

PA

ISSUE 15 | Winter 2022 | Free

HEALTH

YOUR GUIDE TO WELL-BEING

Alive and well

Top-notch trauma care fueled
Rick McFadden's recovery

+

FILL THAT FIRST AID KIT
WINTER FUN AWAITS IN PA
MOUTHWATERING "MEDICINE"

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Centre County, Pa.

WELCOME

Have an amazing health story to share? We'd love to hear it. And maybe we'll feature it in an upcoming edition. Send us a note: pahealth@geisinger.edu



Sledding, skating, skiing and snow days. Winter's here, and we'll help you make the most of it with a tour of Pennsylvania places where you can bundle up and explore the great outdoors.

If you'd rather stay home, try our tips for building a first aid kit, a must-have for every household.

In this edition of *PA Health*, we'll also introduce you to three people who had life-threatening accidents. They're back to health now and sharing their stories of how the people and departments at Geisinger came together to heal them. I began my career as an emergency room physician, so I know firsthand how every second counts in trauma cases like theirs. I thank them for sharing their stories and applaud the teams who provided care when it was needed.

And you can read more inspiring stories like these, including one about our REACH-HEI program, which pairs disadvantaged young people in our local communities with Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine students. This mentorship opens doors to a potential future in healthcare for these youth.

And finally, what's winter without comfort food? We have a delicious recipe right out of Geisinger's culinary medicine classes offered in Selinsgrove.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *PA Health*, and I wish you and your family all the best this winter.

Jaewon Ryu, MD, JD
President and CEO
Geisinger

On the cover:
Rick McFadden of Berwick, Pa., is back to living (and enjoying) life after recovering from a serious accident.

Photo by Robb Malloy.

PA HEALTH

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CONTENTS

- 4 / In an emergency, many people work as one to save lives. These patients share their **trauma care triumphs**.
- 8 / Being prepared can turn a "Yikes!" into a "You were lucky." How to stock your **first aid kit**.
- 10 / Through the **REACH-HEI** program, medical students help local kids see their future could lie in healthcare.
- 12 / **Getting outdoors in winter** keeps you physically and mentally active — and PA's the place for frozen fun.
- 14 / Comfort food gets healthy, thanks to a culinary medicine class. Try your hand at this **French toast casserole**.



Thank you, Zing-ers!

Many of you responded to our Zing challenge in the fall issue, and we're so glad you did. Some of your own Zing things:

Read a funny story to a child

Watch a funny show or movie once a week

Drink vegetable juice today & get someone else to do it

SMILE AT A STRANGER 😊

walk a bit further

EAT A SALAD EVERY DAY

RUNNING ERRANDS FOR PEOPLE

KICK SOCCER BALL BACK & FORTH FOR THE GRANDSONS

Thanks to our readers who emailed or mailed us — as well as to those who didn't, but still found small ways to work in better health every day.

Keep on Zing-ing!

Didn't try our fall Zing challenge? Visit geisinger.org/zingthings to join in the fun!

By Paula Franken

All together now

A Geisinger trauma center resembles nothing more than a well-oiled machine. A patient arrives, and every cog starts turning to heal the damage.



The bike was totaled. He nearly was, too.

When Berwick native Rick McFadden was riding his motorcycle with a friend in June 2015, their bikes collided. His friend was thrown off, but Mr. McFadden's legs became tangled in the bikes as one veered left and one veered right.

Both men were taken by Geisinger Life Flight® to Geisinger Medical Center — a Level I trauma center — in Danville, where trauma teams were standing by. Mr. McFadden, who was 42 at the time, woke up a week later in the hospital surrounded by family and friends. He didn't remember anything since the accident, but he'd already undergone multiple surgeries, with many more still to come.

Trauma surgeon Kenneth Widom, MD, remembers the case well. "Rick was about as sick as a human being can be when he arrived at the hospital," he says. "Through an amazing team effort, we were able to correct his profound shock state and stabilize his life-threatening injuries. More so than anything else, however, Rick's spirit and ability to fight like hell pulled him back from the brink."

