

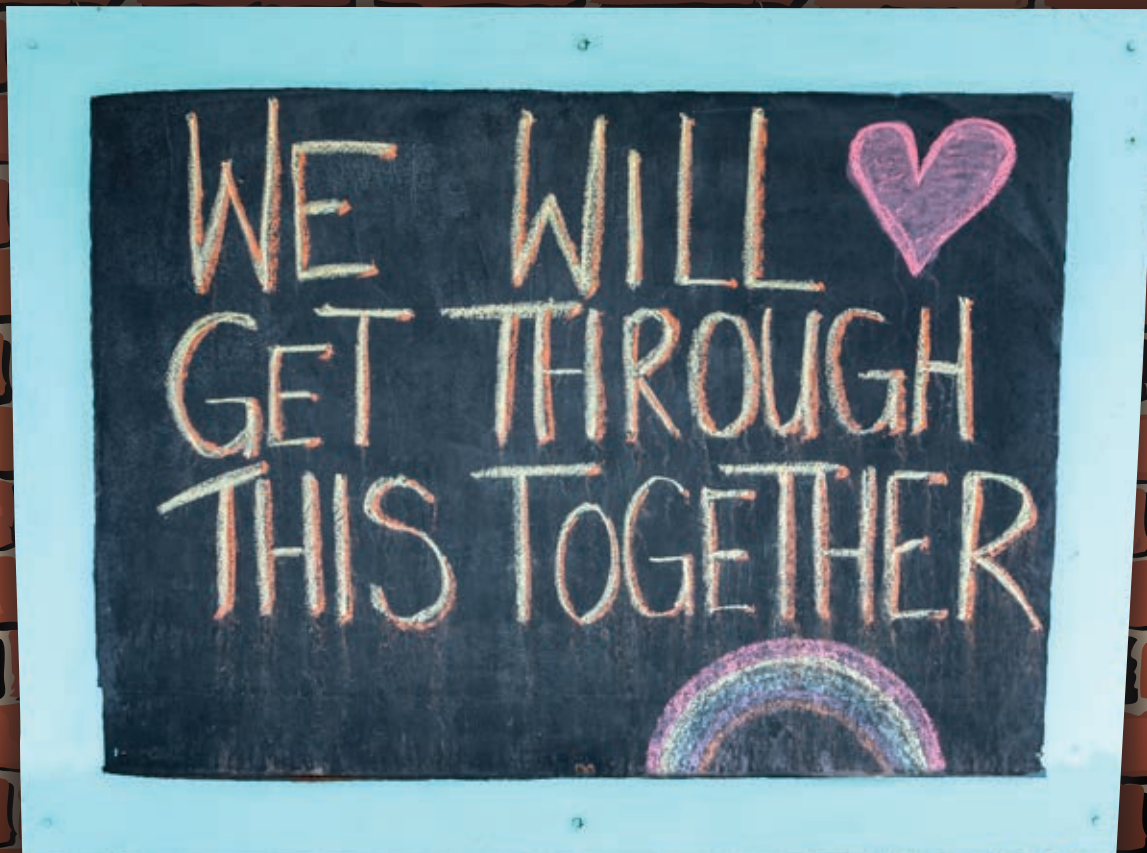
Hope!  
Special COVID-19 Issue

Healthcare Marketer's

# exchange

"Where Healthcare Marketers Connect"

Vol. 29, No. 4  
MAY 2020



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Dear Healthcare Marketer,

First, I hope this finds you and your family healthy and safe. During this unprecedented time, I have chosen to focus on hope, which is what this issue is all about.

Just look around, and you can find neighbors helping neighbors, strangers stepping up to support all those on the frontlines, and general acts of kindness. Here in our town of Verona, I have seen so many things being done to help both friends and strangers. I am so proud to be a part of the Verona community. From helping to feed hospital workers and healthcare professionals to promoting the support of local restaurants and small businesses through websites touting their specials and positive reviews, and showing thanks for local first responders, we have seen the true kindness of others.

I love seeing the essential workers who keep America moving being honored and recognized nightly with bagpipes on Facebook Live by local Noel O'Keefe. We're seeing powerful ways to use social media for good. There's a local nightly tribute at 7 p.m. of clapping and drumming from area homes and local businesses to show our appreciation for all the hard work of first responders. It is also so encouraging to see so many people coming together to make homemade masks for those in need (Kathy Ortolani and I have been making them for cancer patients and people at the soup kitchen. Read about it on page 11). Seeing all the beautiful signs for hospital workers and patients and the chalk drawings kids are doing on their driveways are all small, but important, signs of hope that add up.



Verona also implemented a Lawn Sign Fundraiser to thank and support local emergency service and medical professionals. We donate \$15 for a lawn sign and 100% of the profits go to providing meals for our healthcare workers, while also helping to support local restaurants. One restaurant near us even put meals outside on Easter Sunday for families in need. Another one of the truly touching things I have seen is a GoFundMe page that was created for Jose Fernandez, a local resident who passed away suddenly from COVID-19 and left behind a wife and two young children. The family asked for support to help raise \$15,000 for funeral arrangements and, within days, thanks to the community, the support that flooded in raised more than \$40,000 to date.

