

PBN PROVIDENCE BUSINESS NEWS
**BUSINESS
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AWARDS

HEALTHCENTRIC ADVISORS'
H. JOHN KEIMIG
A MISSION TO EMPOWER
PAGE 6

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BlumShapiro is proud to be the presenting sponsor of the Business Excellence Awards. Congratulations to all the 2016 Awardees - your innovation, perseverance and pursuit of excellence is an inspiration to all. Just like you, we know that it is not just about compliance - It's about trusting, partnering and going above and beyond. You do it every day and so do we. As a fellow Rhode Island business, we appreciate your contributions in moving our state forward. Well done!



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Cornerstone Gencorp, The Hilb Group congratulates the winners of the 2016 Business Excellence Awards. As a current sponsor and past winner of the Business Excellence Award for Corporate Citizenship, Cornerstone Gencorp, The Hilb Group would like to recognize the commitment, foresight and hard work exemplified by this year's winners.



Cox Business is proud to continue its sponsorship of Providence Business News' Business Excellence Awards. Our long-standing support of this venerable program exemplifies our commitment to providing businesses the most competitive voice, video and data services available in this market. We proudly salute all winners in this year's program.

PARTRIDGE SNOW & HAHN LLP

Partridge Snow & Hahn is proud to congratulate the winners of the 2016 Business Excellence Awards. The dedication, vision, hard work and commitment to business excellence that these winners have shown is exemplary.

PUBLISHER'S LETTER

HOW MANY TIMES have we heard that innovation is the only true defensible competitive advantage? And yet, despite being oft-repeated,



the concept is far more than a bromide.

Four of this year's Business Excellence Awards winners have put innovation at the center of their business plans. For A2B

Tracking Solutions Inc., building products and services that allow the U.S. military to keep track of material all over the world is by definition innovative. And as information technology continues to move forward at breakneck speed, innovating is the only way to stay relevant.

Highlander Institute is less concerned with innovation of hardware exclusively, but rather looks to overturn the status quo in teaching with a combination of new technology and new techniques.

Sojourner House noticed that its original client pool, victims of domestic violence, was often on the receiving end of sexual violence, including trafficking, as well. Seeing that there was a great need being unmet caused this non-profit to innovate, so much so that

today, a decade-and-a-half after opening Providence's only drop-in and advocacy center for domestic violence, Sojourner House also has an emergency shelter, transitional housing, a shelter for male victims, permanent supportive housing and soon, housing for those trying to escape human trafficking.

As for Ximedica, that is its raison d'être. Founded 30 years ago by two Rhode Island School of Design grads, the company helps other companies develop and bring to market biotech and medical-device products that are made to be disruptive. If the company doesn't innovate, it doesn't exist.

PBN's BEA program always has had the support of generous sponsors, and this year that is true again. Presenting sponsor of the Business Excellence Awards for the first time is Blum Shapiro. Welcome aboard. Partner sponsors this year are Bryant University's Executive Development Center, Cox Business, the Hilb Group of New England and Partridge Snow & Hahn LLP.

Roger C. Bergenheim
President and Publisher

KEYNOTE SPEAKER | JOHN E. TAYLOR JR.

JOHN E. TAYLOR JR., chairman of the board of Twin River World-wide Holdings, is addressing attendees at Providence Business



News' 16th Business Excellence Awards event. And what timing!

Taylor's company, which owns Twin River Casino as well

as Newport Grand Casino, plans to build a new gambling facility in Tiverton and transfer the state gaming license from Newport Grand to the new location. The process has been roughly 18 months in the making, starting with Twin River's purchase of Newport Grand in the spring of 2015.

As Taylor well knows, making any changes to the state's gaming facilities requires consensus-building of a most delicate nature. Over the years Taylor has made the case for incremental changes to Twin River (once it exited bankruptcy), the former dog-racing facility that was turned into a slots parlor and now is a full casino, operating round the clock and with table games. On the planning board is an on-site hotel, which required a deft hand in the facility's Lincoln

home.

Now comes the planned creation of a new casino in Tiverton on the border with Fall River. Taylor and company look to send \$68 million to the state, an improvement on the \$26.7 million that Newport Grand returned to the state treasury in fiscal 2016. How he will accomplish that goal will no doubt be interesting listening.

Taylor's domain includes not only Twin River and Newport Grand (and soon the Tiverton casino), but the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Biloxi in Mississippi, and Arapahoe Park, a horse racetrack outside Denver.

Prior to coming on as chairman of Twin River's previous owner in 2010, as the casino emerged from bankruptcy, Taylor was CEO of GameLogic Inc., focusing on developing online gaming and marketing strategies for regulated gambling entities. Prior to that, he worked for nearly a decade at GTECH Corp., the Providence-based global provider of lottery services.

Taylor is a graduate of Rhode Island College. He has served as a trustee of the Rhode Island College Foundation and is a member of Johnson & Wales University Corp.

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Congratulations, John!

Healthcentric Advisors associates and board of directors congratulate you on receiving Providence Business News' **Business Leadership award**.

Thank you for your leadership and dedication to our organization.

Your commitment allows us to remain as the preferred neutral convener for the purpose of advancing health care quality and safety in Rhode Island and across New England.