In his 99 days in the hospital, Mr. McFadden saw specialists from disciplines including orthopaedics, neurology, gastroenterology, vascular and plastic surgery. He's grateful to them all — but gives special thanks to his urologist, Ryan Mori, MD, who was involved in his care from the beginning and continued to treat him for years.

"At first, we were focused on his survival. It was all about stabilization and damage control," Dr. Mori explains. "Once Rick was out of the woods, we began the long process of reconstructing him and improving his quality of life through multiple surgeries. He first required a complex urethral reconstruction to return his ability to urinate and to become catheter free, and later we were able to restore his urinary continence and sexual function using prosthetic surgery."



"Dr. Mori became my light in the darkness," Mr. McFadden says. "He made me feel like myself, like a man again. I can't thank him enough. He gave me my life back."

Another person Mr. McFadden says he can never give enough credit to is his wife, Caroline. "She's my rock. She was there for me through it all and I could never have made it without her. She gave me the strength to carry on even when I didn't think I could."

But carry on he did. Months of physical therapy got Mr. McFadden walking again after he lost his right leg below the knee. Extensive behavioral therapy has helped him deal with the aftermath of the trauma.

Back home in Berwick now with his wife and their three dogs, Mr. McFadden is restoring a 1974 Chevy Nova and working at the local Home Depot. "Life is good and I'm lucky to be alive," he says. "I actually think I'm a better person than I was before the accident."



Watch Rick McFadden's story in his own words: [geisinger.org/rickmcfadden](https://www.geisinger.org/rickmcfadden)

Back in the game and stronger than ever

In August 2020, Ryan Brouse of Lewisburg was critically injured in a car accident.

Geisinger Life Flight took the 14-year-old to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville with a liver laceration, brain trauma and a fractured pelvis.

“Ryan was within minutes of dying,” says her mother, Angie Brouse. “Had she gone by ambulance she probably wouldn’t have made it.”

By the time her parents arrived at Geisinger, Ryan was being prepped for surgery. “The trauma team moved swiftly,” says Ms. Brouse. “They let us kiss her and tell her we loved her.”

Mark Massak, DO, and fellow Saif Ahmed, MD, repaired Ryan’s liver using interventional radiology, a minimally invasive approach that uses medical imaging to guide advanced procedures — avoiding the stress that traditional surgery can put on a patient’s body.

After surgery, Ryan was admitted to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at Geisinger Janet Weis Children’s Hospital where Ronald Wong, DO, took charge of her care.

“Dr. Wong was there with us every single day. He answered every question, listened to our input and truly cared,” Ms. Brouse says. “The entire PICU team was fabulous.

The nurses did a magnificent job managing Ryan’s pain, keeping her comfortable and educating us on everything that was going on.”

Next, orthopaedic surgeon Mark Seeley, MD, and neuropsychologist Heather Hoover, PhD, began working to heal her pelvis and brain injuries. “Ryan’s care on the pediatric floor was fantastic,” Ms. Brouse says. “Melissa from Foodservice always had a smile on her face and kept us smiling, too.”

Upon Ryan’s discharge, months of recovery and physical therapy lay ahead. “I lost a lot of my speed with running, so I had to really work and do a lot of sprints to try to get back there,” she says.

And get back there she did. Ryan was the starting centerfielder for her softball team that season and starting midfielder for Lewisburg’s field hockey team the next.

“We are so grateful every day — and it’s amazing to see her not only thriving, but stronger than ever,” says Ms. Brouse. “A true miracle!”

– Paula Franken

It takes a village to save a child

During a camping trip in central PA on June 26, 2021, an ATV landed on top of 4-year-old Zachary Moyer. He needed medical care — fast.

