

Ursuline Talks, 2017: Caregivers, Caregiving ... and Common Threads

Featured Speakers

APRIL 19:

Theresa Brown, PhD,
BSN, RN



Theresa Brown is known by many as the author of The New York Times bestselling book, *The Shift: One Nurse, Twelve Hours, Four Patients' Lives*. In this work, Dr. Brown portrays one real shift worked by a hospital nurse, but it shows not just the day-in-the-life of a registered nurse, but all the activity in one day in a hospital.

Speakers cont. on page 7

Ursuline to Participate in Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community, May 13

Agency Invites Its Friends and Supporters to Join in a Day of Fun for a Great Cause

Ursuline Support Services will be joining approximately 75 other area nonprofits as it participates for the first time in the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community. The annual event, which started in Pittsburgh in 2003 and now includes Walks in Lehigh Valley, Erie, Harrisburg and Johnstown, Pennsylvania,

Walk cont. on page 4

New Speaker Series, *Ursuline Talks*, Premiers in April

Ursuline Support Services has launched an exciting new initiative, *Ursuline Talks*, a timely, informative, thought-provoking and entertaining speaker series providing insight into important issues facing society today.

“*Ursuline Talks* is an important component to Ursuline’s commitment to providing care, advocacy and education regarding critical challenges in our community,” said USS Executive Director Tony Turo. “*Ursuline Talks* is the latest in a series of workshops, presentations and other educational opportunities we’ve offered professionals and the general public on important issues.”

The first series, *Ursuline Talks 2017: Caregivers, Caregiving ... and Common Threads*, will explore the growing need for more caregivers (both professional and lay), the increasing complexity and stress associated with caregiving, the often-requested need to provide support to caregivers and what the future holds both for individual caregivers and society as a whole.

Ursuline Talks cont. on page 6

Ursuline Joined with Other Agencies to Assist Victims of Recent Fire in Munhall

Reflecting on Ursuline’s mission to provide “help navigating life’s transitions,” the reality is that such crossroads in a person’s life can come at different times and with varying pace. For some, a life transition means a slow loss of physical or mental capacity, eventually necessitating assistance with bill -paying, grocery shopping or perhaps others tasks to help an individual maintain independence and dignity.

Sometimes, a life transition can be more sudden, even unexpected, leaving the unprepared individual vulnerable, flustered and frightened. Such an event occurred last December 16, when fire ripped through Parkview Towers in Munhall, displacing more than 90 people from their home.



Parkview Towers, Munhall, PA

Some were able to move in with family or friends. But for nearly 17 others who had nowhere to turn, the Red Cross provided accommodations in the Holiday Inn Express at the Waterfront in Homestead.

Fire cont. on page 6

Core Values: the Heartbeat of Any Organization

Most organizations, whether for-profit or not-for-profit like Ursuline Support Services, adopt Mission and Vision Statements, often along with a set of Core Values. These Value Statements lie at the very heart of what the agency believes and commits to as its staff and volunteers carry out their day-to-day work on behalf of those they serve. In this issue we begin to explore Ursuline's Core Values adopted during our most recent strategic planning, beginning with the following:

No one should struggle alone, and everyone deserves support during life's challenging transitions.

Guardianship, Protective Services or Independence Support Services. Whatever support is needed, Ursuline provides it effectively, efficiently and with a high degree of genuine concern and compassion. Going above and beyond what simply is required is a hallmark of our staff and volunteer effort, whether providing a sympathetic ear, grocery shopping, check writing, financial management assistance, protection against abuse or any of our other services.

Most critically, however, is Ursuline's commitment to always provide a human element to the care and support we provide.



Humans are social beings and one of the biggest threats to individual long-term health and stability is loneliness. This threat is exacerbated when a person is faced with a challenging life transition—a serious health challenge or financial worries, for example—and they feel there is no one to whom they can turn.

Ursuline Support Services provides programs and services to help our neighbors meet these challenges, whether through

Our staff and volunteers connect with our clients in one-to-one, very personal ways. In this way, bonds are forged, trust is built and those we serve are treated as the truly unique individuals they are, with individual fears, needs and hopes. We use technology when it is useful, but never as a substitute for genuine human connection.

