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Leonard A. Brabson, Sr., M.D.  
TMF President

## Message from the President

### Springtime

As I prepare to write my last article as President of this organization, I am very happy to see the signs of springtime. The days are longer and I don't go to work and leave work in the dark. (Although as an OB/GYN, that sometime happens in the summer as well.) The robins are foraging in my backyard and the early spring flowers are beginning to show their colors. Signs of new and renewed life are all around us.

Much is written about the symbolism of the spring season and how it may mirror the mental or spiritual seasons in the life of mankind. There are those of our fellow human beings who through circumstance, chromosomes, and sometimes just bad luck, fall into a cold, dark winter. Some never get out of that place and lose their lives to depression, despair, and addiction. But as the season progresses and winter changes into spring, the human condition of winter just does not change automatically.

It is only through the help of friends and much hard work by the individual that a person can progress from winter into

spring when the problem is addiction. In Tennessee, we are fortunate to have a dedicated staff of professionals whose primary goal is to help the physicians of our state achieve and maintain recovery from their winter of addiction. When the physicians of our state are healthy, then the citizens of our state are healthier as well.

All of our lives are affected by addictions in one way or another. For some of us, it is a friend, colleague, or loved one that struggles against this illness. For others, we see and hear news stories about how drugs and addictions affect our lives and society in many negative ways. I don't propose that I know how to solve the ills of society. But I do know that you and I can help in one small but very important way. Support the Tennessee Medical Foundation. Your personal gift to the TMF is crucial to help your fellow physicians and, therefore, your fellow human beings.

It has been a great honor to serve as your TMF President these last two years. I have been fortunate to work with a talented and dedicated staff. Their work must go on. You must help.

Leonard A. Brabson, Sr., M.D.  
President, Tennessee Medical Foundation  
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**THE MISSION OF THE PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH PROGRAM (PHP) IS TO PROTECT PATIENTS THROUGH IDENTIFICATION, INTERVENTION, REHABILITATION, AND THE PROVISION OF ADVOCACY/SUPPORT FOR PHYSICIANS IMPAIRED BY ADDICTIVE DISEASE, MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL ILLNESS.**

# PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH

## MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



**Roland Gray, M.D.**  
TMF Medical Director

Something TMF Board member Mr. Larry Whisenant said elsewhere in this newsletter (page 5) grabbed my attention. A thoughtful, loyal supporter of many years of the Physician's Health Program, he noted the TMF's impact on

"an exponential number of people over a long period of time."

In reflecting on Larry's observation, I thought about what we accomplished last year - not just the actual numbers but their depth and magnitude.

2012 was busy. We responded to 143 new referrals of physicians and medical students. Added to these requests for assistance, we also met the ongoing needs of 192 additional physicians for whom we provide monitoring contracts or other personalized consultation services. Then there are the 7,000 physicians, medical students and health professionals who attended one or more of my 59 educational sessions given throughout the region. Impressive outreach to the Tennessee medical community to be sure, but these numbers reveal only a piece of the story.

As Larry Whisenant observed, the TMF's impact also rests in its exponential power to touch and improve the lives and wellbeing of multiple others - be they patient's family members, loved ones, colleagues and staff members, neighbors or the community at large.

Consider: a physician restored to health from addiction or mental health issues becomes a part of the solution rather than part of a problem; is able to contribute by providing better care; and thrives personally, professionally and as a citizen rather than merely surviving from day to day.

Dr. Gray has served as Medical Director of the Tennessee Medical Foundation's Physician's Health Program since January 2001. Prior to this, he served as a TMF Board member and long-time volunteer for the Physician's Health Program. Certified in Addiction Medicine in 1987, Dr. Gray has treated more than 10,000 patients for addiction diseases over the course of his career. He serves as a Special Government Employee and Consultant to the FDA Subcommittee on Drug Abuse. A practicing pediatrician from 1976 through 2001, Dr. Gray is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics as well as a Fellow of the American Society of Addiction Medicine. Dr. Gray is also a member of the clinical faculty at Vanderbilt University.

It is difficult to measure precisely the rolling, rippling effect of recovery and wellness multiplied over a lifetime of medical practice. What we know for sure is that a healthy, happy physician is a powerful catalyst in the healing process, not just for patients but for society as well.

It is true that the Tennessee Medical Foundation works with *individual* physicians. But it is equally true that by **Saving Lives. Saving Careers**, we directly impact thousands upon thousands of Tennessee residents who depend and rely on the availability of healthy physicians. Helping good but distressed physicians, like the 335 we served last year, become better doctors - that is our goal. I am abundantly grateful to you for your referrals, encouragement and financial support.



