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# Bloodlines

Community Blood Services Newsletter

*Life Shared. Life Saved.*

## A New Year, a New Donor Center



Orrell, Robin, Kari-Ann, Rayda

On March 3, 2014 our new donor center opened its doors at [One West Ridgewood Avenue](#), practically around the corner from the Linwood Avenue site and still close to Route 17. Early indications are that the staff and donors all like the new space, especially the open flow and bright natural light in the window-lined donor room. This move came less than a year after our last big move to Montvale and, thanks to our Community Blood Services family working together, both transitions went smoothly.

Located on the second floor of the Bergen Medical Center, the new donor room is 2,700 square feet and features three registration kiosks, two screening rooms and nine donor beds. Four parking spots have been designated specifically for our donors (3 in the front, 1 in the back), and there is an intercom in the rear of the building which donors can use to announce their arrival to staff in the donor room on Sundays when the medical center is closed.

The medical building houses a variety of specialists and private medical practices, a surgical and ambulatory center and a pharmacy. An MRI facility will soon be opening at the medical center. Recruitment will be introducing our center to the other tenants and working to educate them about the importance of blood donation in hopes they will help spread the word to their staff and clients so we can attract new blood donors to the new center.



Rayda with first donor Oscar Villalobos

Noting that the blood center has been serving the Paramus community for 60 years, Dr. Todd said, "I am looking forward to maintaining the same standards of excellence for our donors at the new center so we continue to ensure we meet the needs of all of the patients in our community hospitals."

# Spotlight

## Reference Lab



**Welcome to Pearl Bongolan MD**, senior manager of technical services for the Reference Lab, who joined our team in July. Pearl has a distinguished background, including managing a hospital laboratory overseas and working at Montefiore Medical Center's blood bank and Hematopoietic Progenitor Cell (stem cell) laboratory.

"I love working in the laboratory. I find comfort in structure and technicalities," said Pearl, who lives in Chestnut Ridge, New York. "Working at Community Blood Services provides the optimal mix of public health, medical technology and just the right pinch of clinical involvement."

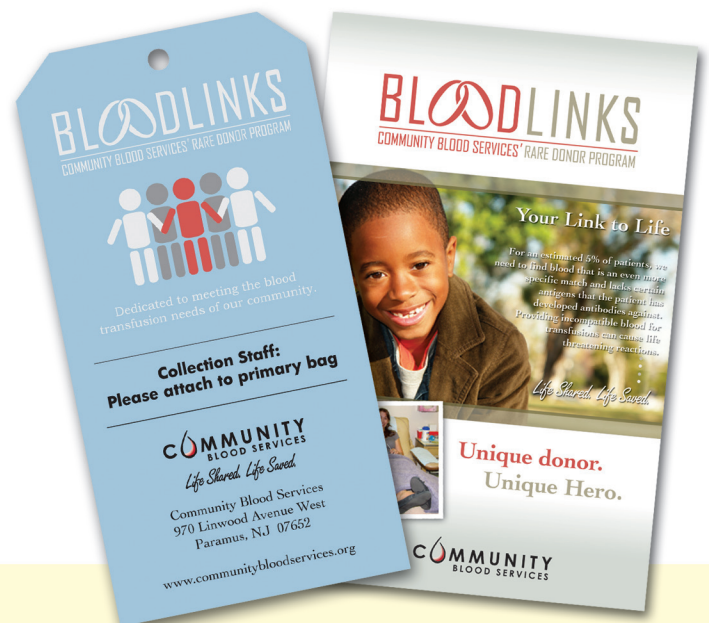
### DID YOU KNOW?

The **Immunohematology Reference Laboratory** tests for a panel of the most common antigens. The absence of antigens in red cells is expressed differently across ethnicities. For example, in the Duffy Blood group systems, the Fy(a+b-) phenotype is most commonly seen in Asians (91% in Chinese, 82% in Japanese, 69% in Thai) while the Fy(a-b-) is very common in Blacks (68%) but very rare in Caucasians, and almost never seen in individuals of Asian descent.

BloodLinks, our Unique Donor, Unique Hero program, ensures all seriously ill patients who need uniquely matched units for transfusion have access to tested and matched blood to meet their special needs. These donors have a combination of negative antigens that make them suitable for patients with multiple antibodies. Patients who have received multiple transfusions can develop multiple antibodies and the combination of these antibodies may present a challenge in finding suitable donors for those patients.