That's Ursuline's unwavering commitment. Never allow anyone in our care to struggle alone. Never allow those we serve to ever feel that their lives have no value or that nobody cares. 



Ursuline
Support Services

Help navigating life's transitions

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Anthony J. Turo, MPA
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Director, Development & Communications

John Daub
Director, Finance & Operations

Diana Hardy, MSCP, NCC, LPC
Director, Good Grief Center

Melissa Osman
Assistant Director, Guardianship & Protective Services

Michelle Smart, MS, NPM
Director, Guardianship & Protective Services

Karen Miller Tobin, MEd
Director, Independence Support Services

DIRECTIONS

from the Executive Director

This being the first newsletter of 2017, I thought it might still be appropriate to share some wishes and hopes I have for the New Year.



After perhaps the most contentious presidential election in recent memory, our nation seems more divided than ever. This likely would have been true even if the outcome had been different. But let me join the chorus of those voices who, regardless of how they cast their individual votes, are calling for us to come together as a nation. That doesn't mean that we all need to think alike or walk in lockstep. But it does mean that we need to maintain our civility and to remember that, despite any political or even philosophical differences, we remain the *United States of America*—a nation forged on the principles of equality and fellowship, so strong and so blessed that no other nation can do us irreparable harm or bring us to our knees. Only we can do that to ourselves.

Statewide, let's hope our elected officials in Harrisburg remember what they learned two years ago when they allowed their differences to create a budget impasse that lasted nearly nine months. That impasse caused great distress throughout the Commonwealth and put agencies like Ursuline Support Services and the people we serve very much at risk. Not only did this make life stressful for our employees (all of whom rose to the occasion and, with great personal sacrifice, made sure the needs of our clients continued to be met), but it put at risk the needs of so many of our neighbors in need.

Locally, I hope that our region continues to be "some place special." This is not an idle claim we make about our home. In my travels over the years, the mention of Pittsburgh or western Pennsylvania most often is met with a smile and genuine admiration for the warmth of our people and our reputation for hard work, honesty and compassion. (Okay, I have run into a few Baltimore Ravens fans who didn't have too many nice things to say about us but, given the fact we have the better football team, we should give them a pass.) There is a genuine caring here, as well as a generosity of spirit and a pride of both place and heritage that is not boastful but deeply held.

Yet, the old adage tells us there is nothing as constant as change and our region will need to change to ensure future growth and prosperity. Here's hoping we will welcome that change—and the new friends it might bring us—while maintaining the essence of our community that makes this such a great place to live.

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Perhaps my biggest hope for 2017 aligns with the well-known Serenity Prayer, which encourages us to accept the things we cannot change, have the courage to change the things we can and the wisdom to know the difference. While I do hope that our elected officials at all levels are moved to act unselfishly and with resolve to do what is right rather than what might be politically beneficial, the reality is that most of the onus for making this a better world falls on each one of us individually.



Our efforts can be large or small. They can involve contributions of time, talent, treasure or all three. The important thing is that we work together, each giving what they can, in concert with each other. In this way, the "parts"—our individual efforts—will add up to a much greater "whole." And we all will be the better for it.

Finally, another sincere hope for the New Year is that you, our loyal supporters, experience all the peace, love and success you so richly deserve. Words can never adequately express how important your support is to us, whether measured in volunteer hours, material contributions or prayers. We are the instruments of your generosity, shared so willingly with USS through our 35 years of service. Without you, we simply cannot be there for others. I hope you never doubt that, just as we will never take you for granted.

Happy New Year!

Tony Turo

Walk cont. from page 1

as well as Wilmington, Delaware, benefits local health and human service agencies.

This year's Pittsburgh Walk will be held beginning at 9 a.m., Saturday, May 13 at Stage AE on the North Shore. The event includes both a 5K (3.1 miles) and 1-mile course, with the latter starting at 9:15 a.m.

The primary goal of the Walk is to help participating organizations raise money for their individual missions. The secondary goal of the Walk is to energize community members to have a greater hand in their health by becoming or staying physically active.

