

A Message from



JANE MAKSOD, RN, MPA

Senior Vice President and Chief
Human Resources Officer, Mount Sinai
Health System

Dear Faculty, Colleagues, and Friends:

Summer in the city is marked by throngs of tourists, bustling farmers' markets, the peaceful vibrancy of the park, and the molten colors of a Hudson River sunset. This is a season to live outdoors, relax, and spend time with family and friends. In June, July, and August I particularly enjoy exploring different neighborhoods and dining al fresco, typically in the company of my beloved dog Ginger. We have logged many miles together over the years.

Whether it is cycling in the morning or running after work, preparing a simple meal using seasonal vegetables, or sitting for meditation, a regular wellness practice is priceless. By making space to replenish ourselves, we can become ambassadors for a balanced life and spread the word to our community.

This issue of Mount Sinai Calm and Fit highlights Mount Sinai Beth Israel (MSBI) leadership and employees. Barbara

continued on page 7 >



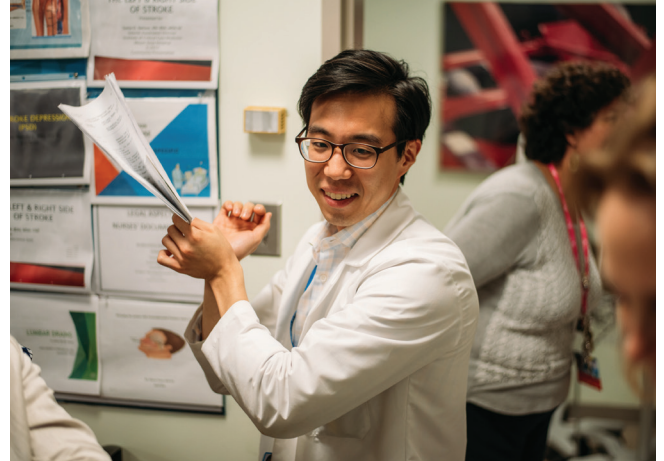
The Chi Cart

An Oasis of Calm in the Midst of a Busy Shift

If you work at The Mount Sinai Hospital or Mount Sinai Beth Israel, you may have experienced the Chi Cart. Developed in 2013 by chaplains in the Department of Spiritual Care and Education at The Mount Sinai Hospital, the Chi Cart provides staff with an opportunity to take a break during their busy work day without having to leave their work stations or interrupt patient care. Additionally, the program provides tea and a snack along with calming music and aromatherapy.

continued on page 2 >

*More than 5,600 staff members
have experienced the Chi Cart at
The Mount Sinai Hospital since 2013*



The word chi (pronounced chee) is taken from Chinese philosophy and can be translated as energy flow, life force, or breath. The Chi Cart invites staff to pause, breathe, and rebalance. It is often used in work areas following critical incidents, where staff are feeling challenged or employees are mourning. Because the cart itself is small and mobile, the Chi Cart can be flexibly adapted to many different work areas in the hospital.

More than 5,600 staff members have experienced the Chi Cart at The Mount Sinai Hospital since 2013 and it has become a service used by the ICARE team. In August 2016, the Department of Spiritual Care and Education expanded the program to MSBI, where the Chi Cart has now reached more than 1,000 staff in clinical and non-clinical work areas. A third Chi Cart launched in April 2017 to serve staff at Mount Sinai Downtown Union Square.

For more information about the Chi Cart, contact: 4calm@mountsinai.org.

▪ By **Maggie Keogh, M.Ed.**, Staff Chaplain,
Mount Sinai Hospital



*“I have lost **50 pounds** since I joined the wellness program last November. I have more energy. I feel well and happy!”*

Meet Mount Sinai Beth Israel’s Wellness Ambassador:

Arlisa Brown

Mount Sinai Fit caught up with Arlisa Brown, Assistant Coordinator in the Department of Medicine at Mount Sinai Beth Israel, in front of Fierman Hall. Ms. Brown was about to begin her 30-minute lunchtime walk with her co-worker and Mount Sinai Beth Israel nutritionist, Jennifer Kartashevsky, RD, CDE.

Mount Sinai Fit: Which wellness services do you participate in and what motivated you to select them?

Arlisa Brown: I actively participate in several free wellness services offered to Mount Sinai Beth Israel employees. I was motivated to participate in wellness offerings that would help me achieve my personal health and weight loss goals. Currently, I participate in Transform with Blue Mesa Health, a personalized digital diabetes prevention program, with my Beth Israel colleagues. As participants we received a free Fitbit, a wireless scale, a health coach, and a mobile app with great information about nutrition, exercise, and mindfulness. I also see the personal nutritionist, Jennifer Kartashevsky, and I exercise in the employee gym on 3 Bernstein four or five days per week.