Dr. Roland Gray, Medical Director of the TMF, speaking at the Tennessee Medical Association Annual Meeting.

### American Medical Association

[www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org) (For Physician health and wellness tool kit, go to Resource tab and click on Physician Health)  
Phone: 1-800-621-8335

## Calendar of Events



### FSPHP Annual Meeting & Conference

April 19 - 22, 2013 Cambridge, Massachusetts

### 44th Annual ASAM Conference

April 25 - 28, 2013 Chicago, Illinois

### Caduceus Retreat

June 7 - 9, 2013 Montgomery Bell State Park

### IDAA Annual Meeting

July 31 - Aug 4, 2013 Keystone, Colorado

# PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH

## SAVE YOURSELF, SAVE A CHILD

The next time you travel by air, listen closely to the instructions given by the flight crew prior to take off. When they begin the part about the deployment of the oxygen masks, pay careful attention. They tell you "...in case of deployment of the oxygen system, place the mask over your face...if you are traveling with a child, secure the mask over your face, **so that you may assist your child with placing the oxygen mask over their face.**" In other words, if there is an emergency, **you have to save yourself first if you are going to be able to save your child.** This same principle applies to parents who have children suffering from the disease of addiction.

How to parent these children isn't something taught in parenting classes. In reality, parenting an addicted child goes **against** what we know and are taught. For instance, parental instinct compels us to protect our children from harm. Therefore, parents of addicted children try to save their child from the *consequences* of the addiction. In reality, this does nothing to address the addiction itself and the family finds themselves living from one crisis to the next. Each time there is a new crisis, the parents attempt to "fix" the addiction by trying to minimize or neutralize the consequences. The crisis passes until the next one arrives. This cycle continues on a downward spiral for both the addict and the family. Think of this problem in terms of banking. Each crisis pulls more energy, money, and emotion from the parents "accounts". As the problems escalate, the "withdrawals" soon exceed the "deposits" and they are in "overdraft".

As the parent of a chemically dependent child, my late wife and I engaged in this destructive behavior. For ten years we tried to **save our child** from the clutches of this scourge only to

realize, later, that in our quest to save, **we** had sacrificed everything and **we** were now lost. We were left mentally, physically, emotionally and financially exhausted from our ordeal. One day, we both realized that if our family was to survive, we had to "save ourselves".

By now you may be asking, "Are you suggesting it's wrong to help a child who has a problem with drugs or alcohol?" No, I am not suggesting that; I am suggesting, however, that parents need to equip themselves with the tools needed "to save themselves" in order to effectively help the addicted child.

Here are some practical suggestions: 1) Learn everything you can about the disease of addiction. Knowledge is a powerful weapon. 2) Remember, a child's addiction is an **illness** parents can't "fix or cure", 3) Realize this isn't your fault. Addiction in a child **does not** mean you are a failure as a parent nor is it an issue of embarrassment, 4) Allowing the child to avoid consequences related to drugs and alcohol only delays the process of recovery and continues the insanity of addiction, 5) Allow yourself to grieve. Parents of addicted children go through the stages of the grief process before accepting their own powerlessness over the addiction. 6) Begin a program of recovery for yourself. Recovery for parents is just as important as it is for the addicted child. Involvement with a group and/or therapist will provide parents with a path toward restoring sanity in their lives, 7) Don't compare your pace of recovery with others. Remember you are working through feelings of grief and everyone works through them at their own speed.

I am grateful that today my child has been clean and sober for ten (10) years. "It works if you work it"

~ Mike Todd

## NATIONAL DOCTOR'S DAY

A wise, unknown author once wrote, "I alone can do it, but I can't do it alone."

As physicians, we heal as individuals but also as members of a tribe that includes elders, beloved teachers and mentors, cherished colleagues, and business associates.

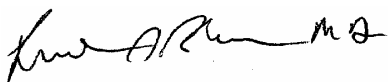
From medical school on, our practice is supported and shaped by fellow physicians. To some of them we owe an enormous debt of gratitude.

In March of 1958, a resolution commemorating Doctor's Day was adopted by the United States House of Representatives. Later in 1990, legislation was introduced to establish a National Doctor's Day. Following overwhelming approval by the United States Senate and House of Representatives, on October 30, 1990, President George Bush signed S.J. RES. #366 (which later became Public Law 101-473) designating March 30th as "National Doctor's Day."

