

# TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM M A G A Z I N E

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2 / 2013



## Understanding Health Care Reform in Our Community

Page 6

## Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic

Supporting cancer programs  
and mild traumatic brain  
injury research  
Page 22

## Wellness

Protect yourself from the flu and  
learn what a healthy breakfast  
can do for you and your kids  
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# TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM NEW DOCTORS

## **Stephen Forner, MD**

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**For a complete list of physicians, go to [www.tfhd.com](http://www.tfhd.com)**

## **PUBLISHING INFO**

Tahoe Forest Health System Magazine is published three times per year by the Tahoe Forest Health System Marketing and Communications Department. If you receive multiple copies of this publication, please share them.

To add your name to our mailing list, change your address, or for questions on any topic, please call **(530) 582-6290**, or email us at [information@tfhd.com](mailto:information@tfhd.com).

## **ON THE COVER**



**Left:** Incline Village Community Hospital

**Right:** Tahoe Forest Hospital



## **CORRECTIONS & OMISSIONS**

### **Volume 1, Number 1**

In our photo caption of the Incline Village Community Hospital Auxiliary, we regret that we misspelled the names of some members. The caption should have read: (L to R) Lorri Waldman, Svata Trossen, Janice Horan, Nan Healy, JoAn Hagy.

**Omission, page 14,** "Life Giving Mission." The Aspen Tree sculpture was created by Troy Corliss in 2011 for the cancer center's radiation waiting area. We regret the omission.

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# WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING...“”

“ I was completely confident in the emergency care I was provided. Your hospital deals with unthinkable experiences, and we are confident all are met with an **exceptional level of expertise and personal caring.**”

“ We feel so fortunate to have Tahoe Forest in Incline Village and Truckee...thanks for all you do!”

## OUR PRIORITY is Top Quality Care

At Tahoe Forest Health System, our focus is to provide you and your family with the very best health care experience possible.

If you have any comments or feedback during your hospital visit, we encourage you to talk to any staff member from the department you are visiting, or call our Service Excellence Hotline, **(530) 582-6544.**

**Striving for the Perfect Care Experience  
for Every Patient.**

“ The California Highway Patrol, Truckee Fire Department, Truckee Fire Rescue Ambulance Crew, CHP Helicopter crew, the medics and Tahoe Forest Emergency Room staff were terrific. The treatment received was no doubt a result of good planning and training...an excellent example of professionalism in public service.”

“ We are so grateful that if we had to go through an experience like this, we did not have to do so without the support your staff gave us. You are a gem nestled in the mountains.”



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**INCLINE VILLAGE  
COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**  
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**Main phone line (775) 833-4100**

## OUR HOSPITALS

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

## BOB SCHAPPER

Understanding the new healthcare reform laws and how they will affect your family is perhaps the most talked about issue in the news today. Whether you are a small or large business, an individual with a group health plan through your employer, on Medicare, or a family without a current plan, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) is a law signed in 2010 that will change how the health insurance industry provides coverage to you and your family.

While some aspects of the new law vary by state, many mandates of the law are the same for everyone. These changes in health care put the spotlight on wellness and the benefit of preventive care through screening programs. Choosing a primary care health provider is an important first step with the reform law. If you have a primary care physician but haven't seen one in more than a year, it's a good time to reestablish yourself. If you don't have a primary care health provider, you'll find a list inside this issue. We've also included some basic information about the law to help you understand its

components and what they may mean for you.

Inside this issue you'll also find profiles of newer physicians in our community and learn how passionate they are about medicine. The specialties of general surgery, cardiology, internal medicine, family medicine and cancer care are exceptional and diverse, and not often found in a community our size.

In every issue of the new Tahoe Forest Health System Magazine, you'll find useful information about health services and programs, wellness tips and screening information, as well as details about our local physicians and other healthcare services. If you'd like more information on a topic, please call **(530) 582-6290** or email us at **information@tfhd.com**.



## ONLINE RESOURCES

**NEWS, EVENTS, BOARD MEETINGS & SERVICES  
FOR THE TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM**  
[www.tfhd.com](http://www.tfhd.com)

**TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM**  
[www.tfhd.com](http://www.tfhd.com)

**GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC**  
[www.GU63.org](http://www.GU63.org)

**GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL TAHOE FOREST  
CANCER CENTER**  
[www.tahoecancercenter.com](http://www.tahoecancercenter.com)

**CANCER CARE ENDOWMENT**  
[www.endowment4cancercare.com](http://www.endowment4cancercare.com)

**CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
[www.hospitalcoc.com](http://www.hospitalcoc.com)

**BEST OF TAHOE CHEFS**  
[www.bestoftahoechefs.com](http://www.bestoftahoechefs.com)

**MEASURE C**  
[www.measurecprojects.com](http://www.measurecprojects.com)

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# HEALTH CARE REFORM:

## A FOCUS ON PRIMARY CARE & PREVENTIVE HEALTH

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act went into effect in October 2013 throughout the nation. Better known by the shorter Affordable Care Act (ACA) or “Health Care Reform,” the law is intended to improve health care quality, lower health care costs, improve access to care, and provide consumers new protections such as increased young adult insurance coverage and wellness care.

The ACA legislation includes many new and innovative mechanisms that were designed to increase the number of insured people, while delivering high quality care at a lower cost. These ideas resulted in the creation of state-based insurance exchanges, the elimination of lifetime caps and preexisting condition discrimination, a mandate requiring all individuals to purchase health insurance, and tax credits for low income individuals to purchase health insurance.

Meeting these requirements in our community depends on a few things happening. Number one is that patients who haven’t interacted with health care on a regular basis—whether they were uninsured, insured with a high-deductible health plan, or not consistently practicing good health maintenance—must begin seeing a primary care physician and implementing good preventive health care screening and practices into their lives.

The ultimate goal of primary health care is better health for all. You’ll find a list of local community primary care providers in this magazine, as well as basic information about the health care reform law and the Health Insurance Marketplace.

“It’s going to be key for us as a health system to help our

community connect to primary care providers where they can access care optimally,” says Bob Schapper, chief executive officer of Tahoe Forest Health System.

Patients taking the responsibility on themselves to practice good health behavior—seeing a primary care physician regularly—is a crucial component of effectively implementing the ACA locally, Schapper says. A key finding in Tahoe Forest Health System’s (TFHS) Community Health Needs Assessment in 2010 was that nearly 50 percent of respondents had not recently seen a primary care physician. Additionally, the ACA provides for health screenings with no deductible that the community should know about and take advantage of, says Caroline Ford, TFHS’s Wellness Neighborhood executive director.

In 2010, most commercial health plans revised their preventive health benefits with no copay for screening mammograms, colonoscopies, PAP smears, lipid panels, fasting glucose tests, specific prenatal screening, childhood immunizations and well child exams. Many more deductible-free screenings are available, including 22 covered preventive services for women, such as breastfeeding support and counseling, contraception and mammograms every one to two years for women over 40.

There are 26 preventive services and screenings providing deductible-free care for children, including autism screenings, developmental screenings, hearing screenings for newborns, immunizations and vision screenings, among a whole host of others. To find out more about these and to see a complete list, visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

## INSURANCE COVERAGE

"Choosing an insurance plan from even a limited number of choices can be a frustrating and confounding experience: there are all those deductibles and copayments, in-network fees and out-of-network fees, covered and uncovered services to consider," according to an article on the Commonwealth Fund's issues brief on how the ACA will strengthen primary care. "Compared with the individual insurance market that existed before the ACA, the law substantially simplifies consumer choice by requiring insurance companies to sell plans at four benefit levels (bronze, silver, gold and platinum) that vary only by premium and out-of-pocket cost exposure. The health benefit package is comprehensive and largely the same across plans in the same metal tier."

The ACA could serve as a very effective partner to Tahoe Forest Health System's Wellness Neighborhood, the five-part plan identified to help better meet the community's needs. The areas or "homes" making up the "neighborhoods" that were targeted following the assessment were: access to primary care and prevention, chronic disease management, dental health, mental and behavioral health and eliminating health disparities.

"Our goals are getting people immunized against preventable diseases, managing chronic diseases, and working collaboratively with the medical community to advance preventive care and reduce needless hospital visits. Having people avoid chronic and crisis healthcare is the point we're all trying to get to," said Schapper.



**Chris Spencer, Nurse Practitioner, Tahoe Forest Health Clinic**

## HEALTH CARE LAW TIME LINE

In March 2010, Congress enacted the Affordable Care Act, which is a health care law that brings a number of benefits to all Americans, including people age 50 and older. Many provisions are now in place. Others are being phased in over several years.

### NOW

- Children can't be denied health insurance because of a preexisting condition.
- Young adults up to age 26 can remain on their family's health insurance plan.
- Health insurance plans must cover more preventive services.
- Insurance companies can no longer drop your coverage if you become sick nor can they place lifetime dollar limits on health coverage.
- People with Medicare receive a 52.5 percent discount on brand-name prescription drugs and a 21 percent discount on generic prescription drugs while in the doughnut hole.
- Health Insurance Marketplace enrollment began Oct. 1, 2013.

### 2014

- Coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace begins.
- Premium subsidies are available for people with limited incomes who buy health insurance through the marketplace (MediCal in California).
- More people who have a limited income are able to apply for Medicaid.
- Insurance companies can't put annual limits on health coverage.
- Insurance companies can no longer deny anyone health coverage because of a preexisting condition.
- People with Medicare get discounts of 52.5 percent on brand-name prescription drugs and 28 percent on generic prescription drugs while in the doughnut hole.

### 2020

- The Medicare Part D doughnut hole is closed.