Our donor samples are screened to identify donors with a combination of negative antigens (phenotypically-matched) that are suitable for transfusion into patients with multiple antibodies. The rare blood unit inventory is continuously replenished through the help of our BloodLinks program which freezes very rare blood units before their expiration dates. The BloodLinks program continues to grow steadily, more than tripling its numbers in recent months!

The **HLA Laboratory** plays a crucial role in meeting the needs of platelet recipients that have not responded to transfusion of regular platelets and may have a chronic need for HLA-matched platelets. Requests for HLA-matched platelets are also met through BloodLinks donors who match the HLA antigens of the patients in need.



The BloodLinks rare donor program now has **1,963** members! Our **Special Delivery** donor club for Type O negative cmv negative donors currently has **519** donor members, while the **Most Valuable Plasma** club for multi-plasma donors has **69** members. Our **Donorplus Rewards Program** has **4,670** members.

**Learn more about our donor clubs  
by visiting our website at  
[www.communitybloodservices.com](http://www.communitybloodservices.com).**

# Department News & Notes

## Kathleen McKenna Named Vice President of Operations



On November 11, 2013, Kathleen “Kathi” McKenna MLT(ASCP), CQIA(ASQ) was named vice president of operations here at Community Blood Services. The organizational change is an effort to ensure consistency in the operational management of Community Blood Services.

Kathi, who has been at the blood center for almost five years, previously was vice president of Quality Assurance at the center. Prior to that, she worked at Datascope Corp. in Mahwah (NJ) and St. Joseph’s Healthcare System in Paterson (NJ).

“Kathi previously had tremendous success in revamping the quality assurance program at our blood center, which led to more successful outcomes during regulatory and accreditation inspections,” said Dr. Dennis Todd, CEO. “I am confident that operations under Kathi will move the company forward in a positive direction.”

The vice president of operations is responsible for hands-on management of Clinical Services, Hospital Services, Recruitment, IT, Facilities and The HLA bone marrow Registry. In her new role, Kathi will provide the leadership, management and vision necessary to ensure the company has proper operational controls and administrative and reporting procedures in place to effectively service the blood center’s customers and ensure the organization’s financial strength and efficiency.

Jumping into her new role, Kathi has been working with her teams individually and together to define the various roles they play in helping the blood center to achieve success.

“My first objective is to foster teamwork and cohesion between the various departments to ensure we are always striving to meet the mission and vision of the blood center as they relate to the community, organizations and hospital clients we serve,” Kathi noted.

## Clinical Services

### New Software Automates Donor Eligibility and Optimizes Donations from Blood Donors

The Vista Information System implemented by Clinical Services this past December is a state-of-the-art software application that automates donor eligibility processes and determines a donor’s optimal donation based on our inventory needs. The system maintains donor and procedure-run data in a database that interfaces with our Trima Accel® machines by capturing, storing and evaluating data from each Trima Accel® collection. Staff interacts with the Vista system using desktop or laptop computers, as well as barcode scanners, on the Trima Accel® device.

With centralized control of Trima Accel® devices, visibility into each collection and actual lab data for the products to be entered is available on a real-time basis. The Vista system increases the ability to collect the **right products, at the right time, from the right donor.**

Managing our blood needs with Vista not only allows us to identify the optimal collection for each donor, but helps increase productivity, streamline the donation process, save time, and enhance donor safety and overall regulatory compliance. Thanks to this new process technicians should be able to spend less time with forms and more time with faces – focusing on **“people over paperwork.”**

“This new program will efficiently serve both our hospital clients and our donors,” said Denise Ross, senior manager in Clinical Services.

She cited the crucial role that the clinical services staff played in making the transition to Vista as seamless as possible. “Hasan Baybagan, quality control coordinator, along with Mary Conrad, education manager, and our team of donor technicians worked very hard to implement this program with the help of the IT department.”



## Recruitment Department Services

### Urgent Appeals Lead to More Drives and High School Donations

Winter is typically a time of blood shortages, but this winter with its daily “snow dumps” had an extraordinary impact on blood collections, with many mobile drives cancelled and donors rescheduling their appointments. Collection totals from December 2013 through February 2014 stand at 6,903 units of red cells and 1,705 units of platelets.

According to Grace Gehrke, senior manager of recruitment, approximately 30% of those collections came from drives held in our high schools. From December to March, 35 high school drives will have been hosted, accounting for almost 2,200 units of blood collected, she said. On February 28th North Bergen High School held its largest drive ever with 311 students registered and 242 units collected.

