

A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a dark grey long-sleeved shirt and bright orange pants, stands smiling in a rooftop greenhouse. She is leaning on a white hydroponic table. The greenhouse has a blue wall and a white translucent roof. In the background, there are more hydroponic tables and a window showing a green landscape. The floor is covered with black plastic mesh.

UMass Memorial Health Colleagues in Community Health

2021 Community Benefits Report

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A rooftop greenhouse, recently completed by Worcester Common Ground, is one spectacular example of how a partnership with UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits addresses food insecurity in neighborhoods.

Our Community Benefits Mission



UMass Memorial Health is committed to improving the health status of all those it serves, and to addressing the health problems of the poor and other medically underserved populations. In addition, non-medical conditions that negatively impact the health and wellness of our community are addressed.

What Are Community Benefits?

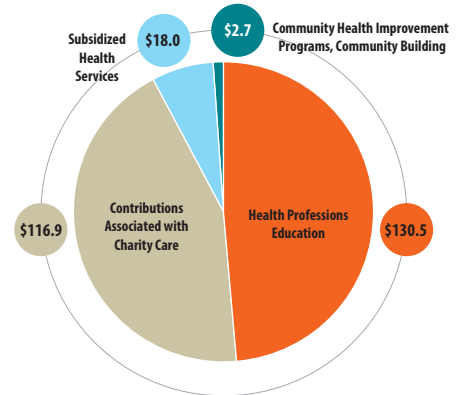
Community Benefits are programs and services provided by not-for-profit hospitals to improve community health. They are designed to respond to identified community needs and address health disparities among disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. Community Benefits are not for marketing purposes and must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Improve access to health care services
- Enhance the health of the community
- Advance medical or health knowledge

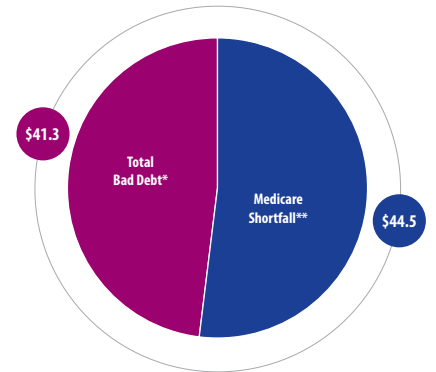
In 2021, UMass Memorial Health contributed \$268.1 million to positively impact the health and well-being of the communities we serve. Our Community Benefits contributions support charity care, subsidized health services, education of health professionals, research, community-based programming and partnerships. In addition, \$85.8 million in other non-Community Benefits expenses were absorbed through bad debt write-offs and Medicare shortfalls.

2021

Community Benefits Total: \$268.1 Million



Other Significant Expenses: \$85.8 Million



* Bad debt: Expenses for receivables that can no longer be collected and are written off.
 ** Medicare shortfall: Net loss incurred for the cost of providing services to Medicare patients versus income received from the Medicare program.

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Updates on many other Community Benefit initiatives may be found throughout the report.

System Hospitals

UMass Memorial Medical Center

- Michael Gustafson, MD, MBA, President
- Mónica Lowell, Vice President, Office of Community Health Transformation/Community Benefits

UMass Memorial Health – HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital

- Steve Roach, President and CEO
- Tricia Pistone, Senior Director, External Affairs

UMass Memorial Health – Marlborough Hospital

- Steve Roach, President and CEO
- Ellen Carlucci, Vice President, Development, Marketing and Communications

UMass Memorial Health – Harrington Hospital

- Edward Moore, President and CEO
- Sue Fafard-Desrosiers, Self Wellness Program Director, Community Benefits

Dear Community, Partners and Friends

In recognition of the amazing efforts of the past year we are pleased to present our 2021 Community Benefits Annual Report. Given the historic magnitude and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know this year was not without its challenges. With your help and collaboration, we were successful in redoubling our efforts as we responded to the new Delta and Omicron variants.

While the pandemic remained a critical focus of our work, we established some wonderful new partnerships. For example, our partnership with the Worcester Community Action Council contributed to the development of a workforce pipeline that helped staff our COVID-19 efforts and resulted in permanent positions within the clinical system, therefore, supporting the Anchor Mission's intentional efforts to hire locally. Food insecurity remained a priority as we supported the Regional Environmental Council's impactful work in food justice and urban youth employment and development.

Our system's Anchor Mission continued to remain very active in each of its four pillars of activity (see page 3). Our new partner, Harrington Hospital, has joined our system and to this end we have been working with them on expanding investment in the Southbridge area. In addition, our efforts in Worcester included utilizing data and community input to explore the feasibility of establishing an Anchor District in one of Worcester's most economically challenged neighborhoods.

Lastly, the Medical Center was again recognized by the American Hospital Association as a Foster G. McGaw Award finalist and one of the top four Community Benefits programs in the country for its community health improvement work. Many of you have played a role in helping us to secure this prestigious award, which we are grateful for.

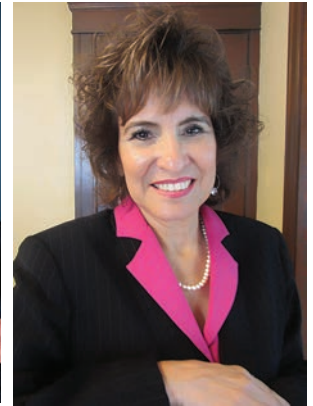
The critical work that has been done this past year would not have been possible without partnerships that have been cultivated over the years. In the face of extraordinary challenges, we remain immensely grateful for the myriad ways our committed community partners and stakeholders have come together to address health inequities and racial disparities among our most vulnerable populations. Thank you for your collaboration and tremendous efforts as we work together to improve the health of our community.

Eric W. Dickson, MD, MHCM, FACEP
President and CEO
UMass Memorial Health

Elvira Guardiola
Chair, Community Benefits Advisory Committee
UMass Memorial Health



Eric W. Dickson, MD



Elvira Guardiola

Rooftop Greenhouse — Worcester Common Ground



In October 2021, Worcester Common Ground completed a 31-unit housing project for low-income residents as part of a neighborhood revitalization effort on Chandler Street. Following a full conversion of a former razor factory, the building features a large community room, commercial space and a rooftop greenhouse where tenants will learn to grow their own hydroponic vegetables in partnership with 2Gether We Eat, a youth agriculture program. UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits invested in this community health improvement effort that addresses food insecurity. For more programs relating to food justice, see pages 6 and 7.

