Bank of America Gift Will Help Transform the Lives of Justice-Involved Youth

In some urban areas, the incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among young people rivals that of the military. Add to this the fact that a sizable percentage of people incarcerated in American prisons have untreated mental illness. With this in mind, McLean is bringing its expertise in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) — a gold standard treatment for depression, anxiety and trauma — to reduce violence risk factors in young people.

“To what extent can you apply a medical model to interrupt the cycles of trauma and violence in our cities?” asked Chief Scientific Officer Kerry Ressler, MD, PhD, who is also chief of McLean’s Center of Excellence in Depression and Anxiety Disorders. “Most historical approaches to stopping violence have not taken mental health into account, yet we know the burden of trauma, mental illness and substance use disorder is huge.”

That’s where a new collaboration between McLean and Roca comes in — a partnership generously supported by the Bank of America Charitable Foundation. Roca, a 30-year-old nonprofit, helps young adults ages 17 to 24 leave the streets, find work and, for some, develop better parenting skills. Since 2014, Roca has been teaching clients CBT as a survival tool. CBT is an evidence-based treatment that helps people reframe their thinking and react to challenging situations in more constructive ways. Teaming up with McLean will enable Roca, which works in several Massachusetts cities as well as Baltimore, MD, to study the effectiveness of its CBT work, refine and deepen it, and share their expertise with other organizations.

CBT as Game Changer

Roca Chief Programming Officer Anisha Chablani-Medley feels that equipping young people, especially those who have suffered deep and repeated trauma, with CBT skills has been a game-changer for their program. She cited the example of a client getting angry at his work crew supervisor, swearing, walking off the job and getting suspended. “The Roca youth worker reviewed..."
Dear Friends

Our last edition of Horizons mailed just as coronavirus was becoming a household word. In the months since then, we have all worked hard to keep each other safe and healthy. Today, McLean is engaged in recovery planning with an ongoing focus on prioritizing the safety of our patients, staff and community. We are also seeing the anticipated surge in need for mental health resources as the emotional and psychiatric toll of the virus makes itself known.

Even more recently, many of us have been touched by the widespread protests and surge in the Black Lives Matter movement that erupted in response to the killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. McLean, and Mass General Brigham (formerly Partners Healthcare), are deeply committed to addressing systemic racism and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. McLean is doing its own work — led by our Anti-Racist, Justice, and Health Equity Committee — to contribute to a healthcare system and society that are more just and equitable for everyone.

Throughout this issue, we share stories of McLean’s collaborations with community-based organizations, investments in technology, focus on the unique needs of women and girls, and support for our own workforce which has experienced unprecedented stress and strain in responding to COVID-19.

In all of these stories, philanthropy has been critical to our ability to plan, aspire and implement new and better ways of delivering our mission. For that, we thank you.

Stay well,

Lori Etringer
Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer

“We also have to reimagine how we work with young people — both in prevention and intervention — and one way to do this is to improve our understanding of human behavior, brain development, historical trauma and healing.”

Alisha Moreland-Capuia, MD

Bank of America Gift  continued from cover

what happened, what the client was thinking and feeling, and then what skill could have been used that might have helped him handle the situation differently,” explained Chablani-Medley. “The goal is to disrupt destructive patterns of thinking and behavior in real-time.”

McLean has recruited Alisha Moreland-Capuia, MD, a renowned psychiatrist working at the intersection of neuroscience, criminology and public health advocacy, to lead the McLean-Roca collaboration as director of the new Program for Culturally and Trauma-Informed Community Outreach within the hospital’s division of depression and anxiety disorders. Dr. Moreland-Capuia sees this role as an extension of the work she has been doing throughout her career: using trauma-informed approaches to transform systems. “We also have to reimagine how we work with young people — both in prevention and intervention — and one way to do this is to improve our understanding of human behavior, brain development, historical trauma and healing,” she said.

Quantifying CBT’s Impact and Improving its Use

According to Ressler, one very promising area the McLean-Roca partnership plans to explore is introducing wearable technologies and phone apps to the nonprofit’s CBT work. “The wearables would measure clients’ heart rates and breathing — the arousal response — and if those were heightened, that could trigger self-soothing tips to pop up on a cell phone or perhaps a survey with questions about mood, what happened and the person’s beliefs about the event,” he explained. The survey responses and physiological data might prompt a phone call or text from a youth worker to keep the simmering situation from boiling over. “Collecting data in real time allows us to better understand what situations are getting people in trouble, how they’re using the CBT skills they have been taught and, ultimately, how we can better target interventions,” said Ressler.