On a personal level, my family set up a Zoom get-together every week. On Easter, we had 17 family members representing five states...it was truly a great way to stay together during this time of social distancing. Rather than focusing on what we can't do, we can focus on what we can do. That way we can all choose to pass on hope and kindness to one another.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge our industry. Competitors have come together for the greater good, as they try to find better tests, a cure, and a vaccination for this pandemic. I am so proud to be part of the pharma industry.

In this issue, you'll discover how the people in our industry are coping and making the world a little better in their sphere of influence. Carol Timberlake shares how she's meeting with her mom even with social distancing. She is also making a beautiful difference to the larger nursing home community.

Shannon Tubridy's husband is feeding those who have lost their jobs due to COVID-19. Peter Messina made the most of a trip cut short by the ban on travel. Alya Sherman's finding her new normal, personally and professionally. Gina Bennicasa has figured out how to enjoy Mah Jongg with her friends virtually. And Phyllis Hassard shares 10 Positive Thoughts to Keep Us Strong. Kathy Sullivan, Jeff Pfohl, Elena Helgiu, Kathleen Hiltz, and I submitted to our Wall of Heroes to honor those who are serving their communities, including John Molluso, Miriam Leonard, Felicia Sun, Matthew Sullivan, Kelsey Dudgeon, April Dewitt, and Kristi Pfohl and her three sisters, all nurses. And, on our Announcements page, we're pleased to acknowledge Susan Dorfman, CMI President, for Campaign Magazine Female Frontier Awards.

I am so thankful for the many truly inspiring ways people are giving and caring as a result of COVID-19, yet I know some are suffering devastating loss. My heartfelt thoughts and prayers to all of you who are dealing with grief.

P.S. On the Good News front – Congrats to my dear friend Monique Michowski for winning this year's AMM Nexus Award. It couldn't happen to a better person!



Believing in a Brighter Tomorrow,

*Nancy*

#VeronaStrong #PharmaStrong

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ONWARD & UPWARD

promotions • additions

**AbelsonTaylor** has announced the promotion of **Erica Rivera** to Vice President, Engagement. She can be reached at 312-894-5500.

**BioPharm Communications** has announced the appointment of **Matt Schneider** as Vice President of Account Services. He can be reached at 609-468-7721.

**Bristol Myers Squibb** has announced the appointment of **Elizabeth Mily** as Executive Vice President for Strategy and Business Development. She can be reached at 800-332-2056.

**CMI/Compas** has announced the appointment of **Matthew Strehlau** as Senior Analyst, CXM. He can be reached in the Cherry Hill, NJ, office at 856-667-8577. **Nora Botros** has been appointed Associate Analyst, SEM and Emerging Media. She can be reached in the Costa Mesa, CA, office at 949-942-1090. **Emily Fitzpatrick** has been appointed Manager, People and Culture; **Juliette Mortimer** as Associate Analyst, Social Media; and **Jacqueline Cappuzzo** as Analyst, SEM and Emerging Media. They can be reached in the Philadelphia, PA, office at 215-568-5944. **Katelyn Alderfer** has been appointed Data Analyst, Social Media; **Fabian Henault** as Vice President, Market Research; and **Alex Hendrickson** as Manager, Customer Development. They can be reached in the King of Prussia, PA, office at 484-322-0880. **Andrew Green** has been appointed Analyst, Business Insights, and **Jason Gee** as Director, Media. They can be reached in the New York City, NY, office at 646-840-0717. **Annie Lowe** has been appointed Supervisor, Media, and **Joseph Jean** as Associate Digital Ad Operations Specialist. They can be reached in the Parsippany, NJ, office at 646-840-0717.

**FCB Health** has announced the appointment of **Jenn (Zemelsky) Brownstein** as Executive Vice President, Group Management Director. She can be reached at 973-224-0580. **Howard Kanter** has been appointed Vice President, Account Director. He can be reached at [howard.kanter@fcb.com](mailto:howard.kanter@fcb.com).

**Healthline Media** has announced the appointment of **Matthew Urbanos** as Vice President of Brand. He can be reached at [murbanos@healthline.com](mailto:murbanos@healthline.com).

**Max Leader** has been promoted to Corporate Marketing and Events Manager. He can be reached at 214-938-2229.

**Publicis Health** has announced the appointment of **Sue Manber** as Chief Patient Officer. She can be reached at 212-474-5000.

**RevHealth** has announced the appointment of **Stacey (Duskin) Crowley** as Senior Vice President, Client Services. She can be reached at [stacey.crowley@revhealth.com](mailto:stacey.crowley@revhealth.com).

**Solve(d)** has announced the appointment of **Michelle Humes** as Media Director. She can be reached at 212-885-3088.

**TBWA\WorldHealth** has announced the promotion of **Robin Shapiro** to Chief Executive Officer. She can be reached at [robin.shapiro@tbwaworldhealth.com](mailto:robin.shapiro@tbwaworldhealth.com).