Highmark, Inc. coordinates and underwrites the cost of the Walk so that 100 percent of the money raised by walkers goes to the participating nonprofits.

"This popular event is a great opportunity for us, not only to raise funds for our agency, but to join in a fun event with friends and relatives while walking alongside thousands of individuals representing Pittsburgh-area not-for-profit organizations," said Ursuline Support Services Executive Director Tony Turo.

Food, entertainment, prizes and fun activities for children are all part of the festivities. Additionally, each nonprofit participating in the Walk will have a booth to share information about its services.

All registered walkers who raise \$30 will receive a Walk for a Healthy Community tee shirt while supplies last. For every \$50 donated to a participating organization, an individual receives a chance for raffle prizes valued at more than \$1,000. Even pets can get into the act, as nonaggressive dogs are permitted at the event on a leash.

"Since this will be Mother's Day weekend, it presents a particularly poignant opportunity to plan an activity that celebrates family and supports our efforts to provide much-needed services to others," Turo said. "But for this to be a success, we need your help. We ask that our friends and supporters consider participating in any of a number of ways. You can register as a single walker, start or join a team, or sign

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*Tony Turo, Executive Director
Ursuline Support Services*

up as a virtual walker. For those who join us May 13 on the North Shore, I guarantee they'll have fun while they exercise and help a great cause."

To learn more or to join Ursuline as it joins the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community, visit <http://hcf.convio.net/UrsulineWalks>. 

Board of Directors SPOTLIGHT

Name: Bob O'Connor

Professional
Organization/Title:

Aetna/Exec Director/General
Manager—Medicare, PA, WV & DE



In What Other Board and
Committee Membership,
Community Service, etc.,
Do You Participate?

I am on the ARC of Washington
County board and active with the
Three Rivers Mothers Milk Bank.

How Long Have You Been a Member of the Board
of Ursuline Support Services?

Seven years.

What Encouraged You to Join the Board?

I am impressed with the services that Ursuline provides and with
the quality of the staff. The organization has some special talents,
people and contributions.

What Do You Hope to Bring to the Organization
through Your Service?

A different perspective on strategic planning and business common
sense tempered with a sense of the mission.

What is Your Favorite Part of Serving on the Board?

Helping to solve our issues for the betterment of the clients.

What Would You Like to Share with the Community
about Ursuline Support Services, its Programs
and Services?

Ursuline is unique in the services it provides the frail and elderly
in Western PA. Without Ursuline and its staff, these people
would suffer and be even more vulnerable. Non-profits like
Ursuline and how we take care of the defenseless makes the
Pittsburgh area special.

What would you say to others who may be considering
board membership as a way to volunteer in support
of a community benefit organization?

Jump on in. Many organizations need the experience, wisdom
or just perspective of new community members to be even
more successful.

Holiday Cheer

Ursuline Support services staff members and
volunteers (below) unload holiday gifts donated by
FedEx Ground to help make the recent holiday
season a little more cheerful for the agency's
clients. In 2016, this seasonal tradition saw nearly
400 gifts donated by West Penn Hospital, FedEx
Ground, Edgar Snyder & Associates law office,
Reed Smith law office and the Pipitone Group.
Ursuline is truly grateful for their support! 



Ursuline Talks cont. from page 1

The 2017 schedule for *Ursuline Talks* features an impressive trio of speakers, including:



April 19: Theresa Brown, PhD, BSN, RN, author of the New York Times bestseller, *The Shift: One Nurse, Twelve Hours, Four Patients' Lives*;



June 7: Nikolas Jintri, who challenges audiences through storytelling, music and illusion to “explore the spiritual, social and practical benefits of placing interesting questions above easy answers;” and



September 20: The University of Pittsburgh's Richard Schulz, PhD, internationally recognized for his work in both aging and caregiving.

(See accompanying article for more expanded biographies.)

Each *Ursuline Talks* presentation will be held at the beautiful Calvary Episcopal Church in Shadyside, beginning with a VIP reception at 5:30 p.m., followed by our speaker at 7:00 p.m.

