Dear Friends,

We have so much to be thankful for and build upon as the Center for Ethics implements and advances each of the core programs of our strategic plan. With the support of OHSU leaders, our Steering Committee and more than 300 generous donors we will soon launch the first major accomplishment in the Program in Compassionate Communication, testing the medical school Class of 2018 in their mastery of communication skills as a graduation requirement. This is a unique and monumental achievement in medical education nation-wide.

By now, you have likely heard the news that Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A., will retire as president of OHSU after nearly 40 years of service. Last month, Joe shared with the OHSU Board of Directors and campus community that he was diagnosed with a mild form of multiple sclerosis. During his tenure, Joe has been a steadfast supporter of the Center for Ethics in Health Care. He provided essential support for OHSU’s highest standards related to conflict of interest and not accepting gifts from health care industry sources.

With gratitude for your support and all you make possible,

Susan W. Tolle, MD
Cornelia Hayes Stevens Chair
Director, Center for Ethics in Health Care
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The Program in Compassionate Communication: Advancing the Vision

On September 18th, the Center for Ethics welcomed over 180 friends to our annual luncheon celebrating The Healing Relationship: Cultivating the Art of Skillful Communication. Professional actors from the Mark Richardson Interprofessional Simulation Center at OHSU helped to deliver scenario’s reflecting both detached and engaged communication, giving the viewer a glimpse of the importance of the Program in Compassionate Communication. A generous grant from The Storms Family Foundation, has allowed us to hire faculty to advance our curriculum work as we prepare to test students on their mastery of communication skills. Through the kindness of our donors, we have surpassed the one million dollar mark, and are on our way towards our goal of three and a half million dollars to fund the future endowed Chair in Compassionate Communication. To view our luncheon presentation on Compassionate Communication, please go to https://vimeo.com/234868676 and enter the password CenterforEthics.

Remembering Maribeth Wilson Collins (1918-2017)

Maribeth Collins’ radiant smile was a hallmark of the gracious and open-hearted generosity she brought to her life. For 41 years, from 1964 to 2005, Maribeth served as President of The Collins Foundation, wisely shepherding its clear yet powerful mission to improve the quality of life for all Oregonians. Maribeth was both quietly resolute and extraordinarily generous in her desire to support the Center for Ethics in Health Care’s mission to ensure that compassion remains at the heart of all health care. We will miss her wise and gentle spirit greatly.

Oregon continues to lead POLST innovation

Kaiser Health News recently featured one of Oregon’s newest electronic POLST innovations (https://khn.org/news/in-oregon-end-of-life-wishes-are-just-a-click-away/). The story included an interview with Sallie Cutler, who courageously shared how helpful it was to find her mother’s POLST form in the midst of an emergency. Alyce Cheatham’s end-of-life wishes were honored because her POLST was instantly retrieved in the OHSU Emergency Department. In addition to technological innovations, we successfully tackled a regulatory barrier which delayed hospice submission to the Oregon POLST Registry. It was a year-long process, but on October 13, the regulation was revised to allow the submission of POLST forms with verbal orders. This amendment makes it possible for hospice programs to rapidly submit to the Oregon POLST Registry. Another POLST program achievement was the creation of a new video for Spanish speaking families. The video is narrated in Spanish and shows the process of decision making over a six year period of time for a family (https://www.youtube.com/user/ORPOLST).

For help in making a gift to the Center for Ethics, please contact Ann Barden at bardena@ohsu.edu or (503) 412-6355.