

# CJI Community Connection

## News from the Critical Junctures Institute

Summer 2010  
 Volume 1, Issue 1

### Focusing on a healthy community

**W**elcome to the first edition of our newsletter. Critical Junctures Institute is a research and learning organization that works with partners to improve community health and healthcare. We link higher education with healthcare and learning so that by working together, we can continue to make Whatcom County a healthier place to live, work and raise our children. We appreciate your interest and hope to use this newsletter to give you periodic updates about our work across Whatcom County. We'll spotlight some of



our projects as they are developing—giving you an inside peek into multi-disciplinary research and learning as it unfolds. We'll share our successes and our

progress. We are a young organization and would like to hear from you if you have ideas you'd like to explore with us!

#### CJI is about...

- Matching resources and expertise with community needs and opportunities
- Conducting research that contributes to community health and learning
- Promoting projects that link the academic community—both faculty and students—with other stakeholders
- Increasing the awareness and knowledge of patient-centered technologies and chronic disease management
- Supporting patients, caregivers and families in health promotion, disease prevention and care delivery

### Bringing together faculty & community

On June 10, 26 Western Washington University faculty and other community members came to the Critical Junctures Institute to participate in a CJI-sponsored symposium to discuss opportunities for collaborative research and education. The focus of the day was community health, wellness and health care delivery. WWU Provost Catherine Riordan, along with Vice Provost Moheb Ghali, provided observations and perspectives on research in the academic community.

It was a day of introductions and dialogue as participants shared information on their

research. The purpose of the symposium was not only to bring together people with diverse backgrounds and expertise but also to start a robust dialogue around common community issues of health, health care, and health disparities.

A community panel brought interesting perspectives about opportunities for multi-disciplinary collaboration. Sue Sharpe, Executive Director of the St. Luke's Foundation; Astrid Newell, MD, Community Health Manager, Whatcom County Health Department; Emily Gibson, MD, Director of

the WWU Student Health Center; and Leasa Lowy, MD, from PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center, spoke about the status of community health and needs, as well as opportunities under the new health care reform legislation. Symposium participants included WWU faculty, staff from PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center, community leaders, and staff from CJI.

Ideas were shared and next steps discussed as CJI affiliates and community members explored community health issues and opportunities for multi-disciplinary research.

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## Palliative Care: Compassionate, patient-centered

The Critical Junctures Institute, Peace-Health St. Joseph Medical Center, and RiverStyx Foundation are partnering to develop patient-centered care for people with incurable, progressive diseases. The goal is to achieve the best possible quality of life and maximize a patient's ability to attain the highest functional capacity. Together we aim to develop a program of palliative care in Whatcom County to work closely with patients and families to develop a plan of care—one that is sensitive to personal, cultural and religious values.



This model will fully integrate primary and specialty care doctors, home health, inpatient

hospital and hospice care. [Click here to read more about this project and view a video](#) on the RiverStyx Foundation web site.

## Simulation: Focus on patient safety

This exciting project is in the early planning stages and is the result of matching grants from the St. Luke's Foundation and a local foundation. It has the potential to positively impact patient care and safety across the region. A collaborative simulation training laboratory would provide hands-on experience for a wide range of users, including emergency responders, nursing students, medical providers, and family care providers. Simulation provides opportunities for trainees to immerse themselves in virtual situations that replicate the real world in an interactive fashion without imposing a safety risk on a live person.

The team collaborating with CJI on Phase one of this project include Whatcom Community College, Whatcom County Medic One, Bellingham Technical College, PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center, and Western Washington University. The community needs assessment is being completed and CJI will be facilitating a strategy session in early fall with interested stakeholders as we work together to map out a plan to make a community simulation lab a reality for the people of Whatcom County.

## Medical Home: Teamwork, better outcomes

Critical Junctures Institute in partnership with Family Care Network received a grant from Mt. Baker Imaging, through the Whatcom Community Foundation, to plan and implement transformative changes in practice that improve the effectiveness and efficiency of care for complex patients under the Medical Home Model. Complexity includes patients with multiple chronic illnesses, often coupled with social determinants of health, e.g. financial constraints that are detrimental to health out-

comes and frustrating to providers in traditional practice systems. The project is focusing on a patient-centered approach to care through an assortment of features that highlight patient values and goals, activate the patient, engage the patient in decision making and promote self management prior to offices visits, during office visits and through the day to day activities in the patient's life. Components include the development of an *Electronic Health Management System* that integrates the

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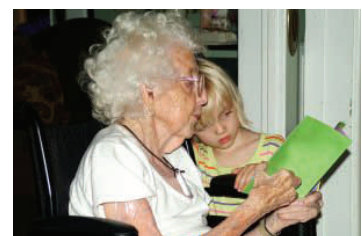
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current electronic medical record with the existing patient medical record (Shared Care Plan—see pg. 4) and redesigned services to develop more effective teamwork within practices that will collaborate with community resources.