“The clinical services staff is terrific and certainly helps to ensure the great results at these high school drives,” Grace said.

With many appeals going out for community organizations to host drives, recruitment saw an increase in calls from members of the community wanting to organize blood drives.

Seventeen new drives on the calendar include: Jasmine Cubuk drive, Garfield, NJ; Chilton Memorial Hospital, Pompton Plains, NJ; Clifton City Hall; Alpine Tilden-Tenakill Lodge #77; Metropolitan Center, East Rutherford, NJ; Dumont High School; In Honor Of Thomas Minervini drive, Wyckoff, NJ; Stop and Shop Wayne (monthly recurring drive); Highland Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, Middletown, NY; Swift Electrical Supply, Teterboro, NJ; SBS Group USA, Edison, NJ; Weichert Realtors, Pompton Plains, NJ; Molly Duggan drive (for Molly’s Girl Scout Gold Award), Ridgewood, NJ; Paramus Volunteer Ambulance Corp (monthly recurring drive); Phi Sigma Sigma at William Paterson University, Wayne,

NJ; Anne Rotondo drive, Nutley, NJ; and the Girl Scouts SU67 at the Middlebush Fire Department, Somerset, NJ.

Anyone interested in hosting a community drive is encouraged to contact our recruitment department at **201-389-0409**. The Referral Reward Program needs **YOU!**



Cliffside Park High School



Hackensack High School

## Human Resources Corner

### Take Advantage of 403b Contributions

Consider contributing to a 403b account today and make an investment in your future!

Your retirement is a key part of your employee benefits package and we hope that you take advantage of this opportunity. When you enroll and save through the Community Blood Services’ sponsored 403b plan you can save and lower your current tax obligation; any investment earnings accumulate tax-free and YOU decide how to invest and manage your own account. Our plan, administered through ING, is for employees regularly scheduled to work 20 hours or more a week.

Please see Human Resources if you would like more information and/or an enrollment packet. If you would like to change your enrollment amount, you can find a form on the intranet under [Resources/Forms Online/Payroll/ING Contribution Form](#).

Employees are also welcome to contact our 403b consultant, Brian Saxton, at **973-993-2504** with additional questions.

Whatever your financial situation is today, examining your retirement planning strategy now could help you reach your retirement objectives tomorrow!

## Community Affairs

### Local Media Helps With Appeals

Seems every time we turned around this winter we were making an urgent appeal for blood donations. Routine snowstorms and frigid temps caused a shortage not just locally but nationwide. Donors would not be able to heed our calls to action without the many media partners working closely with us to get the message out to the community. This winter we have had help multiple times from our local daily newspaper ([The Record of Hackensack](#)) and many of northjersey.com’s weekly newspapers, as well as radio ([1010WINS](#), [CBS880](#), [WGHT](#)) and TV ([News 12NJ](#), [Verizon FIOS](#), [WMBC-TV](#)). More than 100 articles about the center’s activities and blood and marrow drives have run in various local newspapers between December 2013 and February 2014.

## Community Affairs (continued)

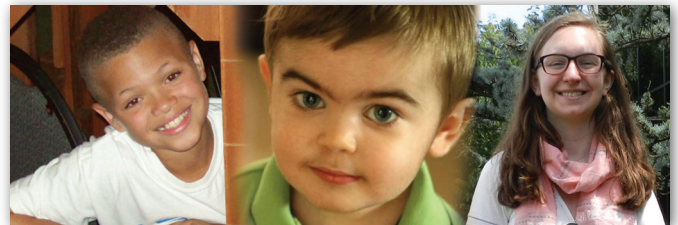
### Help Spread Our Message – Connect to Our Social Media

Ongoing community outreach overseen by Community Affairs uses multiple online marketing and social media platforms, including our website ([www.communitybloodservices.com](http://www.communitybloodservices.com)), Facebook (3,200 Likes), Twitter (300 followers) and Instagram (100 followers) to stay connected to the communities we serve. YOU can help those numbers jump even higher by “liking” us on Facebook, connecting with us at [twitter@cbsblood](mailto:twitter@cbsblood) and posting photos on [instagram@communitybloodservices](mailto:instagram@communitybloodservices). Please share our stories and urgent blood need appeals on your own social media pages to help spread the word and ask your friends, family members, blood drive coordinators, hospital clients, church members, or the organizations you belong to or work with, to do the same. In the future, we expect the social media world at CBS to include Pinterest, an updated more-modern looking website, and maybe even our own blog!