We warmly invite you to celebrate National Doctor's Day this year by honoring or memorializing an influential physician in your life with a contribution to the Tennessee Medical Foundation's Physician's Health Program. When you do, you support the cause of physician health while publicly saying thank you to a special individual who has sustained and encouraged your professional development. The physician you acknowledge will be notified of your gift and also noted in the Fall 2013 issue of **Physician's Health**.

Philanthropist Andrew Carnegie spoke of giving as a form of "wise distribution." By financially supporting the Tennessee Medical Foundation on 2013 National Doctor's Day, your money is immediately put to work assisting doctors and colleagues who care for Tennessee's patients and their families. A wise distribution, indeed!

Thank you for all that you do to promote the health of our fellow citizens.



Leonard A. Brabson, Sr., M.D.  
President, Tennessee Medical Foundation Board of Directors



Roland Gray, M.D.  
Medical Director, Tennessee Medical Foundation

# PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH

## CADUCEUS RETREAT



### 2013 Caduceus Retreat June 7-9, 2013 Montgomery Bell State Park

Dr. Cardwell C. Nuckols, MA, Ph.D., a nationally acclaimed authority on helping individuals find healing and a personal road to recovery, will be the featured speaker at the 2013 Caduceus Retreat.

**C.C. Nuckols, Ph.D.** As one of North America's "most influential clinical and spiritual trainers", Dr. Nuckols' passion and mission is to assist and promote the integration of emerging scientific research with traditional spiritual and self-help knowledge. From this integration flows knowledge, inspiration and techniques useable by practitioners, alcoholics, addicts and individuals with mental health conditions.

Dr. Nuckols has over 35 years of experience as a clinician, supervisor, consultant and program director. In addition to authoring more than 60 journal articles, 30 books and workbooks, and numerous multimedia presentations, he has consulted with Fortune 500 companies, employee assistance programs and governmental agencies.

Among his many national honors, Dr. Nuckols has been honored by the American Society of Addiction Medicine and the prestigious University of Utah School on Alcohol and other drug studies.

The Tennessee Medical Foundation's Physician's Health Program is delighted and honored to welcome Dr. Nuckols as he shares over three decades of wisdom and experience around the topic of spiritual healing.



### Montgomery Bell State Resort Park Inn and Conference Center

Montgomery Bell State Park is located seven miles east of Dickson in Dickson County. A place of quiet natural beauty, the park abounds in fox, squirrel, raccoon, opossum, deer and a wide variety of birds and wildflowers. There are three lakes for fishing, boating or swimming, trails for hiking, and an 18 hole golf course.

### 2012 Caduceus Retreat



Mike Todd, Administrator, Dr. Roland Gray, Medical Director, and Terence T. Gorski, 2012 Caduceus Retreat Speaker



Jeanne Breard, RN, TMF Field Coordinator, Sonia Lee, singer/songwriter, Julie Eberle, TMF Administrative Assistant



Mike Todd, TMF Administrator, Dr. Bill Anderson & Dr. Roland Gray, TMF Medical Director and CEO



Jeanne Breard, RN, TMF Field Coordinator, Julie Eberle, TMF Administrative Assistant & Amanda Rambo, Executive Administrative Assistant

# PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH

## TODAY I AM TRULY GRATEFUL

Before joining the Tennessee Medical Foundation Physician's Health Program, this happy, self-assured physician matter-of-factly proclaimed that he was "a true expert at jacking up my career. In this, I had *real* credibility!" What's more, "I was beyond clueless about what to do about it!"

"Today it's different," he continued. "Having been introduced to a new way of life, I know who I am and what I need to do about me."

Thinking back, this personable doctor recalled that it was "active, unchecked addiction and overwhelming consequences" that propelled him through the doors of the TMF. "Full of hopelessness", he was convinced that he, "was too far gone to benefit from help." Yet, he also recalled experiencing a ray of hope after meeting with Dr. Gray and realizing that "these people know what they are doing and they have a plan." From then till now, "I've gone from believing I was 'the worst of the worst' to 'I'm one of many who lost and re-found their way through the assistance of the TMF. Today I am truly grateful for that.'"

Remembering his first 24 to 36 months as full of challenges, he nonetheless heartily embraced sobriety and the requirements of his contract with the Physician's Health Program. "Was it difficult, at first? Absolutely! But it paid off. I have new friends, enjoy a spiritual way of being, and now can truly appreciate the benefits of having the TMF in my corner. Today, I am truly grateful."