Mount Sinai Fit: It is amazing that you take advantage of so many of the wellness services offered to Mount Sinai Beth Israel employees. What lifestyle changes have you made as a result of participating in these wellness offerings?

Arlisa Brown: I have changed my eating habits. Now I eat protein with every meal and have added non-starchy green vegetables and salad to my plate. I only drink water and I walk for at least 30 minutes, five times a week.

Mount Sinai Fit: Have you noticed a difference in how you feel since you have started the wellness programs? Did any of your results surprise you?

Arlisa Brown: I have lost 50 pounds since I joined the wellness program last November. I have more energy. I feel well and happy! I am definitely more focused and conscious of the foods I put into my body. As for my health, my blood pressure is now normal and I have less knee pain.

Mount Sinai Fit: You are an inspiration and have earned your title as Wellness Ambassador Arlisa! What recommendations would you give to other Health System employees who are considering joining one of the programs?

Arlisa Brown: Do it! Getting and staying healthy is a hard task. Sometimes we need help. I have struggled with my weight and overall health for all of my adult life and have tried many things. This is the first time I am confident that I will reach my goals.



Caption

Mount Sinai Fit: Any final thoughts you would like to share?

Arlisa Brown: In my 19 years at Mount Sinai Beth Israel, the wellness program is one of the best offerings to employees I have experienced. I pray the program continues and that more employees who need the services use them. My experience has been positive, from Transform with Blue Mesa Health’s free Fitbit and coaches to the nutritionist sessions. Thanks so much for helping me on the path to meeting my goals. I am by no means perfect. I still have days where I make the wrong choices and times I do not feel like exercising. If I had to sum up what the wellness program has given me, it is belief in my ability to get back on track.

I now have control and accountability. I participate in numerous challenges through my Fitbit device. That alone keeps me moving because I want to win every challenge! I can talk to my coach at the Transform program and reach out to Jennifer Kartashevsky anytime I have problems staying on track with nutrition. I have gained the confidence to join a group of women at my church and participate in a weight loss group. We share our weight daily and offer to help each other with exercise, food preparation, and more. The leader of the group shared a quote: “Choose your destiny and not your desire”. I’ve saved it on my computer screen at work and repeat it daily to remind myself why I am doing this.

Good luck to all who choose to take that step to getting healthy and living life better!

For more information about employee wellness offerings or to join a wellness program, contact wellness@mountsinai.org.



A Perfect Respite During a Busy Workday

Music and Meditation at Mount Sinai Beth Israel

Numerous scientific research studies support the use of music in medical settings. Mount Sinai Calm supports a stress reduction program delivered by music therapists for staff, faculty, and students at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. Under the guidance of Joanne Loewy, DA, LCAT, MT-BC, Director, and John Mondanaro, MA, LCAT, MT-BC, CCLS, Clinical Director, music therapists combine music-making with meditation practices to help staff reduce stress and feel calm.

"The pairing is natural in that we are musical beings in so many ways. Our health and vitality are measured in musical terms: the rhythmicity of healthy respiratory and cardio systems, the flow of a healthy gait, and the prosody of the human voice in our daily conversations," says Mr. Mondanaro.

Groups vary from week to week to appeal to the diverse musical interests of individuals and to impart to staff the ways in which music can be integrated toward achieving a sense of rejuvenation and balance during the work day. Meditative drumming as a form of tension release, vocal chanting or improvised singing to channel and develop mindful breathing, and guided visualization to music improvised in real time are a few of the department's offerings.

Ines Jones, Pathology Lab Coordinator, has been at Mount Sinai Beth Israel for 25 years. She describes her experience as a participant in this program. "The workday can have its stress, and attending the group creates a feeling of calm and

safety. We came in as strangers from different units and departments, but the music united us. It was beautiful, and a perfect respite during a busy workday."

Mr. Mondanaro went on to say: "It's really quite extraordinary that this offering for staff wellness comes from senior leadership, and that managers are actually encouraging and supporting their staff to participate in these groups. It truly reflects the unique employee-focused philosophy of the Mount Sinai Health System." Dr. Loewy adds: "We've been providing such groups since 1994. To see a philosophy of wellness and staff care endorsed systemwide is remarkable. We are so happy to be a part of it!"