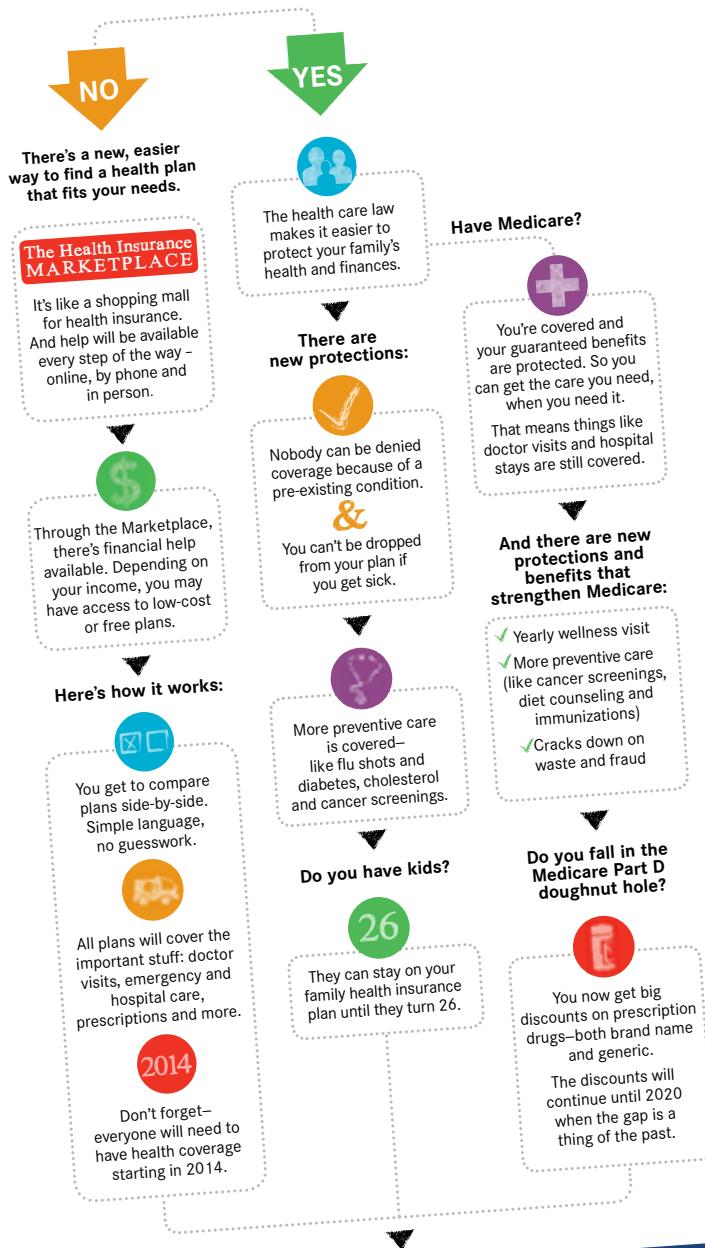
### LEARN MORE

For information on the pharmacy coverage gap and Medicare, go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

# Find Your Way Around the HEALTH CARE LAW

There's a lot to learn about the law. Follow your path to learn more about the new protections and benefits for you and your family.

## Do you have health insurance?



**Questions?**  
Visit [HealthLawAnswers.org](http://HealthLawAnswers.org)

## There is A LOT TO LEARN about the health care law.

We know it can be difficult to figure out what it all means for you and your family. Use this roadmap to find your way through and get the facts.

### NEW CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

Consumer protections are now in place so you can be confident your health coverage will be there for you when you need it. Insurance companies can no longer deny coverage to people with preexisting conditions like asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, or even cancer, and they can't cut off or cancel someone's coverage because he or she hit a certain dollar limit or got sick.

### ALREADY HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE?

With new protections and benefits, the health care law makes staying healthy easier with more preventive care. Diabetes and cholesterol screenings, prostate exams, mammograms and even flu shots are all covered, so you can catch the little things before they turn into bigger problems.

Have kids? Now they can stay on your family health insurance plan until they turn 26. It doesn't matter if they are in school, live with you, or even if they're married.

### DON'T HAVE HEALTH INSURANCE?

As of October 1, 2013, there's a new, easier way to shop for health plans in your state: the Health Insurance Marketplace. You can make apples-to-apples comparisons of the benefits and prices—all in one place.

All plans must cover the essentials. These include doctor visits, emergency care, hospital care, prescription drug coverage, preventive care and more.

Financial help is available. Many people who buy their plan in the Marketplace can get help covering the costs. For example, a family of four earning less than \$94,200 a year may be able to get financial help. Low-cost or free plans are also available, depending on your income.

**Everyone needs coverage.** Having health coverage protects your health and your wallet. Starting in

2014, you'll be required to have health coverage. If you don't, you may have to pay a penalty. There are some exceptions, including people with a very low income. Need help? Just ask. If you need assistance finding a plan or completing the application, help is available every step of the way—online, by phone or in person.

### **COVERED BY MEDICARE?**

The health care law strengthens Medicare, protects your guaranteed benefits and helps you get more from your coverage.

Wellness visits and more preventive care are now covered at no cost to you. This includes immunizations, cholesterol and diabetes screenings, diet counseling and more.

There will be lower prescription drug costs. If you have Medicare Part D and have reached the coverage gap or "doughnut hole," you will get a discount of more than 50 percent on brand-name prescription drugs or more than 20 percent on generic prescription drugs while in the coverage gap. In a few years, the doughnut hole will completely disappear and be a thing of the past. As long as you are enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan, you don't need to do anything to get these benefits. For more information, go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

### **ARE YOU A SMALL BUSINESS OWNER?**

Providing coverage for your employees is now easier and more affordable.

There's a new, easy way to offer coverage. The Health Insurance Marketplace allows you to compare plans, choose what will be available to your employees, and set the dollar amount you can contribute. Then, your employees can simply go online and sign up—reducing your paperwork and administrative costs.

Offering health insurance is now more affordable. If you have fewer than 25 full-time employees, you may be able to get a tax credit to help make the cost of covering your employees more affordable. In 2013, the tax credit covers up to 35 percent of the cost of providing insurance. By 2014, the tax credit will increase to 50 percent—making it even more affordable to keep your employees healthy and productive.

AARP ([www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)) reprinted with permission

# **HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE COVERAGE**

Enrollment in California and Nevada state insurance exchanges is now available.

#### **FOR CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS:**

Visit [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com), or call **(888) 975-1142** to learn about plan options or become enrolled. MediCal benefits have expanded. Visit the Covered California website to see if you qualify.

#### **FOR NEVADA RESIDENTS:**

Visit [www.nevadahealthlink.com](http://www.nevadahealthlink.com), or call **(855) 768-5465** to learn about plan options or become enrolled.

## **FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS**

The Truckee and North Tahoe Family Resource Centers (FRCs) each provide social and financial support information to individuals and families. Tahoe Forest Health System has partnered with each FRC to reach out to provide information and answer questions about local and regional resources, and to provide assistance on learning more about the Covered California programs. For assistance and information please call:

#### **TRUCKEE:**

**Truckee Family Resource Center**  
11695 Donner Pass Road  
Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 587-2513**  
[www.truckeefrc.org](http://www.truckeefrc.org)

#### **KINGS BEACH:**

**North Tahoe Family Resource Center**  
8321 Steelhead Avenue  
Kings Beach, CA 96143  
**(530) 546-0952**  
[www.northtahoefrc.org](http://www.northtahoefrc.org)

### **FOR OUTPATIENT MEDICAL CARE TO QUALIFYING ADULTS AND CHILDREN:**

**Placer County Medical Clinic Tahoe**  
**Providers:** Liana Bailey, NP, and Sheila Raumer, MD  
8665 Salmon Avenue  
Kings Beach, CA 96143  
**(530) 546-1970**

### **FOR FAMILY PLANNING, MATERNAL CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH SERVICES TO QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS:**

**Nevada County Joseph Center**  
10075 Levon Avenue, Suite 202  
Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 582-7814**

# MEET YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS & ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

TRUCKEE & NORTH LAKE TAHOE

## TRUCKEE TAHOE MEDICAL GROUP

**www.TTMG.net** also with an office in Squaw Valley: 1960 Squaw Valley Road, Olympic Valley, CA 96146 (Open Nov - Apr) 

### Family Medicine



**Gina Barta, MD**  
Family Medicine  
Truckee Tahoe Medical Group  
925 North Lake Boulevard  
Tahoe City, CA 96145  
**(530) 581-8864**



**Richard Ganong, MD, FACP**  
Family Medicine/Internal Medicine  
Truckee Tahoe Medical Group  
925 North Lake Boulevard  
Tahoe City, CA 96145  
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**Reini Jensen, MD**  
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**Paul Krause, MD**  
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**(530) 581-8864**



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**Jeanne Plumb, MD**  
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**Scott Samelson, MD**  
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925 North Lake Boulevard  
Tahoe City, CA 96145  
**(530) 581-8864**

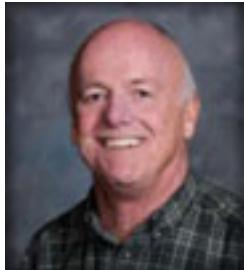


**Erin Winter, MD**  
Family Medicine  
Truckee Tahoe Medical Group  
10956 Donner Pass Road  
Suite 110  
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## TAHOE FOREST MULTISPECIALTY CLINICS

**www.TFHD.com** 

### Pediatrics



**Christopher Arth, MD**  
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**(775) 831-5308**

## TAHOE FOREST MULTISPECIALTY CLINICS

[www.TFHD.com](http://www.TFHD.com)

### Internal Family Medicine & Allied Health Professionals



**Lisa Beck, PA**  
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Truckee, CA 96161  
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**Lisanne Burkholder, MD**  
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Tahoe Forest  
MultiSpecialty Clinics  
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Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 582-1212**



**Dianne Higgins, MD**  
Family Medicine  
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MultiSpecialty Clinics  
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**Tim Lombard, MD**  
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**Bev Mustain, NP**  
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Incline Village, NV 89451  
**(775) 831-5308**



**Greg Tirdel, MD**  
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Critical Care/Pulmonary  
Disease/Sleep Medicine  
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10956 Donner Pass Road  
Suite 260  
Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 582-6400**

## TAHOE FOREST WOMEN'S CENTER

[www.TFWC.net](http://www.TFWC.net)

### Obstetrics/Gynecology



**Shawni Coll, DO, FACOG**  
Obstetrics/Gynecology  
Tahoe Forest Women's Center  
10175 Levon Avenue  
Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 587-1041**



**Peter Taylor, MD, FACOG**  
Obstetrics/Gynecology  
Tahoe Forest Women's Center  
10175 Levon Avenue  
Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 587-1041**



**Steve Thompson, MD, FACOG**  
Obstetrics/Gynecology  
Tahoe Forest Women's Center  
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Truckee, CA 96161  
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**Janet Brooks, RNP**  
Obstetrics/Gynecology  
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# MEET YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS & ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

TRUCKEE & NORTH LAKE TAHOE

## TAHOE FOREST HEALTH CLINIC

[www.TFHD.com](http://www.TFHD.com)

### Allied Health Professionals



**Porscha Adams, PA**

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**(530) 582-3277**



**Liana Bailey, NP**

Placer County Medical Clinic Tahoe  
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Kings Beach, CA 96143  
**(530) 546-1970**



**Danny Buchanan, PA**

Incline Village Health Clinic  
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**Susan McMullen, NP**

Tahoe Forest Health Clinic  
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**Samantha Smith, PA**

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**(775) 831-6200**



**Chris Spencer, NP**

Tahoe Forest Health Clinic  
10956 Donner Pass Road, Suite 230  
Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 582-3277**

THE MEDICAL STAFF and ALLIED  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS listed  
in this directory represent credentialed  
primary care providers at Tahoe Forest  
Hospital District.