## NEW & NOTEWORTHY

awards • mergers • approvals

**Boehringer Ingelheim** has announced the FDA approval of Ofev (nintedanib) as the first treatment for patients with chronic fibrosing interstitial lung diseases (ILDs) with a progressive phenotype. The multi-targeted tyrosine kinase inhibitor is currently approved in the U.S. to treat idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and to slow the rate of pulmonary function decline in patients with systemic sclerosis-associated ILD (SSc-ILD). For more information, visit [www.boehringer-ingelheim.com](http://www.boehringer-ingelheim.com).

**Gilead Science** has announced the FDA approval of Eplclusa (sofosbuvir/velpatasvir), in combination with ribavirin, to include treating hepatitis C virus (HCV) in children as young as six with any of the HCV genotypes, who either have no or mild cirrhosis. For more information, visit [www.gilead.com](http://www.gilead.com).

## Susan Dorfman Campaign Magazine Female Frontier Awards

BY CARLY KUPER



**C**MI/Compas celebrated the naming of Dr. Susan Dorfman, President, CMI, to the prestigious Campaign Magazine Female Frontier Awards.

The brains and vision behind a number of proprietary services in the CMI/Compas arsenal, Dr. Dorfman has been changing, shaping, and reconstructing the way pharma approaches data and marketing. Her contributions to the industry at large have paved the way to bigger and bolder opportunities for all. Her recent mission has been to take the impact CMI/Compas is

making on the consumer side to the next level. Dr. Dorfman is behind the launch of proprietary software and techniques that allow more precise targeting than pharma clients can find anywhere else and closes the loop on integrated consumer/HCP messaging, making every campaign more effective. What that means is doctors and patients have better connections that equal better health outcomes.



**Carly Kuper** is Senior Vice President, Public Relations and Corporate Communications, CMI/Compas, 2200 Renaissance Boulevard, Suite 160, King of Prussia, PA 19406. She can be reached at 610-731-5409 or [ckuper@cmicompas.com](mailto:ckuper@cmicompas.com).

*Susan is a leader with big, bold ideas, and no one has brought more of those to our organization than her. In her tenure here, she has transformed our clients' business as well as our own with her visionary approach to marketing. She has been a critical driver of bringing strategic value to clients, uncovering how we can help them accomplish their business goals."*

— CMI/COMPAS CEO STAN WOODLAND

# AMM

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We are proud to be a part of a community that cares about and supports each other during challenging times. Please stay connected on [ammonline.org](http://ammonline.org) and most importantly, stay healthy!

# Wall of Heroes

“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.” — HELEN KELLER

We are in the midst of unprecedented times. Many of us have been touched by loss and grief. And yet, somehow, in the midst of the suffering, lockdowns, social distancing, there has also been boundless service, selflessness, generosity, love. There are so many doing so much to take care of their friends, family members, neighbors, even strangers. So many people are looking for and finding ways to serve. This sheds powerful light despite the cloud COVID-19 has cast globally.

We wanted to recognize just some of the heroes who have made a positive impact during these challenging times. They are taking risks, making strides, and many are putting themselves in harm’s way in order to alleviate other’s suffering. They are heroes and their impact is creating a ring of hope around the world.

I am so proud of my niece Miriam Leonard. This is her story of serving on the frontlines of COVID-19. —NANCY LEONARD

## Caring for Others No Matter What

BY MIRIAM LEONARD



Here at Destin Healthcare and Rehabilitation, we are lucky enough to have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our building. We are taking several precautions to keep it that way and to ensure the safety of our residents. Florida’s number of confirmed cases are growing, however, and there have been several confirmed cases recently in other Skilled Nursing Facilities in very close proximity to ours.

Prior to entering the building for each shift, all employees must have their temperature taken and complete a health survey to ensure that we are fit and healthy to care for our patients. Dry and cracked hands from constant washing and anti-bacterial and sore ears from the tension of our masks, as well as break-outs have all become our new normal. Personal Protective Equipment like proper face masks, the N95s, face shields, and protective gowns are hard to come by. We are forced to gather supplies on a weekly basis and get by with what we are able to come up with. Several employees have been forced to spend their own time and money, while away from work, to properly gather these supplies.

Recently, our corporate office informed us that all residents must wear protective masks. Because we have been unable to obtain them, we took it upon ourselves to make them out of the materials



Heroes at Work.



Nurses making masks for residents.

available to us. No visitors are allowed inside of the building, so residents stay in contact with their friends and family through video chat, like FaceTime. Residents also follow social distancing rules. They are unable to participate in any group activities or gatherings, so we bring their food and fun right into their rooms.

I can speak for many healthcare workers when I say that I do not fear contracting the virus myself. I am aware of the risk of this job and knowingly accept it to do what I love, and that is to care for others and to put their needs before my own. I do worry about being a carrier and passing the virus on to one of my patients or to my own children or family. To prevent this, we must all do our part to limit the spread of the virus by abiding by regulations like stay-at-home orders, social distancing, and leaving only for work and/or emergency reasons. Be safe. Be healthy.

Miriam Leonard, RN, is a Transitional Care Nurse at Destin Healthcare and Rehabilitation. She can be reached at [miriam.leonard@consulatehc.com](mailto:miriam.leonard@consulatehc.com).

