

Caring Neighbors

Volunteers in Medicine Winter News 2019-2020

VIM Keeps People Working

"Thanks, to Dr. Naame, I am back at work!" a patient recently said to Nurse Practitioner Gina Kremer, as he demonstrated his ability to do deep knee bends. The patient, Steve*, is a middle aged construction laborer. He is in relatively good health but has bad knees. The pain had gotten so bad that he was missing a lot of work and was probably going to lose his job. Gina referred him to our Ortho clinic where Dr. Naame injected his knees. Steve is feeling great and hasn't missed a day of work since.

Bill was a referral from Cooper. He was a bus driver, who had passed out, was rushed to the ER and ultimately spent a week in Camden at the hospital. He had AFib and several other poorly managed conditions. Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is a quivering or irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) that can lead to blood clots, stroke, heart failure and other heart-related complications.

Until we could get his conditions stable, driving a bus was not recommended, which meant no income. With help from his girlfriend and family he was getting by but keeping up with his rent was a big problem. Bill served our country in the military. Although he was not

eligible for VA benefits, he was a candidate for assistance from CVAC (Citizen Veterans Advisory Council). Upon presenting his case, CVAC approved him for 2 months' rent payments while he got his health sorted. They also provided job readiness counselling so he could find more suitable employment.

Bill is back at work at a new job. His AFib is controlled. He is working on his weight and diabetes. VIM provides regular care and prescription medicine assistance. Bill says "I would be on the streets and perhaps dead if it wasn't for VIM and CVAC."

Bill and Steve are typical VIM patients. They work in manual labor and service. They work the types of jobs that do not offer benefits. They live paycheck to paycheck. They struggle to get by, to pay the bills. For years they ignore their health until it begins to affect their lives and more importantly their ability to work. When you live paycheck to paycheck a few missed days of work can begin the spiral into debt and ultimately homelessness.

**All names changed to protect the identities of our patients.*



VIM awarded \$5,000 from the OceanFirst Foundation for Project Healthy Heart

VIM was awarded \$5,000 toward a goal of \$20,000 from the OceanFirst Foundation for Project Healthy Heart. Medical Director Lynn Helmer, MD has identified management of hypertension as an area of focus for 2019-20. Volunteer nurses have added extra shifts to perform baseline EKG's, Volunteer Cardiologists, Dr. Carrero and Dr. Kornberg have set aside extra time to review them.

Thanks to generous support from OceanFirst and others, VIM is able to help hard-working, low-income South Jersey residents improve their cardiovascular health indicators, and achieve behavioral change that will benefit them and their families for years to come. Programs like this ensure a fragile population is able to stay gainfully employed and live their lives more fully.



Welcome to our new friends from The Charity League! Their gift of \$5000 supports care in Atlantic County.

VIM: a volunteer powered solution to the health care crisis



VIM Donation Boxes

This simple fund-raising campaign was started years ago in the CMC Clinic's early days. The VIM boxes not only bring in funds for clinic operations but also promote our mission to the community. You never know who sees the box and is inspired to volunteer or become a patient.

Marge's Diner in CMCH has had a box for 15 years. It is a regular fixture on their counter and a reliable source of income to VIM. **Dock Mike's** box in Sea Isle City fills up fast all summer long. Same with **Duckie's** in West Cape May. If you are able to host a box, please contact Debbie at **609-778- 2706** or development@vimsj.org.

We also have boxes prominently displayed in both clinics and at each thrift store. The thrift store boxes are stuffed with singles every day. Patients regularly put in \$1 or \$2 every time they come to the clinic. Occasionally we will see a \$10 or \$20, once we had a \$100 bill! This does not surprise us. Our patients work hard. They may be poor but they are generous and kind-hearted. They truly appreciate the time and talents of our volunteers.

Each clinic needs about \$250,000/year to operate. We receive no Federal or State funds. We rely on the good graces of a very generous community to make ends meet each year. Please support our thrift stores, put your change in our VIM boxes, and if possible, make an annual donation to VIM either on-line or via the enclosed envelope.

Dear Friend,



"You would do anything for your mom, right?" This simple statement from a tear-stained woman hit me hard. I am a much loved daughter of a wonderful woman and, yes, I would do anything for my mom. Fortunately, my mom has great insurance, but for those that do not, thankfully, there is VIM.

