

Fall/Winter 2022-2023 Newsletter

Greetings! Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2022-2023 edition of the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association Newsletter.

Since the last issue of the newsletter, some of our members let us know about fun activities they had during the summer. For instance, Pamula Yerby-Hammock went on a memorable cruise and traveled to Orlando, Dr. Lynn Speedie had a virtual birthday celebration, Toni Griffin traveled to New York to see a popular musical and Jackie Cross-Daniels spent time with a famous pop star in Las Vegas. We also heard from a former Institute nurse who is enjoying retirement. You can read detailed accounts of their exciting trips and updates in the *Member News* section.

Seven former Kennedy Krieger employees joined the Alumni Association in the past few months. Their names are printed in the *Membership Committee* section. A complete list of members is also included in this newsletter. KKAA now has 310 members!

We have a submission for the *I Remember When* section; be sure to review this special memory. We would like to hear some of YOUR favorite recollections from your time working at the Institute.

While reading this newsletter, you will learn that the Center for Autism and Related Disorders has expanded and that a new Vice President of Pediatric Rehabilitation has been appointed. You will also discover that the *Social Committee* has already begun planning the 6th Annual Kennedy Krieger Alumni Luncheon, and tips to maintain your hearing are in the *Health Corner*.

I hope that you will consider sharing your updates, travels, thoughts, memories and suggestions with us for inclusion in the next newsletter so we can keep *in touch*. All 310 of us make up the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association and we would like to hear from YOU so we can *Stay Connected!*

Now that the new year has begun, I am hoping that 2023 will be filled with abundant joy, immense peace and boundless love for you and your families.

Please take good care of yourself and stay safe!

Roni





MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



We are happy to welcome the following new members to the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association

Gregory Church spent 15 years as a member of the Special Education Department.

Heidi Diliberto worked in the Special Education Department's Mental Health component.

Dr. Arthur Hill was a member of the Special Education Department team for 38 years.

Dr. Robin Church shared her talents with the Special Education Department for 49 years.

Annie Stuchell worked in the Department of Nursing for 34 years.

Julia Chavez spent 7 years working in the Child and Family Support Program.

Folasade Onasany was a member of Neurobehavior Department's Outpatient Program for 5 years.

Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association now has 310 members!

Remember, if you know former KKI colleagues who have not joined the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association, please send us their contact information so we can extend an invitation to them to become a member.

The Alumni Email address is webmaster@kkalumni.org.



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

If you enjoy our newsletter, know that it is **your** input, suggestions and ideas that make it successful. Please keep in touch. Don't think your input is not "newsworthy"! You can contact me at the KKAAs address or at smootjean@yahoo.com. You won't need to write anything, we can talk it over by phone or communicate by email and we will take care of the rest.

Reminder:

Every time we send an email or USPS mail, we get a number of returns. If you haven't been receiving our communications, we don't have your current home or email address. Please keep us up to date with your current information.

We don't want to lose our ability to stay in touch with you.

Let's stay connected!

Jean

HOW YOU CAN STAY IN TOUCH

Join our Facebook group, Kennedy Krieger Alumni

Check out our website kcalumni.org

We keep it simple; we have one main email address:

email the Alumni at webmaster@kcalumni.org

President Roni Gross at webmaster@kcalumni.org

Vice President Jean Smoot at webmaster@kcalumni.org

Membership Committee at webmaster@kcalumni.org

To reach us by phone: 410-215-8972

KKAAs Newsletter smootjean@yahoo.com

Be sure to keep us up to date with any changes in your email address, your mailing address or phone number.



SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Social Committee is already planning our 6th Annual Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association Luncheon. We will be sending information soon.

I REMEMBER WHEN

Flash Back: *(Reprinted from Spring/Summer 2022)*

Tami Swearingen (Nursing) says the most important thing she remembers and was always grateful for, was the way the nursing staff ALWAYS stepped up to the plate to cover the Units when it snowed or the forecast was calling for snow or hazardous weather.

Unlike larger hospitals, Kennedy Krieger couldn't pull staff from unit to unit. They had to cover everything themselves—and they always did. Facilities, and even Dr. Johnston, helped transport the nurses to Kennedy Krieger where they spent the night, worked doubles, slept and then started the next shift after 8 hours of sleep. She said the staff were all “snow angels” in her eyes.