On the cover: Yvette Dyson, executive director, Worcester Common Ground stands in the new greenhouse that will produce 3,000 pounds of food per year.



An Anchor District: Community Benefits Perspective

In 2018, UMass Memorial Health adopted a systemwide Anchor Mission to address social determinants of health in economically challenged neighborhoods. The initiative is engaged in housing and neighborhood revitalization projects in Worcester, Fitchburg and Southbridge, as well as the establishment of a Creative Hub that will provide art-centered activities to low-income families. In 2021, the hospital system worked to define an Anchor District to focus its efforts.



Mónica Lowell, Vice President, Office of Community Health Transformation/Community Benefits: The Anchor District concept, spearheaded by Senior Vice President Cheryl Lapriore (see next page), arose from knowledge we gained doing COVID-19 testing and vaccination. We coordinated with the UMass Memorial Office

of Clinical Integration to analyze Worcester by census tract and Social Vulnerability Index, which includes factors such as life expectancy, social determinants of health and chronic conditions, to identify the most challenged area of the city. The UMass Memorial Ronald McDonald Care Mobile has been visiting this area for 20 years, and two elementary schools participate in its dental program. We have also partnered on several initiatives with Worcester Common Ground, a community development corporation in the neighborhood.

Not wanting to make assumptions, we recognized the importance of hearing directly from the community. Following initial interviews with 12 stakeholders, we identified a network

of contacts from educational and faith-based organizations, and small businesses, as well as individual residents, youth, seniors and some of our own employees. We also shared the concept with civic leaders. In all, we spoke to 64 people – 50% have lived in the area for more than ten years.

We learned residents are proud of their neighborhood and organizations, including the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, churches and parks. They like the schools, the growing number of small businesses and the diversity. But during the pandemic, trash, crime, drugs, poverty and homelessness increased and contributed to social disorder. Gentrification is also a problem; it raises rents and reduces the opportunity for small businesses to buy their buildings.

From the interviews, the message is clear: defining an Anchor District makes sense. Making the community healthier takes different, customized strategies. It's not cookie cutter. Defining an Anchor District is one strategy and part of a multipronged approach to provide needed resources to the community.

The map, above, hones in on the most economically challenged area of Worcester, the Main South neighborhood.

An Anchor District: “An Inch Wide and a Mile Deep”



Cheryl Lapriore, Senior Vice President, Chief of Staff, Chief Marketing Officer, and President of UMass Memorial Health Ventures, Inc.: Meeting people where they are, as we

cared for them under pandemic conditions, provided a bright spotlight on their neighborhoods. A couple of things stood out.

First, families and neighbors came together to help each other. A granddaughter would come to get a test or vaccine, and at the same time, “check it out” for her mom and grandmother. Then, she’d return a second time with other family members and neighbors who lived in their three-decker. We observed this phenomenon over and over. The second is that if our Anchor Mission’s four pillars – investment, local hiring, procurement and volunteerism – are spread “a mile wide and an inch deep,” can we really improve the health and economic well-being of the population?

These observations spurred the formation of the Anchor District subcommittee of the Anchor Mission. Members of this subcommittee include the Community Benefits team, members of the Anchor Mission committee, the Office of

Clinical Integration (our population health experts) and our realty company, among others. Local municipal housing is also represented along with the Worcester Business Development Corporation and Worcester Common Ground, organizations that are already engaged in major initiatives to revitalize neighborhoods and are well-connected to community members.

Using robust data that identified hot spots during the pandemic, the committee ranked areas of the city where Anchor Mission pillars could have longitudinal impact ... be “an inch wide and a mile deep.” Our methodology also included a factor related to where our caregivers live. We inventoried assets and listened to residents to “put a pin on the map” to deploy our efforts, ideally an area with parcels of land, significant business presence, social service agencies, community housing development corporations and an active neighborhood council.

UMass Memorial Health’s mission is to improve the health and well-being of the diverse populations of Central Massachusetts. The Anchor Mission and Anchor District work is an extension of our mission that our caregivers live every day. In addition to their important caregiver roles, the members of these committees voluntarily spend time strategically thinking about how we can better serve the community with their skill sets, time and talent. It’s a testament to the caregivers we have and what we can accomplish when we all work together.

Anchored in Our Community



In partnership with Community Harvest Project, 40 volunteers picked and sorted 12,800 servings of fruit for distribution through the Greater Worcester Food Bank.

Anchor Mission Pillars of Activity

Local Investment Allocate \$4 million in hospital investment funds to address social determinants of health and economic opportunities through collaboration with financial and philanthropic organizations, local government and housing authorities in the region.

Local Hiring Partner with community-based organizations that serve vulnerable populations to mitigate barriers to employment, identify growth opportunities and formalize a hiring pipeline.

Local Procurement Build opportunities for local purchasing and vendor contracts.

Volunteerism Expand upon the network of UMass Memorial Health employees to volunteer in community projects.

Care Mobile Team Pandemic Efforts

In 2021, the UMass Memorial Ronald McDonald Care Mobile staff continued to coordinate community-based outreach, free COVID-19 testing and vaccination in Worcester and surrounding communities in Central Massachusetts.

Stop the Spread Testing: The Care Mobile staff remained deployed, for a second year, in a flexible operation that distributed masks and tested up to 340 people per hour. During the second surge in October, the team partnered with the Latino Education Institute at Worcester State University to actively engage students in COVID-19 education and Spanish public service announcements, as well as with the Worcester Community Action Council, an anti-poverty agency that helped with registration, testing and operations support. Testing sites included public housing, parks, ethnic supermarkets and the Mercantile Center, an office and retail property in downtown Worcester. By adopting a “pop-up” strategy – going directly to the people in their neighborhoods – the team addressed the challenges faced by communities of color – on-the-spot and in real time. From the start of the pandemic through June 2021, 101,755 masks were distributed. More than 65,544 free tests were given at Mercantile Center in 2021.

Vaccines: President and CEO Eric Dickson, MD, working with Mónica Lowell, Vice President, Community Health Transformation/Community Benefits, established the Mobile Vaccine Equity Enhancement Program (MVeeP) to ensure the initial limited vaccine supply would reach vulnerable populations, particularly communities of color. The UMass Memorial Health Office of Clinical Integration provided data to identify neighborhoods with low vaccination rates. Outreach locations included low-income housing sites, churches, faith-based organizations, employers, ethnic restaurants, bodegas, hair salons, barber shops, local farms and shopping areas. The vaccine program increases access to those who may lack transportation, who have limited mobility (homebound) or have limited language proficiency or technology. The effort expanded to include nontraditional partners for the hospital system, such as temporary employment firms, to reach significant employee populations of color at a local meat-packing company and several manufacturing plants.



