

ACHE/WP Newsletter



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WELCOME!

ACHE of Western Pennsylvania (ACHE/WP) is excited to bring you this newsletter, the third edition of our updates for local chapter members. With this means of communication, we hope to keep members informed of ACHE/WP initiatives, events, local and national healthcare management news, and member highlights.

The key to a successful newsletter is making it useful to its readers. As you continue to receive this publication, please feel free to **provide feedback** about its contents – what is important to you, what you’re missing, and how it can be improved.

Message from the President

We’ve had some wonderful weather here in Western PA, and I hope you’ve had time to take advantage of all that our area had to offer during those warm summer months.

I also must ask....Have you been getting all you can out of your ACHEWP membership? Do you often take advantage of the rich learning and networking opportunities available to you through our organization?

There’s an old adage that says, “it’s not what you know, it’s who you know”...but I think success oftentimes depends on BOTH! Indeed, involvement in professional groups and societies such as ours can provide a wealth of resources for career advancement. And in today’s healthcare industry, developing a network of colleagues (the ‘who’) is evermore important to both personal and professional growth. So get out and get to know your fellow members and other colleagues at our upcoming social events...

Education (the ‘what’) is equally important. Everyone should take the opportunity when possible to pursue informal learning through networking and speaker sessions, or even formal education through advanced degrees or societies that offer fellowships, like ACHE. This Fall, we’ll host a Professional Development pre-session workshop on how to become a Fellow. Our speaker will provide an overview of the process, study tips, and more on what to expect when applying for Fellowship with ACHE national.

ACHEWP offers many events to provide you with the means and opportunity to develop important connections and gain education on the hot topics that are in the news and on our minds daily.

As always, if you have suggestions or ideas for an educational session or other event, or if you’d like to become involved at any level of *ACHE of Western Pennsylvania*, I encourage you! The benefits of membership is what you make of it—get involved!!

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Karen Hartman
President, ACHE of Western PA

Member Spotlight: Thomas White, FACHE

By Edward A. Guzik, FACHE



Pictured above (from left to right): Dr. Mark Rubino, Tom White, Michelle Robertson, and Dr. Peter Lund

Want to Know Who's a Member?

If you would like to know who is a member of ACHE/WP, just log on to the chapter website at westpa.ache.org, click the "Membership" tab at the top, and then click the "ACHE/WP Members 2007" link on the left-hand side of the page.

Call for Committee Members

If you would like to get involved behind-the-scenes in ACHE/WP, several opportunities await! We are always in need of fresh minds to help enhance our offerings and make our local chapter more valuable to its membership. Please contact the following committee chairs with interest:

Membership & Marketing:

Amy LaMothe (alamothe@vha.com)

Programming:

Rich Longo (ralong@aol.com)

Nominating:

Sam Friede (friede+@pitt.edu)

Student Task Force:

Heather Barr (barrhp@gmail.com)

ACHE Advancement:

Michelle Robertson

(michelle.robertson@hamot.org)

Sponsorship:

Janet Cipullo

(janet.cipullo@jeffersonregional.com)

New Castle, PA, has undergone many changes over its two-plus centuries and is now in the process of revitalizing. Upon entering the campus of Jameson Hospital on Wilmington Avenue, however, an impressive modern hospital surfaces that has weathered the community's economic challenges and seems to belie its surroundings. The reasons for this dichotomy can be found in the tenure of Thomas White, FACHE, who has been President & CEO, of Jameson Health System for the past 34 years.

Personal – Tom is welcoming, pleasant and engaging, and a first-rate storyteller. He is a man on several missions with a long list of mountains yet to be climbed. Although he spoke freely of retiring soon "to the next phase of my life", his focus on the well-being of Jameson Health System continues undeterred. Indications of his longevity are on display in his office, which is comfortable and richly decorated with plaques, awards, and travel memorabilia. Many photos with signatures and well-wishes adorn the walls and shelves. One of Tom's concerns is that he will need to create an archive for all of his "stuff" when he leaves.

Tom White was born and raised in Farrell, PA, in the western part of the state near Hermitage, just a few miles from the Ohio border. Like many similar towns of the era, Farrell was a steel town whose principle employer was once Sharon Steel. Growing up in Farrell presented kids with a wide range of potential directions – not all of them desirable. Tom states that a kid could go "either good or bad" back then, with the outcome often depending on one's home life and upbringing. Tom and his brothers were fortunate in that they received lots of support and nudging in the right direction by their mother. It took him seven years, but with her encouragement, Tom eventually earned his degree from Youngstown State while working in the Housekeeping Department at Sharon General.