I REMEMBER WHEN

By: Tami Swearingen

Kennedy Krieger had fun activities for its employees in the lobby, to show appreciation for the excellent care they provided to patients and the support they offered to families. Since most of the activities occurred during the day, nursing staff who worked during the 2nd and 3rd shifts on the inpatient unit could not participate.

To let those employees know that they were appreciated and valued as well, Nursing Administration designated individuals to pick up “giveaways” and refreshments for the 2nd and 3rd shift staff members, and preserve them until they arrived. It was heartwarming to see the looks on their faces when they came to work. They were surprised and they knew that they were treasured.

Not only did the Nursing Staff care for patients and families, we also made sure we took care of each other.

MEMBER NEWS

“On My Way To See Bruno”

By: Jackie Cross-Daniels

I ADMIT IT! I am obsessed with superstar Bruno Mars. It wasn't enough for me to have seen him in concert 3 times prior to retiring from Kennedy Krieger. No, that was not enough for this fanatic Hooligan. Two more trips to Vegas and National Harbor were still not enough. When he teamed with Anderson Paak to form Silk Sonic, it sent me in an emotional tailspin.

Then something magical happened. MGM Resorts rewarded me with an early bird notification of a VIP Experience for the last concert to be performed by Silk Sonic on August 22, 2022! Amex at the ready, I made the call that began a journey to one of the greatest moments of my life. It began with a Bellagio Hotel suite with a private concierge, \$500 food and beverage credits, transportation to and from the concert and a bottle of Bruno's Premium Reserve Rum in my suite on arrival. Living the life – but wait – *Bruno still to come!!*

Friday at 9 PM, before the curtain goes up, I realize that seated directly behind me is Mark Walberg and four people to my right is none other than - get this - Viola Davis!! I am living the sweet life! But wait - *Bruno still to come!!*

At 9:15 PM, lights dim and the sold-out crowd are on their feet screaming and clapping, not to sit down again for the next two hours when the curtain closes. Bruno, Bruno, Bruno! All 5 feet 5 inches of him that just commands the stage. I didn't see or hear anyone else on the stage. They were just background noises to me. He sang, played the guitar, drums, congas and the piano. He danced; oh boy did he dance, whipping the audience into overdrive. The entire arena was rocking! Well, what I really know is Mark and Viola (friends in my mind) had as much of a frenzied experience as me. Mark was high fiving me and over the din, Viola's screams and yells were quite distinctive (by the way, she has moves, folks).

Well, the night was not over when the curtain closed. To the VIP section of the club for the after party I went. All my dreams had come true – I got to meet Bruno and his brother, up close and personal. Oh my! What an AWESOME experience. If you have an obsession, try to live it out and enjoy!



Editor's note:
Jackie was a supervisor
in the Patient Financial
Services Department at
Kennedy Krieger for
22 years.



MEMBER NEWS

Enjoying Retirement

Annie Stuchell (Nursing) has been super busy since retiring. For starters she moved back to Western NY, home of the Buffalo Bills. (As a matter of fact, a few of the players are her neighbors!) She has been having fun exploring her home state including Buffalo, the Finger Lakes and Lilly Dale. When not exploring, she has been busy with art classes in painting, collage and altered books and volunteering in her community and church. She is also taking advantage of programs offered through Silver Sneakers, a free program offered through Medicare.

Annie misses her KKI pals, but happily, some have stopped by to visit. While visiting, they collected sea glass at the beach and attended a Gladys Knight concert at the Philharmonic.

Annie is considering returning to work on a very part time basis and may also volunteer at KKI when she is in Baltimore during the winter. She says there is one thing she knows for sure. She will never find such a great team to work with as the one at KKI.

Fun in the Sun

Pamula Yerby-Hammack says that October and November were filled with busy, fun, family activities.

In October, she and her daughter had a "Mommy and Me" vacation cruise to Bermuda where they spent two days enjoying everything Bermuda has to offer. It was pretty rainy, but Bermuda is beautiful and she says there is nothing like a cruise - plenty of food, fun things to do and relaxation. All in all, a well-deserved break!

In November, she had the time of her life celebrating the 4th birthday of her oldest great-granddaughter at Disney's Magic Kingdom and Animal Kingdom in Orlando. Pam said she felt like a kid again as her great-granddaughter had her running, skipping and riding the rides. They had a great place to stay with family and perfect weather. Pam "loves being a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother."