### More “Faces” Needed – YOU Can Help!

What is one of the best ways to bond with our community and attract new donors, as well as ensure our current donors keep coming back? By connecting them through personal stories from the “Faces” of our organization – the patients we help, the donors who take time to provide lifesaving blood and blood products, the groups who run blood drives with us. Patient and donor stories often come from our very own employees who set up and work at blood and marrow drives, recruit our donors, interact with our hospital clients and speak to community members. Whenever you come across a potentially compelling story please ask the patient/donor, drive coordinator or family member involved if they would be willing to share their story and be a CBS “Face.” If so, pass their contact information onto Community Affairs at [karenf@cbsblood.org](mailto:karenf@cbsblood.org) or Ext. 1428 and we will do the rest!



Shayne

Owen

Eleanor

## HLA Registry

### Hundreds Register at Local Bone Marrow Drives

The HLA Registry team has had an active fall and winter. Increased recruitment and registration at recent bone marrow drives will move the registry into Tier 3 in the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) at the end of March.

The “Friends of Anthony Daniels” drive in Ridgewood (NJ) was record-breaking, with more than 500 individuals registering to help 23-year-old Anthony, who has Hodgkin’s lymphoma and is waiting to find his match. Several drives held for 2-year-old Owen Hogan, the son of a NYC firefighter who is recuperating from his transplant in January, added 209 potential donors to the registry. Rutgers University’s recent Phi Sigma Sigma drive in Anthony’s name, coordinated by Odalys Castano, added another 70. Drives were also

held for 15-year-old Brittany Santana, a student from Woodbridge who needs a bone marrow transplant to cure her acute myeloid leukemia, and “Eco” Ed Schwartz of Ridgewood. Both are in treatment and have found their matches!

The current focus is on college drives to reach the 20-somethings who are the most sought after donors. Another drive will be held at Rutgers in April, and drives are planned at Raritan Valley Community College, Fairleigh Dickinson University in Hackensack, Montclair State University, William Paterson University and Moravian College.

In addition, The HLA search team reports four PBSC donors so far have been collected here in Montvale to help transplant patients, with three additional collections pending.

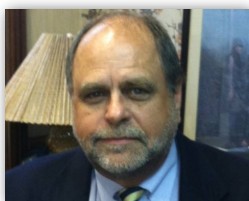


Odalys and Anthony at Rutgers



Jason, Matt and Joe are new bone marrow registry members. Jason and Joe also are the most talented snowboarders in the company – a title that used to belong to Casey Todd.

# News Around The House



**Dr. Dennis Todd** was recently elected to the Board of Trustees of The Icla da Silva Foundation and reappointed to a third term on the National Marrow Donor Program's (NMDP) Board of Directors.



Recruitment Account Manager **Casey Todd**, his wife Erin and big brother Jack are thrilled to announce the arrival of Emma, born on February 21. Emma weighed 6 pounds 14 ounces and measured 19½ inches .



**Robin Gathers**, administrative assistant in Telerecruitment, was thrilled to welcome her first granddaughter, Skyla "Devine" Monroe Wardell, who was born on July 30, 2013.



**Evah Yikona-Spaulling**, medical technologist in the Reference Lab, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy named Adonis on September 17, 2013.



**Stephanie Rodriguez**, Components technician, and her husband Chris welcomed baby Lincoln Joseph on December 20, 2013. Lincoln weighed 7 pounds 10 ounces and measured 20 inches.



**Ray Lombardo**, IT system validator, is a lifelong blood donor with 190 donations to his credit. Ray and his wife Nancy welcomed their seventh grandson, Micah, on March 22, 2013. Their grandsons range in age all the way to 18!



**Hemangini Ben Vyas**, the lead technologist in Components, became certified as a Certified Quality Auditor (CQA) from the Society for Quality (ASQ) in December 2013. Congratulations, Hema, for a job well done!



**"Grandpa" Ray Lombardo** white water rafting in the Lehigh Valley, August 2013.

## Employees Honored At Anniversary Breakfast

Human Resources hosted a breakfast for some VIPs on Tuesday, January 21, 2014. We salute the following Community Blood Services employees for their years of loyal employment.



