Seattle Seahawks Wide Receiver Brandon Marshall Honored by McLean

NFL wide receiver Brandon Marshall received the 2018 McLean Award at the hospital’s annual dinner on June 1. McLean President and Psychiatrist in Chief Scott L. Rauch, MD, donned a Seattle Seahawks cap in homage to the breaking news that Marshall had just been drafted to the Seattle team. Rauch made this exciting announcement while acknowledging that it meant Marshall was unable to accept the McLean Award in person.

The “good news” was that Marshall’s wife and partner in mental health advocacy Michi Marshall was there to accept the award on his behalf and share her perspectives about their family’s dedication to mental health.

Rauch, after teasing Marshall about his career playing only for rivals of the New England Patriots, spoke admiringly of the athlete’s career and his status as “one of the toughest guys in the NFL.”

“We honor him not because of his incredible prowess as an NFL wide receiver,” said Rauch. “Tonight, we recognize Brandon for the meaningful mark he has made on the world of behavioral and mental health. Brandon faced his diagnosis with courage and turned his experience into a transformational public service.”

In 2011, Marshall made public his diagnosis of borderline personality disorder (BPD) and the treatment he received at McLean. The experience inspired the Marshalls to establish a foundation, Project 375, and dedicate themselves to eliminating the stigma of mental illness through honest and open dialogue. Project 375 provides “first aid training” in mental health with the goal of illuminating risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in youth, promoting early intervention, and teaching others how to help an adolescent in crisis.

Michi Marshall accepting the McLean Award on behalf of her husband Brandon (photo inset) and McLean Board Chair Carol Vallone.

“Brandon faced his diagnosis with courage and turned his experience into a transformational public service.”
Scott L. Rauch, MD

On the Horizon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE 3</th>
<th>PAGE 4</th>
<th>PAGE 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship Brings Bates Undergrads to McLean</td>
<td>Foundation Gift Enables Cannabis Research</td>
<td>New Collaboration Seeks to Understand Trauma’s Impact on Genes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Friends

This edition of Horizons highlights our June annual dinner when we honored NFL wide receiver Brandon Marshall with the 2018 McLean Award. Michi Marshall, Brandon’s wife and partner in advocacy, accepted the award on his behalf and spoke eloquently about their work together. It was an uplifting night of celebration during which we also recognized other members of the McLean community who have made substantial and lasting contributions to the hospital.

A critical aspect of McLean’s mission is to educate the next generation of clinicians and researchers, so we are delighted to share a story about an internship established because of a deep connection to a beloved school and an inspirational professor. You will also read about a groundbreaking research program that extends all the way to Ohio and may have significant clinical impact on the way we treat childhood trauma.

Finally, with medical and recreational marijuana a hot topic in much of the country, we bring you a timely story about research into the effects of medical cannabis fueled by a significant new gift.

We hope you enjoy these stories of inspiration and innovation.

Lori Etringer
Vice President and Chief Development Officer

Brandon Marshall continued from cover

In a moving video message from Seattle, Marshall acknowledged that the disorder nearly cost him his career, his family and his life. Noting that his decision to get treatment at McLean was the best decision he’d ever made, he paid special tribute to renowned psychiatrist and BPD pioneer Dr. John Gunderson, who retired at the end of June.

Dr. Gunderson is internationally renowned for shaping the way BPD is understood, diagnosed and treated. He was recognized with a standing ovation throughout the ballroom of more than 360 guests.

Newly-appointed Chair of the McLean Board of Trustees Carol Vallone spoke about the hospital’s expanding global presence and acknowledged the long and dedicated service of former Board Chair David Barlow. She noted his tenure as being marked by humanity, integrity, devotion and tremendous progress. Barlow received the second standing ovation of the night.

Michi Marshall addressed the audience, speaking eloquently about her husband’s battle with mental illness and their gratitude for the help they received along the way, before accepting the 2018 McLean Award on his behalf. Vallone thanked her for her inspirational words and commended the couple’s important work with Project 375.