MEMBER NEWS

MJ the Musical

Some of you may already know that Toni Griffin, former Director of Patient Financial Services, is very active in the theatrical world and has appeared in several productions in the Maryland area.

In September, she traveled to New York to see MJ The Musical, which is a Broadway stage play depicting the life and music of pop star, Michael Jackson. According to Toni, the entire production was marvelous. She described the choreography as magnificent, the set designs as spectacular and the music as breathtaking.



Toni then began to chat about the cast, specifically Myles Frost who portrays Michael Jackson. She seemed to display a sense of pride when talking about him, noting that he is from Maryland and that he played leading roles in several productions while in high school. In addition, she remarked that Myles was a contestant on the primetime TV show, The Voice, in season 13.

In closing, Toni commented, "If you have the opportunity to attend this amazing play, I encourage you to do so because MJ The Musical is outstanding"





MEMBER NEWS

A Milestone Birthday

Lynn Speedie (Neuropsychology) celebrated a high-tech birthday. Her dear friend and watercolor teacher arranged a very large Zoom birthday party for Lynn's 80th birthday. Lynn said, "It was wonderful to see so many friends from KKI as well as colleagues across time from JHH. A particularly special treat was to see colleagues and students from my years in Israel, as well as friends and family from so many countries and states. This was a treat of a lifetime. It was so much fun to get to see and hear from so many who contributed so much to my life". There were about 60 people who tuned in for this special event. We wish Lynn a very happy birthday!

Wellness Week

Nichole Reimers (Guest Relations) has been able to implement a wellness environment in her current work environment with Sheppard Pratt. In a six month period she has organized two Wellness Weeks offering seated massage, Yoga, Qi Gong, a Lunch and Learn on work/life balance, and other fun surprises. All activities have been well received and greatly appreciated. A tranquility room with salt lamps, calming music, and aromatherapy has permanently been established. Staff can take a break there and find a quiet place to gather their thoughts.

According to Nichole, " Now, more than ever, there is a need to take care of ourselves. Our physical and mental health are very closely linked. Taking time in the day to pause and breathe, to quiet our mind and refocus is essential for everyone. "

I have to say, I am so grateful to our members when they share their stories. This is what makes our newsletter interesting. I know everyone is happy to get back to a more normal life, visiting with family and friends, traveling, volunteering and enjoying other activities. We would love to hear about it. SHARE your "news" with us in the next edition, by emailing Jean at smootjean@yahoo.com

HAVE A LAUGH ON US

Every time you clean something, you just make something else dirty.

The word "swims" upside-down is still "swims".

If you replace "W" with "T" in "What, Where and When", you get the answer to each of them.

Dr. Stacy Suskauer has been named vice president of pediatric rehabilitation at Kennedy Krieger Institute and director for the Division of Pediatric Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) in the Department of PM&R at Johns Hopkins Medicine. In this position, she oversees and leads pediatric rehabilitation providers for Johns Hopkins Medicine's pediatric hospitals—Johns Hopkins Children's Center, Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital and Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital in Florida—and here at Kennedy Krieger.

Dr. Suskauer now leads the largest group of pediatric physiatrists and allied professionals in the country. As vice president of rehabilitation, Dr. Suskauer will provide academic and operational oversight to the Institute's Rehabilitation Department and will work closely with the director of pediatric rehabilitation, Dr. Melissa Trovato, and other leaders at the Institute to grow and enhance our pediatric rehabilitative services.

Most recently, Dr. Suskauer has been the co-director, along with Dr. Beth Slomine, of the Center for Brain Injury Recovery at Kennedy Krieger. She will remain in this role, continuing her research focus on pediatric brain injury, especially on disorders of consciousness and concussion.

Center for Autism and Related Disorders New Location

The Center for Autism and Related Disorders is excited to announce the opening of their newest location in Columbia, MD, in January. This location will offer evaluation and intervention for speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, social work and psychology services. Additionally, they will have three Achievements classrooms. Achievements provides small group speech-language therapy focusing on communication, social, emotional and self-regulatory development in the context of theme-based preschool activities.



HEALTH CORNER

Hearing is one of the most important aspects of our health—it connects us to people, keeps us vital in the workplace. When left untreated as we age, hearing loss is associated with other health issues, including dementia and falls. Children with untreated hearing loss are at risk for atypical language development and problems with cognitive and social-emotional function.

Approximately 37.5 million Americans suffer from hearing loss.