Bank of America Charitable Foundation President Kerry Sullivan said the Foundation is delighted to be supporting such transformational work. “McLean is one of the country’s top psychiatric hospitals and Roca has a three-decade track record of turning around the lives of some of our most hard-to-reach young people,” she said. “This collaboration promises to deepen Roca’s local work, but also to spread its impact, through training and advocacy, across the country.”

Together, McLean, Roca and the Bank of America Charitable Foundation hope that their collective commitment and expertise will prove effective in the effort to lessen the stress and heal the trauma often experienced by young adults living in urban communities.❤️
Women’s Mental Health Fellowship Provides Unparalleled Opportunity

Ashley Beaulieu, DO, is the third recipient of McLean’s innovative year-long fellowship in Women’s Mental Health. For Beaulieu and her predecessors, this exceptional experience offered a fascinating 12 months of learning with exposure to female patients coping with a range of diagnoses in every type of setting — from inpatient, to residential to outpatient. The fellowship, said Beaulieu, has only reinforced her passion and the trajectory of her career. “This experience has been the highlight of my training,” said Beaulieu. “McLean’s Center of Excellence in Women’s Mental Health is at the forefront of understanding the role gender plays in psychiatric disorders. I’ve had the opportunity to work alongside and learn from incredibly talented clinicians and leading experts. It’s been such a gift to be mentored by Drs. Amy Gagliardi and Shelly Greenfield.” Greenfield is chief of the Center of Excellence and Gagliardi serves as clinical director of the Center and program director for the fellowship.

After earning her medical degree, Beaulieu had the privilege in residency to work with veterans coping with trauma, addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder. But 85% of her patients were male, and Beaulieu realized she wanted to understand how illnesses differed when present in women. Fellows rotate through the full complement of services for women and girls at McLean as well as the reproductive psychiatry consultation service at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. From treating patients at the Klarman Eating Disorders Center to co-leading the Women’s Recovery Group for substance use disorders, the fellowship offers unique insight into the relatively new field of women’s mental health. “I am so grateful for this opportunity,” said Beaulieu. “Even with COVID-19, I was able to keep learning and had the chance to work with The Hill Center for Women while they adapted their program to safely treat patients during a pandemic, a truly extraordinary experience.”

The Women’s Mental Health Fellowship was established four years ago through a generous gift from the Kathleen and Ronald Jackson Foundation.

“We’re thrilled to support this fellowship and hope it might be a model for future training programs,” said Nancy Rushton, a trustee of her family’s foundation. “We’re particularly interested in helping to develop clinicians who understand the complexity of treating co-occurring disorders. Having this kind of wide-ranging experience can make such a difference in the lives of patients struggling with more than one illness.”

“It’s been eye-opening,” said Beaulieu. “Early in the fellowship I worked alongside clinicians at the Gunderson Residence for women with Borderline Personality Disorder. The young women were often stuck at a crossroads, and after a couple of months of individualized intensive treatment, were able to restart their lives.” Beaulieu has accepted a position at McLean as a staff psychiatrist working in the Trauma and Dissociative Disorders Unit and will begin in her new role this fall.

Please contact Lori Etringer at letringer@partners.org or 617-855-3840 for information about how you can support this important training opportunity.
Since the dawn of psychiatry, clinicians have depended primarily on two things to diagnose and treat illness: what they can observe from face-to-face interactions with patients, and what patients choose to share of their own experiences. These are fairly crude tools compared to those of other medical specialties.

“We are at a point where progress in neuroscience is converging with rapidly evolving ways to deploy technologies to enable the capture of vital data on the brain and behavior,” said McLean President and Psychiatrist in Chief Scott L. Rauch, MD. “McLean’s Institute for Technology in Psychiatry was founded based on a vision of integrating and accelerating these efforts to advance research and translate findings into better care, pioneering concepts such as digital phenotyping.”

Digital phenotyping is an emerging field which strives to capture and characterize a person’s brain and behavioral profile based on data garnered from digital devices. Such data can be gathered continuously over time in real world settings where people live. It is one of the many technological frontiers McLean has been exploring over the past decade in its ongoing quest to provide more accurate diagnoses, improve treatment — including prevention — and extend clinical services.

For example, through smart phones and wearable technology, patients now can provide treatment professionals with continuous data streams that offer important insights into their mental health status — how well they’re sleeping, their level of social interaction and exercise, how often they leave their homes, and so on. These insights, combined with other types of quantitative data, promise to revolutionize how psychiatric illnesses are classified, diagnosed, and treated. And McLean is at the forefront of this revolution.