The McLean Award is given annually to an individual who has substantially raised public awareness and furthered the public’s understanding of behavioral and mental health issues.

PREVIOUS MCLEAN AWARDEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name / Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>ABC News anchor Elizabeth Vargas</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Singer Judy Collins</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>Representative Patrick J. Kennedy</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>Actress Jane Fonda</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>Director David O. Russell</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Author Patricia Cornwell</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Actress Mariel Hemingway</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Actress Glenn Close, her sister Jessie Close and nephew Calen Pick</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Astronaut Buzz Aldrin</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>ABC journalist Lee Woodruff and ABC News anchor Bob Woodruff</td>
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Former Board Chair David Barlow has endowed a fellowship that forges a closer relationship between two institutions that are dear to his heart: McLean Hospital and his alma mater, Bates College.

The John Kelsey Fellowship is named after the retired Bates professor who built the college’s neuroscience program and nurtured generations of neuroscientists, including Bill Carlezon, PhD, chief of McLean’s Center of Excellence in Basic Neuroscience.

“This fellowship reflects my strong belief in the importance of a liberal arts education as the foundation for all kinds of scientific endeavors,” said Barlow, chair and CEO of Psy Therapeutics, Inc., a biopharmaceutical startup. Barlow said that while he would be delighted if Kelsey Fellows pursued careers in psychiatry and neuroscience, that’s not his primary goal. “I hope that the McLean experience provides the fellows valued insights for any career and life path, and an ever-greater appreciation for the compelling need to advance the field of mental health.”

Unlike most fellowships, which are for graduate students, this one targets Bates undergraduates who major in neuroscience or related fields such as psychology and biology. Fellows spend the summer doing research at McLean using various techniques to study psychiatric illnesses.

Last year’s fellow, Andrea Boitnott, worked in a lab studying opioid addiction. Boitnott said the experience was invaluable on many levels: she became comfortable with lab techniques; learned from her colleagues about careers in science; and was exposed to other labs’ research, thanks to the collaborative nature of the work. “Everyone was so supportive, eager to teach me, and excited to help me as I move forward,” said Boitnott, who is now employed as a lab technician at Mt. Sinai Hospital studying autism.

This summer’s intern, Kasey Anderson, worked in the lab of McLean researcher Elena Chartoff, PhD, studying how social stress effects the immune system. She arrived in June and settled seamlessly into the lab community. “I learned so much,” said Anderson. “I’m so grateful to Mr. Barlow and to McLean for this incredible opportunity.”

“This fellowship underscores my strong belief in the importance of a liberal arts education as the foundation for all kinds of scientific endeavors.”

David S. Barlow

(LtoR) Elena Chartoff, PhD; Former Board Chair David S. Barlow; Kasey Anderson; Bill Carlezon, PhD
Now, with the help of a $1.5 million grant from the Patricia Cornwell Foundation, a nonprofit organization created by the best-selling crime writer, Gruber has begun a first-of-its-kind, double-blind, randomized clinical study — the gold-standard of scientific investigations — looking at the effects of a cannabis-based product on people with anxiety. Following an open label phase, the study will compare people taking a cannabis-derived sublingual tincture her lab spent years developing to those taking a placebo.

“Over time, we will look at their clinical symptoms — their levels of anxiety and depression, sleep, cognitive performance, quality of life, and their use of conventional medications,” explained Gruber. “We’ll also use neuroimaging to examine potential effects on measures of brain structure and function.”

MIND Discoveries
Gruber, an associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, is director of the MIND program — Marijuana Investigations for Neuroscientific Discovery — which seeks to fill gaps in understanding the impact of medical marijuana on cognitive function, mood, quality of life, medication use and measures of brain structure and function. “This is the most important area I’ve explored in my career,” said Gruber. “We need to understand cannabis more fully — especially when intended for medical purposes.”