Spurred on by a mentor, Tom went to earn his MHA from the Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH) at the University of Pittsburgh. During the week, he attended GSPH and lived in a modest one-room apartment in Oakland, driving home on weekends. After a year's administrative residency at Albany Medical Center, he returned to western PA as Assistant Executive Director of Jameson Memorial Hospital in 1972. Following the untimely death of the hospital's President in 1973, Tom was offered the position. And the rest, as the expression goes, is history.

Family - Tom met his wife Rose - "Rosie" as he refers to her with great affection - while both were working at Sharon General Hospital. He was running the Housekeeping Department and she was a licensed physical therapist. No longer actively practicing, she now focuses her energies on volunteering her support of the Pittsburgh Symphony and other artistic and charitable endeavors. Tom and Rosie have traveled extensively and are planning to see much more of the world when he eventually retires.

Sports, fitness, and pastimes – Once an avid golfer sporting an 11 handicap, guiding Jameson to success has left Tom with precious little time to devote to his favorite pastime. So, one of his top near-term goals is to get back to golf in earnest, and hone his game to its former glory. Also, Tom has always taken pride in his physical self and is designing a plan to part with some of the evidence of years of Board, medical staff, and awards dinners.

Surprises – In spite of his highly visible position, gregarious nature, and love of speaking and teaching, people might be surprised to know that Tom is a bit of an introvert and a very private person when not "being CEO". While he has had public speaking training and has learned how to look calm and cool, he continues to get nervous before every talk, and it still takes him some time to get in his comfort zone.

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Member Spotlight (continued)

Career overview and highlights – Hospital administrators once enjoyed lengthy careers at their institutions. Tom is one of the last of this fading breed, as he is the longest tenured active administrator in the state. Tom relates his beginnings with a story. After joining Jameson in 1972, the CEO died suddenly. Although he was only there for one year, Tom was surprised to be considered for the job and even more so that he was selected as the new CEO. Sometime later, he inquired why “a new guy like him” was chosen. The response was that it was because he did not focus on the value to him. Instead, he recognized the importance of the opportunity to all concerned and the need for him to make a firm commitment to success. Tom made that commitment and has never looked back.

A brief summary of notable events at Jameson is as follows: In 2002, Jameson acquired the assets of the former St. Francis community hospital, including related human services, educational, and senior programs, and became an integrated health system. The System is comprised of six health care companies providing:

- patient care at two campuses and extensive ambulatory care services
- high-level specialty services including a cancer treatment center, a cardiac / angioplasty center, physical rehabilitation, and a psychiatric care program
- many community health programs including home health care; long-term care, and assisted living
- professional training through a School of Nursing as well as a School of Radiology

Financially, the System has grown from a net revenue of \$50 million ten years ago to over \$105 million today. The financial condition remains stable due to expense control, productivity increases, successful negotiation of managed care contracts, and increases in private philanthropy. The Medical Staff has grown in size and specialty, numbering over 150, not including numerous allied health professionals. The System has also successfully developed tertiary affiliations in western PA with major metropolitan teaching programs. Presently, the Health System provides services to approximately 90% of the Lawrence County population.

Tom relates that there were several lean periods along the way and, while similar hospitals were closing or merging in the '90s, it was necessary to consider the pros and cons of merging or affiliating with one of the major regional health systems. However, he and his Board made the commitment that to best serve the community of Lawrence County, it was necessary to keep Jameson independent, while creating selective strategic partnerships in order to provide the desired level of care excellence to its patients.

When asked to relate his proudest accomplishment, Tom asserted that he was most proud of helping to develop many employee and management careers, such that they have been willing to stay on and follow him for over 30 years as a team—a team which now numbers over 1,500 people.

The future – A notable era will draw to a close in about a year when Tom retires. While this has been announced, there is no question that he is still in charge and he maintains good relationships with his Board and medical staff. He wants to stay involved and is working on how best to do so.

Upcoming Events in 2007

The **ACHE/WP Program Committee** continues to strive for timely and useful programming for the chapter membership. 2007 was no exception!

Please stay tuned and check our website for more details on upcoming events! <http://westpa.ache.org>

REMAINING 2007 EVENT SCHEDULE

Networking Outings	Oct (TBD)
“The Pursuit of Excellence” & Annual Meeting of Membership	Nov 5

To register for an event or to become a member of ACHE/WP, visit our website at westpa.ache.org.