Sabra had been referred to VIM. She was shy about asking for help, embarrassed to need charity. But her mother was ill. Her mom is a senior citizen who has not been in the US long enough to qualify for Medicare. Mom speaks no English, she is from North Africa. She came to live with her daughter, son-in-law and grand-children a few years ago. The plan was to help with baby-sitting and enjoy her family in her golden years. The reality was 2 cancers with a possible third. Sabra has taken a leave of absence from work because she spends most days driving her mom to doctors' appointments, cancer treatments, and of course, translating. The family has fallen behind on bills and is struggling.



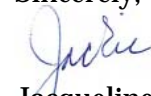
Barbara Harvey, RN, Patient Care Coordinator, is helping to manage mom's care. In addition, she has connected Sabra's family with SJ Gas and ACE assistance programs; she has written to several local cancer foundations and organizations; and has become a friend and sounding board to Sabra as she deals with managing a very ill loved one.

On any given day a breadwinner can lose his job; a chronic disease can reach its tipping point. An unexpected trip to the ER, or an expensive prescription can start the spiral into debt, and ultimately homelessness. On any given day, a neighbor may be connected to VIM, an illness finally diagnosed, a disease properly treated, assistance freely and lovingly offered.

There is magic that happens at VIM, we call it our Culture of Caring. We provide a compassionate and nurturing environment for patients, volunteers, and staff based on a philosophy that healing does not begin with a pill or therapy, but when we greet someone at the door, invite them in, take an interest in their lives, and give them the dignity and respect they often get nowhere else. We live our motto "Neighbors Caring for Neighbors" every day.

As we count our blessings for the year, I hope we can count on you to help us to continue to provide care for the uninsured. Please consider a donation to provide the gift of health and ensure the magic of VIM.

Sincerely,


Jacqueline Meiluta
Executive Director



This Holiday Season, Please Consider the Gift of Health to Your Neighbors in Need...

SHOP!

VIM operates two thrift stores. Proceeds from your purchases and donations of gently used articles help the uninsured get the medical care they need.

VOLUNTEER!

Besides the two thrift stores, VIM operates two FREE Medical clinics. Your time and talent are important and appreciated gifts toward helping our uninsured neighbors.

DONATE!

- ▶ Safely donate online at vimsj.org or mail your check to VIM, 423 N Route 9, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210.
- ▶ Instead of presents, consider a donation in honor of a loved one this holiday season
- ▶ **New!** Donate your vehicle for recycling! See the ad below for more information.



Cape May County Thrift Store

20 S Main St
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
609-465-3680

Cape May County Clinic

Volunteers in Medicine
423 North Route 9
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
609-463-2846

Atlantic County Thrift Store

6825 Tilton Rd (near Produce Junction)
Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234
609-277-7075

Atlantic County Clinic

Volunteers in Medicine
3073 English Creek Ave
Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234
609-867-6384

Make a Difference in the Lives of Many With a Vehicle Donation.

Donate your car, truck, or boat to Volunteers in Medicine. The pick-up is free and your gift is tax-deductible.

[Donate Your Vehicle](#)

For more information, call or visit us online: 609-463-2846 | www.vimsj.org

Thanks To All Our Friends and Sponsors for a Fabulous and Successful 2019 Annual Celebration!



*VIM's Physician of the Year,
Dr. Lawrence J. Naame, receiving
proclamation from Absecon
Mayor, Kimberly Horton.*

County and Municipal Partners

The Borough of Avalon
Cape Regional Medical Ctr
County of Cape May
CMC Dept. of Health
CMC Municipal Clerks'
Association

NJ Commission for the Blind
Rainbow Pediatrics
Reef Family Pharmacy
Borough of Stone Harbor
Township of Lower

Platinum Sponsors

The Avalon Lions
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Gail Keppler

Diamond Sponsors

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The Ocean Drive/O'Donnell's



Pour House
Dick & Mary Shea
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America Chapter 602

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Paul and Marie Sluberski
St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Dr. Jeffrey and Nancy Vecere

*VIM Founders, Dick and Mary Shea, and Joanne
Carrocino, FACHE, VIM Trustee and CEO of Cape
Regional Medical Center*