# Wall of Heroes

## Shout-Outs to Family Heroes on the Frontlines of This Battle

BY KATHLEEN HILTZ

My niece Kelsey and my cousin April are both so dedicated, but so scared too. People are dying all around them every day. They both work in different settings, but are with the sickest of the sick. I appreciate the opportunity to honor them and thank them for the work they do.

My niece Kelsey Dudgeon works on the frontlines at a 1,000-bed, sub-acute facility in the Bronx.

I asked her to share a bit of her experience.

“As a speech-language pathologist in the sub-acute setting during the COVID-19 pandemic, my primary objective is to rehabilitate and restore the speech and swallow function in post-extubated COVID-19 patients. Given what we know about the nature of how COVID-19 spreads, we have been refraining from conducting instrumental Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES), as it involves passing a scope through a patient’s nose and into the throat to get a view of the larynx. Instead, now, the assessment and diagnosis of post-extubation dysphagia during this pandemic relies heavily on conducting clinical bedside evaluations.



Kelsey PPE is Key!!

In addition to the hands-on therapy aspect of my job, I spend countless hours simply comforting patients through the long, lonely days. I FaceTime the family members of those who aren’t as fortunate and are in their last days of life, to hopefully allow them to all gain some sort of closure.

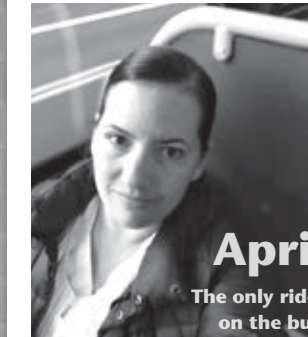
My days on the frontline of this war are filled with physical and emotional exhaustion, helplessness, apprehension, and defeat. I fear the unknown. I dread the possibility of carrying this virus and potentially infecting other patients or my own family. I loathe the long-lasting effects this monster will leave on our society. But as terrified as I am showing up to battle each day, I can honestly say I have learned and grown so much as both an individual and a therapist in these past few months. I am going to look back on this time and smile at the fact that I had the privilege of helping COVID-19 survivors regain two of the best

pleasures in life; eating and communicating. I will find peace in remembering that the patients we lost had a hand to hold until their last breath. I have been pushed to my limits. I’ve cried more times than I can count. But I will continue to give it my all, spread positivity, and persevere each day, because even though it’s scary, this is what I was made to do.”

Here’s a shout-out to my cousin April Dewitt, an ICU nurse in Brooklyn.

I wrote this post on Facebook in support of her work...

“This is my cousin April taking a bus from Brooklyn to get to her job as an ICU nurse at Brooklyn Medical Center. Of the 18 beds in her unit, 16 were confirmed COVID-19 patients. She leaves her young daughter every day to go to work and care for her patients. She and the people she works with, fighting on the frontlines of this pandemic, are why we stay home. It’s the



April The only rider on the bus.

very least we can do.”

Shortly after writing the above post, April wrote that patients were crashing everywhere around them. Nurses and doctors were dropping, getting sick themselves. ICU nurses were being called to assist Emergency Department nurses in starting

drips and lines and reusing PPE (personal protective equipment).

Obviously, New York has been very hard hit by coronavirus. It’s amazing to me how some of these healthcare workers can keep up the pace, but they do it, because it’s their calling! I’m so very proud of all of them, the work they do. Times like these also make me so proud of the work we do as an industry and at Haymarket. It’s my privilege to work at a company that strives to deliver excellence in content and information our readers have come to rely on in their daily efforts to fight this war.

Kathleen Hiltz is Publisher, The Clinical Advisor, Haymarket NP/PA Network, 275 7th Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10001. She can be reached at 201-774-1078 or [kathleen.hiltz@haymarketmedia.com](mailto:kathleen.hiltz@haymarketmedia.com).

# Wall of Heroes

## Donate Blood!

BY NANCY LEONARD

There are so many unsung heroes rising up during the pandemic. My friend John Molluso is one of them because he is making donating blood a priority. I nominate him for our Wall of Heroes, despite his resistance to being recognized.



John and his wife Leslie. Leslie has one of the rarest blood types and makes sure to donate frequently.

There is an urgent and immediate need for blood and blood products due to COVID-19 – both because of social distancing and lockdowns and because the need is higher with so many people falling ill. Many previously scheduled blood drives have been cancelled due to social distancing effects.

For safety reasons, appointments may be necessary. So check with your local blood bank for information on donating blood. Then you too, like John, can SAVE A LIFE TODAY!

*John Molluso is Director of Advertising Sales, Journal Media, American Academy of Family Physicians. He can be reached at [jmolluso@aafp.org](mailto:jmolluso@aafp.org) or 201-355-3710.*

## Choosing to Go Beyond

BY ELENA HELGIU

My friend Felicia Sun is finishing up her medical degree at University of Illinois at Chicago (and has recently been accepted to a Neurosurgery residency at Brown). In exchange for traditional completion of her medical degree, including classes and exams, she has elected to work on the frontlines of the COVID-19 battle, which includes testing and treatment of sick patients.