He would like to participate in major projects on a pro bono basis, recognizing that his experience could be enormously helpful, but knowing that once one steps down from power, he will no longer be *the* driving factor of Jameson Health System.

Goals – Tom has enough aspirations to keep him and Rosie busy for years to come. Examples include:

- Wanting to become computer-literate, which would allow him to recount a wealth of personal anecdotes and life experiences
- Learning how to author a book so that he may preserve his vast experiences, an endeavor requiring a different approach and style than writing professional articles and papers.
- Learning how to paint - to translate the scenes from his imagination to canvas
- Lecturing in Thailand would be a desirable option. (A former Jameson pediatrician from Thailand returned to his roots to serve his people. He invited Tom to deliver a talk to a Thai hospital group that was well-received and which subsequently led to a speaking engagement in China.)
- Visiting every state and Presidential Library, an obsession of sorts that developed after visiting the Roosevelt’s Library at Hyde Park, NY, many years ago.

Closing advice – When asked for advice to fledgling health care executives, Tom related another story about becoming CEO. As a young and inexperienced administrator, when offered the position, he asked a Board member “What if I fail?” The Board member wisely replied, “What if you succeed?” Tom’s advice, therefore, is:

- Secret of success is a combination of hard work, consistency, and education
- You must aspire to success through constant re-education
- Never stop being a student of both life and your profession; it is very important to join and remain active in your professional society
- Be patient but not complacent
- Set achievable goals and accomplish each one – one at a time
- Be fiercely loyal to your institution

The membership of the ACHE/WP wishes Tom White all the best in his exciting future endeavors!

ACHE/WP Scholarships



Pictured Above: Jessica Dornin and John Zaharoff

ACHE of Western Pennsylvania would like to congratulate Jessica Dornin and John Zaharoff for being selected as winners of the 2007 ACHE/WP Congress Scholarship!

ACHE National News

Experience the Benefits of Being a Mentor

Our legacy lives on through those lives we touch. Mentoring is one way to give back to your profession. As a mentor, you can help discover and cultivate talent, improve your coaching skills and use your experience to influence future leaders.

ACHE's Leadership Mentoring Network [http://www.ache.org/newclub/career/MentoringNetwork/mentor_network.cfm] makes it easy for executives to fit mentoring into the fast pace of today's workplace. ACHE matches mentors and protégés and provides helpful resources. Since mentors in the Leadership Mentoring Network typically guide protégés through phone and e-mail interaction, geographic proximity is unnecessary.

This affiliates-only service has matched more than 450 mentoring pairs and is now seeking 100 experienced executives to serve as mentors. To become a mentor, simply fill out the online mentor profile form [<http://www.ache.org/see/mentor>]. For more information, call ACHE's Healthcare Executive Career Resource Center at (312) 424-9444.

Prove You're an Innovator

The 2008 Congress on Healthcare Leadership can be your site to feature your talent and creativity. Consider sharing a management innovation you have introduced in your organization. Innovations address wide-ranging subjects such as improving quality, enhancing customer service, reducing costs and increasing revenues. To learn how you can contribute to the 2008 Management Innovations Poster Session and to see the 2007 Poster Session, visit [ache.org](http://www.ache.org).

For more information and submission instructions, contact Peter Weil at pweil@ache.org or (312) 424-9440. The submission deadline is January 15, 2008.

Advancement Application Deadlines

If you are interested in becoming board certified in healthcare management as an ACHE Fellow, let us recognize you at the 2008 Convocation ceremony. Submit your completed Fellow application (including supporting materials) by November 1, 2007. Sit for and pass the Board of Governors Exam, meet the tenure, continuing education and healthcare management requirements by December 31. *Please note: Applications must be complete and all advancement criteria must be met by December 31 to meet the Convocation deadline.* For more information on these deadlines, call the Division of Membership at (312) 424-9400. You also may go to the Credentialing area of [ache.org](http://www.ache.org).

Leader-to-Leader Program

Encourage your colleagues to join ACHE or earn a credential and you'll enhance their professional development and invest in the future of your professional organization. When you recruit a new Member or Fellow, you earn one point toward rewards like an ACHE gift certificate, a Waterman pen, fleece sweatshirt and many other stylish logo items. With ACHE's Leader-to-Leader Program you can redeem your points anytime, even with just one point. Visit the Join ACHE area of [ache.org](http://www.ache.org) or contact the Division of Membership at (312) 424-9400 for more information.