“The UMass Memorial Stop the Spread and Mobile Vaccine teams have been, and continue to be, critical to the health and safety of our region. These programs bring testing and life-saving vaccination

to our most vulnerable residents as well as promote equity and access. Over two years, this team has touched the lives of tens of thousands of Central Massachusetts residents and continues to be a model for community outreach.”

—John Broach, MD, Director, Division of Emergency Medical Services and Disaster Management



More than 65,550 free COVID-19 tests were conducted at Mercantile Center in downtown Worcester in 2021.

Anchor Mission Hiring Pipeline

One of the Anchor Mission's (see pages 2 and 3) four pillars of activity is a commitment to local hiring through partnerships with community-based workforce organizations that serve vulnerable populations, including the unemployed, English language learners and newly arrived immigrants. One of the goals is to establish a hiring pipeline.



Kaitlyn Urlaub, Senior Director, Talent Acquisition and Anchor Mission Hiring Committee

Co-Lead: As a hospital system that is deeply anchored in the community, we have the responsibility to do everything we can to break down barriers to the social determinants of health. It's important for people to have a consistent job with opportunities

to advance. We asked ourselves how we could increase employment opportunities in specific, economically vulnerable census tracts and, through deliberate partnerships and training, prepare candidates to become part of the permanent workforce.

Working with MassHire, Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC), Worcester Adult Learning Center and the Worcester Housing Authority, we targeted five entry-level positions at the Medical Center. During the Stop the Spread campaign, we worked closely with WCAC to identify candidates for temporary patient care assistant (PCA) positions, such as testers and patient liaisons, at the Mercantile Center testing

site in downtown Worcester. With the third surge of the pandemic winding down, we held a special interview day for them and are working to convert all temporary workers to permanent positions. To date, at least six people have been hired from this cohort alone.

Over the past several years, the number of positions in the Anchor Mission effort has expanded to 21 in 2021. Our goal for 2022 is 30 hires. PCAs in the pipeline now receive the additional support of an internal two-to-three-week intensive orientation to set them up for success. With the help of our community partners, we are in the process of formalizing pathways into the hospital system and career ladders that create opportunity for growth, for example, from PCA to PCA2 to licensed practical nurse and beyond.

It takes a lot of people to champion this work. We have had incredible buy-in and support of our executives and hiring leaders, the Community Benefits team and 16 individuals on the Anchor Mission subcommittee who are our hiring champions. Their range of experience and commitment makes this effort possible. I encourage and challenge any organization that can make a difference in hiring from their community to do it. It's incredibly rewarding.

A UMass Memorial Health employment poster.





“YouthGROW helps teens understand that change can happen when we get together and work towards it. Eating healthy is beneficial for you and the people around you. Engaging with the world is a beautiful thing and YouthGROW helps with that. YouthGROW brings the best out of you.”

—Ymaniliz Roman,
YouthGROW Core Youth

Regional Environmental Council: Youth Urban Agriculture

The Regional Environmental Council (REC), with support from UMass Memorial Medical Center and the City of Worcester, has two campuses for urban farming in Worcester’s Bell Hill and Main South neighborhoods. YouthGROW, a formal leadership development and life skills curriculum for low-income, at-risk teens, produces food that is distributed annually to food insecure areas through a system of mobile farmers markets.



Grace Sliwoski, Regional Environmental Council, Director of Programs: UMass Memorial works to understand a complex web of interconnected factors that contribute to health. They have been an incredible partner in food justice and urban youth employment and development, enabling us to create 37 jobs for city youth and

leveraging state dollars for 300 more youth jobs across the city. Some COVID-19 challenges were daunting, but others created opportunities.

Youth were excited to return to a full, in-person session in summer 2021 at our two YouthGROW farm sites where they worked to grow 5,000 pounds of food. They took part in a six-week training series on racial identity and healing through a partnership with The Village, a cultural and learning center in Main South. They also worked with the Worcester Red Sox to build a rooftop garden at Polar Park, supported school gardens, worked with POW! WOW! Worcester to build community through art and conducted community-based climate research with Northeastern University (see next page).

Our mobile market program also continues to be very successful. When the pandemic began, food insecurity was high as retail locations and farmers markets closed. A top priority was getting food to families whose Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Healthy Incentive Program (HIP) benefits were going unused. We quickly established a single pickup point with pre-bagged options for purchase. In 2021, we developed an online preorder program with five pickup locations, including one outside the city. A 40-foot refrigerated trailer in the Worcester Youth Center parking lot, combined with our huge indoor space, was very effective for food distribution.

The preorder program taught us a lot and we are working slowly to determine what our capacity is to offer it alongside our regular mobile program. We now have a few preorder locations in addition to onsite locations. These combined methods are helping to improve accessibility and build confidence that healthy food will be available.

Youth employed through the Regional Environmental Council urban agriculture program, YouthGROW, display fresh vegetables and produce available for purchase through its mobile and stationary markets.

More About YouthGROW

In FY21, the Regional Environmental Council (REC) led two team projects in Bell Hill. One, a collaboration with professors from **Northeastern University**, supported community-based research on climate resiliency. YouthGROWers conducted experiments on effective ways to design and insulate homes for extreme temperatures. The project included a walk audit of the Bell Hill neighborhood and outreach for a community focus group held at the garden and attended by 16 residents. The second educational effort was with the **Worcester Public Schools** that included Vernon Hill School Garden, Indian Lake Community Teaching Garden Literacy Project and the garden at North High School.

As the City of Worcester prepared for the return to school in fall 2021, University of Massachusetts Medical School Prevention Research Center and local youth organizations developed a **curriculum for high school youth** to address their questions about COVID-19. With a goal of promoting vaccines, the program encouraged participation in a video contest where youth did their own research, vetted reliable information sources, drew their own conclusions and presented their videos on social media. REC YouthGROWer videos earned first and second place in the group category and individual category, respectively, giving participants an opportunity to share their voice in a community effort.

