later she was promoted to Vice President right before an event occurred that changed her and her family's lives. She had three large projects she had been working on and had traveled to both coasts returning home after both trips feeling tired and sick.

On the evening of December 23, 1996, Nancy had several seizures, and was hospitalized. She was 44 years old at the time. She learned she had an astrocytoma, grade 2, in the left parietal occipital region of her brain. Daughter, Katie, had recently graduated from college and son, John, was a freshman in college. Nancy went on to have whole head radiation and later stereotactic brain

radiation. About a year after her initial diagnosis, there was something suspicious on her scan. It was decided to operate. Tissue samples demonstrated radiation induced necrotic tissue rather than tumor. After surgery, Nancy went through two years of rehabilitation including speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. Nancy did have occasional seizure activity which is very controlled today.

For a time after her diagnosis and treatment Nancy volunteered at Fairview Southdale Hospital providing support and encouragement to patients of all kinds. For several years, Nancy and Gary were involved with the support group at Fairview Southdale with neuro-oncologist, Dr. Trusheim's, clinical team. They appreciated the opportunity to share experiences, as both a patient and caregiver, with others. Nancy and her husband have always been very social, caring people.

It has been a long journey for Nancy and for her husband, Gary, who has been her caregiver since the beginning. Over the years she has developed a right sided visual cut and right sided weakness and has occasional balance challenges leading to falls. Nancy continues PT weekly to maintain her strength as balance has become a bigger challenge.

Nancy believes that everyone is so special and wants to make sure everyone feels special. She continues to enjoy weekly bingo, going to Canterbury Downs, and watching other sport events with her husband. But “I find that as the years go by, people seem to forget about you.” She wants others to understand how important it is to keep someone like her, who is challenged with getting out, a priority in their lives.



# Patient Stories

## Teri Menter

### “A Guardian Angel”



I am a 56-year-old mother of two and grandma to six beautiful grandchildren. I married my wonderful husband in 2003 and gained a stepdaughter. My family means the world to me, and they

have provided me with a lot of support.

I live in Medford and work at Mill's Fleet Farm in Owatonna. My previous career was in Healthcare IT as an Implementation Consultant training hospital staff on the same software I used in the hospital I previously worked at as an RN. As a consultant I traveled every week to hospitals across the US.

On November 20, 2012, I was at the movie theater with my daughter when I felt nauseous and began seeing red pinpoints of light flashing before my eyes. My daughter was 8 months pregnant at the time and yet she helped get me to the hospital. I couldn't hold anything in my left hand, my left leg was weak, I was stumbling, and my speech was slurred. I thought I was having a stroke. She took me to the same hospital I used to work at. While there I had a seizure, I was sedated, intubated and air lifted to Abbott.

I had a small perfectly round tumor on my right occipital parietal lobe. I had to wait 10 days to see what changes would happen. In that time the tumor almost doubled in size. My first operation was in December 2012. From that I was diagnosed with a grade 3 Anaplastic Astrocytoma. In January 2013 I had my second surgery to remove most of the tumor which also took part of my vision. I have

no left lower peripheral vision, but I have been able to compensate for that loss. I then went through 30 rounds of radiation. I was on oral chemo for the next year. My mother and my sister stayed with us much of that year to drive me back and forth to my treatments, so my husband could continue to work.

The following week, after I had those symptoms, I was supposed to be in Florida at another customer site. I now feel that I had a guardian angel watching over me, because I was home and in familiar surroundings and with family.

And.... Finally, I have had a tendency to be a klutz for much of my life. My friends joke that I need to be wrapped up in bubble wrap. If you



want to learn more about me, stay tuned for the book I will write someday about my “klutzy” life!

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### **Insurance Changes –**

**Please call us at the Givens Brain Tumor Clinic to let us know if your insurance has changed or will change in the future! Thank you! 612-863-3732**

# Neuroradiology

## Neuroradiology: Essential Viewing

Peter U.Y. Lee, MD, PhD



The medical treatment and care of patients is rarely done in isolation. Rather, it is often the collaboration and expertise of medical professionals with a common goal which produces the best outcomes. This especially holds true in the realm of neuro-oncology. Whether as part of a new brain or spinal tumor diagnosis, or in the course of follow-up after treatment, radiologic imaging and interpretation are important components of this collaborative effort.