Hearing loss affects people of all ages—one in eight people over 12 years of age in the United States has significant hearing loss. Hearing loss is the third most common health problem in the United States. Untreated hearing loss can affect your ability to understand speech, can negatively impact your social and emotional well-being and can decrease your quality of life!

Signs you may have a hearing loss:

- Difficulty hearing people in noisy environments such as a restaurant, shopping mall, in cars or at the movies
- People seem to “mumble” all the time
- Family, friends or colleagues often need to repeat themselves when speaking with you
- You have trouble hearing people when they are not facing you or are in another room
- You have trouble following conversations
- You have ringing, buzzing, or hissing sounds in your ears

What causes hearing loss?

- Exposure to excessive loud noise
- Ear infections, trauma or ear disease
- Damage to the inner ear and ear drum from contact with a foreign object (cotton swabs, bobby pins, etc.)
- Illness or certain medications
- Deteriorating hearing due family history, noise exposure or age

How to protect your hearing:

- Wear hearing protection when around loud sounds. There are different types of hearing protection, such as foam earplugs, earmuffs and custom hearing protection devices. Contact your local audiologist for custom hearing protection devices.
- Turn down the volume when listening to the radio, the TV or anything through earbuds and headphones.
- Walk away from the noise.
- Other than hearing protection, do not put anything in your ear!

¹ Blackwell DL, Lucas JW, Clarke TC. Summary health statistics for U.S. adults: National health interview survey, 2012 (PDF). National Center for Health Statistics. *Vital Health Stat 10(260)*. 2014.

² Lin FR, Niparko JK, Ferrucci L. Hearing loss prevalence in the United States. *Arch Intern Med*. 2011 Nov 14; 171(20): 1851-1852



Member List

Jennifer Accardo	Bethany Carr	Shannon Gettier	Heather Jennett-Sponberg
Lena Abrams *	Janelle Carrington	Yvonne Glass	Shirley Johns
Margaret Adams	Mariana Castillo	Sharon Glennen	Bridget Johnson
Maureen Adams	Rudolph Chapple	Andrea Goffus	Kevin Johnson
Britten Agostino	Julia Chavez	Melissa Goldberg, Ph.D.	David Kadis
Rebecca Albury	Shawn Chinn	Gary Goldstein	Sung Woo Kahng
Alvonnia Allen	James Christensen	Paula Gonce	Kristen Kalymon
Michael Allen	Jean Christianson	Melissa Gonzalez	Esther Kang
Barbara Allgood-Hill	Gregory Church	Estelle Goode	Alice Kau
Marie Andachter	Robin Church, Ph.D.	Nancy Gracie	Elizabeth Kent
Connie Anderson	Devon Coals	Cindy Graham	Helen Kimmel
Mary Anderson	Elizabeth Commins	Gail Graham	Robyn Kincer
Jennifer Ashley	Anthony Concepcion	April Greer	Arethusia Kirk, M.D.
Eileen Atkins	Lorraine Condon	Willie Greer	Fran Knorr*
Jean Augustyniak	Andrew Corroran	Angela Grier	Stacey Kowalski
Joy Auslander	Kristy Council	Toni Griffin	Jackie Krick
Hanna Ballard	Donna Crane	Roni Gross	Kara Kristaponis
Kelly Bandzwolek	Jacqueline Cross-Daniels	Crystal Guengerich	David Kuhn
Gayne Barlow-Kemper	Jeanette Curry	Bobbi Guizzotti-Boney	Stephanie Kuhn
Stephine Barrow *	Stephanie Cute	Kate Gutshall	Jane Kunze
Linda Baynes	Miriam D. Cypress	Melanie Haik	Mi-Kyong Kwon
Jane Beasley *	Charlene Davis	Kelly Hardesty	Chrissy Lake-Shulka
Dawn Beckner	Charretta Davis	Taisha Harrington	Dina LaReau
Jessica Becraft	Sandria Ann Day	Rochelle Harrison	Mary Lashno
Michael Bender	Cary Delavigne	Felicia Harris-Smith	Joanna Lawyer
Dori Bethouille	Martha Denckla (Bridge)	Susan Harryman	Lainy LeBow-Sachs
Nancy Bjork	Eddie Denning	Chelsea Haverly	Lori Lee
Kenneth Bleile	Wanda Dewitt	Patricia Headley	Kimberly Leffler
Traci Blow	Heidi Diliberto	Rebecca Heggemeyer	Terri Leishear
Rosalee Blyther	Jessica Ditto	Geraldine Heggins	Terri Levin
Melissa Boling	Alma Durm	Suzanne Heisler	Audrey Leviton
Jim Boscoe	Rebecca Ebberts	Nancy Hewell	Aaron Lewis
Estelle Bouchard	Jennifer Ernest	Carole Hickman	Mary Ellen Lewis
Bernice Bowen	Katie Ernest	Dr. Arthur Hill	Sheila Lewis
Thelma Bowler	Peter Fanning	Doris Hill	Anita Liu
Leah Boyd	Carolyn Ferguson-West	Joan Hines*	Laura Locher
Kathy Brady	Marge Fessler	Cindy Hoffman	Lisa Lorden
Melanie Branagan	Priscilla Flores	Neil Hoffman	Jessica Lough
Brenda Bryant	Haley Ford	Ruth Hoffman	Sandra Loveless
Kim Buckheit	Margaret Forte ¹	Ashley Hogan	Barbara Lukasevich
Irena Bukelis	Marsha Freed	Jennifer Hogue	Allison Lundahl
Linda Bull	Arlene Friedman	Tova Hoicowitz	
Sarah Calhoun	Suzanne Funk	Christopher Hornung	
Paula Cameron	Chantel Gaines	Roxanne Hughes-	
Catherine Capel	Jackie Galluzzo-Sumner	Wheatland	
Angela Carbonell-Mulligan	Laura Gertz	Bernadette Irwin	