## TAHOE TRUCKEE GYNECOLOGY

[www.TahoeGynecology.com](http://www.TahoeGynecology.com)

### Gynecology



**Chris Richards, MD**

Gynecology  
Tahoe Truckee Gynecology  
10956 Donner Pass Road, Suite 360  
Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 587-7919**

## NORTH TAHOE FAMILY CARE

### Family Medicine



**Emily Smith, MD**

Family Medicine  
North Tahoe Family Care  
936 Southwood Boulevard, Suite 203  
Incline Village, NV 89451  
**(775) 833-9000**

**Please note:**

On February 1, 2014,  
Dr. Smith's office address will be:  
889 Alder Avenue, Suite 205  
Incline Village, NV 89451

**INCLINE MEDICAL**

Family Medicine

**Johanna Koch, MD**

Family Medicine  
Incline Medical  
889 Alder Avenue, Suite 203  
Incline Village, NV 89451  
**(775) 832-5200**

**SIERRA INTERNAL MEDICINE ASSOCIATES**

Internal Medicine

**Daniel Peterson, MD**

Internal Medicine  
Sierra Internal Medicine Associates  
926 Incline Way, Suite 150  
Incline Village, NV 89451  
**(775) 832-0989**

**This just proves what we already knew...**

# Our Nurses ROCK.

**National award recognizes our ongoing commitment to nurses.**

**We must be doing something right.**

For the second time, The American Nurses Credentialing Center recently gave Tahoe Forest Health System the prestigious "Pathway to Excellence" award.

Though the main focus of the designation is to award overall excellence in the workplace, the award also recognizes the importance of nurses achieving a balanced lifestyle, working in a collaborative atmosphere, and having a high level of job satisfaction.

It's a culture of excellence we work hard at.

**And, like our nurses, we're more than happy with the results.**



One of America's Top 100 Critical Access Hospitals

[www.tfhd.com](http://www.tfhd.com)

# PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, PERSONALIZED CARE

**Skilled General Surgeons,  
Self-Reliant and Passionate About  
Personalized Health Care**



**“We can keep patients close to home, and that's important. It's where their support system is. They know the roads; their family is here, so this is where they want to be.”**

**Dr. Julie Conyers, MD, MBA, FACS**

## **Julie Conyers, MD, MBA, FACS, and Ellen Cooper, MD**

general surgeons and two relatively new faces around Tahoe Forest Hospital—have a common job and style but have come to Truckee in vastly different ways.

Dr. Conyers, a graduate of the University of Colorado's School of Medicine, once served as the only surgeon in a three-hour radius when she operated out of a tiny hospital in McCall, Idaho.

"It could take us up to six hours to get somebody out to where they needed to be in Boise," Conyers says of emergency patients. "So you had to think differently, because it could be a long time before they got to a large medical facility."

On the other hand, Dr. Cooper, a University of Washington medical school graduate, operated within the hive of activity that is the University of Washington's Seattle Medical Center. There, she worked in a faculty role for the University, in charge of providing all the emergency surgery for patients coming in from the facility's emergency department.

"You were on the front lines there dealing with a broad scope of illness," Cooper says.

Despite taking different routes, the two have one thing in common: a passion for personalized health care.

"My style is a pretty personal style," Dr. Conyers says. "I like to first sit down and try to make a connection with a patient. I like to have that connection. When you're operating on someone, you're in some of the most intimate parts of their lives...and when patients feel like you really care about them, they're much more comfortable."

Dr. Cooper says the personal connection drew her to Tahoe Forest Health System, her first experience in rural health care. She compared the hospital with Truckee's own Mountain Hardware in the positive light of providing personalized, caring service as opposed to that of a big box store in a large city.

"We have the time and the interest to take care of our patients intently," Cooper says. "I think that's what we provide our community—thoughtful, personal care."

Both surgeons also pointed out that Tahoe Forest Health System's array of resources—the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, cardiologists Dr. Tim Lombard and Dr. Joshua Scholnick, pulmonologist/intensivist Dr. Greg Tirdel, and a host of other highly-trained physicians—makes it an immense value to them and the community at large.

"We can keep patients close to home, and that's important," Conyers says. "It's where their support system is. They know the

roads; their family is here, so this is where they want to be."

Conyers' background began mainly in oncological surgery—surgeries related to breast, colon and other forms of cancer, mostly in urban settings, before heading out for rural environments. She's a natural in the Sierra Nevada.

"I'm a mountain girl. I was born and raised in Colorado, and I'm the daughter of a 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division guy," she says. "Climbing mountains on my skis, chasing the great rainbow trout... I'm at home when I wake up in the mountains."

Ellen Cooper accompanied a mountain guy—her husband is Truckee-based cardiologist Dr. Joshua Scholnick—out to Truckee after spending most of her time in larger cities and most recently, Seattle. The two met at the University of Washington where she says he got to go through residency a second time through his relationship with her.

The resources available at Tahoe Forest Health System attracted Cooper to agree to practice here.

"I love being a physician here," Cooper says. "The community is very supportive of the mission of the hospital. I'm pretty proud of the fact that we can do 90 to 95 percent of a person's medical care right here, and you can get really personal health care. People can know you; this is not a big institution."

Julie Conyers—who helps to create policy for rural surgeons through her involvement on the national Advisory Council for Rural Surgeons of the American College of Surgeons—knows that, generally, rural surgeons are an aging breed and realizes the value of having skilled surgeons right here in Truckee.

"Studies show that patients do better if there's an emergency and there's a rural surgeon right there who can take care of them. Their survival rate is better," she says.

Day-to-day, the pair can see a variety of different injuries and illnesses that create the demand for their skill set.

"We see a whole range of cases," says Cooper. In addition to outdoor injuries, the surgeons deal with very delicate patients due to the proximity of the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center. "With our cancer center, there are complicated patients who are at a high risk for anything we choose to do, so we sometimes ask, how can we solve this problem without an operation?"

Both Cooper and Conyers stress the need for careful assessment of each patient and the importance of being creative and not necessarily choosing a surgical option when there may be a more effective means of care.

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**(530) 587-7698**

**Ellen Cooper, MD**



## **JOSHUA SCHOLNICK, MD**

The mountain-town lifestyle is part of what drew Tahoe Forest MultiSpecialty Clinics cardiologist and internist, Joshua Scholnick, MD, to live in Truckee two years ago.

"I had always imagined I'd be a mountain town cardiologist from when I started training in medicine," Scholnick says. "Skiing, mountain biking, being out on the lake and paddling in the summer, those are all things that I like. I grew up in a town of 13,000 people (Williamsburg, Virginia), so Truckee feels like home to me."

Ironically, it's that same mountain lifestyle that makes his cardiology practice pretty unique among his peers in that particular field of medicine.

"I'm the only cardiologist I know who has a practice like this," Scholnick says. "There's very little heart disease here—strikingly little. So, my practice is more about heart rhythm problems, heart failure and heart valve disease and much less coronary artery disease and stroke."

Scholnick earned his undergraduate at Yale University before attending Duke University's School of Medicine and graduating in 2000. It was there that he last worked in rural medicine in the town of Sparta, North Carolina.

Scholnick's career took him to the University of Utah where he became certified as a heart transplant and heart failure specialist—he believes he's currently the only heart failure specialist between Sacramento and Salt Lake City. He eventually landed at the University of Washington (where he met future wife and Tahoe Forest MultiSpecialty Clinics general surgeon Dr. Ellen Cooper) and Seattle's Swedish Medical Center. The rural setting of Tahoe Forest Hospital compares very favorably

to the practice of big-city medicine, Scholnick says.

"There were 40 cardiologists in downtown Seattle with admitting privileges at Swedish," Scholnick says. "Here there are 40 physicians. I wasn't used to the inter-specialty collegiality of the medical staff here. You can sit down to some good cafeteria food with an orthopedic surgeon and a general surgeon and a radiologist and an anesthesiologist, and you can't do that in Seattle. There's no way, you'd be off in your own little world. I have everyone's phone number here, so it's very easy to coordinate patient care with a medical staff of this size; we know all the inpatient and outpatient physicians."

In addition to his cardiology practice, Scholnick also tends to internal medicine, urgent care and general medicine on his rotations at Tahoe Forest Hospital. He works in the MultiSpecialty Clinics with associate and fellow cardiologist Tim Lombard, MD, and the two are an excellent resource for area patients.

"Between Dr. Lombard and me, we offer general cardiology care that's equal to any practice or hospital," Scholnick says. "And, since we're affiliated with, but not beholden to, any institution, if someone needs specialty care, we suggest the very best consultants in Northern California or Nevada that we know of."

Patients often see Scholnick if they're experiencing chest pains, difficulty breathing or pain in their legs—potential signs of coronary trouble. In addition, patients can see Scholnick to understand what their risk of heart disease is and to make sure they're on the right track to avoid heart disease or a stroke.

When you need him, Dr. Scholnick is here to provide top-notch care to patients in Truckee and North Lake Tahoe.

**“**I had always imagined I'd be a mountain town cardiologist from when I started training in medicine.

— Joshua Scholnick, MD **”**



## CARDIAC REHAB and HEART-TO-HEART PROGRAMS

### Silver Steps Exercise Program

We are proud to offer the Silver Steps program, a personalized 12-week fitness program designed especially for seniors of all ages. Silver Steps meets three mornings a week and is a medically monitored program in a welcoming group environment. The benefits of Silver Steps include increased quality of life, greater enjoyment of everyday activities, and lifestyle counseling to reduce health risk factors. For more information, please call **(530) 582-3285**.

### Heart to Heart

Tahoe Forest Health System's Heart to Heart program is a medically supervised cardiac reconditioning program that combines exercise and education. It's especially designed to assist individuals with a cardiovascular diagnosis to achieve optimal fitness levels and make healthy lifestyle changes. Heart to Heart is open to anyone who wants to make healthy choices a part of their everyday life. Call **(530) 582-3285** for more information.

## FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL HEART MONTH

Tahoe Forest Health System offers special programs and screenings throughout the month of February. Check [tfhd.com](http://tfhd.com) for details.

## FOR APPOINTMENTS OR MORE INFORMATION:

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Incline Village Community Hospital  
880 Alder Avenue, 2nd floor  
Incline Village, NV 89451

**(775) 831-5308**



**“** Rural medicine is such a unique opportunity. There's a wide variety of work and variety of patients.

— **Scott Samelson, MD** **”**

**FOR APPOINTMENTS OR  
MORE INFORMATION:**

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925 North Lake Boulevard  
Tahoe City, CA 96145

**(530) 581-8864**

## SCOTT SAMELSON, MD

Truckee Tahoe Medical Group's new physician, Dr. Scott Samelson, patches lacerations, repairs fractures and helps his patients deal with urgent health matters—it's part of the job. But Samelson's out-of-the-box thinking—he went to medical school after spending time as a mountaineering guide, outdoor educator and raft guide—leads him to value his position as a healer in the preemptive sense more than his ability to address problems after they occur.

"My thought on health care, well actually I heard this from a friend, most of the time, it's sick care," Samelson says. "You only come in when you're ill or injured. We should be focused more on preventive care so you don't end up in the hospital."

Brand-new to the job at Truckee Tahoe Medical Group (TTMG) since September, Samelson brings a wealth of medical and practical experience to his position. The practice, with offices in Squaw Valley, Tahoe City and Truckee, now has eight primary care physicians who provide exceptional medical care. Samelson earned two bachelor of science degrees in botany and wildlife biology from Colorado State University in 1997 before embarking on a career in the outdoors—including time at Tahoe-area ski resorts where he got a taste for the local lifestyle.

Along the way, he compiled certifications as a swift water rescuer, a wilderness first responder and an avalanche rescuer.

Medical school came later—he graduated from the University of Colorado's medical program in 2009—and as soon as he decided to pursue his MD, he knew he wanted to practice family medicine.

"I get bored easily, I like a challenge," Samelson says. "Family medicine is perfect for that, you see so many different issues, and you really become a jack of all trades."

The same goes for rural medicine, which he became intimately familiar with during his time at the Hanmer Springs Medical Centre in a remote region of the island nation of New Zealand. His experiences there from August 2012 to August 2013 ranged from dealing with chronic disease management to search and rescue evacuations and stabilizing acute injuries.

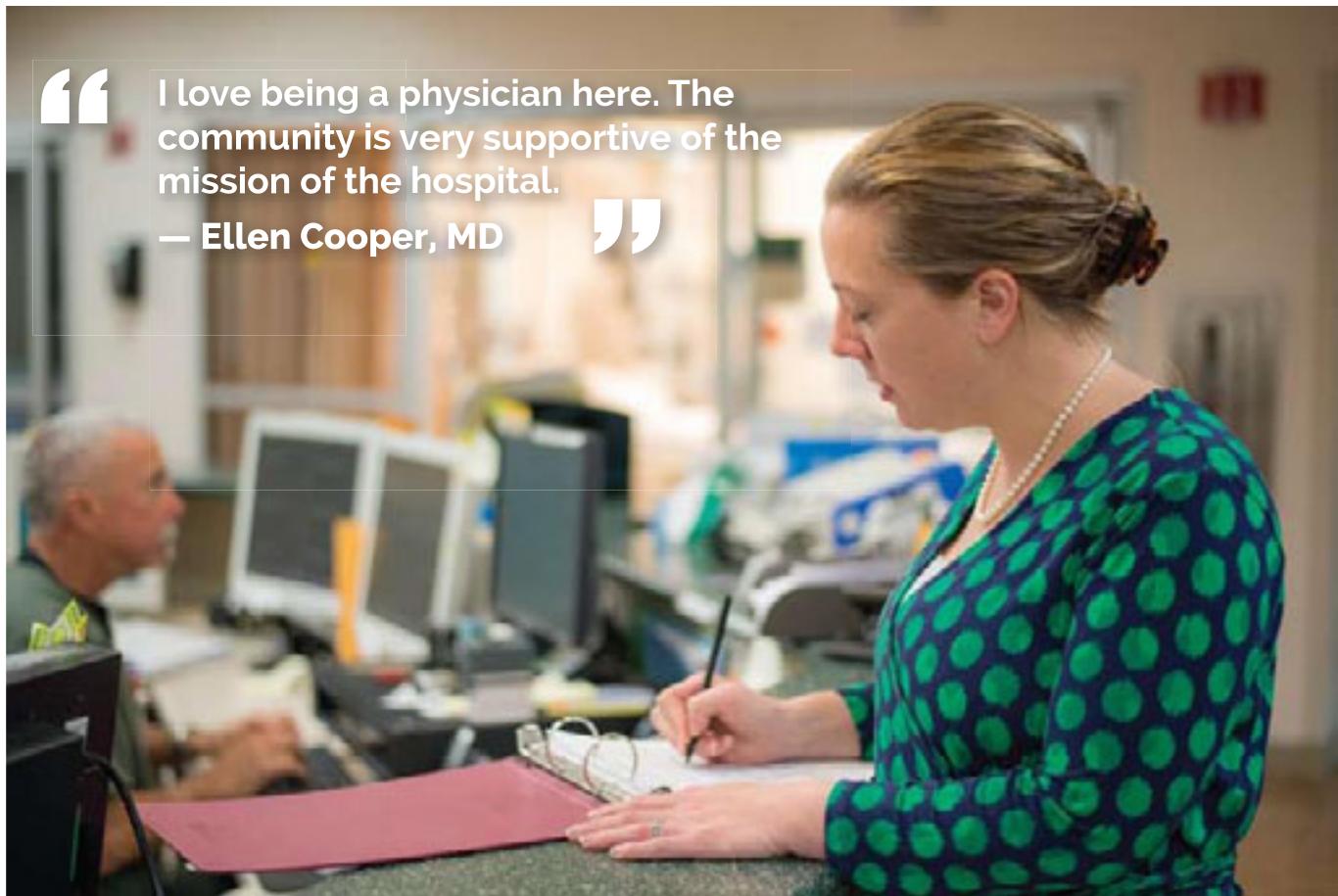
"Rural medicine is such a unique opportunity," he says. "There's a wide variety of work and variety of patients. That's what I like most about it—you have to be able to do it all."

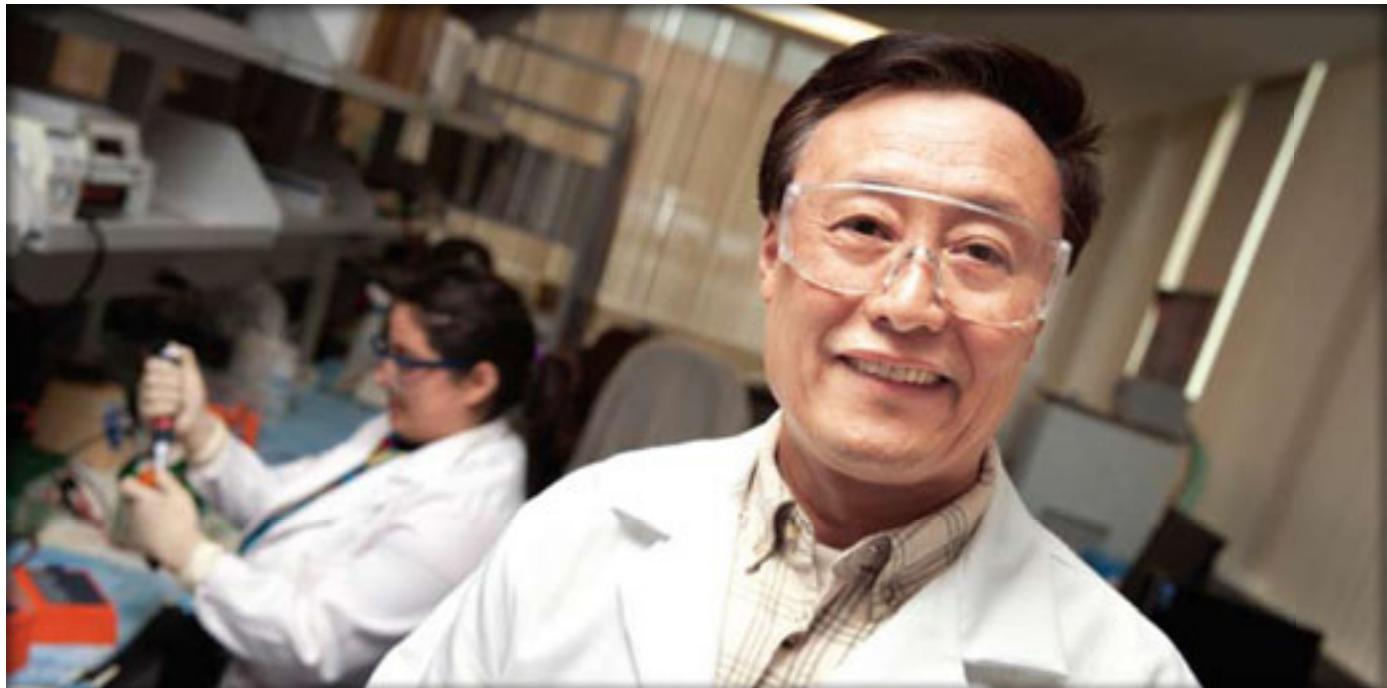
Samelson now brings his experience and ideas for preventive care to the Truckee/Tahoe region. You can schedule an appointment with Dr. Samelson at Truckee Tahoe Medical Group at **(530) 581-8864** or [www.TTMG.net](http://www.TTMG.net).



I love being a physician here. The community is very supportive of the mission of the hospital.

— Ellen Cooper, MD





# Breast Cancer Trailblazing

## Stem Cell Discovery Broadens Treatment Options

Tumors contain many parts, including healthy tissue and malignant cells with different mutations. This underlying chaos is one of the reasons cancer can be so difficult to treat. Even if the primary tumor is eradicated, smaller cell groups with different, sometimes treatment-resistant, mutations can bring it back.

Fortunately, researchers are beginning to get a handle on this chaos. Over the past few years, they have identified different tumor subgroups, recognized how they affect disease progression and, in some cases, developed treatments to combat them. They've learned that cancer is a highly personalized disease — tumors in the same types of tissue can differ substantially from patient to patient.