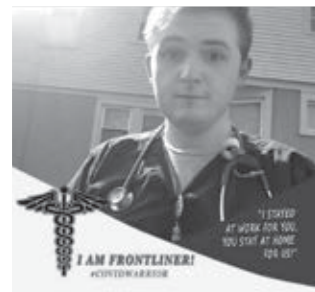


Felicia at McCormick Field Hospital in Chicago. The temporary hospital is expected to treat around 4,000 non-acute COVID-19 positive patients by the end of the month.

Additionally, Felicia has taken on an advocacy role in treatment, prevention, and safety of healthcare workers. Through her social media accounts, Felicia has shown her 10k followers proper hand-washing procedures, instructions for calling local representatives to sponsor hospital supplies, and encouragement of social distancing rules.

I am very happy to nominate my friend Felicia and recognize our healthcare workers.

*Elena Helgiu is Sales Planner, Haymarket Media, Inc., 275 7th Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10001. She can be reached at [elena.helgiu@haymarketmedia.com](mailto:elena.helgiu@haymarketmedia.com), 646-638-6040 (o), or 973-626-5073 (c).*



Proud of my son, Matthew Sullivan, an Emergency Room nurse in NY State. Let's get through this.

*Kathy Sullivan is Media Director, Solved, an FCB Company. She can be reached at [kathleen.sullivan@solved.health](mailto:kathleen.sullivan@solved.health).*



Four sisters all nurses fighting the good fight against COVID-19.

When I saw your request to recognize folks who are on the frontlines as we engage in a daily fight against COVID-19, I thought of my wife Kristi. She and her three sisters are all nurses. Kristi is an OR (Operating Room) nurse at Saint Anthony Community Hospital in Warwick, New York, now being retrained to treat COVID-19 patients. Jennifer, also at Saint Anthony's, does case management. Janine is a Critical Care nurse at University of North Carolina Medical Center. Sharon is at Good Samaritan Hospital in Rockland County, New York.

*Jeff Pfohl is Senior Director, Strategic Solutions, Jumo Health, New York and London. He can be reached at 917-488-9008 or [jeff@jumohealth.com](mailto:jeff@jumohealth.com).*

## Care in the Family

BY JEFF PFOHL

When I saw your request to recognize folks who are on the frontlines as we engage in a daily fight against COVID-19, I



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AMERICAN FAMILY PHYSICIAN

<sup>1</sup> The Essential Journal Study for Primary Care, The Matalia Group, 2019  
<sup>2</sup> KANTAR, December 2019 Medical/Surgical Readership Study, Primary Care (Office Based)  
<sup>3</sup> KANTAR, December 2019 Website Usage and Qualitative Evaluations, Primary Care

PLEASE TELL US YOUR CORONAVIRUS HERO STORY

A paragraph or more up to 750 words. Contact Nan at [nmcardle@HMExchange.com](mailto:nmcardle@HMExchange.com).

## IGC Family Meal

BY SHANNON TUBRIDY

My husband, Terence, is no stranger to risk. Having grown up in the restaurant business, he is well aware of how volatile the industry can be. My father-in-law owned a restaurant in Rockaway Beach, Queens, for 35 years called Pier 92. This is where Terence learned the skills needed to run a successful business from the ground up. From a dishwasher as a young boy, to a busboy as a teenager, a bartender, then manager, to now owner. He learned the ins and outs at every level, in order to gain a holistic sense of all the jobs involved.

### BURGEONING BUSINESS

His entrepreneurial spirit kept him constantly pushing for more, which led Terence to own his first bar at the age of 21. His drive and determination continued as the years went on, which led to the growth of his company, **In Good Company Hospitality Group**. Collectively, IGC owns 13 establishments and employs close to 1200 people.

### THE WEEK THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

But all that changed the week of March 16, 2020. Due to the growing pandemic of COVID-19, Governor Cuomo required all nonessential businesses to close, which included all bars and restaurants, with the exception of those that offered takeout and delivery service. This meant closing 11 of the 13 spots, consolidating the business down to two locations, and managing a team of just eight employees in less than 48 hours.

Everything Terence and his partners worked for their entire lives was taken away in one swift executive order. And, yet, with all they were going through, they decided to give back to others. As stated on IGC's website, *Whether you are looking for a night out, intimate private dining experience, impeccable business lunch, ideal private event space, or an experienced event planner, IGC Hospitality is your "friend in the business."* And that's exactly what they are, Friends. A certain level of family and comfort is felt in the atmosphere at any of their establishments, many of which I'm sure you've frequented yourself for a happy hour or corporate dinner.

### STILL SERVING

Every employee at IGC is onboarded with the 4H core values of the company: Human. Hospitable. Hungry. Humble.

It is with these values in mind that the team decided to start *IGC Family Meal*. This is a program that provides

"takeout" meals to restaurant workers and their families for FREE to those who are no longer employed because of the current health quarantine mandate set forth by NY State. The idea behind the program is to enable some employees to keep working, while simultaneously helping those in need.



Terence and Shannon with their children Quinn and Brayden.



IGC continues to offer takeout and Free delivery in Manhattan.

The premise is simple. Each day, the "Family Meal" is posted on the IGC Instagram account by 10:30 a.m. If you are in need of a meal (or a few), participants simply submit a request by noon through IGC's social media outlets. Participants then choose the time they want to pick up their meal and head out on their way.