UMass Memorial Medical Center supports three YouthGROW summer jobs annually at Grant Square Community Garden through its **Building Brighter Futures For Youth (BBFY)** program. Established in 2005, BBFY creates meaningful summer employment for inner-city youth, age 16 to 24 years old, who work 24 hours a week in departments across the hospital system. The Medical Center provided a total of 11 youth positions in 2021.

Food Voucher Pilot

As part of an effort to address food insecurity in Worcester's large African community, UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits expanded its longstanding partnership with the Regional Environmental Council (REC) to pilot a voucher-based incentive program aimed at lowering linguistic, cultural and scheduling barriers to access food resources. The pilot was conducted by a food pantry in a highly food-insecure neighborhood. Vouchers provided free produce, onsite healthy eating and educational opportunities to patrons and residents.

Other Nutrition Efforts

UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits has a long-standing commitment to addressing food insecurity in distressed neighborhoods through a range of efforts.



Medical Center Community Benefits staff serve as active members of the **Worcester Food Policy Council** Steering Committee. The group focuses on policy and advocacy to address food insecurity, promote healthy eating

and access to healthy foods in food insecure areas. The committee convenes the Access to Healthy Foods Work Group of the 2021 Community Health Improvement Plan (see page 15), which promotes healthy weight, healthy eating, and improved nutrition in distressed neighborhoods through policy and advocacy. Ongoing efforts include advocacy for a living wage and legislation on food insecurity, as well as meal programs including Hunger Free Communities and Hunger Free Campuses.

Medical Center Community Benefits staff are part of the **Worcester Mayor's Task Force on Food Security**, as well as the **Food is Medicine Massachusetts (FIMMA)** state planning effort. FIMMA, led by the Harvard University Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, and Community Servings developed a strategic plan to increase access to medically-tailored foods and improve the availability of nutritious prepared meals for economically-disadvantaged patients once discharged from a hospital. Community Benefits staff serve on the Provider Education and Community Linkage subgroup committees and provide ongoing advocacy to support FIMMA efforts. In FY21, FIMMA established a state-wide service inventory to maximize access to programs providing medically-tailored meals and food packages.





UMass Memorial Health – Marlborough Hospital: COVID-19 Response



Ellen Carlucci, Marlborough Hospital, Vice President, Development, Marketing and Communications: From the start of the pandemic, the hospital was a resource for community residents as well as for businesses and nonprofit organizations that care for vulnerable populations in our area. We had to remain nimble and responsive as we continued to provide them, and our own staff, with fast-breaking information. We accepted our first, very sick patient in mid-March 2020, who credits us with saving his life during a 20-day stay.

Marlborough was hit hard, percentagewise, by COVID-19. In July 2020, when Governor Charlie Baker initiated the statewide Stop the Spread program to bring more free testing to vulnerable communities, Marlborough was among the first eight identified. As testing began, hospital parking was scarce and lines were long, winding back through the streets. With help from the City of Marlborough, nearby lots were identified where patients could wait in their cars until radio-equipped guides directed them to the hospital. New England Sports Center provided parking during the surges, including the Delta and Omicron variants. As time went on, we made the process more efficient especially for those with Spanish or Portuguese as a primary language. We had no idea we would be testing at this level. On a cold January day, we administered 2,200 tests in four hours.

When vaccines became available, we established a clinic in conference rooms at the centrally located Marriott Courtyard,

less than four miles from the hospital. We partnered with the City and the Board of Health to establish easy registration by phone and online, and offered walk-ins and extended hours.

We also worked with the public middle and high schools in Marlborough and Hudson. We took the clinic to them. Superintendents, principals and staff made sure children received consent forms and one of our proudest moments was when a principal said some students would never have been vaccinated otherwise! Beginning in December 2021, four National Guardsmen were deployed to the hospital for three months during the Omicron surge that negatively impacted our own staff, something that hadn't happened during other surges.

We completed our last Stop the Spread tests through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on March 31, 2022. We administered 148,369 free tests and are grateful for the support of the community and our own caregivers.

Ellen Carlucci, Vice President, Marketing and Communications, Marlborough Hospital, center, receives the “Standing Ovation Award” from Sean Rose, President and CEO, left, and Stacey Forrest, COO President, right, both of Thrive Support & Advocacy. The nonprofit, which works with youth and adults with developmental disabilities, recognized the hospital for its work with Thrive during the pandemic.



UMass Memorial Health – HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital

HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital provided Determination of Need (DoN) funding to Clinton Public Schools to support families, especially those with an English language barrier, to effectively navigate the school system, as well as connecting them to public health and human services.

Guadalupe Puim, Clinton Family Outreach Center, Outreach Coordinator: Many people enrolled in English classes at the Clinton Adult Learning Center are also parents, and school administrators saw the need for a language facilitator. I work at all three schools, from elementary to high school, with teachers, counselors and principals, students and parents. I speak three languages (Spanish, Portuguese and English) and use all three every day. As I register all incoming students, I gain information about their family background – not only demographic and academic but also whether students speak English, need special education, if they have experienced trauma or have been in a detention center. My role is to interpret and advocate for them and their parents.

During the pandemic, my office became a central location for families to pick up food and lunches for kids at home. Through Clinton Community Partners, we have access to many resources, such as WHEAT Community Connections and a food pantry at the high school. If a family can't get there, we deliver food to them. We also work with Clinton Housing Authority and two free medical clinics in Worcester and Shrewsbury. Beginning in 2022, the UMass Memorial Ronald McDonald Care Mobile will be here twice a month for physicals and dental screenings.

My family is originally from Guatemala and I relate to these families. By sitting down with them, we can address their needs, top to bottom. That connection makes them feel welcome and part of the school system and community. While registration slows down as the semester begins, we have a steady intake of students emigrating from other countries throughout the year. Many are from Brazil and Central America – two communities that already have a large presence in Clinton.

The hospital grant moved the outreach center forward, providing resources for more families and helping the district leverage additional funding. Access to the Care Mobile will be important for the community. Next, we want to implement a bilingual/trilingual mental health program as the need is high.

Photo above, Guadalupe Puim, left, and Nancy Muñoz, of Clinton Family Outreach Center, help families with a language barrier navigate the public school system.