Greater Wildwood Elks

Program Supporters

Susan Antczak
Avalon Campground
Beachcomer
Charles & Bernice Biondi
CA Lorentz, AIA
Cape Islands Realty
John & Eileen Convery
Marie (Terri) Cwik
Dennis Volunteer Fire Co
Dino's Diner
Paula & Tim Doll
Neil & Suzi Gallagher
Doris Gidding
Larry & Micki Goldberg
Grand Hotel of Cape May
Bernard Groff
Chris & Barbara Harvey
Dr. and Mrs. William Hooper
Bill & Kay Leahy
Loretta Keenan
Little Oaks Campground
Joseph McErlean
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Morey's Piers
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William F Robinson, DMD
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Mary Sweeney
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Brian Timms
Margaret West
Greater Wildwood Lions Club
George Wimberg Funeral
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Centerpiece Sponsors

Blooms
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Lily's Wildflowers, LLC
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Donations for Cork Pull Generously Provided By:

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Braca Café
Brizzles
Circle Liquor
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Dalrymple's Cards & Gift
Dino's Diner
George's Restaurant
James Fudge (SIC)
Jay's on Third
Johnson's Popcorn
Kix-McNutley
LaCosta Lounge
La Finestra Restaurant
MAC – A Day in Cape May
Marie's Seafood
Matthews Seafood
Mike's Seafood
O Modo Mio Restaurant
Scola
The Sea Grill
The Shore Club
Tomasello Winery
Alec Vint
Washington Inn



SAVE THE DATE!



Reserve Your Sponsorships Now

Neighbors Caring for Neighbors Annual Celebration!

The Flanders Hotel * September 17, 2020 * 6:00 PM

PLATINUM SPONSOR - \$5000

Provides complete care for 6 patients for one year. Recognition as a Platinum Sponsor in all press releases, invitations, program, VIM website, and signage at event. Also includes 10 guest tickets!

DIAMOND SPONSOR - \$3000

Provides complete care for 3 patients for one year. Recognition as a Diamond Sponsor in the program and listed on the VIM website. Also includes 8 guest tickets!

GOLD SPONSOR - \$1000

Provides complete care for one patient for one year. Recognition as a Gold Sponsor in the program and listed on VIM website. Also includes 4 guest tickets!

SILVER SPONSOR - \$500

Provides 3 patient visits. Recognition as a Silver Sponsor in the program. Includes 2 guest tickets!

Yes, I would like to become a Sponsor for the 2020 VIM Annual Celebration!

Enclosed is my check

I will send a check nearer to the event

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please complete form and send in the envelope attached to this newsletter. Thank you!

Did you know?

VIM patients have access to the following providers:

In Atlantic County, more than 155 families consider the Atlantic County VIM clinic their medical home. Our patient panel is 55% female and 45% male. 48% are white with the remaining 52% representing multiple ethnicities and languages. As a young clinic, we are slowly developing a presence through out the county:

Absecon	4.35%
Atlantic City	12.72%
Brigantine	1.45%
Dorothy	0.48%
Egg Harbor City	1.61%
Egg Harbor Twp	23.51%
Estell Manor	0.32%
Galloway	12.56%
Linwood	1.77%
Margate	2.42%
Mays Landing	8.05%
Northfield	3.86%
Pleasantville	13.69%
Smithville	0.81%
Somers Point	6.44%
Ventnor	5.96%
Total	100.00%

In Cape May County, more than 475 families consider the Cape May County VIM clinic their medical home. Our patient panel is 52% female and 48% male. 48% are white, 40% Hispanic/Latinx, 12% African American, Eastern European and Asian. Patients come from almost every municipality:

Avalon	1.22%
Cape May	6.72%
Cape May Court House	19.10%
Del Haven	1.30%
Dennisville	0.19%
Erma	1.03%
Marmora	1.38%
North Cape May	6.19%
North Wildwood	3.09%
Ocean City	4.85%
Ocean View	2.06%
Rio Grande	11.28%
Sea Isle City	0.42%
South Dennis	0.23%
Stone Harbor	0.11%
Town Bank	0.27%
Villas	11.98%
West Cape May	2.06%
West Wildwood	0.50%
Whitesboro	0.96%
Wildwood	18.87%
Wildwood Crest	1.72%
Woodbine	4.47%
Total	100.00%

- Primary Care**
 Octavio De Los Reyes, DO
 Tom Dierkes, MD (Pediatrics)
 Mary Ann Hafin, MD
 D. Lynn Helmer, MD
 William Hooper, MD
 Gina Kremer, APN
 Theresa Rodino, APN
 Eugene Siegel, DO
 Nancy Sudol, APN
 Demetra Zalman, APN