The love, appreciation, and utter respect I have for my husband and his partners in this company is immeasurable. And it's not just felt by me, it's felt by their employees, business partners, and patrons. As one of their General Managers stated, "I was able to witness firsthand the way this crew responded to this crisis. Right from the beginning, it wasn't about them, it was about how they could help everyone else. Proud to be a part of In Good Company Hospitality!"

### A WAY TO HELP

IGC has set up a GoFundMe page, where donations made go towards the costs to keep the initiative growing. All money not used or left over will be donated to charity. If you have the means and are interested in donating, please visit [gofundme.com/f/1xiajkkyc](https://www.gofundme.com/f/1xiajkkyc) or go to [gofundme.com](https://www.gofundme.com) and search for IGC Family Meal.



**Shannon Tubridy**, formerly Vice President, Media Supervisor, at SSCG Media Group, is an online health and wellness coach and full-time stay-at-home mom. She can be reached at 718-309-5784 or [shannon.tubridy@me.com](mailto:shannon.tubridy@me.com).

## Making Masks, Doing Our Part

BY NANCY LEONARD

Kathy Ortolani, one of my best friends and a figure skating instructor who is currently out of work due to COVID-19, wanted to put forth her extra time to help protect people from the coronavirus by sewing masks. The masks were free, but she asked for monetary donations for the local rescue squad and to cover meals for hospital workers. When I heard of her mission, I was on board and so were my daughters.



Donning my mask.

Kathy is the sewer – the hardest job by far. It takes her about 15 minutes to make one mask. My oldest daughter Katie created a website, which allowed her to handle the orders. My younger daughter Maddie did the cutting of the fabric. I was in charge of Facebook marketing, reaching out for fabric that I then ironed (which, if you know me, is pretty funny), and helped distribute the masks when done. Kathy's children, Pete, Tom, and Tara, who don't live locally, did their part by donating fabric. Some of my neighbors, as well, donated and cut fabric to help out. We had a lot of bumps along the way, including running out of elastic, fabric, three broken sewing machines (we are now using a 1964 sewing machine... it's true, they don't make things like they used to), and I even spilled some wine on a batch of masks!



Maddie doing her part.

Yes, to add a little humor, each day, I go over and pick up the masks from Kathy's house. We meet on her deck. Stay 10 feet apart. I bring my own bottle of wine and a glass, and we catch up on life and our orders and donations. When I got home one day, I realized the wine spilled on one of the orders and the donation check for the rescue squad, one of the recipients of donations. I could only laugh. I put the masks in the wash and proceeded to dry out the check. My daughter Maddie, who is a youth member of the rescue squad, was worried about the check smelling like alcohol! We received a lot of orders from people in the industry and friends. It has

### MASK MISHAP

As I reflect on this project, I realize it has bonded my family and kept us busy during this difficult time. We all have our COVID-19 related jobs and are trying to navigate these uncertain times. We are working together for a common goal to help our neighbors, friends, and those who need us. It has kept us sane and focused on something other than ourselves and the virus. Stay well, my friends.



Katie maintaining the website.

been such a nice way to connect, even just to say, "Be well, my friend."

### SUPPORT, LOCALLY

So far, we have made over 200 masks and have received numerous donations for three charities including the West Orange First Responders (several of whom have come down with the virus), where Kathy lives, as well as the Verona Rescue Squad, which my daughter is a part of as I mentioned. The need is so great, they've been called to support several neighboring towns.

We're also supporting Verona locals Kate Curren and Steve Neale. They have organized meals for the local hospitals to help feed nurses and healthcare workers by ordering from local restaurants. This helps out our small businesses, as well.

### FOCUSING OUR EFFORTS

Now we've decided to move on. My friend Michele Klerman, who works with cancer patients, expressed the need for masks for patients. My best friend has stage-four breast cancer, so we know how crucial it is for those diagnosed with cancer to stay healthy. Most recently, we were approached by Holly Denton, a friend who shared the need to provide masks for both workers and guests at Franciscan Charities Soup Kitchens at St. Ann's Church in Newark, NJ, a coronavirus hotspot where the need is great. Some soup kitchens are closing and because of shelter-in-place orders, people can't gather right now so to-go meals are being provided.



Some of the mask recipients – The Reicherts, Carol Timberlake, and Janice Radam Katz.

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Kathy hard at work.

## 48 Hours in Amsterdam...Yikes!

BY PETER MESSINA

On Wednesday, March 11, my middle daughter Aimee, my wife Pam, and I took off at 7 p.m. for a long week-end trip to Amsterdam. We had reservations about going, so we checked with all the places we were to visit, and everything looked good to go.

### EUROPEAN TRAVEL BAN

While sitting on the tarmac waiting for takeoff, I was exchanging a few last texts with one of my clients. Off we went. Eight hours later on Thursday morning we landed in Amsterdam and as we touched down our phones began to blow up. A note from my client was the first text I read, which basically told me that shortly after we took off the President placed the ban on European travel and we should check to see what that meant for us. We immediately got in a line at the ticket counter along with hundreds of other people. We soon learned that we needed to turn around and head home.

