

INSIDE

Expanding Access to Complete Oral Healthcare

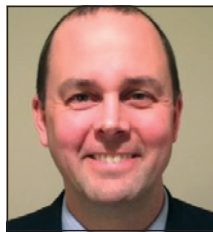
Catching Up on Preventive Care

LINKing Social Factors to Health in Arlington

New Audiology Program Update

## Freshman Class of New AFC Providers

Following a temporary dip in new volunteers at the height of the pandemic, over the past year, 15 new providers have joined the AFC team, bringing a wide range of skills and healthcare expertise. Please join us in welcoming our newest “class” of volunteer providers!



**Robert Bentley Calhoun, MD**  
Primary Care

Rebuilt the back end of a pop-up camper in his spare time



**Bill Corin, MD**  
Cardiologist

Roasts his own coffee from raw green beans



**Jacqueline Corrigan-Curay, MD**  
Primary Care

Is both a doctor and a lawyer



**Stanley Drake, MD\***  
Gastroenterologist

Was recently interviewed by Jewish magazine The Forward about the adverse gastrointestinal side effects of eating too much matzoh during Passover



**Kate McCartan, MD**  
Primary Care

Loves baking and recently has been joined by 3-year-old son in trying new recipes, especially those involving chocolate chips



**Jacklyn Munn, FNP**  
Primary Care

Climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro



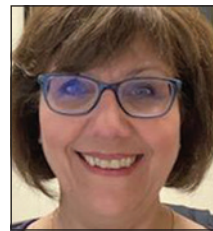
**Jessica Porzel, FNP**  
Primary Care & Gynecology

When not chasing a toddler, enjoys running and BodyPump



**Jorge Ramallo, MD\***  
Primary Care

Started volunteering at AFC in high school, and now works as the medical director for the Inova Pride Clinic, providing primary care to the LGBTQ+ population of NOVA



**Lisa Rickard, AuD**  
Audiologist

Launched AFC's new audiology program with her UMD clinical audiology doctoral students



**Bertha Sanchez, MD\***  
Primary Care

Loves playing beach volleyball at the Lincoln Memorial courts on the National Mall



**Rupali Singh, MD\***  
Gynecologist



**Amanda Rudman Spergel, MD**  
Allergist/Immunologist



**Neil Stern, MD\***  
ENT

Drove a taxicab in New York City after college and before medical school



**Kristin Bowling Williams, DDS**  
Dentist

Climbed the equivalent of 180 flights of stairs in a couple hours hiking up Aspen Mountain last September



**Felasfa Wodajo, MD\***  
Orthopedic Surgeon from VCS

Shows up to his volunteer shifts on a motorcycle

# Catching Up on Preventive Care

As we emerge—hopefully—from the worst of the pandemic, we are finding that our patients need to address health conditions, new and old, as well as mental health challenges and dental issues. We have also found that—due to reduced volunteer capacity or patients’ other priorities—preventive health screenings have been deferred during the pandemic. AFC is committed to “catching patients up” on these important interventions.

This includes mammograms and pap smears; colonoscopies to screen for colon cancer; DEXA scans to evaluate for osteoporosis; and oral and mental health screenings. During the pandemic, our Women’s Health team maximized outreach by phone to our patients to schedule them for breast cancer screenings, so mammograms actually increased in 2021. However, cervical cancer screenings requiring office visits were curtailed, as we used available appointment slots for patients with immediate gynecological needs. To address the unmet need for HPV/pap testing, AFC is working to recruit more GYN volunteers and identify new primary care providers to help with monthly pap-focused clinics.

For colorectal screenings we are routinely referring to the National Institutes of Health but have also onboarded a new volunteer gastroenterologist—recently retired from Kaiser Permanente—who can perform potentially life-saving diagnostic procedures like colonoscopies and EGDs, especially for patients with symptoms.

As we resume routine screenings for depression and substance use, we are getting more behavioral health referrals. Thanks to recent grant awards for our behavioral health program, we are enhancing volunteer recruitment efforts for counselors, psychiatrists, and psychiatric nurse practitioners, as well as adding several paid staff positions to help us better meet the growing need.

AFC is also working to reinforce prevention and wellness through education and support for healthy lifestyles. We are building back our Move to Health exercise program with classes onsite and with Zoom access every Tuesday night. We are also recruiting dietitians and diabetes



Joan Bowes Ritter, MD

educator volunteers to resume one-on-one education sessions. In addition, our 6-week virtual sessions on general topics in mental health have been popular with patients.

