



We're on a Mission from UMANA

By Ihor M. Draganchuk

Mission manager **Ihor Draganchuk's** two word assessment: "Extremely successful." The traditional medical mission to the Central City Clinical Hospital in Ivano-Frankivsk,

Branch President **Myron Lewyckyj, MD**, plans for the mission began early in 2018. Mission days, from September 24-28, arrived sooner than imagined. By then, a cadre of physicians

brothers then continued with performing multiple diagnostic ultrasound studies on a large number of patients.

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Early arrivals at Lviv airport (from left): I. Draganchuk, T. Maslyak, V. Lebedovych, S. Saleem, A. Amir, S. Ali, C. Guerrero, A. Sediq, J. Bartolino, B. Munir, A. Pundy, and M. Ali.

organized by the UMANA-Illinois Branch, took on a distinct international flavor this year with the participation of volunteers from among UMANA members in the United States, as well as colleagues from England and Pakistan. My long-time experience running such missions allowed us to not only provide medical help for the needy but to include a serious educational component consisting of lectures, eagerly attended by our Ukrainian colleagues, on a variety of cutting-edge medical issues.

At the urging of UMANA Illinois

and allied healthcare providers were assembled and began arriving at Danylo Halytskyi International Airport in Lviv. Others soon joined from various other locations, and soon the work commenced.

The team was warmly greeted by the CEO of the hospital, Dr. Taras Maslyak, and the resources were distributed where most needed. **Sartaj Ali, MD** (UMANA Illinois) and his brother **Murad Ali, MD** (Pakistan) conducted lectures on ultrasound diagnoses, which were enjoyed by over 125 listeners. After their educational lectures, the Ali

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Keynote Presentation
Ihor Sawczuk, MD
Physician Burnout

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Amir Mir, MD and Sonya Saleem, MD, two family physicians practicing in London but originally from Pakistan, conducted a lecture that from all indications was "outstanding!" The staff physicians and the department heads could not praise Dr. Saleem enough and literally begged her to come back. Both Dr. Mir and Dr. Saleem expressed a genuine desire to return. In addition to their lectures, both physicians examined patients.

Andrew Pundy MD and **Andriy Ripecky, MD** (UMANA Illinois Branch) put their psychiatric acumen to work meeting with colleagues at a local psychiatric hospital. Adrian Ripecky, an EMT from Minnesota, was involved with Emergency Medicine personnel, riding in ambulances and getting involved in ER work. **Peter Redko,**

DPM (Northern California) assisted during podiatric surgery, and **Myron Lewickyj, MD** (Illinois Branch) assisted on multiple ophthalmologic operations. Other general surgeons, **Victor Lebedovych MD** (Syracuse Branch), **George Kuzycz, MD** (Illinois Branch), and his former partner Neal Thomas, MD shared their knowledge and experiences with Ukrainian colleagues. **Roxolana Horbowyj, MD**, (Maryland-DC Metro branch) the U.S. representative of WFUMA, presented an informative lecture on "*Tension Pneumothorax.*" **Andrew Melnyk, MD** (Illinois Branch) delivered a lecture concerning "*Suicide in ATO Veterans*" and also examined children that were brought in specifically to be examined by him. Volunteers to the mission Christoph Guerrero, MD, from Chicago, and Jack Bertolino, MD, from New York, examined patients and offered medical advice. **Vasyl Pidkaminetskiy, MD** (NY Metro Branch) - once actually on staff at the hospital in Ukraine but now residing and working in New York - was able to provide his expertise without an interpreter and knew the hospital's and Ukraine's policies as they pertain to healthcare.

Dr. Ajmal Sediq, a cousin of the Alis and a dentist practicing in Indiana, spent his working hours at a dental clinic, since the Central Clinic Hospital does not have a dental department. Dr. Sediq had been to Ukraine with us many times and is devoted to helping Ukraine. He promised Dr. Maslyak a very expensive instrument that UMANA will help ship to Ukraine.

Ex-medic **Robert Wickman** (Illinois Branch) served as a general volunteer to the mission. For example, the Drs. Ali used him as a stand-in patient in their presentations of ultrasound topics.

Finally, there were two international events never before experienced on our mission. First, a relative of the Ali brothers, Badar Munir, is a Delegate to the United Nations, traveling with our group on a diplomatic passport from Pakistan. Munir promised Dr. Maslyak's hospital economic aid from his country. Second, Dr. Murad Ali offered to accept to his hospital in Pakistan individuals that would need specialized training in elastography. Housing and feeding the individuals would be borne by Dr. Ali's hospital; transportation to and from Ukraine would be at the Ukrainian hospital's cost. These were win-win situations for all.