### HER2-negative?

One success story is HER2, a cell surface protein that is overproduced in some breast cancers. A cancer's HER2 status can have a significant impact on the tumor's aggressiveness, as well as patients' overall prognosis and their treatment choices. HER2-positive breast cancers are routinely treated with Herceptin or Tykerb, antibody drugs that inhibit the protein, with good results. However, until recently, there has been little reason to administer these targeted treatments to patients with HER2-negative cancer.

But that could change. A nationwide study led by UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center researchers found that HER2-negative tumors can contain a small, stubborn group of HER2-positive breast cancer stem cells (BCSCs). Prior to this research, most experts believed that a breast cancer was either HER2 positive or negative — but never both. This finding underlines the chaotic environment in breast tumors and may change how these cancers are treated.

"These BCSCs are very resistant to traditional treatments, which can lead patients to relapse," says Jian-Jian Li, a professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology and the cancer center's director of translational research. "Despite chemotherapy, radiotherapy or even surgery, the cancer is still recurrent. These findings modify our concept of breast cancer, because now we believe HER2-negative breast cancers can be treated effectively with anti-HER2 treatments."

### Hunting cancer stem cells

Regardless of where they come from, stem cells are recognized by their ability to divide, like fully mature cells, and differentiate into more mature cell types. While embryonic stem cells are known for their ability to become virtually any cell type, the body contains more specialized adult, or somatic, stem cells, which can regenerate brain, muscle and other tissue.

In recent years, biologists have hypothesized that some cancers may contain their own version of stem cells that are highly resistant to treatment and can therefore differentiate into new tumor cells. If the main tumor is destroyed by radiation, chemotherapy or surgery, the cancer stem cells can step in to generate a new tumor.

"We think there's a subpopulation of cells that has fundamentally different properties than the rest of the tumor," says Wolf-Dietrich Heyer, chair of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. "These cells are dormant and very resistant to treatment because they divide so slowly and may be responsible for recurrent cancer."

**"**We think there's a subpopulation of cells that has fundamentally different properties than the rest of the tumor. These cells are dormant and very resistant to treatment because they divide so slowly and may be responsible for recurrent cancer."

**Wolf-Dietrich Heyer**

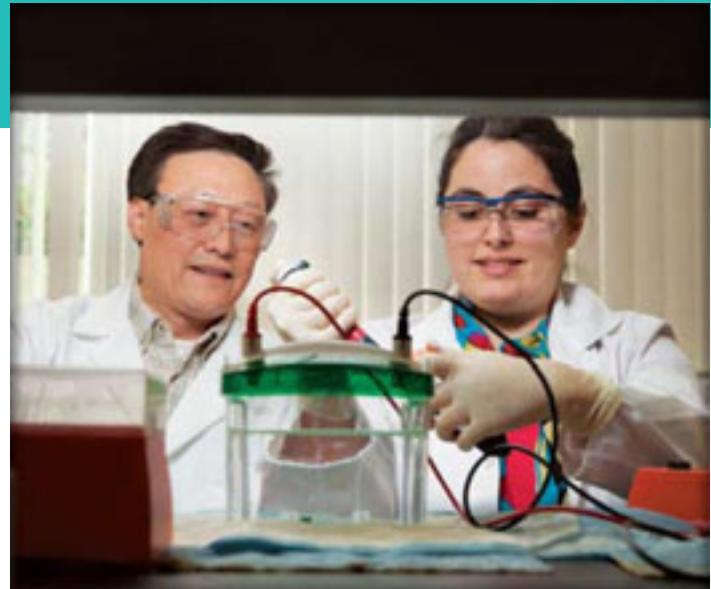


## A needle in a haystack

The new study is providing ample evidence to back up this hypothesis. The starting point was a well-studied line of breast cancer cells known to be resistant to radiation. The team wanted to figure out why that cell line is so radiation-resistant and whether a smaller subgroup of BCSCs was giving it those properties.

The group, which included researchers from the University of Michigan, University of Iowa, Emory University and MD Anderson Cancer Center, painstakingly isolated the cells they suspected were BCSCs. They were looking for cells that expressed the breast cancer stem cell markers CD44 and CD24. They found that cells that were CD44 positive and CD24 negative were more aggressive and particularly resistant to radiation. However, these cells also responded to Herceptin and other treatments.

In addition to identifying this previously hidden group of HER2-positive stem cells, the team also looked at how these BCSCs maintain their treatment resistance. They identified a complex group of proteins that control metastasis, programmed cell death and other functions. In particular, the power to inhibit cell death is a big deal, giving these tumors the ability to survive the gamut of traditional anti-cancer therapies.



By isolating this group of treatment-resistant cells in breast cancer, the team blazes a trail for scientists to pursue similar research in other stubborn cancers.

"This research provides breast cancer patients with new information, especially for patients whose tumors are HER2-negative," says Li. "Patients could get second opinions or they could have their HER2 status rechecked after treatment. If the tumor does become HER2-positive, other treatments could be prescribed."

## Improving diagnosis & treatment

While this research may open up new treatment options for HER2-negative cancer, it also outlines a new approach to diagnose HER2-positive BCSCs in patients. Markers like CD44 could help clinicians identify these aggressive cells in cancers that appear to be HER2-negative, personalizing treatment to match each patient's needs. These findings may also advance treatment for other cancers.

"This may open the possibility of treating HER2-positive stem cells in bone, lung or brain cancers, which are all difficult to treat in the later stages," says Li.

Also, by isolating this group of treatment-resistant cells in breast cancer, the team blazes a trail for scientists to pursue similar research in other stubborn cancers. And while those studies are in the future, the results of this study could potentially influence clinical care today.

"This study has direct implications for the clinic," says Heyer. "Even if a cancer is HER2-negative, HER2 therapy might be helpful. Ultimately, we may begin treating cancers the way we currently treat HIV — by using a concurrent cocktail of therapies."

This story has been reprinted with permission from **Synthesis**, (Volume 16, No 1) the magazine of UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center



# GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC

OFFERS SPONSORSHIPS TO PROMOTE INNOVATION & RESEARCH

The Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic Advisory Board is accepting sponsorships for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebrity Golf Classic July 13 and 14, 2014. Proceeds from the tournament benefit the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund, dedicated to changing lives through innovation and research.

Gene Upshaw, professional athlete, NFL Players Association leader and humanitarian, was a member of the Tahoe Truckee community for 35 years until his death from pancreatic cancer in 2008. Because of the outstanding quality of care Upshaw received at Tahoe Forest Hospital and the extraordinary dedication of the hospital staff to patient care and family services, Upshaw's family established the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund at the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation.

The purpose of the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund is to honor Gene Upshaw's legacy and to advance the Upshaw family's passion for quality medical care for patients and their families, sustainability and advancement of medical technology, and funding research in areas such as pancreatic cancer and traumatic brain injury.

The National Football League is a generous supporter of the annual tournament. Other partners include the Tahoe Mountain Club, the Golf Club at Gray's Crossing and The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe.



**Top:** A golf tournament tent displaying sponsor logos

**Bottom:** Annika Sörenstam, ranked most successful female golfer in history, with Marcus Allen, football Hall of Famer and former NFL Player

# SAVE THE DATE FOR NEXT YEAR! JULY 13-14, 2014



Some of the NFL's greatest players and other sports celebrities are paired with each golf foursome. Past sponsors and golf participants praise the tournament for its excellent organization, helpful volunteers, top-ranked golf course and sports celebrities who participate in order to pay tribute to Gene Upshaw and raise needed dollars for a cause they are passionate about.

Registration, sponsorship opportunities, volunteer inquiries as well as a list of participating celebrities can be viewed at [www.gu63.org](http://www.gu63.org). Sponsors receive golfer spots in the tournament, lodging at The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe, VIP tickets to the private pairings party, gift bags, and recognition on all program materials and releases.



## THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC

was held on July 14, 2013, with more than 100 golfers and 25 National Football League and other sports celebrities. Players began the day with a warm-up session with 10-time major champion and Golf Hall of Famer Annika Sorenstam, one of the most successful female golfers in history. The event was held at The Golf Club at Gray's Crossing, and raised **\$172,000 to support patient, family and caregiver programs at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center**. These supportive care

programs offer patients an integrative approach during and after cancer treatment. This whole-person approach to cancer care offered at the cancer center addresses the social, psychological, emotional and functional aspects of cancer care to improve quality of life for patients. Programs are offered to patients at no cost, and are funded solely by philanthropy. **A portion of donations also benefits mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) research conducted by the Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research.**

## 2014 GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Pat Allen**, 2013 Event Chair, Former Executive Vice-President, NFL Players Incorporated

**Clyde Batavia**, Retired International Business Executive

**Crystal Betts**, Chief Financial Officer – Tahoe Forest Health System

**Betsy Cole**, Founding Member and Director – Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research

**Tim Garcia-Jay**, Executive Director – Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center

**Bob Hickam**, General Manager of Tahoe Mountain Club, PGA Professional

**Mitch Juricich**, Creator/Co-Host of "Hooked on Golf"

**Larry J. Kushner**, LK Consulting Real Estate Management

**Angela Manolakas**, Sports Marketing Executive

**Brad Marnitz**, Co-Founder and Principal of Partners Commercial Realty, NAI Houston

**Sam McCullum**, Former NFL Player (10 years)

**Scott McRae**, Founder and Personal Trainer at Tahoe Peaks Health & Wellness Performance Training

**Lesley Nygaard**, President of Ultimate Vitality

**Christina Proctor**, Weidinger Public Relations

**Chris Ryman**, Chair, TFHS Foundation, Board Member, Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research

**Martha Simon**, Director of Fund Development - Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation

**Paige Thomason**, Director of Marketing and Communications – Tahoe Forest Health System

**Phil Weidinger**, President – Weidinger Public Relations

**Terri Upshaw**, Honorary Chair of Gene Upshaw Memorial Golf Classic and Founder of the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund

# 63



**Above:** Spirit of Giving Award Recipients (L to R) Randy Hill, Gary Boxeth, Patti Boxeth, Tom Hobday, Pam Hobday, Billy McCullough, and TFHS CEO Bob Schapper



**Above:** The McCullough Family (L to R, back row) Elizabeth Bell, Phebe Bell, Billy McCullough, (L to R, front row) Maia McDermott, Zoey McCullough, Andy McDermott, Eliza McCullough

# Spirit of Giving AWARD

Billy McCullough was presented the 2013 Spirit of Giving Award at a ceremony on Sunday, August 25. The event, hosted by the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation, took place at the Upper Pavilion at Northstar Village. The Spirit of Giving Award is given to an individual, family or organization who has made a positive difference that caused transformational change within Tahoe Forest Health System and has demonstrated extraordinary dedication to the health of the community. This year's nominees included Laurence Heifetz, MD, Margo Lalchandani, Billy McCullough, Northstar California Resort, The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe, George and Ellen Robertson (posthumous), Terri Upshaw, and Trinkie Watson.