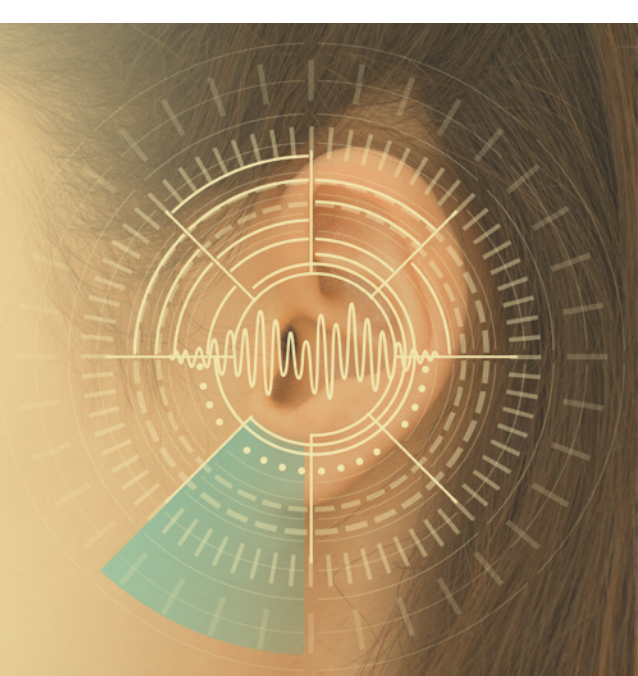
To assess success and effectiveness of our work, AFC is leveraging our electronic health record (EHR), Epic, to document, retrieve, and store patient medical information and report on healthcare services. AFC also uses our EHR to proactively manage patient care. We regularly generate lists of patients needing preventive (e.g., immunizations or mammography) and chronic disease management care (e.g., patients with diabetes needing lab tests). We carefully monitor these metrics over time and use them to inform ongoing operations and strategic planning efforts and to enhance care for individual patients.

## New Audiology Program Update

Since AFC’s Audiology Program launched in September, we have conducted hearing tests for 19 AFC patients in partnership with University of Maryland’s Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences. Twelve of these patients have received hearing aids. We are thrilled with the success of the audiology program thus far, and we look forward to continuing to provide this important service to our patients. We are grateful to donor Mary Mellon and to our partners at the University of Maryland for making this important service available to our patients.

**19**  
Patients Tested

**12**  
Hearing Aids Delivered



# Expanding Access to Complete Oral Healthcare

Unlike AFC's medical programs in which volunteers donate time and care is free to patients, AFC must pay our dental staff and incurs steep (and climbing) material and lab expenses. This means certain costs must flow to patients. Patient feedback via surveys and focus groups in 2022 unveiled cost—even the \$25 initial appointment fee—as the biggest barrier to obtaining dental care. While our drastically reduced fees are feasible for some, most patients earn less than \$15K per year, making more advanced services (e.g., deep cleanings, root canals, dentures) inaccessible. Our providers estimate 70% of dental treatment plans are "adjusted" for patient affordability. While these plans get patients out of pain and help avoid dangerous infections in the short-term, they often fail to yield lasting results, and patients later return with no alternative to tooth loss.

AFC is committed to bringing down patient dental costs. Our new lead dentist, Dr. Janeen Asfour, is exploring different laboratory partners that offer lower costs for dentures, partials, and crowns. Last month, we visited HELP Clinic (a nonprofit that operates a charitable dental clinic in Hampton Roads, VA) to learn about their 3-D printer and opportunities to partner around lower cost fabrication of dentures and crowns. We will continue to explore other strategies and expand dental volunteer recruitment efforts with the goal of building our capacity to provide comprehensive oral healthcare—that goes beyond basic cleanings, fillings, and extractions to include advanced/restorative services like dentures and crowns—in an affordable and sustainable way.



AFC's Dental Team

## LINKing Social Factors to Health in Arlington

In 2018, longtime AFC funder Northern Virginia Health Foundation (NVHF) invited area organizations to apply for support to address the root causes of health disparities, commonly known as the "Social Determinants of Health" (SDOH).

Read a newly released report documenting the collaborative work between "LINK" partners Arlington Free Clinic, Arlington County Department of Human Services, and VHC Health—who seized NVHF's important opportunity and have been funded to work together for going on five years to better understand and address the non-medical factors impacting the health of our shared patient population.



Scan QR code with your smartphone or tablet's camera to read the report.

# New Mission, New Strategic Plan, New Values - Same Arlington Free Clinic

Arlington Free Clinic kicked off 2023 with the unveiling of a new mission: "to advance health equity by providing comprehensive, whole-person healthcare to our neighbors who would otherwise lack access." The pandemic brought to light stark health disparities in the communities where our patients live. But even before the events of the past three years, AFC had been consistently redefining our role in health equity - and how we might better understand and address the community conditions that negatively impact the health of those we serve.

Our new mission statement was developed as part of our new strategic plan. Over the past year, our Board, staff, volunteers, patients, donors, and many other community stakeholders contributed to our strategic plan. Not surprisingly, equity emerged as a major theme. AFC's new strategic plan (2023 - 2026) will guide us as we work to improve health and provide access to healthcare for those in need. Our newly refined core values will guide us on this journey.

Scan QR code with your smartphone or tablet's camera to read the Strategic Plan.



## AFC'S CORE VALUES

The needs of our patients come first. Our core values define the spirit with which we carry out our work and connect with one another, with our patients, and with our community.

**RESPECT** - Treat everyone in our diverse community with dignity and respect.

**INTEGRITY** - Build trust by adhering to the highest standards of professionalism, care, ethics, and personal responsibility.