We anticipate, given the prominence of the talk and impressive list of presenters, that *Ursuline Talks* will attract a wide audience, including professional caregivers (nurses, physical therapists, etc.) as well as those who have or someday might be thrust into the role because of the needs of a friend or family member. Other key audiences include healthcare workers, those in the nonprofit and social concerns arenas, academicians, students and the general public.

Sponsorship packages and program advertising opportunities are available. Individual tickets can be purchased for the series at \$90 or individual speakers at \$40. Series tickets that include a VIP Reception are \$125, while individual tickets with the VIP Reception are \$55.

For more information regarding sponsorships, advertising or ticket purchases, call 412-224-4700 or visit www.ursuline-supportservices.org. 

Fire cont. from page 1

One man died in the fire and seven others were injured. One woman later died in the hospital.

Shortly after the fire victims were relocated, Ursuline Support Services received a call from Mildred Morrison, administrator at the Allegheny County Agency on Aging, seeking help to assess the needs of about 15 families.

Michelle Smart, director of Ursuline's Guardianship & Protective Services, responded immediately to the call and found herself working alongside representatives from Familylinks, as well as county agencies including human services, homeless services, aging and mental health.

“The county called us because we have extensive experience in relocation through SLEP (Supportive Living Enhancement Program) where we often helped move individuals into housing and helped them adapt,” said Smart. “So we began reaching out to each family, introduced ourselves and tried to figure out what we could do to help each of them. At first, there were so many people talking to them that it was a bit overwhelming.”

Faced with a desperate situation at a time of year when most people are in their homes enjoying the holidays with their loved ones, the families were stranded and overwhelmed with questions. Who needed financial assistance? Who would pay for their housing? Would they ever be able to reclaim their possessions or go home again?

Smart recalled how the emotions flowed both from those chased from their homes and those trying to provide assistance.

“One woman sobbed into my shoulder over the loss of her beloved pet until my shirt was soaked with her tears,” she said.

As Smart related her interaction with each individual, all but one of whom were seniors, she remembered how varied and basic some of their needs were. One woman, who crawled down six flights of stairs, needed a cane. Another man was fine but needed respite care for his wife. One by one their concerns were allayed.

Besides nonprofit and county agencies, Smart said the team included the staff of the Holiday Inn Express in Homestead.

“They couldn't have been more attentive to the families brought there,” she said. “They cooked for these folks and provided things to make their stay as comfortable as possible. We've worked with many hotels over the years and this was by far one of our best experiences.”

Other images remain for Smart: of watching the local churches bring in special meals for Christmas and New Year's celebrations and the bonding that developed between those unexpectedly forced into homelessness, albeit temporary.

“I watched people build relationships with others from the same building but they had never met before,” Smart said. “Most inspiring, though, was the strength I saw in those senior citizens. Here they had lost almost everything, and during the holiday season, yet their resiliency enabled them to get through it. I'm just glad we were able to help in some small way.” 

Speakers cont. from page 1

For *Ursuline Talks, 2017*, Dr. Brown will explore the relationship of the professional caregiver with patients and those who provide their care, including family and friends. Drawing on media representations (or misrepresentations) of nursing and her own clinical experience, Dr. Brown encourages her audience to fully understand the centrality of good nursing to quality patient care. After all, she says, “If patients go to the hospital, it’s because they need the care of nurses.”

Dr. Brown is also the author of *Critical Care: A New Nurse Faces Death, Life, and Everything in Between*, which is used as a text book at nursing schools around the country. A frequent contributor to *The New York Times*, Dr. Brown’s opinion series, “Bedside,” examines health care from a nurse’s point of view. One of her columns, on healthcare reform, earned Dr. Brown an invitation to the White House, where President Obama quoted her in defense of the Affordable Care Act.

Dr. Brown has written for CNN.com, *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *Slate.com* and the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, and has a quarterly column in *The American Journal of Nursing* called “What I’m Reading,” that discusses books of interest to nurses. She has been interviewed on the NPR program “Fresh Air” and has appeared on “Hardball,” “20/20” and NPR’s “Talk of the Nation.” She speaks nationally on topics related to nursing, health care and end-of-life care.