“The Family Outreach Center was able to get started thanks to support from HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital. The center has had the most significant impact on how we are able to support our families for whom English is not their first

language. Guadalupe Puim and Nancy Muñoz are doing a great job taking the necessary steps to connect families to the resources they need.”
—Steven C. Meyer, EdD, Superintendent, Clinton Public Schools



Medical-Legal Partnership

The UMass Memorial Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP), under the leadership of Kate Eshghi, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, UMass Memorial Health, and Community Legal Aid, Inc. (CLA), addresses health-harming legal needs of low-income and Medicaid eligible patients and their families. Clients, referred by providers from four clinical practices, receive services and advocacy from CLA and pro bono lawyers to improve both health and legal outcomes relating to social determinants of health.



**Marina Abraham, Esq.,
Community Legal Aid, Staff
Attorney:** Before the pandemic, MLP services were onsite, helping providers and social workers to screen patients for legal needs and following up with additional resources. As MLP adapted to a fully remote process, we provided updates on rapidly changing topics, including unemployment

benefits, food stamps and rental assistance through virtual trainings, informational newsletters and video conferencing.

After two years, it turns out that remote consultation works better for our patient clients. In-person meetings raise many access barriers for patients, including child care and transportation. By utilizing video conferencing, electronic signature and phone calls, clients do not need to leave their homes. Providers and attorneys can participate on merged calls to answer questions more fully, and if needed, call-in translators are available.

By far, most of our cases concerned housing. People lost jobs during the pandemic and they couldn't pay rent. Because many people were isolated at home, conditions they once tolerated bothered them more and it seemed everyone lived with an

array of bad conditions: rodent and cockroach infestations, inadequate heating or plumbing, mold and uncovered electric wiring. In addition, families living in shelters experienced difficulties, especially those with disabled children. We also took on public housing requests for reasonable accommodation or transfer.

At the beginning of the pandemic, law offices were moving to a remote work environment, courts were shut down and cases previously placed were delayed or on hold. After some adjustment, our pro bono attorneys returned to help MLP clients face their legal crisis. Attorneys advocated for these patients, making their voice heard, and we are grateful for their continued commitment.

UMass Memorial Medical Center has been instrumental in combating community health inequities that disproportionately affect people of color, low-income families and children. They reach a great number of people in need of legal assistance and equal justice. MLP improves outcomes for many patients who might otherwise fall into a cycle of stress and anxiety from health-harming legal issues.



“We are grateful for our ongoing collaboration with Community Legal Aid and local private attorneys, which is in its sixth year of providing critical legal support to our low-income patients and their families to address barriers to good health including substandard and unstable housing, benefit denials and lack of access to necessary educational services for children with significant social and learning needs. Every day the Medical Legal Partnership makes a measurable impact on the health and wellbeing of our patients and the community.”

—Kate Eshghi, Senior Vice President and General Counsel
UMass Memorial Health

A Patient Story



Anthony “Tony” Rivera was referred to Community Legal Aid through the Medical-Legal Partnership with UMass Memorial Medical Center. He worked for many years in maintenance and custodial jobs. Two decades ago, he suffered back injuries that, in addition to his other health issues, severely limited his mobility.

In his 60s, he was unable to sit, stand or walk for long periods of time. His only income was a modest, monthly disability benefit.

For 16 years, Tony lived in a small basement apartment in Worcester that cost almost half of his monthly income. In fall 2020, as the pandemic raged, an investor bought the building and immediately raised the rent. Tony couldn’t pay the increased rent, and the new owner filed an eviction case against him.

While Staff Attorney Mariyam Bhatti worked on Tony’s eviction case, other CLA staff helped him apply for subsidized housing. Unfortunately, his application was initially denied because of a criminal record from 20 years ago. After months of advocacy by Staff Attorney Nina Harrison to help Tony seal this decades-old criminal record, his denial was overturned, and he was approved for subsidized housing.

Sadly, Tony recently passed away. He had moved into handicap accessible public housing where he was very happy. He said, “I had nowhere else to go. Without CLA, I would have been living on the street, living in my car.”

MLP Patient Referrals, 2021

Disability	21
Housing	73
Education	9
Employment	18
CORI	4
Income Support	15
MassHealth	10
Guardianship	6
Immigration	3
Family	9
Other (such as bankruptcy, elder abuse, fraud)	22
TOTAL	190

Other UMass Medical Center Programs

Public Health

UMass Memorial Medical Center funds capacity building and the medical director role at the **Worcester Division of Public Health** to help ensure program growth and continued development of the public health system infrastructure, as well as to carry out strategies of the Greater Worcester community health improvement plan (see page 15).

Injury Prevention

The Medical Center’s Injury Prevention Center partners with the Worcester Police Department, the Worcester Division of Public Health, the Office of the District Attorney and 17 police departments in surrounding communities on **Goods for Guns** to provide grocery store gift cards in exchange for unwanted firearms. The program offers gun safety education and free trigger locks. One collection event was held during FY21, where nearly 30 firearms were collected and destroyed. Since 2002, more than 3,330 guns have been returned.

The Injury Prevention Center’s **Child Passenger Safety** program teaches proper installation of car seats and provides them free-of-charge to parents with financial need. In FY21, 107 families participated in educational sessions, 77 free car seats were distributed and 50 car seats were inspected and safely installed.

Youth Programming

Recreation Worcester (RW), a free neighborhood-based program for inner-city youth, is supported by the Medical Center and operated by the City of Worcester Division of Youth. The program offers supervised recreational, artistic and academic activities during school vacation and summer breaks and connects youth to many community resources. Staff is trained on social emotional learning, cultural humility and trauma informed practices to build safe and positive relationships with youth. In partnership with Worcester Public Schools, RW provided all participants with three meals a day. In summer 2021, 716 registered youth participated in in-person activities at ten parks across Worcester. The summer program employed 139 individuals, 94% of whom were youth 15 to 24 years old.

Care Mobile to Resume Regular Operations

The UMass Memorial Ronald McDonald Care Mobile provides medical and preventive dental services in ten low-income neighborhoods and 21 elementary schools in Worcester. Launched in 2000, this mobile clinic is a user-friendly point of entry into the health care system for medically underserved families and individuals. The program helps to connect impoverished children and their families to primary care physicians and other providers. The Care Mobile serves patients regardless of insurance status, assisting with enrollment into a medical and dental home and connection to needed social support services. The school-based preventive dental program plays a critical role in addressing the high level of tooth decay prevalent among Worcester children due to a lack of fluoride in the city's water supply.