“There are so many ways the brain breaks, and we put them into fairly general categories, such as depressive and stress-related disorders, psychotic illnesses or substance use disorders, yet there are hundreds of different subtypes for each diagnosis that we don’t understand,” said Chief Scientific Officer Kerry Ressler, MD, PhD, who is also chief of McLean’s Center of Excellence in Depression and Anxiety Disorders. “Technology helps improve our understanding of the underlying components of psychiatric illness and offer more personalized treatments that work.”

Improving Diagnosis and Treatment
Consider McLean’s Short-Term Inpatient Unit, where digital phenotyping meets biobanking (the collection of biological samples, genetic information and neuroimaging studies) — all with patient consent. This melding will create among the richest multi-disciplinary mental health databases in the world for use by researchers seeking to improve diagnosis, treatment and prevention.

In the Behavioral Health Partial Hospital Program, Courtney Beard, PhD, is supplementing patients’ in-person cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) with an app-based intervention. CBT is a powerful tool for changing negative patterns of thinking, but it can be challenging for patients to master during their short stays in the program. Dr. Beard’s app offers rapid-fire practice in 10-minute increments to cement their learning.

Meanwhile, Ipsit Vahia, MD, medical director of Geriatric Psychiatry Outpatient Services, is studying a device that uses radio waves to unobtrusively collect data on patients with dementia. The app tracks things like pacing, agitation and sleeplessness. He hopes this information will yield important insights into the impact of medications and other treatments, and ultimately, enhance patient care.

Extending McLean’s Reach
“There is an ever-growing need for behavioral health services, and we have highly specialized experts. How can we expand the number of people who we can serve and address access?” said Catharyn Gildesgame, MBA, senior vice president of strategy. “Digital health offers the opportunity for a triple win: expanding access, improving outcomes and enhancing efficiencies.”
McLean Shifts to Telemedicine to Maintain Patient Care

In just a few short weeks in March, McLean transformed itself from a hospital that depends on face-to-face encounters and shoulder-to-shoulder group interactions to one that delivers treatment via patients’ computer screens.

“Pre-pandemic, I would estimate that less than 5 percent of our care involved telehealth,” said Chief Information Officer Kara Backman. “Today, we’re depending on telehealth at all levels of care and for every illness we treat. Because of this rapid and effective shift, programs across the hospital have been able to continue and, in some cases, extend care during the pandemic.”

While McLean’s inpatient units and certain residential programs are still operating in-person — at reduced capacity to allow for social distancing — more patients now receive their treatment, both one-on-one therapy as well as groups, via Zoom.

“Our technology team provided the tools and training, and it was amazing to watch the clinical teams take it all and run with it,” said Chief Medical Information Officer Alisa Busch, MD, MS. “Our goal is not to have the technology just approximate what we used to do, but to enhance it whenever possible.”

Admittedly, there have been challenges. How do you ensure that very ill patients stay organized and follow a schedule of online groups? Can a therapeutic milieu — with all the spontaneous, healing interactions that occur outside of structured programming — still exist when people aren’t physically together?

Creativity has become the name of the game, perhaps none more evident than in the hospital’s child and adolescent programs. “Kids might watch a movie together on Zoom, then have a conversation about it,” said Michael Macht-Greenberg, PhD, MPH, senior director of the Simches Center of Excellence in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. “We’ve done lots of other things like online Simon Says, CBT trivia games and show-and-tell — maybe you show off your pet or a piece of artwork — to keep people connected.”

With the challenges have come unexpected wins. “Telehealth has provided us with opportunities to have more robust partnerships with parents — who are critically important as we work together to manage our youngest patients’ engagement in treatment,” said Macht-Greenberg.

Additionally, no-show rates are down, and the teleconferencing platform has provided an unexpected benefit for trainees: in-the-moment supervision. They can do online therapy with patients as their supervisors observe — with patient consent — then receive guidance from mentors in a “breakout” room, if needed.

Once the pandemic subsides and programs can return to some semblance of normal, it’s likely that telehealth will play an ongoing role in some areas of the hospital, according to Dr. Busch. “It’s certainly not going away.”

Technology holds great promise for its ability to extend the hospital’s services to more patients and offer clinicians and researchers around the world the opportunity to benefit from the extraordinary expertise at McLean.

To support these and other technology initiatives at McLean, or for information about the annual Technology in Psychiatry Summit scheduled for October 28-30, please contact Elizabeth Fieux at efieux@partners.org.
Donors Support McLean Staff Through COVID-19 Emergency Fund

There are dozens of signs flanking the roads and sidewalks across the McLean campus. Their messages include personal expressions of gratitude and encouragement from donors, patients and hospital leadership for the counselors, nurses, food service workers, maintenance staff, doctors and countless others who have enabled the hospital to continue fulfilling its mission during one of the most challenging periods in its 200-year-plus history.