JUNE 7:

Nikolas Jintri

Nikolas Jintri’s “Wonder 101: A Thinking Man’s Theater” is an interactive presentation about the power of philosophical perspective. It’s an evening guaranteed to entertain audiences while giving them a fresh perspective on their lives ... and perhaps a much-needed break from them.



Aimed at lifelong learners and idealistic professionals, Jintri’s performance uses storytelling, music and illusion to explore the spiritual, social and practical benefits of placing interesting questions above easy answers—and while he may amaze his audiences, he will never insult their intelligence!

This is no novelty for passive spectators. It is an experience for the actively curious, led by a Carnegie Mellon and University of Pittsburgh professor who spent years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa and teacher in Japan. Jintri is an accomplished bass guitarist with a wide stylistic palate ranging from ‘60s to soul to modern metal.

Jintri holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Humboldt State University and a Master of Arts degree in Rhetoric from Carnegie Mellon University. A returned Peace Corps volunteer who served in Ghana from 2004 to 2006,

Jintri also has been a high school English teacher in Japan with the Japanese Exchange and Teaching Program, a public relations assistant with the American Red Cross of Alaska and a rhetoric instructor at Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University and the Community College of Allegheny County.

SEPTEMBER 20:

Richard Schulz, PhD

Richard Schulz, PhD, is a Distinguished Service Professor of Psychiatry, Director of Gerontology and associate director of the Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services and the University of Pittsburgh. He earned his PhD in social psychology from Duke University.



Dr. Schulz has spent most of his career doing research and writing on adult development and aging. His work has focused on social-psychological aspects of aging, including the impact of disabling late life disease on patients and their families. He has been funded by the National Institutes of Health for more than three decades to conduct descriptive longitudinal and intervention research on diverse older populations representing illness such as cancer, spinal cord injury, stroke, Alzheimer’s disease, heart disease and arthritis.

He has been a leading contributor to the literature on the health effects of caregiving, Alzheimer’s disease caregiving and intervention studies for caregivers of persons with Alzheimer’s disease. The body of work is reflected in more than 300 publications, which have appeared in major medical, psychology and aging journals, including *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *The Journal of the American Medical Association* and *The Archives of Internal Medicine*. He also is the author of numerous books, including *The Handbook of Alzheimer’s Caregiver Intervention Research* and *The Quality of Life Technology Handbook*.

In the past decade, Dr. Schulz has become interested in supportive interventions, including technology-based approaches designed to enhance patient functioning and quality of life both of patients and their relatives.

Dr. Schulz is the recipient of several honors, including the Kleemeier Award for Research on Aging and the Distinguished Mentorship in Gerontology Award from the Gerontological Society of America, the M. Powell Lawton Distinguished Contribution Award for Applied Gerontology, the Baltes Distinguished Research Achievement Award and the Developmental Health Award for Research on Health in Later Life from the American Psychological Association. In 2014 Dr. Schulz was appointed by The National Academies of Sciences – Engineering – Medicine – to chair the Committee on Family Caregiving for Older Adults. 



Ursuline Support Services

Help navigating life's transitions

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INSIDE:

Join USS at the Highmark Walk. Visit <https://hcf.convio.net/UrsulineWalks>

Ursuline Support Services ... 35 Years and Still Going Strong

In December, 2016, Ursuline Support Services marked its 35th year of service to those in our community trying to navigate life's transitions.

The agency has come a long way since it was formed by the Ursuline Sisters following the closure of Ursuline Academy in 1981. It was the Ursuline Sisters' legacy of compassion and caring for others that formed the foundation of the varied services Ursuline Support Services has provided to its clients over the years.

While the needs have changed and the agency's programs have evolved over the years, one thing hasn't changed: the commitment to be there for those we serve and to treat everyone as a unique and valuable member of our community.



This success has been built through the hard work, dedication and support of past and current staff, volunteers, donors and well-wishers, without whom the agency could not have continued to fulfill its mission.

To each and every one of them, we remain forever grateful.

Tony Turo

Executive Director



www.ursulinesupportservices.org

United Way Donor Designation Code: 281



Ursuline Support Services was awarded this Seal of Excellence by the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations (PANO), under the Standards for Excellence.