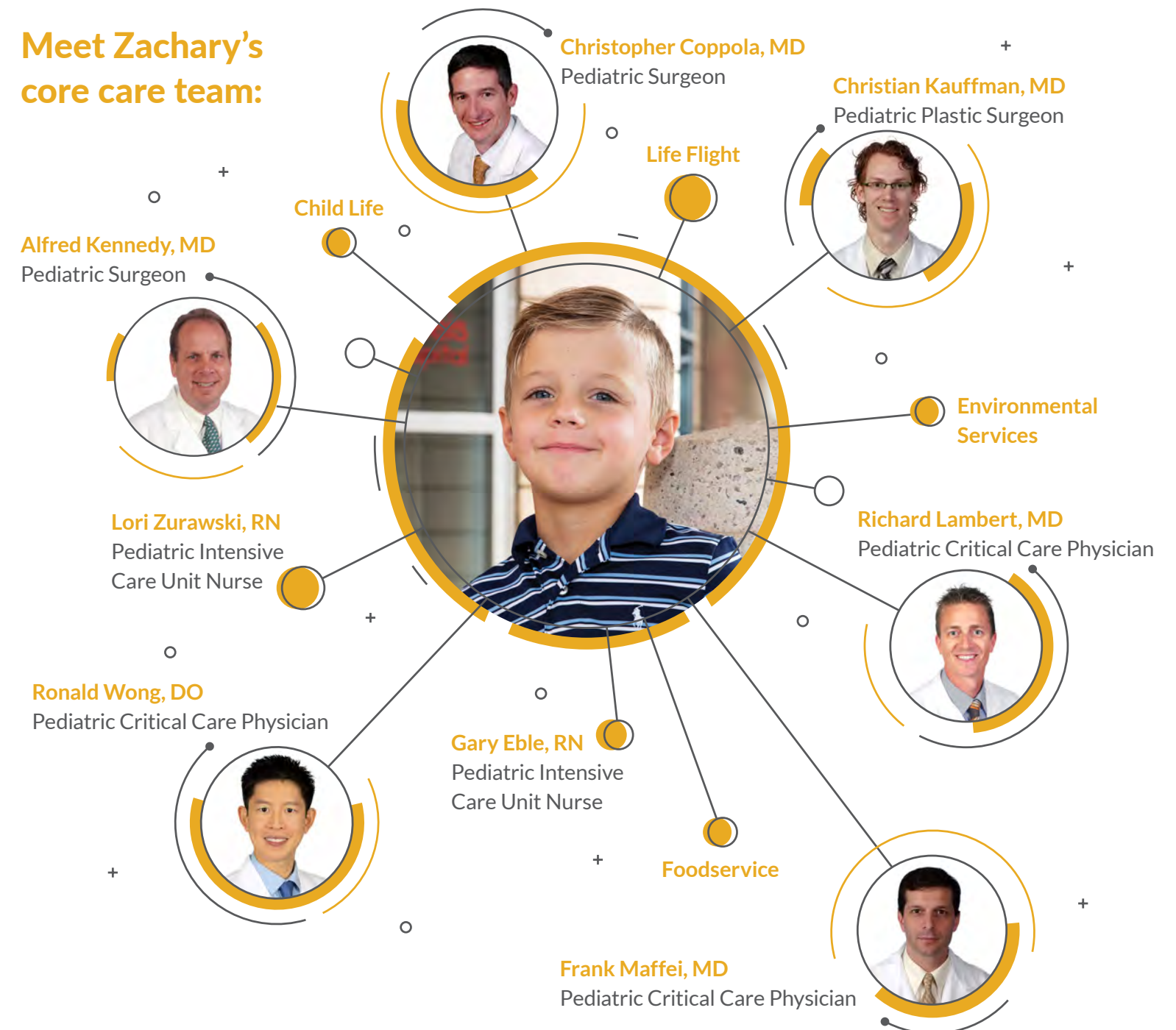
Geisinger Life Flight flew Zachary about 80 miles to Geisinger Janet Weis Children’s Hospital, where teams came together to repair his head injury, a severed artery in his liver and multiple broken bones, including his eye socket, jaw, arm and both legs.

This past August, after a full recovery, Zachary traveled back to Danville from his hometown of Haverford to thank the team who saved his life — by donating more than 400 toys to hospitalized children.

“The doctors here are heroes,” says Zachary’s mom, Lyndsay Moyer. “They saved his life.”

– Paula Franken

Meet Zachary’s core care team:





Put first aid first

By Kimberly Adler-Morelli

A well-stocked first aid kit can help you treat minor injuries or temporarily manage more serious ones.