The first phase of Gruber’s ongoing longitudinal study, launched four years ago, put MIND on the medical marijuana research map. This first ever, multi-year observational investigation has been following patients who use medical cannabis for a range of medical and psychological conditions. Using cognitive assessments, clinical measures and neuroimaging techniques, Gruber and her colleagues reported patients’ improvements in sleep quality and executive function — the ability to manage life’s tasks — as well as other measures of mood and quality of life following three months of treatment. Patients also reduced their use of conventional medications, including a notable drop in their use of opioids.

Improvement on certain cognitive tasks after using medical cannabis stands in contrast with the majority of findings suggesting that recreational marijuana use is linked to decrements in cognitive abilities. The longitudinal investigation has spun off related studies of veterans, investigating how medical cannabis affects PTSD, pain, anxiety and other common conditions. “Veterans are a highly understudied population, often suffering from conditions reported to be addressed or partially ameliorated by cannabis,” said Gruber. “They offer an extraordinary opportunity to learn more.”

The Marijuana Landscape
Medical marijuana is now legal in 30 states and Washington, D.C., while recreational use is legal in nine states and D.C. Gruber frequently consults with policy makers and other stakeholders around the country about all sorts of questions, for example, the relative effects of different products and delivery systems (concentrates vs. flower, vaping vs. ingesting) and how much cannabis someone must ingest to be considered impaired. “We’re trying to let the science guide us, not the politics, not the emotion,” said Gruber.

The Cornwell Foundation has been a major supporter since MIND was established and in turn has inspired gifts from other foundations as well as industry. “The highly innovative MIND program has already
New Board Chair Aims to Expand McLean’s Impact

Carol Vallone has spent her career launching, scaling and selling global market-leading online learning companies. An 11-year veteran of the McLean Board of Trustees and its new chair as of March 2018, Vallone has stepped away from a high-powered business career to dedicate herself to McLean and its critical mental healthcare initiatives.

As chair of the strategic planning committee, Vallone is focused on expanding clinical services internationally, fueling groundbreaking research, and advancing education and training to broaden McLean’s impact.

“Ranked as the #1 freestanding psychiatric hospital for the 16th consecutive year, and #1 among all hospitals for psychiatry in 2018, McLean has a unique opportunity to leverage its intellectual assets to accelerate the behavioral health field and generate new sources of funding,” said Vallone.

Setting the global standard for the delivery of quality mental health services; leading the field in the use of technology to support diagnoses and treatments; broadening the reach of unique programs associated with women’s mental health; and advancing college and adolescent mental health services are among Vallone’s priorities.

“We’re trying to let the science guide us, not the politics, not the emotion…”

Staci Gruber, PhD

made significant contributions to our knowledge of medical marijuana,” said author and National Council member Patricia Cornwell. “We are confident our continued support will facilitate groundbreaking discoveries.”

Gruber said that this gift allows MIND to move into the next stage of its work, which includes projects focused on pain, mood, substance use and other conditions, including those that disproportionately affect women. “Given the shifting landscape of marijuana use and legislation across the country, studies like these are critical, as they will undoubtedly shed light on the impact of medical marijuana and should help to both inform alternative courses of treatment and prevent unnecessary exposure, ultimately improving people’s lives.”

Rosie Smith, research project manager (R), and Kelly Sagar, MS, research associate (L), are members of Dr. Gruber’s team.
New Collaboration Seeks to Understand Trauma’s Impact on Genes

Why does one person who suffered severe childhood adversity become homeless or addicted, while another with a similar background builds a loving family life and a thriving career? Is the answer in our genes, or perhaps in how trauma affects our genes?

A collaboration between McLean Hospital and The Connor Group Kids and Community Partners, an Ohio-based non-profit, is attempting to answer this question. The partnership leverages The Connor Group’s extensive community relationships in Dayton, Ohio with the research expertise of McLean’s Kerry J. Ressler, MD, PhD.

Dr. Ressler is McLean’s chief scientific officer and chief of the Center of Excellence in Depression and Anxiety Disorders. He is also one of the country’s foremost experts on trauma and runs McLean’s Neurobiology of Fear Laboratory. Ressler’s research focuses on epigenetics, the study of the biological mechanisms that turn genes “on” or “off,” resulting in their expression or silencing, which in turn can lead to physical and psychiatric illnesses. Trauma is believed to have its hand on these molecular switches.

