TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

At Kaiser Permanente, our rich history and enduring legacy is built upon the dedication, passion and commitment of our incredible people. Nurses make a difference in the lives of our members and in the continued success of Kaiser Permanente in Northern California.

Janet A. Liang
President, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals, Northern California

At 3:30 a.m. on October 9, a fast-moving wildfire prompted leaders at the Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa Medical Center to evacuate 122 patients.

JOCELYN DE LEÓN, RN, AND ADA WALKER, RN

We would like to recognize the extraordinary and heroic actions of our nurses, physicians, and the entire North Bay community.

Nearly 9,000 structures were destroyed in the North Bay fires. More than 200 Kaiser Permanente nurses, physicians, and staff lost their homes. Kaiser Permanente teams evacuated 148 patients from skilled nursing facilities. Home Health staff connected with area patients, 65 of whom had been evacuated.

Kaiser Permanente donated $2.75 million for relief and recovery efforts in the community, and offered its affected employees and physicians temporary housing, counseling, and immediate financial help.

That morning, most evacuated patients arrived at Kaiser Permanente San Rafael, driven by ambulance, city bus, and in the personal cars of Santa Rosa staff.
More than 1,700 Kaiser Permanente nurses, physicians, staff, and members of the community donated more than $400,000 to help those impacted by the fires.

The North Bay fires forced the evacuation of the Santa Rosa Medical Center in October 2017. Kaiser Permanente leadership from across the region worked together during a time of unprecedented crisis to help ensure the communities we serve were safe.

It was 1:15 in the morning of October 9 when Judy Coffey, RN, Marin-Sonoma senior vice president and area manager, got the call at home that smoke was bothering patients and staff in the Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa Hospital.

Coffey called Tom Hanenburg, senior vice president of Hospital & Health Plan Operations. They learned the smoke was worsening, and sent out an emergency notification, or Tier 1.

Next, Coffey noticed the smoke at her home in the Fountaingrove neighborhood of Santa Rosa, and called Joshua Weil, MD, assistant physician in chief for Hospital Operations, who was on duty in the Emergency Department.

“He said, ‘I think my house just burned down,’” Coffey remembered. “At that point, we activated Tier 2: calling in everybody who could make it to help at the facility.”
A Hasty but Successful Evacuation

By 2:30 a.m. the hospital command center was opened. A regional command center followed one hour later, and within minutes, Dr. Weil called the evacuation order.

Employees and physicians loaded more than 100 patients—including women in labor and ICU patients—into ambulances, city buses, and, in some cases, their own cars to get them safely to other hospitals, including Kaiser Permanente San Rafael.

Fanned by wind and fed by parched vegetation, the multiple North Bay blazes destroyed nearly 9,000 structures and scorched around 210,000 acres.

To date, there are 43 confirmed deaths and many people injured.

With the Santa Rosa Medical Center closed, Kaiser Permanente hospitals throughout Northern California pitched in.

“...we received tremendous support from local physicians, nurses, and staff as well as from our Northern California leaders and medical centers,” Coffey said. “Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital and our Kaiser Permanente sister facility in San Rafael opened their doors to receive and care for our patients.”

Reopening After Disaster

On a late October visit to the Santa Rosa Medical Center, one would barely know the Kaiser Permanente community had faced the worst disaster in the organization’s history—and the deadliest week of wildfires on record in California.

Employees and physicians moved with purpose through the facility’s halls, which smelled of scrupulous cleaning, not smoke. Members received flu vaccinations in a lobby clinic and the parking lots were full.

But a closer look showed people hugging and talking urgently. After all, the medical center had just reopened on Oct. 25. And everyone had a story to tell.

On that first night of the fires, Judy Coffey lost her own home, driving her husband, who was recuperating from knee surgery, through falling, burning trees to safety. Dr. Weil listened in anguish on the phone as his terrified wife and daughter escaped through a wall of fire.

A Glimpse of Green

Camille Applin-Jones, RN, the medical group administrator, was evacuated from her Solano County home. Having served in the U.S. Army during Desert Storm, she likened the fear, uncertainty, and shock of the fires to war.

“I’ve seen a lot of pain and loss, but also a spirit of resilience like I’ve never seen before,” she said. “A nurse from Pediatrics said that our landscape is changed, but just over the hill you see a glimpse of green. That is a beautiful way to see a new day on the horizon.”

When the facility reopened, she recalled another happy sight: children skipping through the lobby on their way to the temporary daycare provided for staff left without child care.

Approximately 200 employees and physicians lost homes in the disaster. Even supported by emergency monies, grants, and loans from the organization, including Kaiser Permanente’s donation of $250,000 to the Red Cross, it will take a long time to rebuild homes, and longer still to rebuild lives.

“I see the amazing spirit, cooperation, support, kindness, and resilience of our community,” —Judy Coffey, RN

— Michael Shulman, MD, physician in chief for only eight days when disaster struck, returned to his evacuated home after a week, and felt “so proud and appreciative of KP’s response in the crisis.”

“All of the other medical centers came to our assistance; individuals, departments, and physicians reached out. It was a regionwide and even Programwide effort, in any and all ways. It was tremendous and it was inspiring.”

— Michael Shulman, MD
Succession Planning for Northern California’s Future Nurse Executives
By Priscilla S. Javed, DNP, RN, regional director nursing professional practice

Based on our commitment to develop future nurse leaders, two pathways have emerged to prepare high-potential candidates for Kaiser Permanente nurse executive roles. Participants identified through a talent management process are invited into one of the programs based on their preparedness for executive leadership.