The Louis Armstrong Center for Music and Medicine also offers a dial-in music meditation line to de-stress with music remotely. The service is free and is for staff, faculty, and students, as well as patients, caregivers, and community members. Mount Sinai Calm recommends the use of music as a self-care tool and encourages all to dial in for a restorative musical reprieve.

▪ **By John F. Mondanaro, MA, LCAT, MT-BC, CCLS,**
*Clinical Director, The Louis & Lucille Armstrong
Music Therapy Program*

▪ **By Joanne V. Loewy, DA, LCAT, MT-BC, Director,**
*The Louis Armstrong Center for Music and
Medicine Mount Sinai Beth Israel*

> A Message from

(continued from page 1)

Barnett, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Mount Sinai Beth Israel and Christopher Berner, Vice President of Human Resources, Mount Sinai Beth Israel are a collaborative, caring, and hands-on leadership team with a unified focus on the "pulse of the people" at MSBI. They share their insights on the dynamic environment of the Mount Sinai Beth Israel campus and the importance of positive energy during periods of change. We highlight the Music and Meditation Program, learning about the value of the Chi Cart. Weekly yoga classes with Jyothi Larson (sponsored by Mount Sinai Calm) offer employees an opportunity to de-stress in the workplace. Last but not least, we talk with Chef Tony about the Who's on First café and detail a healthy version of comfort food he enjoyed as a child.

I hope that you will embrace the richness of the season and take time for self-care so that you may bring your best self to your family, patients, friends, and colleagues each day. If you would like more information about any Mount Sinai wellness offerings, please visit mountsinai.org/mswellness.

Be well,
Jane

Mount Sinai Wellness is delighted to announce that we launched our website in June. Please visit mountsinai.org/mswellness for a comprehensive listing of free wellness services available to Health System employees, including all of the wellness offerings mentioned in this newsletter. For feedback or questions, email amanda.persaud@mountsinai.org.

For guided mindfulness meditation, call 212-241-CALM. For music and meditation, call 212-844-CALM. Music and Wellness Group sessions are available on Tuesdays from 3 pm to 4 pm on 3 Linsky. To learn more, please contact 4CALM@mountsinai.org or info@musicandmedicine.org.



Message from



Barbara Barnett, MD

Barbara Barnett, MD joined Mount Sinai Beth Israel as the Chief Medical Officer three years ago. "I was immediately taken by the passion our employee community exudes each day as they take care of their patients. That type of passion deserves to be rewarded."

As a lifelong exercise enthusiast, Dr. Barnett suggested to hospital leadership that they convert the cardiac rehabilitation center into an employee gym. She strongly felt that if they built the facility, employees would utilize it. And to date, 1200 Mount Sinai employees signed up (including employees from Mount Sinai Beth Israel, Mount Sinai Beth Israel Medical Groups, Mount Sinai Downtown Union Square, and Mount Sinai Hospital). Utilization ranges from approximately 100-150 employees a day.

"I work out in the gym almost every day. I feel so much better after using the treadmill - it helps to clear my mind and I feel more energized afterwards. Employees have formed groups and work out together in teams, and it is inspiring to see them work and encourage each other," related Dr. Barnett. Dr. Barnett emphasizes the importance of taking the time to care for ourselves and shares "This message is reinforced by our hospital President, Jeremy Boal, MD. In return, I share this mantra with my team."

BEND

Revive and Energize Your Body and Mind with Yoga

For more than 40 years, Jyothi Larson has been practicing yoga. She completed a 500-hour yoga teacher-training program more than 25 years ago and has been teaching ever since. Recognized internationally, Ms. Larson teaches with patience, understanding, and compassion. Her weekly class helps Mount Sinai Beth Israel staff, faculty, and students to de-stress and invigorate at the end of the day. Ms. Larson combines yoga poses (asana), breathwork (pranayama), and relaxation, which she describes as a perfect combination for self-care.

In Ms. Larson's class, students explore a variety of yoga postures that enhance flexibility, strength, balance, and body awareness while considering breath, form, and alignment. Ms. Larson provides hands-on assistance, welcomes new students to the practice, and encourages all to work at their own pace. She inspires students to be mindful, reflective, and attentive to their self-care needs both on and off the yoga mat.

Ms. Larson strongly believes that a yoga practice is an excellent self-care strategy and encourages those without experience to join her class. She gently and carefully teaches new and experienced students to de-stress and invigorate with yoga.