Our mission concluded with general satisfaction for all. As mission manager, I would like to thank all the volunteers and participants and look forward with anticipation to future missions. We are eagerly awaited.



UMANA News

The Newsletter of the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America is published quarterly by UMANA with the objective to promote good fellowship and to uphold and enhance the best interests of UMANA. The newsletter serves as an impartial forum for information for its members. UMANA cannot guarantee the accuracy of all information contained herein. Some information has been obtained from third party published and oral sources and may not have been independently verified. The treatment of articles, views, and opinions expressed in UMANA News is not necessarily endorsed by UMANA.

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The Ukrainian Medical Association of North America



UMANA MEMBER NEWS



Dennis BURACHINSKY, DO (NY Metro Branch) has joined ENT and Allergy Associates, LLP (ENTA), the leading ear, nose, throat, allergy, and immunology practice in New York and New Jersey. He is a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed his residency at St. Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston, NJ.

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President's Message

This September, while participating in the medical mission to Ivano-Frankivsk organized by UMANA's Illinois chapter, I took advantage of the opportunity to visit a variety of medical institutions across Ukraine. These included a city hospital-polyclinic in Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv's National Institute of Medical Sciences (Department of Psychiatry, Neurology, and Narcology), Kyiv's Central Military Hospital, specialty hospitals such as Lviv's Institute of Hematology, and a psychiatric hospital, also in Ivano-Frankivsk.

My meetings with staffs of each institution left me impressed and inspired. Impressed by their level of preparation, their openness, their acknowledgement of their shortcomings, and their keen interest in making things better. I was inspired by their dedication to their work, their perseverance despite the many obstacles in their path, and their creative solutions when lacking resources. All were eager to share their knowledge and experience while listening closely for any insights to be learned from their western counterparts. This was quite remarkable in the context of the ongoing Ukraine-Russia war, with its massive psychosocial disruptions and the simultaneous transformation of Ukraine's healthcare system. Healthcare reform has brought much anxiety, confusion, and uncertainty to everyone involved in healthcare, not unlike the turmoil we've seen here in the United States.

The psychosocial challenges Ukraine faces are enormous, and existing institutions are not well equipped to address these problems. Fortunately, these needs have inspired talented and idealistic social activists to rise to the challenge. One such person is Lesia Vasylenko, founder of the Legal Hundred NGO in Kyiv. A lawyer, Lesia noticed how difficult it was for newly discharged - often disabled - veterans and their families to navigate the unmanageable complexity of the health and social services system in Ukraine. Working with a network of volunteers, she organized the Legal Hundred NGO. These volunteer attorneys guide veterans to the agencies and services they need and to which they're entitled. They have published an elegant, comprehensible guide for veterans explaining services and benefits. Another example is Serhiy Bogdanov, a psychologist at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy who, in collaboration with researchers at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, is working on systematizing a process of identifying common psychosocial sequelae of war and social upheaval such as PTSD, substance abuse, and anxiety. At the same time, he and colleagues are training non-mental health professionals, such as teachers, social workers, and primary care physicians, to care for the sufferers of these conditions in their uncomplicated presentations. In Lviv, Dr. Vasyly Novak is Director of the Hematological Institute there where he and colleagues are hoping to initiate an allograft bone marrow transplantation program in collaboration with Chicago's University of Illinois Medical Center. Surprisingly, allograft bone marrow transplants are currently not done in Ukraine but are desperately needed. In Ivano-Frankivsk, Dr. Myron Mulyk, in his role as director of a local psychiatric hospital, grapples with a patient base experiencing PTSD and substance abuse by cultivating innovative affiliations with local veterans groups. At Kyiv's Central Military Hospital, Dr. Vsevolod Stebliuk responded to the scarcity of programs addressing PTSD and traumatic brain injury by teaming up with his psychologist wife, Kateryna Pronoza, to develop an innovative program that they continue to run. In Kharkiv, Dr. Ihor Linsky, Director of Psychiatry at the National Institute of Medicine, along with his coworkers, are studying the biologic underpinnings of PTSD and related disorders. They are eager to establish affiliations with U.S. institutions.