## Spotlight: Student Scholars Program

CJI's Student Scholars Program matches interested students with opportunities brokered by CJI. Students are able to broaden their educational experience, learning in a hands-on, real world practicum. Our wide range of community partners allows depth and breadth of experience for students. We devise practicums that span diverse organizations and are multi-disciplinary in nature.

Recently three Western Washington University students worked with CJI on various projects.

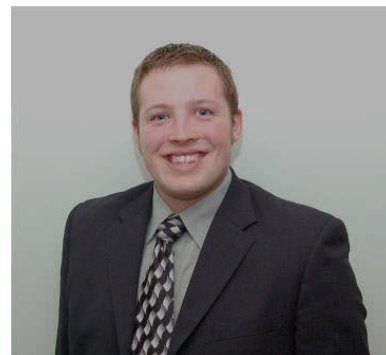
While enrolled in his MBA program, **Kenneth Mackie** worked with CJI as part of a team at PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center to develop a business plan for an inpatient Palliative Care program. Kenneth's undergraduate degree from WWU is in Finance. He has a passion for people, ethics, management and analytical work. Kenneth received his MBA in June, and is pursuing a position involving management structure/corporate governance. He is hoping to find a role where his analytical ability can make an impact in the structure of an organization.

**Jeffrey Nelson** graduated from WWU with a BA in Psychology in 2003. After working as an EMT, he decided to go to

nursing school but after just a few months in nursing school, Jeffrey knew he wanted to pursue medicine. He entered the WWU experimental psychology graduate program to get experience in a health psychology lab and for the statistics training. He was recently accepted into the Rosalind Franklin University Chicago Medical School. At CJI, Jeffrey analyzed assessment data for the palliative care project based on a needs assessment done with physicians, nurses, social workers, chaplains and other health care providers.

**Kara Bergerson** assisted CJI this spring in implementing online communication strategies and establishing an online web presence. Kara graduated in June with a degree in Communication and International Studies, She has traveled

*"Working with CJI allowed me to get good experience doing exactly what I had studied and helped me to gain some understanding of how research can be used as part of the process of addressing a need in the community."*  
—Jeffrey Nelson



**Kenneth Mackie**



**Jeffrey Nelson**



**Kara Bergerson**

extensively while studying abroad on Semester at Sea and has a strong passion for people, community work, and cross-cultural learning. Kara gained experience in developing social media for non-profits and hopes to use this experience as leverage in her job search.

## CJI Research Affiliates—Care to Join Us?

The CJI Affiliates program brings together a cadre of experts from institutions of higher education and the community. They contribute their expertise, skills, talents and passion to action-based research, in order to share information



**Dr. John Krieg**  
WWU Economics

with the community or to partner with CJI to prepare and execute multi-disciplinary research proposals. In the few months since its inception, this program has grown to 25 WWU faculty members and other

community members.

Click on this link to read more about the CJI Research Affiliates: [www.wvu.edu/cji/ResearchAffiliates.shtml](http://www.wvu.edu/cji/ResearchAffiliates.shtml)



**Dr. Amy Anderson**  
WWU Mathematics



**Dr. John Korsmo**  
WWU Human Services

Three CJI affiliates from **WWU Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders**.



**Dr. Lina Zeine**



**Dr. Kimberly Peters**

Contact Director of Research Dr. Michael Massanari if you would like to discuss the CJI Research Affiliate program.



**Dr. Reiko Darling**



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Critical Junctures Institute is a partnership between Western Washington University, PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center, and the Whatcom County community.

## Building a healthier community

# SharedCarePlan.org: Empowering patients

The Critical Junctures Institute is dedicated to improving our community's health through a variety of methods, which includes engaging people in their own health through the use of technology. Developed here in Whatcom County by patients and professional caregivers, the Shared Care Plan Health Record Bank [www.SharedCarePlan.org](http://www.SharedCarePlan.org) reflects such technology, as a free online tool for individuals to manage, communicate and share their health information.

Individuals can track medications and allergies, and store important documents online in this secure web-based application. You can also connect to the state immunization registry and PeaceHealth laboratories and electronic record to import information for yourself and your loved ones.

Recent community outreach activities for Shared Care Plan enrollment were conducted at the Seniors' Day in the Park at

Ferndale's Hovander Park, and the 21<sup>st</sup> annual Kids' Fest at Bloedel Donovan Park. The Shared Care Plan has something to offer for young and old, and those in between. If you haven't yet signed up for the Shared Care Plan, visit [www.SharedCarePlan.org](http://www.SharedCarePlan.org) or call the Shared Care Plan office at 788-6840 for more information or personal assistance. Staff can also come to your group or organization to help register individuals or provide a demonstration or training session.



The Critical Junctures Institute is located on the waterfront at 625 Cornwall Avenue, sharing space with Whatcom Health Information Network (HI.net).

If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to be on the "Friends of CJ" mailing list, contact [Bonnie.Drewes@www.edu](mailto:Bonnie.Drewes@www.edu)