### 14 HOURS ON HOLD

Unfortunately, all the flights were full, so it was suggested we call the airline directly. At that point, we decided to head to our hotel. I placed the call to the airline and of course was put on hold. Thank God for portable chargers! After 14 hours of being on hold, we finally got through. Then we were placed on a flight back a day later.

### GETTING THE MOST OUT OF BEING ON HOLD

During the hold time, we decided we should cover as much ground as possible. We immediately hit the Heineken brewery, did the tour, and knocked back many beers – all while listening for someone to pick up the call. From there, we walked all over the city, taking in all the sights. We had a great lunch,

Cheers from the Heineken Brewery.

more beers, and then jumped on a canal tour. We ended the evening with a nice dinner and then decided to rest up for the next day.

### TOURING THE COUNTRYSIDE

Friday morning, as we prepared to head out to various landmarks, we were informed Amsterdam had closed pretty much everything. Ugh! Quickly thinking, we decided to jump on a train and go see the countryside and windmills. We spent several hours walking around there – did some cheese tasting, saw the wooden shoe factory, and had a great lunch with some local beers. After that, we worked our way back to downtown Amsterdam, had a great dinner, and called it a day.

### 14 DAYS OF SELF-QUARANTINE

Four hours later, we were in the airport at 5 a.m. and at 1 p.m. EST we landed back in New Jersey. Wow! Talk about a crazy 48 hours!! Upon arrival in NJ, we were greeted by the CDC in full hazmat gear on the plane. We were briefed and placed in groups of 25-30 people. From there, we proceeded to a CDC Quarantine Station where they interviewed and checked us regarding any health issues. They advised us that since we missed the mandatory cut off time to return, we would need to self-quarantine for 14 days. From there, we went through a global entry point and then were finally released. From the time we landed, it was a good five to six hours before we finally got home.

Since the 14-day quarantine has passed, we feel fine, we are following the social distancing guidelines, we converted our house into an office complex like so many others, and have not been in a store since we returned. The steady flow of deliveries drives the dogs crazy, but it beats risking any exposure to the virus.

Although it was a highly stressed and fast trip, we did manage to cover a lot of ground and will head back to Amsterdam someday soon. Be safe everyone!



*Peter Messina is Executive Director, Sales, Brand Group, Rx EDGE. He can be reached at 973-615-0449 or peter.messina@rxedge.com.*



Wooden shoe races!

## HOW TO GET THROUGH UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

### DIGITAL MAH JONGG

BY GINA BENNICASA

When I worked in the city, I used to ride the Long Island Railroad with a group of women. We all got very friendly and started doing dinners, game nights, vacations together. One of the girls suggested we learn Mah Jongg. I love games, so I agreed to do it. We took classes through Adult Education at the local high school. Once we all learned, we started to play Tuesday and



My First Win! At Adult Education learning the game (before social distancing).

Wednesday evenings. One of the women sets up a calendar of who is playing which night and who is hosting. The host puts out snacks and drinks and the rule is no one brings anything to the host's house when they come over.

When the quarantine began, we were missing our weekly game and someone suggested [www.realmahjongg.com](http://www.realmahjongg.com). We were thrilled! Now, we get on a Facebook Messenger phone call so we can see each other's faces and play online at our own homes. The catch is we all need to bring our own snacks now!



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### Staying Connected Professionally and Personally

BY ALYA SHERMAN

When we were first advised to Work From Home (WFH), many of us including me were like, "Ooh Yeah!" Now, two weeks in to #SocialDistancing, I do believe we're all desperate for a little human interaction.

Embracing our new normal has come with some perks – athleisure, for one, has never looked so appealing, makeup is optional (no video/no makeup is my policy), and, according to many of my male colleagues, it's no-shave ala Movember until further notice. Not only have I learned a lot about myself in these past few weeks, but, very quickly, I've realized that social isolation has its drawbacks, especially if you're someone who thrives off social interactions. I hope you're staying safe and sane during these uncertain times. Here's how I'm coping.

Within a few days of WFH, I implemented daily team touch-bases. Not too early of course, but in the morning so everyone can start the day feeling connected as a team. Technology like Skype, Teams, and Zoom has allowed us to celebrate birthdays, welcome new team members, and lament over our lonely yet busy days during countless statuses. Week two, we kicked off virtual Happy Hour via Skype that included just the immediate team. And week three, we extended Happy Hour to all 50. The team tries to connect each Wednesday at 6 p.m. and I actually look forward to combing my hair, doing my makeup, and turning on video.

Almost immediately, my go-to Pilates studio moved all classes to Zoom. There I was in the comfort and confines of

my bedroom breathing in and out while trying my best not to trigger Cleo the cat who's still confused by the current state of affairs.



Midday Escape Pilates Zoom Classes keep me strong and sane.

I've never been more grateful for technology. Thanks to Zoom, I've been able to see my parents and blow kisses at my baba Alla who is 88, lives alone, and feeling very isolated. I've been able to reunite with childhood friends I haven't seen or spoken to in years. Tonight, we're getting "the gang" back together over a Zoom Happy Hour. Most importantly, Zoom allowed us to celebrate Jacob's 15th birthday with my parents who logged in from Baltimore and helped him "blow out the candles."