Radiology is a medical field built on the foundation of visualizing, characterizing, and diagnosing disease processes and abnormalities. Neuroradiology is a sub-specialty of radiology focusing on diagnoses of the brain, spine, and head and neck. Neuroradiologists are physicians who have completed 1–2-year subspecialty fellowship training after 4 years of radiology residency. A number of neuroradiologists also attain a Certificate of Added Qualification issued by the American Board of Radiology.

Neuroradiology shares an exciting space alongside neurology, neurosurgery, neuropathology, and neuro-oncology where diagnosis, treatment planning, and treatment outcomes converge. Clinical examination and lab work provide important details though remain an incomplete picture of a patient's condition. It is the ability to "see" or visualize a brain or spinal tumor in its current state that is essential for diagnosis.

Neuroradiologists harness the electromagnetic spectrum utilizing CT and MRI as the main tools for diagnosis and characterization. Such scans provide a wealth of information and can differentiate an aggressive tumor such as glioblastoma from a more benign tumor such as meningioma. More advanced MR techniques can provide specific data, from the volume of blood flow within a potential tumor, to the relative movement of protons within an unknown lesion.

As diagnosis evolves into treatment, neuroradiology continues to play an essential role. Functional MRI is utilized in cases when tumor location may affect eloquent portions of the brain and influence the neurosurgeon's precise approach for resection. Diffusion tensor imaging also guides surgeons by providing a map of cerebral white matter tracts and displaying how these tracts are displaced or disrupted by a tumor. Additionally, the precise localization of brain tumors characterized by high resolution volumetric imaging assists radiation oncology in planning targeted treatments.

Lastly, neuroradiology has a fundamental role in the short and long term follow up of treated neurologic tumors. Recurrence and progression of tumors remain distinct possibilities even after successful surgical resection and radiation therapy. When long term surveillance imaging is required, neuroradiologists are often the first to identify subtle changes that may indicate tumor recurrence or progression. Subsequent correlation with neuropathology allows for the continued fine-tuning of the radiologist and evolution of our field.



# Neuroradiology

In each phase of patient care, neuroradiology is the common entity. We highly value our role as consultants to our clinical and surgical colleagues and remain avid learners as the field of neuro-oncology continues to increase in complexity. This complexity necessitates a continued multidisciplinary approach using the collaborative efforts of highly trained specialists. This is where you will find neuroradiology at its best.

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## Metro-Minnesota Community Oncology Research Consortium



Dr. Wasilewski referred to MMCORC in her medical column. MMCORC is a consortium of 25 hospitals and clinics in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area and surrounding suburbs bringing various types of cancer research to those communities. Sponsored by the National Cancer Institute and participating hospitals and clinics, MMCORC is a separate program from the Neuro-Research program at the Givens Brain Tumor center. They provide access to cancer clinical trials for patients who can then be treated at their local community oncology clinics. This may be another research option for patients of the Givens Brain Tumor Center. Dr. Wasilewski, Medical Director and Neuro-oncologist at the Givens Brain Tumor Center, may determine if one of the trials available through MMCORC is appropriate for a patient. Dr. Wasilewski's vision is to actively pursue clinical trial options for brain tumor patients, and we are excited to have this as another research resource available. Please see their website for more information: <https://mmcorc.org/>

# Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation

## Neuropsychological Assessments

Jerry Halsten, PhD

Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute



Clinical neuropsychology refers to the utilization of knowledge about brain-behavioral relationships to help people gain self-awareness, work toward acceptance, and creatively adapt to the consequences of neurological disorders, such as brain tumors. Courage Kenny Neuropsychology provides support services to the Neuro-Oncology Program at the Givens Brain Tumor.

Neuropsychological assessment services are available to individuals who are currently being treated for brain tumors or who have undergone treatment in the past. People who have specific neurologic impairments from tumors or treatment may have a wide range of difficulties, such as problems with attention and concentration, speech, and language, learning and memory, visual-spatial skills, planning and organization, and/or social interactions. These difficulties may limit the ability to function at home, at work, or in the community. In order to gain better understanding the neurological changes of people who have brain tumors, neuropsychological assessment includes a review of a person's medical record, a clinical interview that includes a source of collateral information, objective testing of specific thinking abilities, and a feedback session that provides the findings and specific recommendations for managing difficulties in daily life. A unique feature of neuropsychological assessment is the use of age-education-based normative data to make statistical statements about the likelihood of changes in specific cognitive domains. After determining a person's unique profile of cognitive strengths and limitations, a plan for using strengths to address areas of limitation can be developed. This can most effectively be accomplished through recommendations regarding return to important activities, modification of these activities, supportive interventions, and specific treatment services within the Cancer Rehabilitation program, as previously described by Dr. Hutchison in the Grey Matters Newsletter ([Summer 2021 issue](#)). Examples of specific recommendations include:

- A referral to an occupational therapist for cognitive rehabilitation to address memory problems that may pose an obstacle to return to work.
- A referral to a speech language therapist for treatment to address communication difficulties that may limit independence in the community.
- A referral to a rehabilitation psychologist to address emotional/psychological adjustment issues that are limiting participation in family and community activities.