Don't think you need a first aid kit? When a serious injury happens, having what you need all in one place can save a lot of time and trouble. You can create your own first aid kit or buy one that's ready-made. Then stash one in your home and another in your car so you'll always be prepared for an emergency.

Ron Strony, MD, department chair of emergency medicine at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, cautions, "No one ever expects an injury to occur, but when it does, it's best to be as prepared as possible."

The American Red Cross recommends including these items in your first aid kit.

- 1 Bandages of various sizes, including compress dressings, adhesive cloth tape, gauze bandage rolls, sterile gauze pads and adhesive bandages
- 2 Antibiotic ointment packets
- 3 Antiseptic wipe packets
- 4 Aspirin (81 mg; take 4 for acute chest pain)
- 5 Emergency blanket
- 6 Breathing barrier with one-way valve (used for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation)
- 7 Instant cold compress
- 8 Non-latex gloves
- 9 Hydrocortisone ointment packets
- 10 Oral thermometer (non-mercury/non-glass)
- 11 Tweezers
- 12 Emergency first aid guide

Other helpful items to keep on hand:

- Over-the-counter medications like antihistamines and anti-diarrhea medicine
- "Stop the Bleed" kit (for more information, visit stopthebleed.org)
- Surgical mask, like the ones we've all been wearing for COVID-19
- Hand sanitizer
- Hydrogen peroxide for disinfecting

Be sure to check your supplies periodically and replace anything that's expired or used up.



Reaching high — and achieving dreams

By Beth Kaszuba

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's REACH-HEI program is a win-win for students and local communities.



Students who are described as “disadvantaged” lack external resources — things they can’t control, like their school district’s funding or access to transportation.

What they don’t lack? Talent, drive — and dreams.

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine’s REACH-HEI program nurtures all those things, with inspiring results for young people in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Founded in 2010, REACH-HEI (which stands for Regional Education Academy for Careers in Health – Higher Education Initiative) provides free health sciences education, motivation and mentoring to economically disadvantaged and first-generation-to-college students, guiding them to careers in healthcare.

“Programs like REACH-HEI are an effective way to increase representation of underrepresented minorities in the health professions,” says Maureen Murtha, Geisinger Commonwealth’s director of Pathway Programs. “Participants receive early exposure to healthcare careers, and this in turn addresses educational gaps associated with income, race, ethnicity and gender.” Besides REACH-HEI, Ms. Murtha says, Pathway offers nine other programs, many focused on piquing young people’s interest in health fields.

REACH-HEI students don’t just listen to lectures. They don white coats, conduct research, practice procedures on artificial body parts and complete case studies. They also benefit from mentorship by Geisinger Commonwealth medical and graduate students.

“Our students are working in careers including healthcare administration, nursing, physical therapy, counseling, nutrition, speech and language pathology,



and healthcare finance,” Ms. Murtha says. “Some are resident physicians.”

REACH-HEI is a natural fit for a medical school founded by community members with a specific goal — and it’s not necessarily to train the next great surgeons, although outstanding specialists have earned their degrees there. The aim is to nurture skilled, compassionate primary care doctors who will develop lifelong relationships with patients.

To date, the program has served more than 3,000 students. Fully 100% of participants have graduated from high school, and 92% have gone on to college — with 90% pursuing majors and careers in healthcare.

Many Geisinger Commonwealth students are drawn from local communities. When they decide to stay and practice here, they fill a care gap.

REACH-HEI extends that mission to younger people, like Poul Chinga of Hazleton. “I’m so fortunate to have been a student in REACH-HEI,” he says. “I was headed down the wrong path, associating with people who didn’t have high aspirations. I joined the program and immediately felt at home. The staff and medical students got me to realize that I had great potential.”

Mr. Chinga, who recently graduated from Geisinger Commonwealth’s Master of Biomedical Science program, adds, “My grades drastically improved, I graduated high school and got a full scholarship to The University of Scranton. REACH-HEI has guided and inspired me at every point.”

Anthony Soto Ramos, also of Hazleton, has followed a similar path from high school to The University of Scranton to Geisinger Commonwealth’s master’s program.