No one can predict what's to come or how long we will be affected by COVID-19, but it seems we've all somehow settled into a new normal. My only wish after all this is done is that we emerge healthier, stronger, and more grateful for all of life's many gifts like our family, friends, and freedom. In the meantime, stay in, stay safe, and stay busy!



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## Social Distancing with my Mom

BY CAROL TIMBERLAKE

I never thought the term “social distancing” would have such a profound effect on our daily lives. For me, it has a much more personal meaning. A while ago, we made the decision to move my mom, Rowena, north from beautiful Naples, Florida. As she was turning 91, she took a fall and fractured her pelvis in four places. With great healthcare and a strong will to improve, Mom recovered and was able to walk again with the use of a walker. That was two years ago. Now we fight a different battle – one that is spreading like wildfire and affecting not only the elderly but younger people, children, even infants.

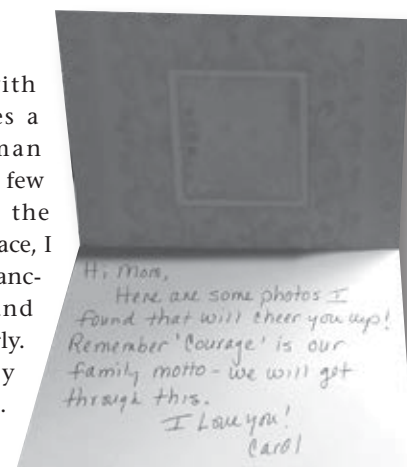
### SOCIAL DISTANCING CHALLENGES

With the spread of COVID-19, Mom’s residence took immediate action and issued a total lockdown of the facility. While we knew this was coming, I was already practicing social distancing (not hugging, touching, kissing, and staying at least eight feet away from Mom). I was able to stock

her apartment with all the necessities a 92-year-old woman would need and a few treats, too. Once the lockdown was in place, I realized social distancing has a profound impact on our elderly. Many are already alone or lonely. Many have few visitors and many aren’t equipped to process what is going on around them quickly. In my view, the elderly who are in the winter of their lives don’t want to waste any more time. They want to see family, to touch and hug their loved ones as often as possible. Right now, that can’t happen.

### RESPONDING TO LOCKDOWN

So, we organized a consistent “drop and go” plan for both the residents and the HCPs who are working around the clock to keep residents safe. All are wearing masks, gloves, taking temperatures twice a day, delivering meals to the rooms, cleaning knobs, light switches, hallway rails – all in an effort to keep residents healthy. Some HCPs have musical talent, so they are playing the piano while the residents listen in the hallways. We regularly drop off candy,



Words Matter!

donuts, cookies. This week, we are organizing food deliveries – pizza, wings, sandwiches. Even my neighbor and her family created 50 goodie bags filled with fuzzy socks, large print crosswords, lotion, and candy to bring to Mom’s residence.

### LOVING MOM FROM A DISTANCE

Right now, my husband and I are both practicing social distancing, but that doesn’t stop me from getting in the car, driving to my mother’s residence, parking in the back, and having her walk out on her balcony. We blow kisses and hugs to each other and I’m able to make the best social connection I possibly can for now. She knows she is loved.

If you are able to make a difference at a local nursing home and/or assisted living residence, please take the time



Goodie Bags for the residents.

to send letters, cards, or have something exciting delivered. You’re also supporting the local businesses with your efforts.

Please be safe and know this will pass. We are a strong country and can weather the storm. My mom reminded me she was able to live through the Depression and World War II, so I think she’ll get through this crisis just fine.



Keeping a safe distance.



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Delivering pizza and brownies!

## HOW TO GET THROUGH UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

### HOW TO REMAIN POSITIVE

BY PHYLLIS HASSARD

Several industry friends have asked those of us who wish to share our positive thoughts with each other during this very heartbreaking and challenging time in our nation’s history. I hope these thoughts, which I have learned over these many years, will be helpful and insightful for you to envision far better tomorrows that can and will happen for all of us and our families.

### 10 POSITIVE THOUGHTS TO KEEP US STRONG

1. The Small or Much Larger Challenges in Life Are ONLY A MOMENT IN TIME
2. Tough Times Don’t Last, But Tough People Always Do
3. Blue Skies Are Always Behind Dark Clouds – Ready to Shine in Time for Us
4. Always Remember Your Blessings, Not Your Disappointments

5. Consequences Often Change One’s Behavior More Favorably
6. Change Is Opportunity Ready to Happen for You
7. Never Let Anyone Rent Space in Your Brain
8. Winning Always Starts with Beginning
9. Always Fearlessly – ASK – to Learn and Achieve Still More
10. NEVER-EVER-GIVE-UP On Achieving Your Dream and Your Positive Intent



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As we navigate through this global pandemic,  
**PDQ Communications** hopes you are safe  
and staying healthy.

Founded in 2003 as a **virtual** company, PDQ's sales and production teams have 18 years of experience meeting customers' needs in all types of HCP and Pharmacy non-personal communications.

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