Like many TMF participants, this physician's day opens with a prayer. His is for "humility, acceptance and gratitude." He is grateful for a very busy but stressful practice; for the advice, friendship and counsel he still accepts and receives from the TMF staff; and for the many, many opportunities he gladly accepts to help other struggling physicians. "With my disease and all the problems it brings. I try to help. I hope it is good for them. I know it is very good for me!"

*~Anonymous as told to Vince Parrish, LCSW*

**If you know a physician who may need help or have a question about physician health, please contact the TMF Physician's Health Program at (615) 467-6411 or visit our website at [www.e-tmf.org](http://www.e-tmf.org)**

## MEET THE TMF BOARD

### Larry Whisenant



Larry Whisenant

Larry Whisenant has devoted 8 years of exemplary volunteer service to the Tennessee Medical Foundation, serving as a member of the Board of Directors and President of the Board of the Tennessee Medical Foundation Endowment Fund.

A graduate of the University of Central Arkansas and the Banking School of the South at Louisiana State University (LSU), Mr. Whisenant is a 25 year veteran financial expert. After 14 years with Sun Trust as regional manager and commercial banker, Mr. Whisenant moved to Pinnacle Financial Partners where he currently serves as Senior Vice President and Area Manager. He also is a member of the Nashville Medical Group Management Association and the Board of Directors for Junior Achievement of Middle Tennessee.

"As I look back on my service with the TMF," he recently observed, "it's amazing to see the number of lives that are impacted year after year by our mission and the dedication of the staff."

Citing the ripple effect of the Foundation's work, Mr. Whisenant said, "My association with the Physician's Health Program has truly been an opportunity to be part of a special endeavor impacting an exponential number of people over a long period of time." He went on, "I am always humbled when I reflect on the history of the TMF and the individuals who built the organization from an idea conceived by necessity into the lifeline for doctors it is today."

Dr. Roland Gray, Medical Director of the Tennessee Medical Foundation, noted that, "it is we of the TMF who are humbled by Larry's long and faithful support, service and business acumen."

Of Mr. Whisenant's tenure with Physician's Health Program, Administrator Mr. Mike Todd said, "In addition to his valued friendship, Larry has continued to provide wise counsel to the TMF. We are fortunate he agreed to serve and provide his expertise."



**Sue and Bill Anderson**  
TMF Endowment Dinner  
October 2007

### We Pause to Remember Katherine Sue Anderson

Often thought of as "a pair" by their admirers at the Tennessee Medical Foundation, there was never any doubt that Sue and Bill Anderson contributed significantly as individuals in their support of the Physician's Health Program.

Sadly, we lost Sue to cancer on January 19, 2013. She leaves behind a host of wonderful memories for us to celebrate her nearly 35 year TMF involvement.

Remembered by Mike Todd, Administrator of the Tennessee Medical Foundation, as the quintessential "genteel lady", Sue and Dr. Bill Anderson met in the 1950's during their undergraduate days at Vanderbilt University. Marriage brought them 54 years of togetherness and 4 sons and 8 grandchildren Sue doted on.

Ever by Bill's side, Sue is remembered as never missing a TMF Board of Directors Meeting or Caduceus Retreat in three decades. She shared her gentle, Southern warmth and kindness

with every participant, spouse and staff person she encountered. In essence, she and Bill served as founding co-partners in the establishment and growth of the Physician's Health Program.

The entire TMF staff and membership of the TMF Board of Directors extend their deepest heartfelt condolences to the Anderson family. She will be sorely missed and long remembered.

# PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH

## 500 DOCTORS . . . \$500 CAMPAIGN

In January 2011, the TMF launched 500 Doctors. . \$500, a major fundraising campaign to raise \$250,000 by having 500 physicians and individuals give \$500 or more to support the PHP. We are deeply grateful to the 217 donors who generously donated \$250,658.10 to further our work of **Saving Lives. Saving Careers.**

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# PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH

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OCTOBER—DECEMBER 2012

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For many years, the Tennessee Medical Foundation has enjoyed the staunch financial support of three loyal and generous benefactors: **State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company (SVMIC)**, the **State of Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners (BME)** and the **Tennessee Medical Association (TMA)**. Together they provide 63% of the annual budget for the Physician's Health Program. Without this support, our crucial work of **Saving Lives. Saving Careers** would not be possible. We are immensely grateful to them.

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## PHYSICIAN'S HEALTH

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By Michael Todd, Administrator

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