His next stop? Medical school.

“I knew from a young age that I wanted to be a doctor,” Mr. Ramos explains. “I was the only bilingual speaker in my family, so I would be excused from school to attend doctor’s visits with family members. I would then go home and look up medical terms and conditions to explain things to them.”

While helping his family, he noted that he never encountered a Spanish-speaking provider, and he became determined to be “part of the solution.” After medical school, he hopes to open a family medicine clinic in Hazleton. While he applies to schools, Mr. Ramos has created a data management company and volunteers with REACH-HEI as a mentor and workshop instructor.

“The REACH-HEI program means everything to me,” he says. “From the time I walked in the door in eighth grade, I knew medical school was my future. The program allowed me to learn about health disparities, public health issues, anatomy, physiology and so much more.”

He adds, “The program was always there for me, and it provided exactly what I needed to know my potential, to identify my goals and to give me the guidance, the tools and the resources to accomplish my goals.”



Outdoor play in PA

By Kimberly Adler-Morelli

Snuggling under a cozy blanket with a steamy mug of something warming is one of the delights of winter. And it's even better after a chilly day outside! It's easier to get exercise in the warmer months, but your muscles need year-round movement to stay strong. Being outdoors in the winter can also improve your mood, reduce stress and boost your immune system and metabolism.

However, as Grace Guerrier, MD, a primary care physician at Geisinger Berwick, reminds us, "Viruses thrive in low temperatures, so while you're out having fun, remember to wash your hands frequently to stay healthy."

Also remember to use sunscreen whenever you're outdoors. Though the sun's rays are weaker in the winter, sunlight reflecting off snow and ice can still cause skin damage.



So what is there to do outside besides walking? Luckily for us, Pennsylvania offers lots of unique opportunities for winter fun.

❄️ ❄️ ❄️ High intensity



Want to get your heart rate up in the great outdoors? For a fun workout, try skiing, sledding, tobogganing, skating or snow tubing. There are plenty of ski resorts across PA, and many offer snow tubing as well.

State parks are great places to hop on a sled or toboggan — or lace up a pair of ice skates. Find lots of spots near you by visiting dncr.pa.gov and searching “where to sled” or “where to ice skate.”

❄️ ❄️ ❄️ Medium intensity



If you enjoy fishing, why not try it on the ice? Take a hike across the ice with your gear, drill your hole and prepare to reel in dinner. You can hook many different species of fish across the state, such as walleye, perch, northern pike, crappie, trout and bass.

Pennsylvania has 525 lakes, so chances are there's one near you. Be sure to check ice thickness before you head out onto a frozen lake, or you may be taking an unintentional polar bear plunge.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (fishandboat.com — search “winter fishing”) is a great resource for ice fishing locations and safety tips.

❄️ ❄️ ❄️ Low intensity



For an activity that's not quite so strenuous, take in the winter scenery on a horse-drawn sleigh or carriage ride. There are plenty of places throughout PA where you can enjoy the brisk weather and beautiful landscape while horses pull you along in the snow or clip-clop through quaint, scenic towns. This activity is perfect for families and people of all ages. It's a great way to embrace winter and soak up some vitamin D from the sun.

Whether you enjoy physical activities like skiing, tobogganing and sledding or you just want to admire the wintry beauty of Pennsylvania on a leisurely stroll, there are lots of ways to keep moving. Stay healthy this season by getting out of those pajama pants and into your snow boots — for a few hours, anyway.

A bowl full of (delicious) medicine

By Beth Kaszuba



Course instructor Amy Marie Pinkham demonstrates cutting technique.



Want to sharpen your knife skills? Learn fun food facts? Make new friends while learning to cook delicious, healthy recipes – for free?

Sign up for Geisinger’s Culinary Medicine classes in Selinsgrove and you’re in for all these treats – plus a chance to improve your well-being or even conditions such as diabetes, according to Geisinger registered dietitian nutritionist and course instructor Amy Marie Pinkham.

“Most people who take the classes are looking to get off medications,” she says. “But anyone can come. You don’t even have to be a Geisinger patient.”

