

The Bradley *Bulletin*

News and notes for our friends and supporters.

Fall 2019

The Lambreses Team Up to Help Bradley!

Bristol couple Bernie and Kelly Lambrese are partners in the truest sense of the word. Kelly has helped Bernie raise his two boys, they started five businesses together, and supported a variety of nonprofit community organizations together—including Bradley Hospital. Over the years, the pair has sponsored Bravo Bradley and donated generously to the hospital's annual fund. They say that hearing their son tell stories about Bradley is what first inspired them to get involved.

"Our son Jason is a child and adolescent psychiatrist at the Cleveland Clinic," Bernie explains. "He earned his degree from The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University in 2010 and spent part of his training at Bradley. So, he would come home and tell us about his days there. We got quite an education on the mental health challenges many young people face and how it affects them and their families. We also got a glimpse into the great work the Bradley staff was doing."

The Lambrese's relationship with Joe and Betty Brito was also a catalyst for getting involved with Bradley. The Britos are not only Kelly and Bernie's neighbors in Bristol; they are involved and dedicated Bradley supporters, former Bravo Bradley co-chairs, and current volunteers. "When Joe asked if we wanted to get involved, we said 'Absolutely!'" Kelly recalls. "We know lots of friends and families who've benefitted from Bradley's services," she continues, "and the more people we met, the more we'd hear 'my daughter was helped there' or 'my son was helped there.' Bradley is truly pioneering pediatric mental health care, education, research, and hope. We love Bradley so much, because they do so much."

Bernie echoes his wife's sentiments. "Bradley has really captured our hearts," he says. "We believe strongly in their



Bernie and Kelly Lambrese with their son Jason

mission and we look forward to continuing our involvement with Bradley well into the future."

When they're not giving back—or checking in with their other son, Christopher, who works in the hospitality industry in Kentucky—the couple stays busy running Healthcare Strategies LLC, the successful consulting firm they launched to help health care companies achieve their goals and bring innovative products and services to market that improve quality of life, enhance patient experience, and increase efficacy of care delivery. Boston College grad Bernie possesses sales and marketing acumen, while Kelly—a registered nurse who holds a bachelor of science in nursing degree from Salve Regina—is expert in clinical affairs and operations. "Together, I guess we make a pretty good team," Bernie jokes.

We couldn't agree more, and we're so glad they decided to team up to help Bradley!



Bradley Hospital

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Wave Clinic Helps Teens Turn the Tide

Thanks to a \$200,000 grant from Woonsocket-based CVS Health and a generous gift from private donors, Bradley Hospital was able to launch a new outpatient program this spring that provides care for teenagers with substance abuse and behavioral health issues struggling simultaneously.

Known as the Wave Clinic, it typically serves 13- to 19-year-olds who might suffer from anxiety, depression, behavioral disruption, or have a history of family-related trauma and are abusing marijuana, alcohol, prescription painkillers, or other substances. The clinic is staffed by a multidisciplinary team and offers individual, family and group therapy, medication management, and skills training for parents and caregivers.

“Substance abuse and mental illness frequently go hand in hand, and there are limited outpatient resources for treatment in Rhode Island,” reports child psychologist Selby Conrad, PhD. “So, there is a great need for programs of this nature.”

Complementing the hospital’s existing residential and intensive offerings, the Wave Clinic functions as a less intensive “step-down” for Bradley patients as well as a referral resource for those in the community. Teens and families participate weekly or bi-weekly in treatment with the goal of reducing harmful behaviors and allowing them to focus on positive connection and development of alternatives to substance use.

“We are so grateful to CVS and the special donors who made this program possible,” adds Dr. Conrad. “Together they have created a crucial service that addresses a wide array of mental health issues and substance use challenges. They truly are helping to change and save lives.”



Genetic Testing Helps Demystify ASD

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects 1 in 59 children. Symptoms vary, but usually include difficulty with communication and social interactions, obsessive interests, and repetitive behaviors. Targeted therapies can bolster development—and genetic testing supports this approach.

“First, though, it’s important to point out there is no genetic test that can diagnose autism,” explains Daniel Moreno De Luca, MD, MSc, a psychiatrist at the Verrecchia Clinic for Children with Autism and Developmental Disabilities at Bradley Hospital. “That is a clinical diagnosis, which is behaviorally defined. But once diagnosed, genetic testing can explain ASD in up to 40 percent of cases, which is a very high yield and growing, thanks to advancements in technology.”

Genetic test results can inform prognosis, guide management plans, and assess the likelihood another family member could get ASD. Results may also reveal whether the person with ASD is at risk for unrelated medical conditions such as seizures, heart disease, or kidney problems.



Only about five percent of those with ASD are offered genetic testing, but Bradley is working to boost that number by allowing tests to be ordered directly from the hospital. Dr. Moreno De Luca also launched his Precision Medicine in Autism (PRISMA) research program and is working closely with the Rhode Island Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment (RI-CART)—a statewide partnership between families, clinicians, researchers, agencies, and advocacy groups—to build patient registries and advance knowledge sharing.

“Knowledge is power,” he says. “The more people know and participate, the better we can collaborate to care for children with ASD.”