Classes are free and open to all Mount Sinai Beth Israel staff, students, and faculty.

Classes are held on Mondays from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm.

To register, or for more information about yoga at Mount Sinai, contact mountsinaiyogaprogram@gmail.com or 4CALM@mountsinai.org.

Chris Berner

"Employee wellness offerings and services are things that our team greatly values," says Chris Berner, Vice President of Human Resources at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. "Our employees have participated in diabetes prevention services, personal nutrition

sessions, walking groups, music and meditation classes, and yoga. We look forward to engaging the entire patient community and working together to prioritize personal health and well-being." Mr. Berner is a member of a wellness committee at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. "We are pleased with the feedback we have received from our employees and look forward to rolling out new wellness programs this summer."



CHEF'S CORNER

Chef Antonio Vidal, or *Chef Tony*, is the Senior Executive Chef at *Who's on First* café, located in the Linsky Lobby of Mount Sinai Beth Israel at 280 First Avenue. In this interview, Chef Tony dishes about café offerings and shares his healthy eating practices.

Chef Tony's Sancocho

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 small white onion, peeled and diced
- 4 aji dulce peppers or cachucha peppers
- 1 gallon vegetable broth
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped
- 1/4 pound yuca (cassava), peeled and chopped
- 1/4 pound malanga or taro, peeled and chopped
- 1/4 pound pumpkin, peeled and chopped
- 1 green plantain, peeled and sliced
- 1 cob of corn, cut into one-inch slices
- 1 cup yellow split peas
- 1 bunch each cilantro and parsley, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 lime, cut into wedges to serve on side (optional)

Directions

Heat the olive oil over medium heat and sauté the garlic, peppers, onions, and split peas. Add 2 quarts of vegetable broth. Cover and simmer until the split peas are soft. As the broth cooks, add more vegetable stock to maintain the level and stir as needed. When the peas are cooked through, add the tubers and vegetables.

Simmer, covered over medium heat, until all vegetables and roots are cooked through. When stew is finished, season with salt and pepper to taste. Add cilantro and parsley. Serve with a lime wedge and a side salad.

Who's on First includes kosher food options, a "cuisine of the day" station, weekly specials, a salad bar, a hot food bar, and a ready-made section. The salad bar features whole grains; seasonal fruit and vegetables; superfoods rich in nutrients, such as avocados; composed salads; and fresh, leafy greens. The summer season sees lighter offerings, such as asparagus, green peas, and zucchini. The menu emphasizes chicken, vegetarian dishes, and fresh fish. Chef Tony is committed to cooking with sustainable ingredients in his kitchen.

Chef Tony discovered his love of cooking at an after-school program in high school and has more than 48 years of culinary experience. After 23 years in corporate dining at Marriott Hotels, he made the switch to health care, working for more than three years at the Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Neptune, New Jersey. He joined Mount Sinai Beth Israel in early 2016.

Chef Tony shares what makes his kitchen special:

We do not fry anything! Our kitchen does not have a fryer. All dishes are oven-baked, roasted, pan-cooked, or steamed. Many members of our staff are of Caribbean descent. We feature ethnic dishes that have a healthy twist, such as oven-roasted jerk chicken and plantains. It's also important to recognize the talent of our culinary team. Members of our culinary team recommend culturally diverse dishes. They put their heart into preparing each dish. Creating healthy recipes influenced by their culture is deeply rewarding for our employees and inspires me as a chef.

Chef Tony also shared a bit of his own wellness story with us:

I have high blood pressure, so I have cut out all sodium in my diet. Instead, I use fresh herbs to give food flavor. As you get older, your tastes change, and I am eating lighter. My diet includes more vegetables and fruit and lean cuts of protein and fish rather than red meat and heavier foods. Being a chef in a hospital makes you mindful of what you are putting into your body.

Chef Tony shares his Sunday dinner staple: "Pasta. I like to use quality cheeses and farmer's market vegetables rather than meats. Good olive oil, whole wheat pasta, garlic, and broccoli rabe is always a go-to."

If you have any favorite meals from the Plaza Cafe, please email us at wellness@mountsinai.org so we can share them in an upcoming issue of Mount Sinai Fit.

Sancocho is a comfort food my mom made for me as a child. It is a traditional, rustic soup usually made with meat, root vegetables, tubers, and traditional spices. Additional flavors, including ginger, thyme, parsley, bay leaves, oregano, and even wine or rum can also be added. This dish has been modified to a vegetarian version for the health-conscious eater.