The classes attract everyone from retirees looking for new social activities to couples wanting a different kind of date night. They’re hands-on, and offered in four-week blocks in a cheerful, multi-station, fully equipped kitchen.

Along with gaining kitchen skills, students learn to work elements of the healthy Mediterranean diet into their daily menus. But don’t get hung up on the word “diet,” Ms. Pinkham says.

“Diet culture usually equals restriction,” she explains. “This is about the addition of healthier foods, as well as higher-quality ingredients.”

Many think a Mediterranean diet involves a lot of salmon, hummus and olives. But culinary medicine students learn to modify western dishes, such as turkey meatballs or French toast casserole that uses whole wheat bread.



“Students learn how small changes can make a big difference, nutritionally,” Ms. Pinkham says. “And a lot of people try things they’ve never tried before.”

Not only try them – often, students learn to like new ingredients or find ways to enjoy foods they’ve disliked in the past.

Jessica Amon of Orangeville points to her husband David as a participant whose palate has expanded. “He would not eat quinoa before,” she says, explaining that the couple joined the class to become better cooks. “Now, he bought it at the store.”

“There are a lot of dishes we make and next week buy the ingredients,” confirms Mr. Amon, who originally thought they’d stop at a nearby steakhouse on the way home from classes. Instead, they fill up on healthier alternatives – including dishes with onions, which Ms. Amon used to reject.

Karen Persing of Marion Heights joined because she used to enjoy cooking classes with her daughter, who’s now a chef. “Also, I’m pre-diabetic,” she adds, while whipping up a dish featuring cauliflower and whole-grain pasta. “It’s a way for me to start eating healthier.”

The classes, which end in a group meal, are also a bonding experience, Ms. Pinkham notes. “We all become friends. And participants get to try new flavors and foods without spending a dime.”

About half the students are healthcare providers in training. “Residents from all the different specialties have come through,” says Ms. Pinkham. “Nutrition is relevant for all specialties, from obstetrics and gynecology to cardiac care to weight management.”

In the future, she hopes to expand the in-person program to Scranton and State College – and in early 2023, virtual courses will open up the learning to everyone. She’s also developing a summer program aimed at parents and kids.

In the meantime, she says, “Having even one household member join the class can impact how a whole family eats.”

Along with providing students with skills, recipes, fellowship and some great meals, Ms. Pinkham added that she hopes to impart one key message to students: “Healthy cooking and eating a nutritionally balanced diet are affordable, attainable and sustainable.”

French toast casserole

Ingredients

For the toast:

- 2 large eggs
- 2½ cups unsweetened almond milk
- ¼ cup honey
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 8 slices stale whole wheat bread

For the filling:

- 3 overripe, mashed bananas
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ½ cup toasted chopped pecans
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger

Directions

1. Heat oven to 350° F.
2. If your bread isn’t stale, dry it out in the oven for about 10 to 20 minutes. If it’s not completely dry, the dish will be soggy.
3. Whisk together the eggs, almond milk, honey, vanilla extract and cinnamon.
4. In a separate bowl, combine the filling ingredients.
5. Spray a baking pan with cooking spray. Dip four bread slices into the egg mixture, giving them time to absorb as much liquid as possible, and place them in the bottom of the pan.
6. Spread the filling mixture over the bread.
7. Dip the remaining bread slices and use them to top the filling.
8. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes until the casserole is golden brown.

Makes 8 servings, 200 calories each.

Adapted from [culinarymedicine.org](https://www.culinarymedicine.org).

Live near Selinsgrove? Sign up for a class:
geisinger.org/cookingclasses

How about a hearty pasta dish with less mess?
geisinger.org/onepotpasta

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ever
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us,
we're
here.

Level I trauma centers

The highest level of complex care

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- Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, Wilkes-Barre

Level II trauma centers

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- Geisinger Community Medical Center, Scranton
- Geisinger Janet Weis Children's Hospital, Danville

Level IV trauma centers

Stabilizing care for transfer to a Level I or II facility

- Geisinger Jersey Shore Hospital, Jersey Shore
- Geisinger Lewistown Hospital, Lewistown

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