Good Stuff wellness e-newsletter: June 2, 2020

UC Davis Health Chief Wellness Officer Peter Yellowlees will send you “Good Stuff” wellness tips and resources every week on Tuesday.

A message from Dr. Peter Yellowlees, Chief Wellness Officer

Helping our community by example

In this very difficult time of high unemployment and two very painful national epidemics, one viral from the coronavirus and one social caused by racial and economic injustice, many are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. It is hard for all of us at times to focus on our immediate community, and our personal and family needs. These coexisting events challenge our resolve, but we must take time to talk with our friends and family about what is happening to us, our cities, our nation.

It has never been more important to listen to each other and try to find a path forward toward a more healthy community and nation. We can do better and we must. I believe that we will continue to confront and create the changes we need to overcome both epidemics and that we will all end up in a better place. More community focused. More egalitarian and fair. Safer for all.

If you haven’t read the recent statements from the health system on violence and racism (Drs. Lubarsky, Ton, Brashear and Cavanagh) HERE and from Chancellor May HERE, please do read them. We all have a duty to be a positive influence on our communities and to not only overcome the coronavirus, but also, to quote Chancellor May, to do what we can “to eliminate racism, sexism and other negative influences on our progression as a nation.”

So, over the next few weeks I thought I would focus on some individual members of our community who, in their own way, have shown remarkable resilience in the past few months, have been breaking down barriers and helping overcome these oppressive hurdles.
Let me introduce you to Dr. Rachael Callcut MD, who is an Associate Professor of Surgery and Vice Chair for Clinical Science in the Department of Surgery. I asked her, as a trauma surgeon, what COVID had been like for her:

“I joined the faculty at UC Davis just a short time before COVID stay-at-home orders were issued. Being new to the institution in the face of a pandemic has made my initial time here certainly unique. In my clinical life, trauma and emergency surgical care needs have remained significant throughout this pandemic. Trauma volumes were initially down the first few weeks, but rapidly returned to pre-COVID levels. Our team, led by our Division Chief, Dr. Joe Galante, has continued to respond day and night to meet the needs of the community while developing protocols to keep our practitioners safe. Providing trauma care during a pandemic creates unique challenges and I have been incredibly proud of our residents, nurse practitioners, and team for their unwavering commitment to our mission in a very difficult time.

“In my research life, COVID has had a variable effect. My work using artificial intelligence to improve outcomes following traumatic injury has been slowed due to pauses on new patient enrollments. However, COVID has also created incredible opportunity for new collaborations, refocusing of expertise, and funding sources. I have been profoundly impressed with how our entire University has mobilized to fight this pandemic. I have had the privilege of being involved as the site-PI of the COVIDSurg Worldwide project examining the impact of COVID on surgical outcomes. Our first paper has been accepted in the Lancet showing a shockingly high rate of pulmonary-related complications even in initially asymptomatic patients.”

Dr. Callcut continued: “My administrative role has changed to focus on how we are supporting our research enterprise during the pandemic and supporting our faculty and staff as a whole. COVID has created entirely new stressors for people inside and outside of work. We must take care of one another. Be kind to one another. This affects each of us very differently. Be thoughtful. Be respectful. Take a moment to care for yourself as well. Forgive yourself if it takes a bit longer to get through your list of to-dos.”

But work is not everything for Dr. Callcut. She talked about her home life during COVID as follows: “My husband and I loved to travel, which is obviously on hold right now. We have spent time during the pandemic exploring new recipes to cook, perfecting our homemade strawberry jelly recipe, and enjoying connecting with our family via Zoom. We have also caught up on a lot of home improvement projects and spent a lot of time with our puppies.”

And as no good message nowadays is finished until the puppy pictures have been shown, here are Dr. Callcut’s beautiful puppies!
Let's all follow Dr. Callcut's example and we will overcome the social and viral epidemics together.

Emergency Pavilion
“I've always liked UC Davis; I feel like you get extra attention because it's also a learning facility for some. Thank you.”

D11 Trauma Nursing Unit
“The hospitalists were kind and informative to my family about my care. It was great they called her on the phone to discuss my care, that meant a lot to me.”

UC Davis Medical Group Rocklin Clinic
“I have always been absolutely confident in my years with UC Med personally & for other members of my family; particularly the ER/Trauma departments.”
**UC Davis Medical Group Midtown Pediatrics**
“The MA who administered well-visit vaccines was particularly awesome - skilled, competent, efficient, kind - my 6 month old barely peeped! Thank you too for allowing me to nurse him during shots.”

**D14 Orthopedics/Trauma**
“I was impressed by the coordination of the entire team - especially at discharge time!”