Continue...



Member List *Continued*

Laverne Madden
Jennifer Markowitz
Catherine Mayo
June McIver
Keisha Meade
Elisabeth Mekosh
Judith Miller
Marigot Miller
Sue Miller
Shernica Miller
Christopher Moore
Delores Moore
Laura Moore
Elizabeth Moore
James Morrell
Karen Murphy-Keddell
Mary Nasuta
Patricia Neal
Colleen O'Brien-Enders
Folasade Onasanya
Edore Onigu-Otite, MD
Kathleen Oppenheimer
Juliet Oroszy
George Papuchis
Danielle Parker
Evelyn Patterson
Beth Pendergast
Kendra Paey, MD
Elizabeth Petersheim
Joanna Peterson
Matthew Peterson
Leslie Phillips
Frank Pidcock, MD
Joseph Pillion
Shari Pincus
Shanna Pool
Patty Porter
Victoria Proctor
Courtnei Pumphrey
Caryn Putchat
Eva Queen
Novella Ragins

Martina Rao
Mary Rawlings
Janice Reaves-Robinson
Kathleen Redifer
Barbara Reed
Carolyn Reeder
Nichole Reimers
Rachel Rentch
Lori Revitz
Sharon Riccitelli
Jody Roblyer
Concetta Roby
Vanessa Rodriguez
Natalie RoliderAguila
Tom Ross
Joel Rothwell
Emily Rubio
Belinda Russell
Jessica Ryan
Julia Ryder
Rachel Salamone
Michael Schlund
Lynne Schroeder
Lisa Schwartz
Dianne Sestero
Brittney Shaffer
Dorothy Shiffler
Gabe Shleifer
Heidi Shoemaker
Maggie Shulka
Emily Shumate
Dr. Charles Silberstein
Bonnie Sue Simms
Chris Small
Charmaine Smith
Seneith Smith
Jean Smoot
Carol Solberg
Robin Sommer
Lynn Speedie
Matt Statton
Rebecca Stern

Victoria Stinnett
Marjorie Strama
Annie Stuchell
Kunise Stroh
Annie Sutton
Tami Swearingen
Kay Taylor
Alicia Taylor
Tessa Taylor
Julie Tefft
Dr. George Thomas *
Nancy Thomas
Deb Tolley
Pam Tsapalas
Trinity Tumban
Frank Updike
Jennifer Vance
J.Ronald Walcher
Ann Walker-Kennedy
Catherine Walton
Cynthia Ward
Paul Watkins
Barbara Wayland
Kim Weinert
Maureen Wheeler
Lauren White
Peggy White
Terri Whitmore-Howard
Arthur Wilke
Darlene Williams
Jasmyn Williams
Alvin Winn
Carmen Wise
Elizabeth Wohler
Lynn Woods
Tanya West Wynn
Pamula Yerby-Hammack
Carrie Yost
Marc Young
Andrew Zimmerman

* *Deceased*