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# Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation

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As a clinical neuropsychologist, my role on the treatment team is to first answer the questions of people with brain tumors and their family/support partners, such as whether it is the right time to return to work or driving, modify roles in the family, make use of strategies to compensate for cognitive limitations, etc. Another important role on the treatment team is to provide information to neurology and rehabilitation medicine staff to help them determine the extent to which brain tumors have had an impact on thinking abilities, behavioral control, emotional/psychological functioning, and communication in relationships. This helps to ensure that “whole person” treatment needs are met. I do not provide psychotherapy, but the information that I gather can be used to develop plans for psychological treatment by a rehabilitation psychologist.

It is an honor to have the opportunity to help people with brain tumors gain a better understanding of their changes in thinking, memory, behavior, and emotional/psychological functioning. It is my hope that increased self-awareness can facilitate the process of acceptance of changes in abilities. I have seen many people work through this process of acceptance on the path to participation in activities that provide a sense of personal meaning in daily life.

The Courage Kenny Neuropsychology group is pleased to partner with a Givens Brain Tumor Center to assist in identifying changes in thinking and behavior after diagnosis and/or treatment of brain tumors so that optimal recovery and/or quality of life can be achieved. For more information or referrals contact the Givens Brain Tumor Center at 612-863-3732.

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## PUT TOGETHER A WINTER SURVIVAL KIT FOR YOUR CAR



Check out the Minnesota Department of Safety website for information about winter weather and driving safety. Put together a winter survival kit for your car. [Weather Safety - Winter Driving \(mn.gov\)](https://www.mn.gov/Weather-Safety-Winter-Driving)

# Neuro-oncology Research

## Neuro-oncology Research

### Katrina Stremski



Allina Health is dedicated to staying on the cutting edge of cancer research. We believe that everyone deserves excellence in comprehensive care, and through research and innovative clinical trials we improve the quality and longevity of life for our patients.

Promising new treatments and therapies are studied in clinical trials; this is how medical innovations are evaluated for safety and effectiveness before widespread use. The neuro-oncology research department at the Givens Brain Tumor Center has multiple open drug and/or device treatment trials that have been selected by our medical team. Qualified candidates may be invited by the medical director to consider participating in a trial. Clinical trials for people with primary brain tumors are focused on immunotherapy, individualized medicine protocols, and adaptive platforms to bring our patients the most innovative treatments available. This partnership allows our patients and providers the opportunity to be part of medical advancement and help guide treatments that may benefit others in the future.

Our research team of experienced research nurses and coordinators partner with the Givens Brain Tumor Center and Allina Health's specialists to provide whole-person care. We look forward to partnering with you in your care.

## Meet Our New Research Partner!

### Jennifer Murwin, MLS<sup>(CM)</sup>

Jen Murwin joined Neuroscience Research in September 2021 as a Research Project Specialist and began assisting the Neuro-oncology team in August 2022, after transferring out of the Microbiology laboratory at Abbott Northwestern. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Medical Laboratory Science from Saint Cloud State University and is currently pursuing her Master of Science degree in Microbiology and Infectious Disease through the University of Edinburgh.

Jen grew up in a suburb north of Chicago, Illinois and moved to Minnesota to continue her education in healthcare. One thing she loves most about working with Neuroscience Research is being able to give more treatment options to our patients through collaboration among providers, nurses, and research team members. She finds this position especially rewarding, as the information we obtain from our participants will eventually help others in the future.

In her free time, Jen teaches as an adjunct professor at Saint Cloud State University in the same program she graduated from in 2017, is the President for a non-profit organization that offers continuing education to laboratory-based personnel and enjoys various hobbies ranging from reading to cross-stitching. Jen, her husband Phillip and their two children Ben (12) and Evie (10) enjoy spending time together with friends and family, exploring various activities around Minnesota and Wisconsin. When at home, they can be found entertaining their two cats, Salem and Skittles.