The Care Mobile will resume its regular operations in FY22. On average, the program serves approximately 2,500 patients annually. From 2000 to 2021, the Care Mobile program provided a minimum of 103,072 patient visits and 85,562 dental sealants were placed through the dental program.

Access to Care

UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits also coordinates the Central Mass Oral Health Coalition, an effort that ensures the provision of preventive dental services in 42 Worcester public and charter schools. Collaborators include the UMass Memorial Ronald McDonald Care Mobile, Worcester Public Schools, Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center, Family Health Center of Worcester, Quinsigamond Community College and Commonwealth Mobile Oral Health Services. With the reopening of schools during the pandemic, the coalition was reactivated to plan and reinstate services in 2022.

Insurance Enrollment

UMass Memorial Health affiliates provide health insurance enrollment assistance to improve access to health care for uninsured/low-income populations.

12,000

Average number of people who receive insurance enrollment assistance each year



On board the UMass Memorial Ronald McDonald Care Mobile, Stacy Hampson, RDH, Dental Program Coordinator, screens a Worcester Public School student for tooth decay as regular operations resumed in May 2022.

Community Health Workers

For more than ten years, UMass Memorial Medical Center Community Benefits has engaged trained, culturally competent community health workers (CHWs) in a variety of programs to improve access to care and build trust in underserved, at-risk communities.

The Maternal-Fetal Medicine Department continued a **pilot program for high-risk Latina mothers** utilizing multilingual CHWs to help ensure health for both mother and baby, from pregnancy to post-delivery. The intervention, funded through a Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was received by the Worcester Division of Public Health in 2018. CHWs work closely with patients to provide breastfeeding support, nutrition and lactation counseling and identify risk factors, such as hypertension, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and obesity, to reduce chronic disease disparities. During the pandemic, the program adopted a virtual home visiting model. Approximately 80 patients were enrolled and connected to resources relating to social determinants of health.

The **Pediatric Asthma Intervention** aims to reduce school absenteeism, hospitalizations and Emergency Department use among high-risk asthmatic children in Worcester, where the pediatric asthma rate is double that of the state. There are nearly 4,000 asthmatic students in the Worcester Public Schools (WPS). CHWs address asthma triggers in the home, educate to improve medication adherence and make referrals to Community Legal Aid (see page 11) to resolve conditions that require landlord remediation actions. During the pandemic, virtual home visits were conducted via Zoom and Facetime. The intervention includes connectivity to **AsthmaLink**, a school-based medication adherence program for approximately 60 WPS students with persistent asthma each year. The Pediatric Pulmonology Department established a medication reminder and asthma status check-in intervention for high-risk patients using text messaging.

Worcester Addresses Childhood Trauma (Worcester ACTs) engages CHWs to connect families with young children who have been exposed to violence to evidence based, trauma-informed interventions. Anchored by the Medical Center and Clark University, and managed by Laurie Ross, PhD, the partnership includes the Worcester Division of Public Health, Worcester Public Schools and diverse community stakeholders. At least 79 families were enrolled in 2021. Monthly, virtual trainings by those with lived experiences are conducted for providers working with families. Sessions are recorded and are available to the public on the Worcester ACTs Facebook page.

UMass Memorial Health

In partnership with the City of Worcester, UMass Memorial Health established a **\$1 Million Health Equity Fund** to address health inequities. A committee consisting of representatives of the clinical system and the city has been organized to develop data informed strategies.

The **Anchor Mission** (see pages 2 and 3) Food as Medicine effort expanded a pilot with the system's Cancer Center of Excellence and in partnership with Fresh Connect to provide food insecure cancer patients with prepaid debit cards restricted to healthy fruit and vegetable purchases.

HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital

The hospital awarded **four \$2,000 scholarships** to economically challenged high school graduating seniors living in its service area who are pursuing a college education in a health care related field. Scholarships are distributed in collaboration with the North Central Mass Chamber of Commerce scholarship program. The hospital scholarship fund's primary focus is to support young women and women of color in healthcare.

As part of its Determination of Need (DoN) process, the hospital awarded \$15,000 to three community organizations **to address food insecurity**: WHEAT Community Connections food pantry program, Clear Path for Veterans food access program for the homeless and New Vue Communities to support its community gardens.

Mobile Addiction Service



In 2020, the Medical Center was awarded a five-year contract by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Addiction to target opioid disorders in at-risk individuals. The **Road to**

Care mobile service is designed to reach out to those experiencing homelessness and substance use disorder to reduce morbidity and mortality and mitigate barriers, including mistrust in health care. The service, initiated by Kavita Babu, MD, Director, Division of Toxicology, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Erik Garcia, MD, Internal Medicine, UMass Memorial Health and Hugh Silk, MD, Family Health Center of Worcester, serves the City of Worcester, with 438 patient visits in FY21. The program partners with AIDS Project Worcester.