The messages are a visual reminder of the months-long community effort to support the hospital and, in turn, its patients. And while medical hospitals have borne the brunt of the initial impact of the coronavirus pandemic, McLean is now rising to meet the surge in need for acute psychiatric care — a need that is expected to increase in the months and years to come as the full toll of the coronavirus becomes apparent.

“Historically, in the wake of major disasters or other large scale traumatic events — such as 9/11 or Hurricane Katrina — we have seen a rapid rise in mental health needs that endure for months or years to follow,” said McLean President and Psychiatrist in Chief Scott L. Rauch, MD. “Fear of illness, physical isolation, economic impacts, the death of loved ones, and the disruption of normal traditions and routines all represent potent stressors as well as factors that undermine resilience. In tandem with the vital services provided in general hospitals, from emergency rooms to ICUs, for the medical manifestations of COVID, the psychiatric consequences of this pandemic likewise pose a profound challenge to global public health. This crisis requires rapid adaptation, innovation, and growth of psychiatric services. McLean is nimbly rising to meet that challenge, along with our colleagues in the field, appreciating that we will be dealing with these ramifications for years to come.”

Reimagining Mental Health Care

Like every other healthcare organization, McLean has had to rethink and revamp many aspects of its operations during the pandemic. To ensure an effective response to this public health crisis, Rauch immediately activated the hospital’s Incident Command Team to work in conjunction with similar teams across Mass General Brigham (formerly Partners HealthCare).

Inpatient units have remained open throughout the surge, although with initially reduced capacity and new processes aligned with infection control and social distancing guidelines. McLean, already at the forefront of testing and adopting technological innovations, rapidly pivoted to launch telehealth systems for outpatient clinics, partial hospital programs, community-based programs and schools, and in residential settings where

“Your expertise, dedication and compassion saved the life of our beloved family member. ‘Whoever saves one life saves the world entire.’”

A message of gratitude from a family member of a former McLean patient
possible. (see “McLean Shifts to Telemedicine to Maintain Patient Care” on p. 5). This virtual care model was actualized a full two to three years faster than anticipated due to COVID-19.

Caring for the Caregivers: The COVID-19 Fund

Staff on the frontlines of patient care, as well as employees in areas like housekeeping, security and facilities, continued to show up day after day, despite the challenges and ongoing strain of the pandemic.

“Our staff have shown extraordinary grace under pressure, thoughtfully adjusting to reassignments and new safety protocols without sacrificing care,” said Paula Bolton, MS, CNP, ANP-BC, co-leader of McLean’s Incident Command Team. “Their efforts have made our whole community profoundly safer.”

McLean’s COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund, created and sustained through the generosity of the hospital’s donors, has provided much-needed assistance for the most affected hospital employees. The fund has been used to provide thousands of meals and other caring supports to show gratitude for employees’ sacrifices during a very trying time.

Recognizing that our staff has endured substantial stress and widespread and uneven hardship, both personal and financial, Mass General Brigham (MGB) established an Employee Grant Fund to mitigate the financial impact faced by some members of our workforce. McLean — along with other MGB affiliates — contributed to this fund, which enabled us to award nearly 300 $1,000 grants to McLean employees experiencing financial difficulty due to COVID-19.

In addition to cash contributions to McLean’s COVID-19 fund, our donors contributed personal protective equipment, food, hand sanitizer and a number of innovative items geared toward supporting our staff.

While the pandemic has caused widespread economic and human suffering, Rauch believes there will be some silver linings for healthcare overall, and McLean specifically. “Post-pandemic, we will be closely analyzing all of the changes the crisis forced on us in order to integrate some of them into our new normal.”

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Donor advised funds, or DAFs, have been around since the 1930s but, in recent years, have become one of the fastest growing and most popular charitable giving vehicles in the United States.

The best way to think about a DAF is as a savings account for the sole purpose of charitable giving. You can contribute cash, stock, artwork or even real estate to a DAF and get an immediate tax deduction for the gift. These irrevocable contributions become assets managed by a “sponsoring organization” — often the non-profit arm of a large financial services firm — where they can be invested and grow tax-free.

McLean Board Chair Carol Vallone manages her charitable giving through a DAF, and recently named McLean as the beneficiary of the fund after her lifetime.

“I believe deeply in McLean’s mission,” said Vallone. “As my primary philanthropic focus, it made sense for me to create a legacy gift through my donor advised fund. It was easy and quick and offered me a tax deduction the moment I created the fund. And best of all, my children also have a vehicle to support McLean.”

If you would like to learn more about how to help McLean through this simple tool, contact Keith Raho at kraho@partners.org. If you have already included McLean in your estate plans, please let us know so that we can recognize your membership in our legacy giving society.