ABOVE + BEYOND: THE TREK TO MOUNT KILIMANJARO

TAKE ONE MORE STEP. Above + Beyond Cancer’s motto since its founding in 2011 succinctly conveys the thoughts going through the heads of cancer survivors and caretakers as they climbed the tallest peak in Africa earlier this month. The group was led by Above + Beyond Cancer’s founder and Mercy Cancer Center Medical Director Dr. Richard Deming.

The journey – which Dr. Deming refers to as a pilgrimage because it involved both risk and renewal – consisted of both a medical mission and the physical challenge of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. The traveling group was made up of 40 people, including 16 cancer survivors. They were men and women age 20 to 66, with diverse backgrounds and professions. Some of the survivors had successfully completed treatment several years ago, others were still in the process of receiving ongoing treatment for incurable cancer.

The medical mission portion of the trip involved helping build a Hope Lodge in Nairobi, Kenya. The Above + Beyond Cancer team spent three days at the hospital meeting with patients and staff, learning about the challenges of providing and receiving cancer care in Kenya and performing a service project at the hospital.

After completing the service project at the hospital, the group ventured to Tanzania, where they summited Mount Kilimanjaro on Jan. 12. The guides said they don’t think there had ever been a group as large, with such a success rate. Dr. Deming said, “I get choked up just thinking about it. There is nothing in the world that compares to being with a group that has come together around a cause and a higher purpose.”

Included in the group were three Mercy employees – Dr. John Gachiani, neurosurgeon; Diane Cummings, director of plant operations and construction; and Dr. Deming. “I can assure you, each and every day was a demonstration of “Live Up!” in action,” said Dr. Deming. “I am so proud of Dr. Gachiani and Diane (and the entire team). Dr. Gachiani is originally from Kenya. It was such a privilege to see his country for the first time with him and his wife, Dr. Nicole Gilg, at my side. On the climb, both Dr. Gachiani and Dr. Gilg provided compassionate care to our team members and were instrumental in our impressive success rate.”

“Diane Cummings was an inspiration. As a cancer survivor, she knows the meaning of suffering and she knows the power of having a great team on her side,” said Dr. Deming. “The climb to the peak of Kilimanjaro was very difficult; the temperature was below freezing, the wind was gusting to 40 miles per hour and all of our water froze. Diane dug deep, embraced the suffering, and found a reason to take one more step. She inspires me to be a better doctor and a better person.”

Find a full summary of the trip written by Dr. Deming at http://www.mercydesmoines.org/survivorfrica2017.

Dr. Richard Deming leads the Above + Beyond Cancer group in a reflection during their pilgrimage to Mount Kilimanjaro.
REMINDER: CHI AND DIGNITY HEALTH CULTURE SURVEY

PLEASE REMEMBER TO TAKE THE CHI AND DIGNITY HEALTH CULTURE SURVEY before Tuesday, Jan. 31. As a possible alignment of our ministries is explored, part of the discernment process includes an assessment of how well our respective organizational cultures fit together.

CHI and Dignity Health launched this survey to gather and assess its employees’ views of their organizations’ cultures, as well as the desired future culture of a potentially-combined organization.

To take the survey, please visit https://ohi-survey.com/wix/p48527483.aspx.

The culture survey will ask you a series of questions about our organization, and it is important to answer from the perspective of your current role. The survey should take about 30 minutes to complete. All survey responses are strictly confidential.

We highly encourage you to participate and offer your candid thoughts in the CHI and Dignity Health Culture Survey, as it’s strongly believed that this is an important investment for every one of us.

MEET OUR LATEST SPIRIT OF MERCY AWARD WINNER!

LEADING BY EXAMPLE, showing support and an understanding of all patients who are seeking answers to their health concerns and showing concern for colleagues are the qualities which led to Tara Fisk being chosen as our latest Spirit of Mercy Award Winner.

Tara has been a member of the Mercy Family for 19 years and is the lead polysomnographic technologist at Mercy Sleep Center. Her commitment to excellence and compassion in serving others is felt by patients and staff at the Sleep Center.

“She is extremely knowledgeable about sleep medicine and patient care, and no task is too big or small,” Tara’s colleagues said. “Tara doesn’t hesitate to share her knowledge and experience — and her leadership and professionalism inspires confidence, pride in a job well done and the joy of being of service to others in them.”

Thank you, Tara, for all that you do to provide a Remarkable Mercy Experience to everyone we have the privilege to serve!

WHAT’S UP?

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Shannon Becker, Ped’s Psych, and Jim, on the birth of their daughter, Quinn. Quinn was born on Jan. 1.

Arielle Hansel, 7 South, and Ben, on the birth of their daughter, Addalyn. Addalyn was born on Jan. 3.

Ashley Toben, Neuro Trama Medical ICU, and Clint on the birth of their son, Lennon. Lennon was born on Jan. 3, and was welcomed home by Landon, 6.

Mischma Mystere, 7 North, and Walter, on the birth of their son, Perry. Perry was born on Jan. 4, and was welcomed home by Mitch, 14.

Taryn Loue, West Lakes Tele., and Michael, on the birth of their daughter, Clara. Clara was born on Jan. 12.

Arein Mutchler, Iowa Heart Center - Indianola, on the birth of her daughter, Amelia. Amelia was born on Jan. 20, and was welcomed home by Lizzy, 10, and Luke, 8.

SYMPATHY TO...

Maggie Koenigs, Rehab Services/Infection Prevention, on the death of her grandmother.

JOIN US FOR STAFF FORUMS ON FEBRUARY 8

To learn about all the latest happenings at Mercy, attend Staff Open Forums on Wednesday, Feb. 8! The forums, led by President Bob Ritz will take place at 7:45 a.m., 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. in the East Tower Auditorium at Mercy central campus and by video conference to Mercy West Lakes Cownie Conference Room and to Centerville and Skiff. Each session will have door prizes and refreshments!

CONTACT US

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If you are interested in submitting information to be printed in the Bulletin, send it to PR and Marketing or call 515-247-3050.