**EQUITY AND INCLUSION** - Intentionally and actively create an environment that embraces individual diversity where all are valued, appreciated, and empowered.

**INNOVATION** - Enthusiastically embrace new ideas that enhance the lives of those we serve.

**COMPASSION** - Act with humility, show empathy, and demonstrate kindness and caring in all we do.

**COLLABORATION** - Blend the skills and strengths of all individuals to achieve the best results.

**PASSION** - Approach our patients and our work with a sense of optimism, positivity, joy, and hope.

## Spotlight On: Volunteer Interpreters

Volunteer interpreters may not be the first role that comes to mind when you think of a medical clinic, but interpreters make up one quarter of our volunteer program and play a critical role in AFC's everyday operations.

Not only do they provide communication assistance for our more than 1,100 Spanish-speaking patients, but they also serve as a support system for culturally competent care. Over the past three years, they have flexibly supported our appointments in every way imaginable - via video call from home (and at times, abroad!); over the phone when patients' spotty internet connections made video impossible; and in-person under N95 masks. They have been willing to adapt to transition after transition to ensure our patients get the high-quality care they deserve.

Most of our volunteer interpreters are not professionals - they are bilingual members of our community who want to use their skills to help others. This makes their abilities even more impressive as they interpret for everything from discharge instructions to primary care appointments to specialties like gynecology, dermatology, neurology, and gastroenterology. The amount of terminology they must learn and retain is seemingly endless! We are *agradecido* for their dedication and commitment to our mission.

## Volunteer Snapshot: January - December 2022

Interpreters  
2,255 hours

Scribes  
1,268 hours

Pharmacy  
659 hours

Medical/Lab Review  
522 hours

Medical Providers  
2,408 hours

Students  
2,145 hours

Intake & Discharge  
707 hours

Telehealth Support  
620 hours

Dental  
307 hours

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

## My Next Chapter – and AFC's

Centuries ago, a philosopher observed that there is nothing permanent except change. That has certainly been true at AFC. Some changes were made of necessity: integrating telehealth, for example, when COVID entered our lives. Some changes have been motivated by our aspirations as we have transformed from a provider of medical care to a provider of comprehensive whole-person healthcare. Indeed, over the last eight years, we have steadily deepened the care we provide to encompass more comprehensive disease management, mental and behavioral health support, dental care, and, most recently, expanded vision and hearing care. I could not be prouder of AFC, our staff, and our work.

Now, as many of you have already heard, we are preparing for another change, this one personal. After much consideration, I have decided that the time has come for me to retire, stepping down as AFC's leader within the next year. Our Board of Directors has graciously accepted my decision and has formed a search committee to identify and hire my successor.

This was not an easy decision. Leading AFC has been perhaps the most rewarding experience of my career. But the time is right for me to enter my next chapter of my life, even as AFC enters its own new chapter. We have a new strategic plan in place (follow the QR code on page 4 to read it), an incredibly strong team, and a wonderful community of supporters like you. And I have immense confidence that AFC will continue to do more and more to build a healthy community and advance health equity in Arlington.

As mentioned, my departure is not imminent (it will most likely be in early 2024), and I look forward to connecting with many of you individually over the weeks and months to come. Perhaps you will join me for a toast at this year's gala.



Nancy White, President

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## SAVE THE DATE

ARLINGTON FREE CLINIC  
ANNUAL BENEFIT GALA

*Let's have  
a Ball!*

OCTOBER 21, 2023

Gala Chairs: Cristin Finkel & Kathy Martin  
Special Gifts Chairs: Brian & Cait Crivella • Doug & Dr. Cassie Root

Design by Winking Fish

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



As the need continues,  
so does the important work of AFC.

**Make a difference with a gift  
before 6/30/23 and help us  
finish our fiscal year strong!**

## PATIENT STORY: "Anabel"

Originally from the Dominican Republic, "Anabel" settled into her new community in Arlington by immediately enrolling in an English class. It only took her a few months to both meet the man she would eventually marry—a classmate recently arrived from Turkey who was fortuitously seated next to her—and find a job at Pentagon City Mall. A busy work schedule made it difficult for her to keep up her formal studies, but given her natural knack for languages, you'd never know it.

Following the birth of her youngest, Anabel was suffering from the painful symptoms of an umbilical hernia when she saw a pamphlet with information about Arlington Free Clinic posted on the bulletin board of her Arlington Mill apartment building. She was quickly referred by AFC for surgery at VHC Health and was back in action in no time, caring for her new baby and three older children.

When her youngest started school, Anabel began driving and grocery shopping through the various rideshare and delivery apps. She noticed that many of her Latinx passengers had

difficulty maneuvering through life without the English skills she had honed over her two decades in this country. One day, she got the idea to print business cards offering translation services to passengers in need of help. Her first client was a man seeking a green card whose lawyer hadn't shown up for his court hearing. It was just Anabel and her client in the courtroom—but they were successful! The experience of helping meet an important need in her community solidified this "side-gig" as a true passion of hers—one that she looks forward to sharing with AFC someday as a volunteer!