## Givens Brain Tumor Staff

Andrea Wasilewski, MD - Neuro-Oncologist, Medical Director  
Tankia Barnes - Medical Assistant  
Patti Bruns – Clinical Nurse Specialist, MSN, APRN, CNS, OCN  
Megan Elia – Nurse Navigator, RN, BSN  
Lani Hoese – Clinical Support Specialist  
Karen Holmseth - Nurse Navigator, RN, BSN  
Deborah Jones – Care Guide, MA  
Becky Moore – Social Worker, LGSW  
Michelle Picconi – Nurse Practitioner, MSN-FNP, APRN, CNP  
Emma Sacco - Nurse Navigator, RN, BSN  
Brenda Wrenn – Clinical Support Specialist

Find support groups and resource information for patients and their loved ones on our website: [tinyurl.com/2pe8vcmj](https://tinyurl.com/2pe8vcmj)

Or scan this QR code with your phone's camera to see the webpage.



# Thank You for Your Support!

## Brain and Spinal Cord Tumor Resource's Highlights



Anna Kate Bush, Neuroscience Operations Manager, receiving a check from Kathy Kuhl, co-founder of WalkTalkConnect.org. Leslie Johnson, Development Officer, from the Allina Health Foundation, also joined us. WalkTalkConnect held their 5th Annual WTC Connection Event on September 15, 2022, to raise funds for The Givens Brain Tumor Center. The focus this year was for



persons living with spinal cord tumors and celebrating the book launch of *ReConnected: Stories from SpinalCord Tumor Survivors* by author and collaborator

Dawn Standera.

Standera's second book, it focuses on the stories of survivors who live with these rare tumors. The funds will be used for research, therapies, and rehabilitation for those living with these rare tumors. The event was a huge success for everyone who attended.

All of us at the Givens Brain Tumor Center are deeply grateful to WalkTalkConnect for their generosity and continued vision to find ways to connect others with Brain and Spinal Cord Tumors.



Bowl Hole is a non-profit created about 8 years ago on Lake Marion in Minnesota. A winter game created by a guy names Dan, it is a combination of bowling and bags played on the ice on a lake. Holes are set in the lake like bowling ball pins. Three guys including Dan and a gal, Emilie, have most recently led the annual cause at Knotty Oar Marina on Prior Lake. Proceeds from the annual event go to a different charity and / or family. Last year, proceeds were shared with the Givens Brain Tumor Center. For a ball of fun, check it out on Saturday, February 4! You can learn more about it here on their website and Facebook:

<http://www.bowlhole.com/>





# Our Call to Action

## Allina Health Visitor Guidelines

Allina Health has always valued the importance of family and support persons as integral members of your care team to help with making decisions and providing you safe patient care. Below we have highlighted how we define family. You may access more information about our visitor guidelines [here](#).

### How we define family:

We adopt the following definition of “family” within our visitor guidelines: “Family” means any person who plays a significant role in your life. This may include a person not legally related to you. For example, “family” members include spouses, domestic partners, and both different-sex and same-sex significant others. “Family” also includes a minor patient’s parents, regardless of the gender of either parent. For the purpose of visitation, parents may include legal parents, foster parents, same-sex parents, step-parents, those serving in loco parentis, and others operating in caretaker roles.

## Allina Health Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Recognition

Allina Health’s diversity, equity, inclusion, & belonging (DEI&B) team is honored to receive two distinct recognitions this past summer: For one of the “Best places to work for Disability Inclusion” and the other for scoring high marks in several categories for the first Racial Equity Dividends Index. You can learn more about each of these reports [here](#).



“Allina Health is committed to creating a workplace that is inclusive of all people. Globally, people with disabilities represent more than one billion people and disability intersects with age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and religion. I’m proud of this recognition and our commitment to continue to identify potential areas of growth because Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI&B) work involves constant dedication,” said Jacqueline Thomas-Hall, vice president, chief DEI&B officer of Allina Health.

Allina Health’s scores in the Racial Equity Dividends Index Report also reveal that we have both a responsibility and an opportunity to create long-lasting change in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging at all levels of our organization and in our community. The report recognizes the important work we’ve done and the strides we have made while also showing us more opportunities for growth in the future. Congratulations Allina Health, the DEI&B Team and everyone who makes Allina Health inclusive!



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