National Recognition: Foster McGaw Prize

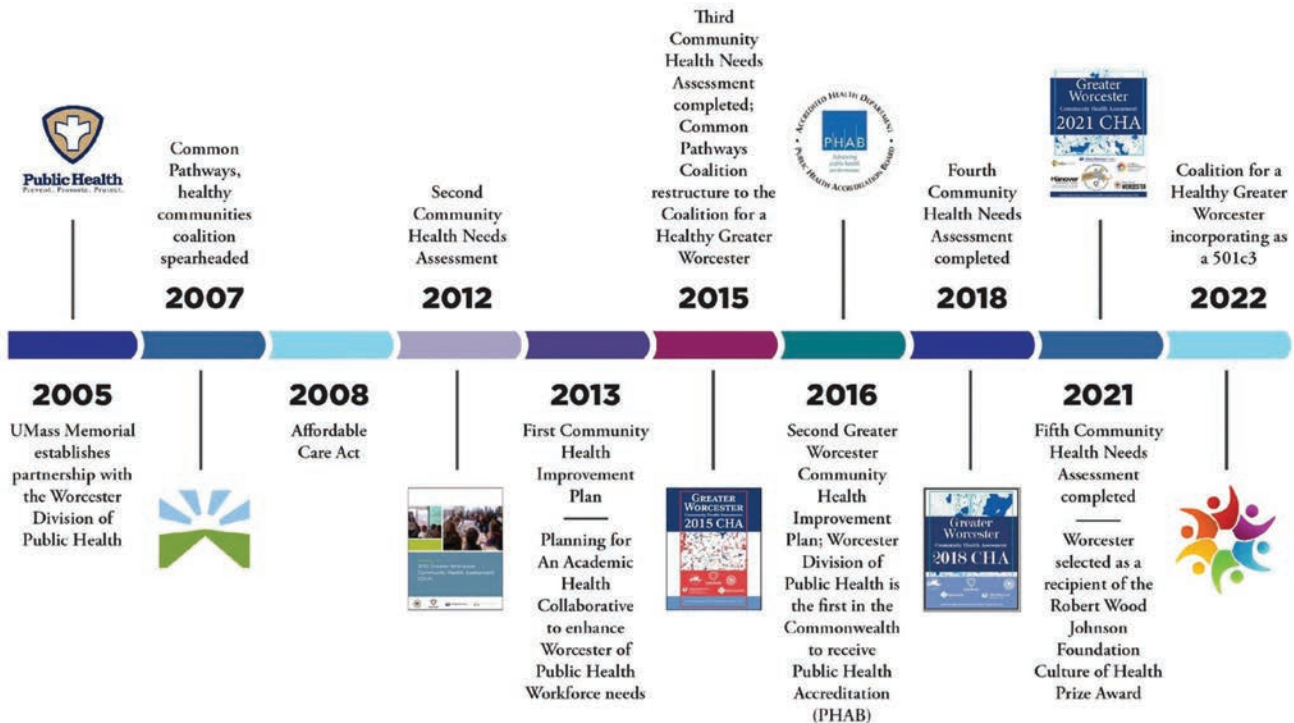
UMass Memorial Medical Center was selected as one of the top four finalists, nationwide, for the third time for the esteemed Foster G. McGaw Prize of the American Hospital Association (AHA). The prize is awarded to health care organizations that demonstrate continuous commitment to improving health and wellbeing for all in their communities, and have distinguished themselves in this area through efforts addressing health inequities and disparities among vulnerable populations. The award is sponsored by the Baxter International Foundation in Illinois, AHA and its nonprofit affiliate, Health Research & Educational Trust. Finalists each receive \$10,000 in funding for community health improvement efforts.

The Medical Center was recognized for its community-based response to the pandemic and its role within the public health infrastructure, as well as the commitment and direct involvement of Eric Dickson, MD, President and CEO, UMass Memorial Health, and the system's leadership team. In particular, the Medical Center's multisectoral and neighborhood-based strategies to provide vaccines and testing access to vulnerable

populations and the application of lessons learned to further inform the hospital system's ongoing efforts to addressing health equities were commended. These include deployment of the Care Mobile team for outreach, education and testing through a neighborhood-based approach that targeted the most at-risk populations beginning with Feet on the Street and the Mobile Vaccination Equity Expansion Program (see page 4). Critical to the success of these programs was the use of community level COVID-19 data including positivity and vaccination rates. The Medical Center's longstanding, multipronged approach to addressing food insecurity, equitable access to healthy foods and Food is Medicine (see page 7) advocacy were also recognized.

The Medical Center also received the prize in 2017 and 2019 for a range of community health improvement efforts. These included its long-standing work with the Worcester Division of Public Health, diverse community partnerships and community/clinical linkage interventions such as Goods for Guns gun buyback program, youth mental health and community gardens to address food insecurity.

CHRONOLOGY OF PARTNERING WITH PUBLIC HEALTH; AND COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT COALITION BUILDING



Coalition Receives Robert Wood Johnson Award

The Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester was one of ten organizations in the nation to receive a \$25,000 Culture of Health Prize from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that honors and elevates communities in America working at the forefront of advancing health, opportunity and equity for all. The coalition received the award for its convening work related to youth violence prevention, comprehensive solutions to stem violence, substance use prevention and developing strategies to address root causes of disparities that lead to systemic change.

UMass Memorial Medical Center is one of the founding partners that spearheaded the launch of the coalition and is its primary funder. The coalition promotes community engagement by convening partners in the public, nonprofit and private sectors, which include the Worcester Division of Public Health (WDPH), service providers, health departments, consumers and residents to improve the health status for all in the region.

Working collaboratively with lead organizations WDPH, Fallon Health, Hanover Insurance Group and the Medical Center, the coalition served in an advisory capacity for completion of the 2021 Greater Worcester Community Health Needs Assessment (CHA). The process incorporates a broad spectrum of primary and secondary data to identify community health needs and priority areas. To understand health issues facing Greater Worcester, the CHA utilizes a mixed-methods assessment approach, which integrates quantitative and qualitative data and sought information on the lived experiences of the community's diverse populations. The full process focuses on compiling information through an extensive community engagement effort that involved stakeholder interviews, focus groups and a community health survey. Data and findings from recent local assessment and planning efforts are also included.

The coalition provides the critical scaffolding necessary to support implementation of the Greater Worcester Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), including convening CHIP Working Groups. Medical Center Community Benefits staff serve on the coalition steering committee and participate in the work groups. In total, the coalition encompasses over 200 engaged "CHIPed-In" community-based organizations and individuals including health and social service providers, advocates, elected and appointed officials, faith leaders, community organizations, boards and commissions, and community residents.

A timeline, left, shows the long-term commitment to planning, coalition building and implementation necessary to achieve positive public health goals.

Community Health Updates

As part of a not-for-profit clinical system, each hospital conducts a community health needs assessment (CHA) specific to their region every three years, and as a best practice, develops a community health improvement plan (CHIP) in collaboration with local health departments and community partners. Hospitals also adopt a strategic implementation plan triennially to align with the CHA and CHIP. Each CHA is approved by the hospital's board of trustees and posted on the UMass Memorial Health website.

UMass Memorial Medical Center completed the 2021 Greater Worcester Community Health Needs Assessment in collaboration with the Worcester Division of Public Health, Fallon Health, Hanover Insurance Group and the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester (see left), which served in an advisory role.

UMass Memorial Health – HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital completed its 2021 CHA in partnership with Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, Heywood Healthcare, North Quabbin Community Coalition and Community Health Network of North Central Massachusetts Group (CHNA-9).

UMass Memorial Health – Marlborough Hospital is working in collaboration with the MetroWest Health Foundation, MetroWest Medical Center, the towns of Hudson and Marlborough, the City of Framingham and other community partners to complete its 2022 CHA.

In FY21, a new affiliate was welcomed into the system. **UMass Memorial Health – Harrington Hospital** provides care to patients from more than 25 communities across south central Massachusetts and northeastern Connecticut with a comprehensive array of services. Its Community Benefits efforts will address identified health needs and disparities throughout its service area. The hospital will engage in community health improvement planning including an updated CHA in 2022.