The Spirit of Giving Award is the namesake of Tom and Pam Hobday, who were honored with special recognition in 2007 for their efforts toward the

betterment of Tahoe Forest Health System. Past Spirit of Giving Award recipients include Randy Hill, 2009, and Patti and Gary Boxeth, 2010. This award is not given annually but only when the situation presents itself to honor an individual, family or organization.

"Billy McCullough's service to Tahoe Forest Health System has made a huge impact on our community," said Martha Simon, Director of Fund Development for Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation. "His efforts have transformed the Best of Tahoe Chefs fundraiser into the huge success it is today. These funds support vital programs offered free to patients and families at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center."

"It is truly amazing what a small community can achieve," said

McCullough, upon accepting the award from past recipient Pam Hobday. "It makes me feel great knowing that a single idea can snowball into a positive impact for so many." McCullough is the chef/owner of Dragonfly Restaurant in Truckee and also serves on the board of Tahoe Food Hub, which works to advance community health and nutrition.



**Above:** Pam Hobday and Tom Hobday in 2007, with the Spirit of Giving Award located in Tahoe Forest Hospital Lobby

# Remembering Allison



**Top:** Allison Kreutzen in the backcountry

**Bottom:** New crab apple tree near the entrance to the ER, dedicated to Allison

**Right:** Memorial marker

A beautiful sunny autumn day greeted friends and family of Allison Kreutzen as they gathered to honor her memory on October 15. Kreutzen was tragically killed with her boyfriend, Kip Garre, in an avalanche on Split Mountain in the eastern Sierra on April 26, 2011. She held a special place in the Tahoe Forest Hospital family as a well-loved and highly valued emergency department nurse with an infectious smile and a distinct love of life. Her brand of extreme athleticism garnered her a respected reputation in every sport she mastered: skiing, mountain climbing, kayaking, running and mountain biking. But perhaps she is most remembered for her compassion, kindness, and generosity of spirit.

Over the last two years, close family friend Mimi Blythe has spearheaded a plan, along with a circle of friends, to remember Kreutzen by dedicating a tree outside the emergency department in her honor. Mother Nature provided the picture-perfect day for the ceremony where friends took turns telling stories of Kreutzen. Fellow nurse Todd Burks spoke, describing her as “smart, motivated and deeply caring,” and added, “Allison made an instant impression on both patients and staff here at Tahoe Forest Hospital.”

Burks echoed the sentiments felt by everyone as they admired the beautiful crab apple tree. “As a true lover of nature, this tree is a perfect symbol to represent Allison’s immortal spirit. It is fitting that this tree be planted here, in her memory, to remind us of her lasting presence and influence as a registered nurse at Tahoe Forest Hospital.”





# THE ★ RIGHT STUFF

**Melissa Kaime, MD, FACP**

If Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center physician Melissa Kaime, MD, FACP, seems to keep her cool exceptionally well in the pressure-filled world of oncology, it's for good reason.

The retired Navy Captain, who holds board certifications in internal medicine, hematology and oncology, was thrust into performing the duties of an ER physician in the most pressure-packed place on earth circa 2004-2005: Fallujah, Iraq.

Kaime, a 30-year military physician, deployed with a Marine unit in November 2004 for the second battle of Fallujah, a siege where Marines went door-to-door rooting out insurgents in what is now known as the war's bloodiest battle.

"I can still remember the day, November 10<sup>th</sup>, when it started, and we were very very busy," Kaime says. "In Iraq it was absolutely bare-bones medicine; I mean we didn't have an exam table—we built our own."

Kaime describes her time in Iraq as an experience that impacted her in a very positive way, despite the struggles.

**"**I was called to do things where I thought, how am I going to do this? I'm not trained to do this. I'm not an ER doctor... that hadn't been my major training," Kaime says. "And you learn very quickly that your team teaches you what you need to do, and that was very life-transforming for me in a positive way; it showed me you can do things you didn't think you could do before.**"**

Kaime now brings that immense skill set to Tahoe Forest Health System as the newest physician on the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center's already robust medical staff. A rancher's daughter from Colorado and New Mexico, Kaime earned an engineering degree as an undergrad at Vanderbilt University before earning a medical degree from St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri. From there, she was commissioned in the Navy, where she received the rest of her training. Her service took her around the world, from Okinawa, Japan to Bethesda, Maryland's Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

Upon retiring from the military in 2012, Kaime toured cancer centers throughout the country, filling in for six different centers with temporary needs for oncologists. It was in the fall 2012 when she completed a three-month rotation at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, filling in for now-colleague Dr. Ahrin Koppel, that she found a permanent home.

"I was here for three months, and that was a great experience in a sense that I truly got to understand the practice," she says.

## CONTACT

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"You're there for longer than just an interview, you can really evaluate the practice thoroughly in that time."

The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center fit best for three key reasons: the leadership of Medical Director Dr. Laurence Heifetz, the ethical care practiced here and the collaborative transparency of care aided by the center's partnership with UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center.

**"**We are very transparent," Kaime says. "We're not afraid to offer a patient a second opinion with medical leaders around the country, and we help guide them to those things. We have a virtual tumor board every single day with UC Davis, so we are constantly discussing our patients.**"**

In addition to being able to share ideas with and ask

questions of colleagues, Kaime is interested in the possibilities provided by the UC Davis partnership in reference to research and clinical trials, which could provide huge breakthroughs for patients.

"Davis is a kind of mother ship of sources for clinical trials, and we don't have to build that infrastructure here to take advantage of it," she says. "The effort to start clinical trials and do all the scientific work, all of that is a huge administrative task. We're lucky UC Davis does that and kind of hands us the clinical trials on a plate that we can offer to patients."

Find out more about Dr. Kaime and the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center at [www.tahoecancercenter.com](http://www.tahoecancercenter.com).



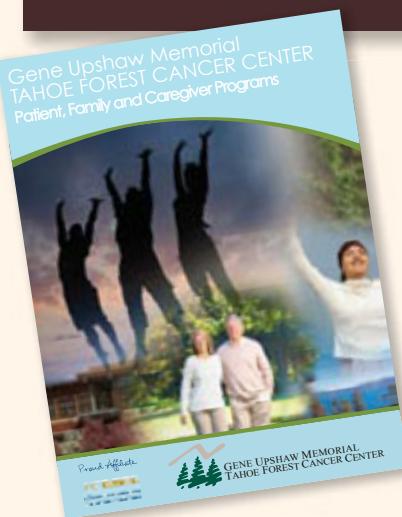
## FREE COMMUNITY PROGRAM: **KICK NICOTINE WORKSHOP SERIES**

The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, in conjunction with the Tahoe Forest Health System Wellness Neighborhood, is hosting a series of workshops to help our community become nicotine-free. Trained clinical psychologists, nutritionists, pharmacists and clinicians will guide you through the process of kicking the nicotine habit.

### This program offers:

- Free carbon monoxide testing
- Relapse prevention support and strategies
- Learn to quit without gaining weight
- Learn different techniques to replace nicotine cravings
- Keep yourself, your children, and non-smoking family members healthy
- Save money and improve your quality of life

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
or to register,** please contact  
Kirk Ditterich, PsyD, licensed  
behavioral health clinician  
**(530) 582-8207.**



## CANCER CENTER PROGRAMS

For complete information about Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center patient, family and caregiver programs, go to [www.tahoecancercenter.com/calendar](http://www.tahoecancercenter.com/calendar), or call **(530) 582-6450.**



# GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL TAHOE FOREST CANCER CENTER RECEIVES REVITALIZATION AWARD



Photo courtesy of rettingphotography.com

The Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce held its 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Dinner this past fall at the Resort at Squaw Creek in Squaw Valley. The Chamber recognizes leaders in the community for their commitment to Truckee's economic vitality and quality of life. Nominees were chosen by their peers based on contributions made over the past year.

Awards were presented to nominees in ten different categories. Honorees were recognized for their investment in Truckee's economy, innovation of product or service, staying power, customer service, and contributions to the community and its well-being. The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center was honored with a certificate of special congressional recognition in the category of Large Business Revitalization. The cancer center also received a California Legislature Assembly Certificate of Recognition acknowledging the same.



**Top, left to right:** Roger Kahn, President, Tahoe Forest Hospital District Board; Virginia Razo, Chief Operating Officer, Tahoe Forest Health System; Laurence J. Heifetz, MD, FACP, Medical Director, Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center

**Bottom:** The Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center

# AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY HEALTH SCREENINGS

Tahoe Forest Health System offers a variety of affordable lab tests and screenings available monthly at convenient locations in Truckee and Incline Village.

No appointment is necessary. Regular physical exams by your healthcare provider and screening tests are an important part of preventive health care.