Nurse Executive Accelerated Leadership Development Program (NEALDP)
The NEALDP 18-month program launched successfully in 2016. Ten participants from the first cohort celebrated program completion in July 2017. Kaiser Permanente mentors, program coaches, participants’ supervisors, and regional leadership were on hand at a recognition event to hear the accomplishments of these future and present nurse executives. Based upon the American Organization of Nurse Executives competencies, the program focuses on participants’ promotional opportunity and retention. To date, six participants received promotions, including Debbie Reitter, MSN, RN, who was selected for a chief nurse executive role.

Nurse Executive Fellows
In 2017, we were fortunate to identify two stellar Nurse Executive Fellow candidates who immediately embraced this professional opportunity to enter a 12-month fellowship that prepares nurse leaders to enter an executive role.

Amy Young, MBA, RN
Amy has been a registered nurse for 18 years, with 13 of those years embracing promotional nursing leadership opportunities. She held leadership positions within perioperative services for Kaiser Permanente along with other large health care systems in Texas. For three years, she served as a hospital nursing administrator. She is an experienced, outgoing, energetic nursing professional committed to ensuring high-quality health care, business leadership, and a healthy work environment.

Romaanetia “Ro” Lofton, DNP, RN
Ro has been a registered nurse for 15 years working in diverse inpatient and outpatient settings. Nursing leadership positions account for 13 of those years within emergency care, infection prevention, nursing administration, telemetry care, adult inpatient service line, and surgical services. She is a well-rounded, dynamic leader whose ability positively influences quality and operational metrics, regulatory survey results, teamwork, and professional relationships.

As I look toward retirement in early 2018, I have the opportunity to reflect back on my Kaiser Permanente career.

Looking Back as I Look Forward
I can still remember interviewing for my first unit manager position at Kaiser Permanente San Francisco Medical Center in 1989. I had some trepidation thinking about working for such a large organization, but quickly adapted and felt at home with the organization’s mission and leadership. I remained at San Francisco for 11 years. It was a great learning opportunity for me, given that the department encompassed primary care, specialty care, tertiary care, physician residency, nursing student clinical teaching, hospital services, and surgical services. I learned so much from all the nurses, residents, support staff, and physicians.

Stepping into Administration
In 2000, I accepted a position as the Director of Nursing Practice and Assistant Medical Group Administrator at our Richmond campus. Again, the learning opportunities were tremendous. I had the opportunity to partner with The Permanente Medical Group (TPMG) and Kaiser Foundation Hospitals leaders to work together to improve services in our emergency department, surgical services, and inpatient areas.

After four years, I moved to the TPMG regional offices as the Assistant Regional Medical Group Administrator focusing on nursing practice. A couple of years later, I transitioned to my current role as the outpatient nursing leader for TPMG and Managing Director for Medical Group Support Services. I helped clarify the scope of practice of all our outpatient staff, participated in labor relations, represented TPMG nursing in many arenas, and have worked hard to improve our overall quality of patient care.

It Takes a Village
To paraphrase Oprah, there are a couple of things I know for sure. Along this journey, I have been supported and challenged by the people with whom I’ve had the privilege to work. Everything I have done, or tried to do, has required the support of others to get to the desired result. I can’t possibly name all the people I am grateful for, but I hope you recognize yourselves in these few sentences and know how much I appreciate you.

I am so proud of nursing’s contribution to the mission of TPMG and Kaiser Permanente. I believe the future will provide additional opportunities for nursing to shape the way as we meet the needs of our patients and members. I can’t wait to be delighted by what you do next!
In 2018, Barbara Crawford, MS, RN, vice president Quality and Regulatory Services, Performance Improvement, and Behavioral Health, will begin transitioning to retirement. Over the past 33 years, Crawford’s passion for high-quality nursing care and innovation have been exemplary.

Transforming Care at the Bedside
Crawford earned her BSN at California State University, Fullerton, and her MS in nursing administration from UCSF. Early in her career, Crawford cared for the first AIDS patients, and worked with Dr. Norman Shumway, a pioneer in heart transplantation at Stanford as an ICU nurse. She served in progressive senior leadership positions in the Sacramento Valley for 14 years, and was chief operating officer at Kaiser Permanente Roseville. In Roseville, Crawford led a pilot that impacted the nursing world called “Transforming Care at the Bedside.” She championed the implementation of the enterprise-wide standard for patient- and family-centered communication known as the “whiteboard,” as well as the concept for Rapid Response Teams. Crawford has authored numerous articles on clinical effectiveness, patient safety, and multifocal clinical performance improvement.

Crawford significantly contributed to the care described in a July 2016 article in Healthcare Management Review that identified “Kaiser’s quality advantage is its nursing practice that has flowed historically from its commitment to patient-centered care.”

Thinking Globally
Social service and building better communities is something Crawford and her husband Doug have modeled for their family as well. There are two RNs, three physicians, and one biomedical engineer in their immediate family. Her daughter Marisa will be a chief pediatric resident in 2018 and daughter Leah is an ICU/ED RN. Retirement offers Crawford the opportunity to continue her work with her daughters’ international medical missions, dispensing medications, providing wound care, breathing treatments, and teaching medical students core clinical competencies. In 2017 Crawford completed her fourth trip to Kenya and her first trip to Nepal.

A Fond Farewell
Please join us in extending our heartfelt gratitude to Barbara Crawford for her many years of devoted service. We wish her well in all her future plans: to travel, to pursue more international missions, and to nurture her longstanding love of trail horseback riding.

On the Cover:
LINDA OBI, RN