Awards and Acknowledgments



Thank You!

It is with gratitude for her service to our community that we acknowledge **Rosa I. Fernandez**, Director, Community Health and Volunteer Services, UMass Memorial Health – HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital. During her career at UMass Memorial Health, she held multiple positions and advanced

to managerial roles where she made a significant difference working with vulnerable populations and people of color. As a strong advocate in improving the health of the community she served, Rosa established partnerships with community stakeholders to address food insecurity and other social determinants of health.

Award For Stroke Care

UMass Memorial Health-HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital received the American Heart Association’s **Gold Plus Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Quality Achievement Award**. Stroke is the fifth cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the country, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Early stroke detection and treatment are key to improving survival, minimizing disability and speeding recovery times.

Local Hero Helps Us Combat COVID-19

UMass Memorial Health recently recognized community leader and real estate developer, **Charles “Chip” Norton**, owner of Franklin Realty Advisors, for his tremendous contribution to the Stop the Spread effort. The plaque reads:

As medical professionals around the world raced heroically to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, Central Massachusetts’ own hero, community leader and real estate developer, Chip Norton, owner of Franklin Realty Advisors, and his colleagues at the Mercantile Center “leaned in locally” to combat COVID-19. Without hesitation, and for two years, Chip and his team donated space and personnel at Mercantile for UMass Memorial Health to use as a testing and vaccination center from 2020 to 2022. This contribution of time, resources and space allowed over 150,000 people in Central Massachusetts to be tested and vaccinated. With their generosity, Chip and his colleagues truly saved lives. This plaque is dedicated in grateful appreciation to commemorate the profound generosity and collaborative spirit that lives on here.



Thanks to Two Outstanding Champions

After more than 20 years as Vice President, Community Health Transformation, UMass Memorial Health, **Mónica Escobar Lowell**, above left, will retire. With deep commitment and long experience in developing health initiatives that address the needs of vulnerable populations, she worked closely with the community to develop strong coalitions and partnerships with diverse stakeholders. Under her leadership, the UMass Memorial Ronald McDonald Care Mobile team expanded service to 20 schools and 11 neighborhoods, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, implemented an outreach and education program she developed for at-risk populations. Mónica established a youth urban agricultural program in Worcester’s Bell Hill (see page 6), developed a public/private first-time home ownership program resulting in 25 revitalized homes and spearheaded a range of community/clinical linkage programs including the citywide Pediatric Asthma Intervention. During her tenure, UMass Memorial Community Benefits was recognized as a finalist for the prestigious American Hospital Association Foster McGaw Prize in 2017, 2019 and 2021 (see page 14).

UMass Memorial Health Chief of Staff, Senior Vice President, and Chief Marketing Officer, **Cheryl M. Lapriore**, above right, is retiring after a 15-year career in the system. She served as President of UMass Memorial Health Ventures, Inc. In her work leading the Community Health Transformation/Community Benefits Team, Cheryl has been a staunch supporter for the under-resourced in the community who lack access to health care and has constantly strived to provide opportunities for underserved populations. She cochaired the UMass Memorial Health Anchor Institution Mission and led the effort, with Mónica Lowell, to establish an Anchor District (see pages 2–3) in one of Worcester’s most economically challenged neighborhoods.

Thank you Mónica and Cheryl for your leadership, tireless efforts and achievements. You will be dearly missed.





Thank You for Helping Us Save Lives in Central Massachusetts!

We are grateful for the support of our many hospital volunteers and community partners in Worcester and surrounding towns as we fought together against COVID-19. Since March 2020, you played a vital critical role throughout this community health emergency as we conducted Feet on the Street outreach and education, offered free testing in our most at-risk neighborhoods and at the Mercantile Center, and administered the Mobile Vaccination Equity Expansion Program. You made a difference – helping our community stay healthy and saving many lives.

FIGHTING COVID-19, OUR COMMUNITY FOOTPRINT

APRIL 2020 – 2022



11,270
Vaccines

325,000
Masks Distributed



113,000
Free COVID-19 Tests

10,000
COVID-19 Educational
Kits Distributed



Our System

- Largest not-for-profit health care system in central New England
- Largest provider for the uninsured outside Boston
- Only Safety Net Provider in central New England and the fourth largest in the Commonwealth
- Supports a dedicated financial benefits program that connects the medically underserved and uninsured populations to health insurance and other services

Community Benefits Partners

- Academic institutions
- Advocacy groups
- City of Worcester
- Community Health Centers
- Local and state health departments
- Medically underserved populations
- Neighborhood groups
- Philanthropic organizations
- Schools and community-based groups
- Community Development Corporations



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Page 6, back cover: Regional Environmental Council

Page 8: Thrive Support & Advocacy in Marlborough
Page 9 (top): UMass Memorial HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital
Page 9 (bottom): Clinton Public Schools
Page 10, 11: Medical-Legal Partnership



Grant Square Community Garden

UMass Memorial Medical Center has partnered with the Regional Environmental Council (REC) since 2010 with the establishment of Grant Square Community Garden and youth urban agricultural program. Thirty-four raised beds, maintained by youth gardeners and area residents, produce 800 to 1,000 pounds of fresh produce annually. REC matches Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits at its mobile markets, doubling buying power for low-income residents, and participates in the Massachusetts Healthy Incentives Program anti-hunger program that provides \$40 to \$80 a month to SNAP customers for fresh produce purchases. The garden is scheduled to undergo a million-dollar renovation in summer 2022 as part of a master plan for development, including expansion of the growing area and ADA accessibility. For more about the garden, see page 6.



UMass Memorial Health is the largest not-for-profit health care system in Central Massachusetts with more than 15,500 employees and 2,100 physicians, many of whom are members of UMass Memorial Medical Group and Harrington Physician Services. We are the clinical partner of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Our comprehensive system includes UMass Memorial Medical Center, UMass Memorial Health – Harrington Hospital, UMass Memorial Health – HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital, UMass Memorial Health – Marlborough Hospital, and UMass Memorial Health – Community Healthlink. Together, we impact every aspect of life in the region by making health and wellness services available to everyone, advocating for social equality and providing economic stability and opportunity. There are many ways to heal. We pursue them all. Relentlessly. Visit www.ummhealth.org.



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