**If fasting is required, patients should fast for 10-12 hours prior to the lab test. This service is a low-cost laboratory screening that is not necessarily reimbursable by your insurance company. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted. Tests are available to individuals 18 years and older.**

## TAHOE FOREST LABORATORY DRAW STATION

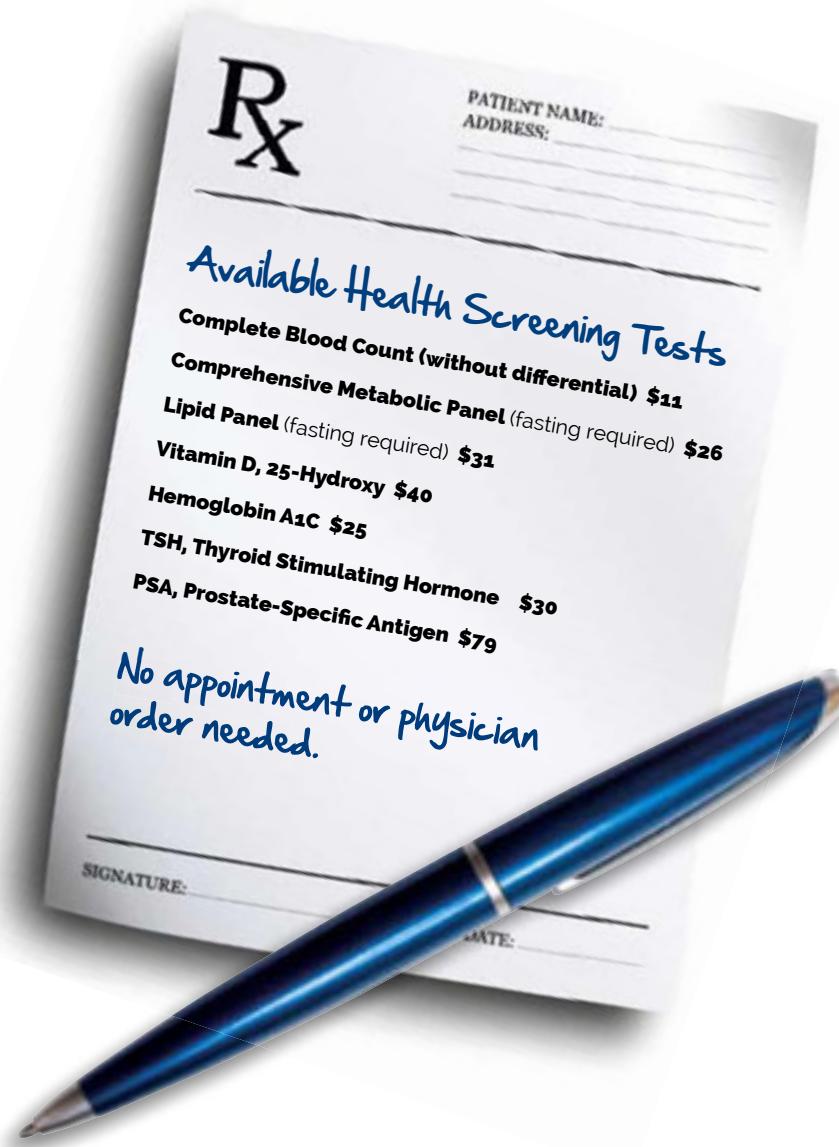
10956 Donner Pass Road, Suite 230, Truckee, CA  
(inside the Medical Office Building)

Services are available the second Wednesday of every month, 7 AM to 9 AM. For more information, call (530) 582-3277.

## INCLINE VILLAGE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

880 Alder Avenue, Incline Village, NV

Services are available the second Friday of every month, 8 AM to 9 AM. For more information, call (775) 833-4100.





**Top (left to right):** Jan Iida, RN, Director of Patient Care, Incline Village Community Hospital; Kim Pearson, RN, Emergency Services, Tahoe Forest Hospital; Bev Brink, RN, Director, Emergency Services, Tahoe Forest Hospital; Peter Shieldhouse, MD, Emergency Services, Tahoe Forest Hospital; Carol Ann Clark, RN, Emergency Services, Tahoe Forest Hospital; Ellen Bjorkman, RN,

Emergency Services, Incline Village Community Hospital

**Bottom (left to right):** The OB Award, Peter Taylor, MD, OB/GYN, Tahoe Forest Women's Center; Lilith Anderson, RN, TFH; Careen Holman-Gary, RN, TFH; and Jim Sturtevant, MS, RN, CCRN, Director of Inpatient Services, TFHS

## Striving for Excellence in Patient Safety and Care

Tahoe Forest Hospital's Women and Family Center was awarded the Quest for Zero: OB Safety Program Tier II, recognizing efforts to improve patient safety and evidence-based care through best practice initiatives.

Obstetrical nurses and physicians completed an intensive continuing education program focused on patient safety and risk management. The training included e-focused learning, team communication strategies and emergency management in labor and delivery and required all members of the perinatal team to meet specific quality of care criteria.

The emergency departments of Incline Village Community Hospital and Tahoe Forest Hospital also received recognition. Both emergency departments obtained Tier I status by demonstrating compliance with all elements of the training. The entire team of emergency department physicians and nursing staff completed the required courses for the recognition.

The awards were given by the BETA Healthcare Group, an organization that emphasizes best health care practices. BETA provides member hospitals opportunities for training to improve patient safety and quality of care in hospital clinical departments.

## Tahoe Forest Hospital Children's Center Renewed as a 5 Star Quality Child Care Center

The Tahoe Forest Hospital Children's Center was renewed as a 5 Star Quality Child Care Center in June 2013. Open since 1991, the Children's Center serves hospital and community children who need care from infancy to 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

It is the only center in Nevada County to have both its Infant/Toddler and Preschool rooms rated at 5 Stars by the Nevada County Child Care Coordinating Council through the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools. The center proudly displays its certificate of 5 Stars as a Quality Child Care Program and strives daily to exceed those standards.

Marcia Westbook of the Quality Child Care Initiative wrote in her letter of recognition, "It is clear that a great deal of

effort goes into preparation of a successful program, and that the children placed in your care clearly benefit from your commitment to quality. Thank you again for all your efforts to create and maintain a quality environment!"

It takes teamwork to coordinate care for over 100 children and exceed the quality requirements for the nationally known quality measurements in the Environmental Rating Scale as well as numerous State of California regulations. The childcare team at Tahoe Forest Hospital Children's Center works daily to provide high quality care for each child. They also understand how quality of childcare affects patient care and wants each Tahoe Forest Hospital System employees to be at his or her very best while serving patients.



**Above:** Abby Thomas, MHS, BSN, RN, Clinical Resource Nurse accepts the 2013 CALNOC Sustained Excellence Award for Best Performance in the Reduction of Injury Falls on behalf of the Tahoe Forest Hospital. As a Critical Access Hospital, the criteria for Tahoe Forest Hospital was zero inpatient falls with moderate or severe injury in the past three years.

## Nursing Team Recognized for Outstanding Safety and Excellent Patient Care

The Tahoe Forest Hospital nursing team has been recognized by the Collaborative Alliance for Nursing Outcomes (CALNOC) with the CALNOC Award for Sustained Excellence for Best Performance in Reducing Injury Falls for two consecutive years.

"We are so proud of our nurses who proactively work together to continually improve patient safety and quality," said Judy Newland, Chief Nursing Officer, Tahoe Forest Health System. "This recognition is a real honor and is due to the excellent dedication of our nursing staff." The award was given to Tahoe Forest Health System nursing teams that care for admitted

patients in the areas of the Medical Surgical Unit, Intensive Care Unit and Women and Family Center (OB) departments.

CALNOC is the nation's first registry dedicated to nursing-sensitive measures at the nursing unit level. It is a sustaining nonprofit public benefit corporation with over 15 years experience in advancing the safety and quality of patient care. CALNOC is the leading provider of actionable information and research on nursing-sensitive quality indicators. Hundreds of leading hospitals are partners with CALNOC to monitor and benchmark performance in order to deliver excellent patient care.

# The FLU...

The number of people infected with flu is increasing in our community, and flu activity typically peaks in January and February. The most important step you can take to protect you and your family is to get a flu vaccine each season. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone over the age of 6 months receive the 2013-14 flu vaccine unless one of the very few contraindications is identified by their healthcare providers.

## **Are flu vaccinations 100% effective?**

While flu vaccines are probably the best protection we have from the flu, they are not perfect. For years, flu vaccines in the United States have been designed to protect against three strains of flu. But during the 2013-2014 flu season, a vaccine that protects against four strains will be offered for the first time.

## **Can the flu shot give me the flu?**

It is a myth that the flu shot will give you the flu. The vaccine uses dead viruses so you cannot contract the flu from the vaccine. The most common side effects are soreness in the arm near the injection site, muscle aches, or a mild fever. These symptoms are a result of your natural immune response to the vaccine. Be aware that it takes two weeks for the vaccine to be effective, so if you are exposed to the virus before that time you may not be protected.

## **Protect yourself and your family**

By combining the vaccine with regular hand washing, covering your cough, avoiding touching your T-Zone (across your forehead and from your nose down to your chin), and staying home when ill, you are doing all you can to protect yourself and others from colds and flu.

## **Where can I get a flu shot?**

Flu shots are available at our local **Safeway**, **CVS**, and **Rite Aid** stores, through your local healthcare provider, and at the following community clinics: **Nevada County Health Department in Truckee** (by appointment on Wednesdays, or

drop-in the first Thursday of the month from 1:00-3:30 pm), at the **Placer County Health Department in Kings Beach** (Fridays, from 9:30-11:00 AM and 1:00-3:00 PM), and at the **Tahoe Forest Health Clinic** (Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 8:00-4:00 PM, and Thursday from 9:00 AM-4:00 PM.)

## **Learn More**

For more information about who should and who should not get vaccinated, visit:

[www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldvax.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldvax.htm).

For additional information on immunizations for children and adults, visit: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/).



# PROTECT yourself.

# THE POWER OF BREAKFAST...

...IT'S IMPORTANT!

**The Power of Breakfast was the B-FIT wellness theme for the month of November.** Be Fit in Tahoe (B-FIT) is an activity and wellness program implemented in Tahoe Truckee Unified School District (TTUSD) elementary school classrooms in partnership with Tahoe Forest Hospital District.

Not only is it important for children to eat breakfast every day, but what they eat for breakfast counts, too! Breakfasts that are high in protein and fiber, and low in added sugars, improve attention spans, concentration and memory in school.

Children who eat breakfast every day are more likely to have diets that are higher in fiber, calcium, and other important nutrients. They also tend to keep their weight under control, have lower blood cholesterol levels and fewer absences from school, and make fewer trips to the school nurse with stomach complaints related to hunger, according to [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org).

## Serve a Balanced Breakfast that Includes at Least 3 of the 5 Food Groups

**Protein** helps you stay full longer and provides sustained energy over the morning. Eggs, low-fat meats, cooked dried beans, and nuts and seeds (including nut butters) are good sources of protein.

**Grains** are good sources of carbohydrate, which provide immediate energy for the body. Choose whole grains, which are higher in fiber. Try whole-grain breads, waffles, muffins, and cereals, brown rice, wheat or oat bran, and other grains.

**Dairy Products** provide protein and carbohydrates and are an excellent source of calcium. Choose yogurt (especially greek yogurt) and other low-fat and nonfat varieties of dairy foods such as milk, cheese, kefir and cottage cheese.

**Fruit** choose whole fruits over fruit juices. Whole fruits provide vitamins and minerals and are a good source of fiber.