I could go on of course, but the impressions that have stayed with me revolve around the resilience that I saw across Ukraine. This "take home" point should resonate with all UMANA members here in North America. At a time when rapid changes in healthcare delivery challenge our own peace of mind, remembering the ideals that drove us to undertake a career in healthcare can be quite restorative. As you can tell, connecting with colleagues in Ukraine has been energizing and rewarding - something I'm happy to recommend.

Sincerely,
Andriy Ripecky, MD

UMANA MEMBER NEWS

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Daniel HRYHOR-CZUK, MD, MPH (Illinois Branch) accepted an invitation

from the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to serve on the Board of Scientific Counselors for the National Center for Environmental Health/Agency

for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (NCEH/ATSDR), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), for a term beginning immediately and ending in June 2022. The 16-member Board advises the Secretary of DHHS, Director of CDC, and Director of NCEH/ATSDR regarding program goals, objectives, strategies, and priorities in fulfillment of the agencies' mission to protect and promote people's health.



Theresa KURITZA, DO, MBA, FAOCR, (Illinois Branch) has

received a fellowship in the American Osteopathic College of Radiology (AOCR) for meritorious service to the practice of radiology and academic contributions to the American Osteopathic Board of Radiology (AOBR). She is Medical Director of Breast Imaging at Loyola University.



Anthony TARASENKO, MD (NY Metro Branch) has been re-elected to the Board of

Trustees of the State of New Jersey Medical Society and re-elected to the post of Treasurer/Secretary for the Union County Medical Society.

UMANA CHAPTER NEWS

Illinois Branch

On August 19, 2018, UMANA-Illinois held its traditional picnic at the Osela at Round Lake, IL, now the UYCO/Plast campground. The group of dedicated members enjoyed beautiful weather, a deliciously prepared repast catered by the Tryzub Ukrainian Kitchen, and a collegial gathering to reminisce and network among the old and new associates. **Dr. Myron Lewickyj**, Illinois branch president, hosted the gathering and plans a repeat in the coming year.



Illinois Branch members enjoy a picnic luncheon.

On Wednesday, September 12, 2018, UMANA-Illinois members met at Tryzub Ukrainian Kitchen to hear a presentation on “*The Global Bone Marrow Transplantation Program: the Case for Ukraine.*” Moderator **Daniel Hryhorczuk, MD, MPH**, introduced Damiano Rondelli, MD, director of the Blood and Marrow Transplant Program at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, and Kateryna Filonenko, MD, of the National Cancer Institute in Kyiv, Ukraine, to discuss the state of the art in bone marrow transplantation in the west and Ukraine.



(from left) Katerina Filonenko, MD, Damiano Rondelli, MD, and Daniel Hryhorczuk, MD, MPH

NY Metro Branch

On September 15, 2018, the NY Metro UMANA chapter gathered for a Fall Social and Networking meeting. It was an opportunity to reconnect with colleagues and meet new potential members. The mission of UMANA was reviewed and a written survey was initiated. Over the next few weeks all the chapter members will have a chance to complete the survey to help define the interests of the membership. Volunteer opportunities, teaching, and mentorship are some of the options.

The event was made even more special by our gracious hosts **Dr. Ariadna Bach** and Mark Bach at their home. Our guest speaker from Ukraine, Dr. Ivanka Nebor, spoke enthusiastically about her newly formed organization called INGenius. She discussed the value of her ENT rotations, which were just completed in the U.S.

Dr. Peter Lenchur, the president-elect for UMANA nationally, spoke about the upcoming Scientific Conference (June 19–22, 2019) in Park City, UT, and called on members to actively participate in various opportunities.

We look forward to expanding our membership and activities and invite any UMANA members to join any of our meetings if you are visiting the area!



(from left) Marta Lopatynsky, MD, President of Razom Mariya Soroka-Tomycz, Luke Tomycz, MD of Copilot project, and CEO of INgenius Dr. Ivanka Nebor

Ohio Branch

On October 21, 2018, a fundraiser for U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur of Ohio was attended by UMANA-Ohio members. Representative Kaptur (D-OH), one of Ukraine’s staunchest supporters in the U.S. Congress, is a founder and co-chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus. The fundraiser was held at the home of Andrew and **Christine Fedynsky**.



(from left) Maria Strus, MD, Myron Bodnar, MD, Andriy Ripecky, MD, Rep. Marcy Kaptur, Bohdan Pichurko, MD, and Christine Fedynsky, RPh