### 20 years

Kathy Young - The HLA Registry

### 10 years

Serpil Baybagan - Clinical Services  
 Paramjit Kaur - Clinical Services  
 Joanne Garlick - Donor Management  
 Jerry Pagotaisidro - Clinical Services  
 Susana Chiriboga - Stem Cell Division  
 Inge Prinz - Hospital Services  
 Juan Villavicencio - Hospital Services  
 David Sobel - Telerecruitment

### 5 years

Rosario Molina - Stem Cell Division  
 Carl Oerke - Stem Cell Division  
 Cynthia Fermin - Clinical Services  
 Angela Gallego - Clinical Services  
 Juana Then - Clinical Services  
 Kristin Soravilla - Facilities  
 Liz Ramesdorfer - Telerecruitment

## Welcome to the following new employees...

**Grace Gehrke**, senior manager, Recruitment; **Julio Rivera**, Transportation; **Mehr Choudhary**, medical technologist, Reference Lab; **Soha Mahmoud**, technician, Components; **Nadine Darwiche**, technician, Components; **Tracy Donald-Rose**, customer service representative, Telerecruitment; **Tyyab Beale**, Transportation, CDL driver; **Margaret Callaghan**, phlebotomist; **Amanda Van Winkle**, phlebotomist; **Cathy Frassetto**, search specialist, The HLA Registry; **Anthony Nasonte**, Transportation; **Sindy Simoes**, technician, Quality Assurance; **Shani Di Farnecio**, search specialist, The HLA Registry; **Vesna Bernal**, customer service representative, Telerecruitment

## A Doctor's Labor of Love: Her Pilgrimage Helps Typhoon Victims in Philippines

**Johannah Caturan** was born and raised in the Philippines by her medical missionary parents - her father, a doctor, and her mother, a nurse.

**“Growing up I learned that material things do not replace life’s value.”**

“I learned that by relying on my faith I could live a well-balanced life. The stark realization that my parents impacted others so powerfully is the primary reason I became a doctor,” Johanna said.

On November 8, 2013, super typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda, the most powerful storm on record, hit the Philippines, killing at least 6,000 people. Later

that month Johannah, a doctor like her father, joined him on a two-week pilgrimage, visiting devastated areas in Samar, Leyte and Cebu whose communication and electricity networks were damaged by the storms.

“As we arrived at each destination, we were besieged by large groups of displaced villagers, each wanting to be seen right away by a doctor. It was overwhelming but my dad and I, with the help of a few volunteers, managed to see everyone in need,” she recounted.

Johannah and her medical team were able to help more than 1,000 families and treat nearly 500 patients.

“This time spent was a revelation for me. I am now even more grateful for

the basics of life. I am grateful that, as a physician, I am able to mend bones and heal illness. But most of all, I am grateful that my parents, through their example, gave me the greatest gift of all. They opened my eyes to a world in need and gave me the faith to find a way to help,” said Johannah.

Community Blood Services is grateful for Johanna, who works in our Stem Cell Division as a laboratory aide.



## Community Blood Services Employees Celebrate Halloween!



Deana, Jeannette, Colleen, Sarah



Maureen, Faye, Joanne



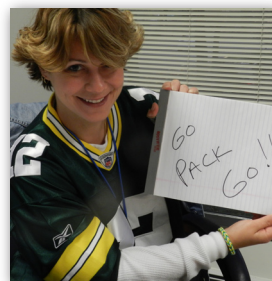
Cindy, Barbara, Steve, Connie, Diane



Hema, Stephanie, Angela



Karen, Janet



Misty



Kim



Matt

**CALLING ALL EMPLOYEES...THE REFERRAL REWARD PROGRAM NEEDS YOU!**

The need for first-time blood drives and bone marrow drives is always present and we know that often the most successful blood and bone marrow drives are those organized through referrals. We encourage all employees to refer a new sponsor group (church, corporation, school, community group, etc.) and earn \$50! New sponsor groups are defined as first-time blood drive and bone marrow drive sponsors or those who have not run a blood drive or bone marrow drive within the past three years.

The KidzKare program also needs your help with blood drives sponsored through elementary and middle schools where you might know a teacher or school librarian willing to participate as a coordinator.

The school gets one book for every lifesaving blood donation and you get \$50 for the referral!

If you have a new sponsor group to refer, please contact [Human Resources](#) at ext. 1422 for more information.



**Two Roads Diverged**

Going home after work one dark frosty night  
I remembered an email, insistent yet polite,  
inviting me to a local school blood drive  
"please give of yourself," help keep someone alive.  
I was tired and drained, feeling sorry for me,  
but I realized how selfish we sometimes can be.  
When I arrived at the crossroad -  
my home to the left,  
blood drive to the right -  
I took the road less traveled that night.

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**Garrett Allen**  
Call Center Manager

*Life Shared. Life Saved.*