**Vegetables** are great in egg dishes, smoothies (try spinach or other tender greens), and in juices. They are power packed with essential vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, to help children understand the importance of breakfast, **be sure to set a good example.** When your children see you making time to enjoy breakfast every day, they will be more likely to do so

themselves. **Everyone should get off to a healthy start each day by refueling their brain and body!**

## TO THE RESCUE!

Here are some quick and healthy breakfast ideas that include at least 3 of the 5 food groups:

- Whole-grain cereal (grain) with berries (fruit) and nonfat yogurt (dairy)
- Whole-grain waffles topped with peanut butter or ricotta cheese and fruit
- Hot cereal topped with cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, or cloves; add nuts and fresh fruit
- Peanut butter on a whole-grain english muffin, fresh fruit (banana or apple wedges) and low-fat milk
- Breakfast smoothie (1% milk or yogurt, fruit, and teaspoon of flaxmeal, whirled in a blender)
- Vegetable omelet with whole-wheat toast and fruit
- Bran muffin and yogurt with berries
- Lean turkey with an egg on a toasted english muffin and vegetable juice
- Heated leftover rice with chopped apples, nuts, and cinnamon, and milk
- Low-fat cream cheese and fresh fruit, such as sliced strawberries, on whole-grain bread or a whole-grain bagel, halved
- Shredded cheese and/or beans on a whole-wheat tortilla (fold in half and microwave for 20 seconds) topped with salsa

For more breakfast tips and fun interactive games for children, visit [www.nourishinteractive.com](http://www.nourishinteractive.com).

**For more information about the B-FIT program** and to get involved, contact the Community Health Staff of Tahoe Forest Health System: Wendy Buchanan, Maria Martin, and Jill Whisler at **(530) 587-3769** or [mmartin@tfhd.com](mailto:mmartin@tfhd.com).

# WELLNESS NEIGHBORHOOD

## Welcomes Executive Director



**Caroline Ford, MPH**, is the newly appointed Executive Director of the Wellness Neighborhood for Tahoe Forest Health System. She has more than 30 years of experience in rural and frontier health issues. Ms. Ford was instrumental in crafting many state-authorized health programs in Nevada, including the Nevada Health Service Corps, the Medical Education Council of Nevada, and the Nevada Area Health Education Center Program. She focused on programs devoted to addressing medically underserved populations. Her body of work has spanned national and state development of health policy addressing the critical health system issues of isolated populations and health workforce development. She served for more than 27 years as the Director of Nevada's State Office of Rural Health and is an Assistant Dean Emerita of Rural and Frontier Health at the University of Nevada School of Medicine. She is also President of the National Center for Frontier Communities.

In December 2010, Tahoe Forest Health System initiated a comprehensive community health needs assessment at the direction of the Hospital District Board of Directors. The purpose of the assessment was to gather current statistics and feedback on the key health issues facing full-time residents living within the hospital district.

At a public workshop held in May 2011, Hospital District board members, area healthcare professionals, steering committee members and other local organizations examined the resulting data. Five strategic issues were identified as health priorities:

- All residents will be able to identify and access a primary care provider/ medical home
- Improve immunization rates and aim to reduce vaccine-preventable diseases
- There should be no inequities in health status with regard to race or ethnicity
- Residents will enjoy good mental health and those in need will have access to prevention and treatment
- Reduce substance abuse in our community

The Wellness Neighborhood provided the framework to engage the community to identify those programs addressing the priority issues that would have the most impact on the health of our community. Five working groups, with a total of over 70 volunteers, were created to recommend top strategies to address the key health issues identified by the



**Caroline Ford, MPH**

Board of Directors. The Wellness issues were grouped into the following categories: Primary Prevention, Chronic Disease Management, Behavioral/Mental Health, Dental, and Disparities.



**wellnessneighborhood**

The Wellness Neighborhood was created to provide a framework to engage the community to identify, develop and prioritize health programs that would have the most impact on community health.

You can contact Caroline Ford at **(530) 582-7425** or [cford@tfhd.com](mailto:cford@tfhd.com).

# HGTV DREAMHOME

The **TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION** is proud to be the official charity of choice for the 2014 HGTV Dream Home at Schaffer's Mill. To learn more about how you can support TFHSF and see this amazing home, please visit [www.schaffersmill.com](http://www.schaffersmill.com).

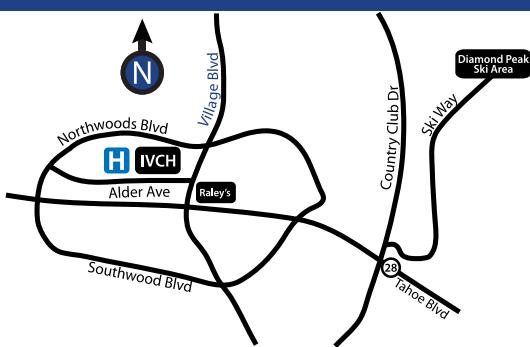
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SUNDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup>**

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[www.BestofTahoeChefs.org](http://www.BestofTahoeChefs.org)

**QUESTIONS:** Call the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation (530) 582-6271

*All proceeds benefit the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center Patient and Family Programs*

*Dress your true colors!*

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PO Box 2508, Truckee, CA 96160



# Rural Health Conference 2013



## Rural Health Conference Educates Healthcare Providers

Tahoe Forest Health System presented the Second Annual Rural Health Conference, titled "Rural Medicine in the 21st Century," at the Hyatt Regency in Lake Tahoe. This conference was designed especially for healthcare providers and was offered to those interested in rural health care, including physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, educators, academics, hospital administrators, clinic directors, and medical students. The program was led by the Medical Education Committee of Tahoe Forest Health System, under the direction of Charles Zipkin, MD, Medical Director of Continuing Medical Education.

Participants discussed the current delivery system reforms and issues unique to medicine in a rural setting. Speaker highlights included Betsy Thompson, MD, DrPH, Chief Medical Officer for Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, who addressed the future of health care reform, Michael Wilkes, MD, Professor of Global Health at UC Davis, who reviewed best practices in cancer screening, and Paul Auerbach, MD, MS, FACEP, FAWM, Redlich Professor of Surgery in the Division of Emergency Medicine at Stanford School of Medicine, who shared his experience with the emergency medical response to Haiti immediately after the 2010 earthquake. For information about future programs, contact TFH Medical Staff Services at **(530) 582-6414**.



**Top:** Attendees participated in the sponsor trade show between sessions of the conference.

**Bottom:** Tahoe Forest Health System Medical Director of Continuing Medical Education Charles Zipkin, MD, greets the attendees and introduces keynote speaker Betsy Thompson, MD.



# Tahoe Center for Health & Sports Performance

Here are some of the great classes offered at TCHSP:

**Balls, Bands, and Bosus** - Cardio, core, functional, and balance training all wrapped up in one hour for a fun full-body workout! All levels welcome!

**Cardio Fit** - This 45 minutes of interval training is pure calorie-burning cardio! All levels welcome!

**Core, Sculpt & Stretch** - This lunch-hour class focuses on core conditioning and integrates strength training with full body flexibility. All levels welcome!

**Foam Roller, Core & Restore** - Release tight muscles while toning your core! Learn how to effectively self-massage your trigger points on the foam roller to prevent and recover from injury, enhance your athletic performance, and prepare your muscles for deeper stretching. All levels welcome!

**Intense Cross Training** - This powerful class mixing cardio, strength, and core is not for the faint of heart! Expect a workout that includes upper body, lower body, core, and cardio segments. A focus on balance and agility brings everything together for a complete workout. Intermediate to advanced participants.

**Gentle Yoga Flow** - Move through basic yoga postures, joint movements, and breath work that will warm and open the body and encourage healing. This gentle workout is great for combating daily stress, recovering from injuries and illness, and staying fit pre- and post-pregnancy. All levels welcome!

**Power Yoga Flow** - A fun, energetic and challenging yoga class emphasizing the coordination of breath with movement. Progressing from warm-ups to challenging postures and deeper stretching, modifications are offered so you can work at your own level of intensity. Balance strength and flexibility to gain confidence in movement and integrate body, mind and breath in this uplifting practice. Intermediate to advanced level of fitness recommended.

**Super Circuit** - An interval circuit workout, focusing on functional movement while incorporating cardio and strength training. All levels welcome!

**Toned Up!** - This one-hour class will pump you up! The focus is on body sculpting using hand weights, resistance bands, medicine balls and other equipment to tone from head to toe. All levels welcome!

For more information, please call the Tahoe Center for Health & Sports Performance at **(530) 587-3769**.

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**Sun, 10 am - 4 pm**

**(530) 582-4947**

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**8611 North Lake Boulevard**

**Open: Mon - Sat, 10 am - 5 pm**

**Sun, 10 am - 4 pm**

**(530) 546-5494**

**Donations are gladly accepted for gently used items. Ask about our Student Volunteer Program.**

## Incline Village Community Hospital Physical Therapy and Medical Fitness

Maintaining an active, independent life is important to all of us. We evaluate and treat people of all ages and abilities to reach their goals. Our staff members are experts at analyzing movement and function to treat you effectively.

We offer evaluation, treatment, education, home exercise programs and more.

**For more information:**

Incline Village Community Hospital Physical Therapy and Medical Fitness

333 Village Blvd, Suite 201 (corner of Village & Alder)  
Incline Village, NV 89451

Ph: (775) 831-1964 Fx: (775) 831-1997

## A Gift Shop for All Seasons

Make plans to drop by the gift shop located inside Incline Village Community Hospital for unique gifts, candles, jewelry, home decorating items, cards and more. Operated by the North Lake Tahoe Community Health Care Auxiliary, the gift shop recently located to a much larger space after a \$10,000 donation from the Auxiliary. Since 1996, they have raised more than \$375,000 for direct patient care needs at the hospital, as well as \$177,000 in scholarships for Incline High School students pursuing degrees in the medical field.

**For more information:**

To learn more about the Auxiliary or how to help, please go to [www.tfhd.com/nltchca.asp](http://www.tfhd.com/nltchca.asp).

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\*Based on 2012/2013 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Health Plan ratings and Consumer Assessment of Health Plans Study - Medicare & You Handbook. Senior Care Plus is a 4-Star Rated Plan. Plan performance summary star ratings are assessed each year and may change from one year to the next. Senior Care Plus is a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract, available to anyone with both Medicare Parts A and B. A member must be a resident of Carson City County, Churchill County, Douglas County, Lyon County, Storey County or Washoe County and continue to pay his or her Medicare Part B premium.



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