“Childhood adversity and trauma are the best documented environmental risk factors for a range of psychiatric disorders, including suicidality, depression and addiction, yet we know very little about what to do about this,” said Ressler. “Our goal is to better understand the epigenetic fingerprint of trauma so we can find more effective interventions and treatments for trauma-induced illnesses. Currently, understanding one’s trauma history is not large enough a factor in research and treatment.”

Studying Trauma’s Imprint

To that end, The Connor Group Kids and Community Partners has donated $625,000 to this research. McLean must match the gift in equal amount and is seeking additional philanthropic support to achieve this goal. “Our community has been particularly impacted by economic hardship and as an organization, we’ve invested in different projects to pull kids out of generational poverty,” said Larry Connor, a member of McLean’s National Council and managing partner of The Connor Group, which created the nonprofit. “When we learned about Kerry’s work, trying to explain why some people are resilient and others are not, we were intrigued. We are investors in people and we want to fund life-changing work that can impact as many people as possible.”

“We want to be able to help this generation of kids and the generations that follow.”

Kerry J. Ressler, MD, PhD
The investment will fund a five-year, intergenerational study of 1,000 Ohio parents and their children, studying their DNA and interviewing them annually about their lives: What stress and trauma have they endured? What psychiatric or physical symptoms have they suffered? Do they have attention difficulties or problems with aggression? Are they faring well in certain areas of life or struggling in others? The concept is to connect what Ressler and his colleagues are learning about participants’ genes with the way their lives unfold. The hope is to better understand how trauma’s imprint may be passed down from generation to generation. The funding also will support other cutting-edge epigenetic research by Ressler and his lab.

**Better Treatments and Interventions**

Dr. Ressler hopes the research will yield short-term and longer-term outcomes, starting with the discovery of an objective way to predict which people exposed to trauma will go on to develop illnesses like post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). By getting better at predicting trauma’s impact, clinicians could customize treatments for this vulnerable population. Further down the road would be the development of better medications and even technologies that could “edit” the epigenome of trauma-exposed people and prevent the development of trauma-related illness.

**The implications of the research are far-reaching.**

“If you have a set of biomarkers — that is, biological changes that can be measured — that are highly associated with trauma, this would be a tool to help emergency departments, pediatricians, foster programs and other social service organizations intervene in more meaningful ways,” said Ressler.

Dr. Ressler added that he is tremendously grateful to The Connor Group Kids and Community Partners for their generosity. “We want to be able to help this generation of kids and the generations that follow.”

If you would like to support this research initiative and help us meet the Connor Group’s challenge, please contact Leslie Kolterman at lkolterman@partners.org or 617.855.2264.

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**“We are investors in people and we want to fund life-changing work that can impact as many people as possible.”**

National Council Member Larry Connor
The McLean Board of Visitors convened its fifth annual meeting on May 2 at what felt as much like a reunion of old friends as an educational gathering. More than 70 members of the 165-person group, whose purpose is to advocate within their communities and help increase awareness of mental health issues, exchanged enthusiastic greetings and a fair number of hugs. McLean President and Psychiatrist in Chief Scott L. Rauch, MD, hosted the event, which drew members from across the U.S., including Alabama, California and Texas, as well as Canada and the Dominican Republic.

Former NHL goalie Clint Malarchuk and his wife Joanie delivered the keynote address, covering a range of mental health experiences including addiction, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and obsessive compulsive disorder. With great charm and delightful banter the Malarchuks gave a heartfelt presentation highlighting the role of family support and their commitment to destigmatizing mental illness through open discourse.

The half-day event included a presentation about geriatric depression and a full roster of roundtable discussions led by McLean experts on topics that ran the gamut from Providing Patient and Family-centered Care to How Nature Shapes Nurture in Depression and Anxiety Disorders.

For more information about the Board of Visitors contact Erin Collins-Moore at ecollinsmoore@partners.org or 617-855-4596.