- Specialty Care**
 Martin Carey, DPM (Podiatry)
 Wilfredo Carreno, MD (Cardiology)
 Eugene Carroccia, MD (Plastic Surgery)
 Jong Choi, MD (Acupuncture)
 Bhargavi Degapudi, MD (Nephrology)
 Sallustio Del Re, MD (Pulmonology)
 Joanne Drane, PhD (Counseling)
 Gary Feinberg, MD (General Surgery)
 John Gottlieb, MD (Orthopedics)
 Steven Kornberg, MD (Cardiology)
 Anthony Lombardo, PhD (Psychology)
 Divo Messori, MD (Gastroenterology)
 John Middleton, MD (Infectious Disease)
 Lawrence J. Naame, MD (Orthopedics)
 Melind Pandya, DO (Nephrology)
 David Roeltgen, MD (Neurology)
 Birenda Tandan, MD (Urology)

- Community Partners**
 Cape Regional Medical Center
 CMC Department of Health
 NJ Commission for the Blind
 Rainbow Pediatrics
 Reef Family Pharmacy



We provide care for a Brigantine woman with multiple chronic conditions. She travels three buses and about two hours to get to our EHT clinic. When you factor in time with our care teams, each doctor's appointment is easily a seven hour adventure. She works two part-time jobs and does a lot of juggling of schedules but she loves coming to VIM and always says "no one ever cared for me, like you do."

Join Us In Welcoming Our Newest Board Members:



Rev. David Yun

Learn to love without condition. *Talk* without bad intention. *Give* without any reason. And most of all, *care* for people without any expectation.



Dolly S. Paramanathan



Rev. Dr. Julia L. Hankerson

“Helping People have healthcare is not only beneficial to that individual’s quality of life but it also benefits our entire society by reducing overall healthcare cost and improving the emotional wellbeing of our society.”

Thank You to All of the Atlantic and Cape May County Churches and Church Groups Who have Generously Donated in 2019!

Bethel Commandment Church	Monsignor Moroney Assembly Knights of
Cape May Lutheran Church	Columbus 4th Degree
Central United Methodist Church	North Wildwood United Methodist
Church of the Advent Outreach Program	South Seaville United Methodist
Cold Spring Presbyterian Deacons	Church Community Thrift
Cold Spring Presbyterian Women	South Seaville United Methodist Women
Dennisville United Methodist Women	St. Brendan The Navigator Parish
Dennisville United Methodist Church	St. Mary’s Episcopal Church
Fresh Start Church	The Margate Community Church
Green Creek Bethel United Methodist	Wells Memorial Presbyterian Church
Green Creek Community Church	Wesley Methodist Church
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Ladies	Women of St. Peter’s By The Sea
Philoptochos Society	Episcopal Church
Madonna Maria Council 3560	

SHOUT OUT! to Mayor Desiderio for Hosting VIM’s First “Annual” Cocktails for Care



If you are interested in hosting a similar event, please contact Jackie at 609-778-2710.

Join Us!  **Volunteers in Medicine**
FREE CLINICS OF SOUTH JERSEY
www.vimsj.org
Cocktails for Care
at
Kix - McNutley's



Volunteers in Medicine
423 N Route 9
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210



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www.vimsj.org

Together we are neighbors caring for neighbors!



**For many, VIM free clinics are
the only place to get health care**

In Atlantic County, at least 11% lack health insurance, in Cape May County, 8%. People without health insurance go to the emergency room with strokes, heart attacks, out-of-control diabetes, and high blood pressure. They are stabilized and advised to "follow up with their primary care doctor" - only they don't have one. Later, after disease has ravaged their system and their finances, they will finally qualify for Medicaid or Medicare. We know preventive care ultimately saves money, so how can this make sense - medically, financially, or morally?

Here in Atlantic County and Cape May County, we are blessed to have access to two Volunteers in Medicine clinics. Our clinics are perfect examples of all that is good about America. We are a grassroots movement of neighbors taking care of neighbors. VIM receives no State or Federal funds, operates on a shoestring budget, and is wholly dependent on the good graces of our very generous community.

VIM has one patient who works for a municipal public works department, but as a "permanent temp," so he has no health benefits. He suffers from colitis, a painful condition requiring frequent doctors' visits and expensive medications. We have a waitress who needs shoulder surgery; a landscaper with heart problems; a single mother with uncontrolled diabetes who eats too many carbs because pasta and rice are cheap. All of VIM's patients say, "Without VIM, I do not know what I would do."