H. John Keimig, MHA, FACHE
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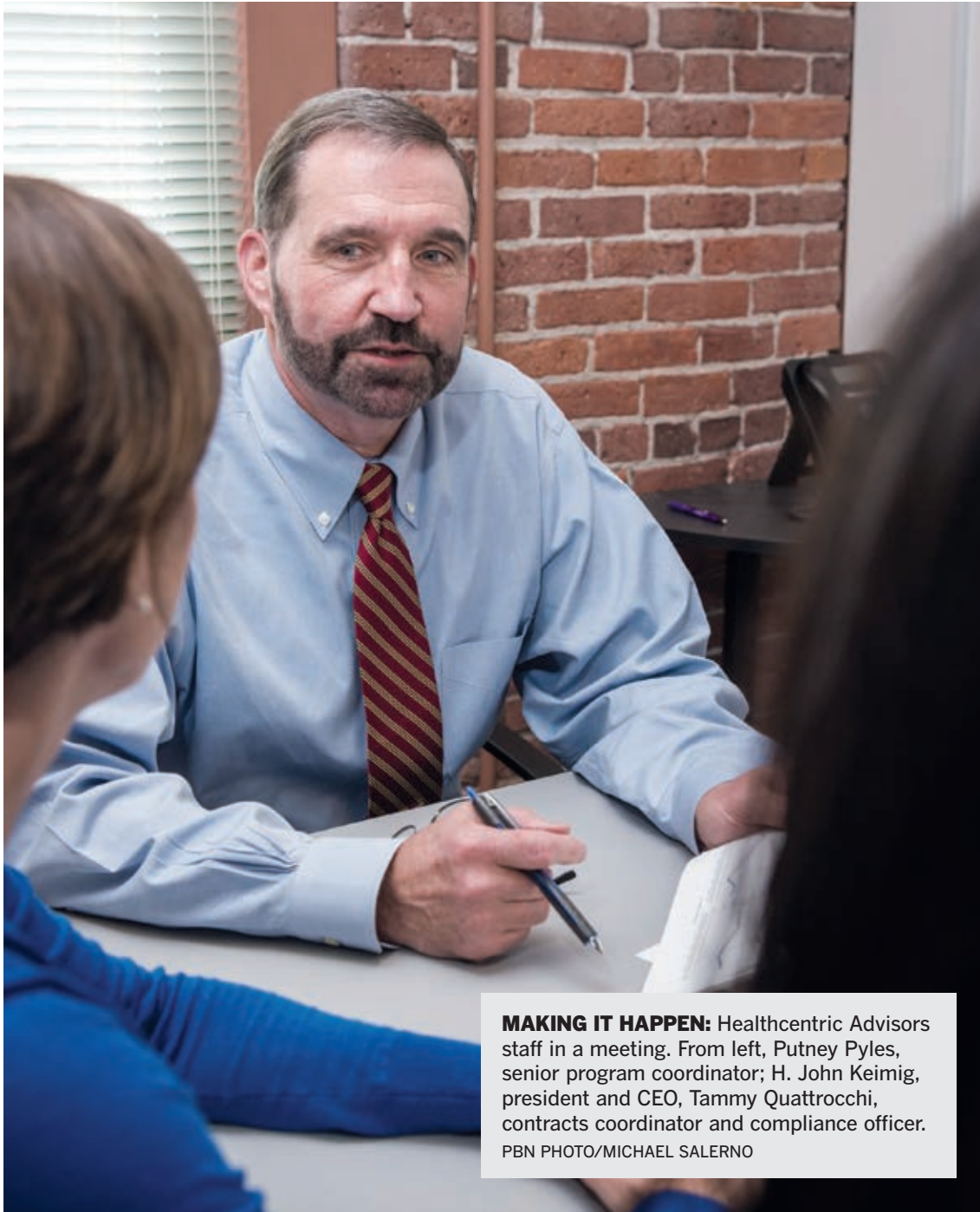
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MAKING IT HAPPEN: Healthcentric Advisors staff in a meeting. From left, Putney Pyles, senior program coordinator; H. John Keimig, president and CEO, Tammy Quattrocchi, contracts coordinator and compliance officer. PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

H. JOHN KEIMIG

president, CEO

HEALTHCENTRIC ADVISORS

job-training programs for electronic health records and for nursing home workers, as well as facilitating the use of standardized tools throughout various facets of medicine.

Meanwhile, another of Keimig's significant directives was updating the nonprofit's brand.

Formally known as Quality Partners of Rhode Island, its name was changed to Healthcentric Advisors in 2011 as a means to reflect its expansion, both in its expertise and services and in its coverage area.

"This persistent commitment to the organization's central mission and its associates is a testament to Mr. Keimig's accountability, integrity, open communication and overall approach to leadership," said Kara Butler, Healthcentric's director of administrative services.

Keimig is just as dedicated to the community. He sits on numerous boards, including the government affairs committee and the finance committee for the American Health Quality Association in Washington, D.C., as well as for the Rhode Island Quality Institute. He also lectures on health care topics at Xavier University and Rhode Island College.

Ultimately, he noted, empowerment is central to the organization's mission because, simply put, there is no "silver bullet" when it comes to improving health care.

"It cannot be improved merely through mandate, regulation or a mission statement on a glossy annual report," he said.

He takes a three-pronged approach to that philosophy: Healthcentric employees are empowered to be creative and take calculated risks; health care providers are empowered with data and practices to help make changes in quality of care; and patients are empowered to be active when it comes to their health and health care.

As a means to further emphasize its mission, Healthcentric has adopted the tagline "Advancing Healthcare Quality and Empowering People." As Keimig noted, the two go hand in hand.

"We don't provide health care," he stressed, "We provide education and technical assistance to those who do so that they can deliver health care that is better, safer, more accessible, of higher value and more person-centered." ■

'Health care quality cannot be advanced without the empowerment of people.'

H. JOHN KEIMIG, Healthcentric Advisors, CEO and president

Positive power player

BY TARYN PLUMB | Contributing Writer

HEALTHCENTRIC ADVISORS is all about empowerment.

Under the direction of President and CEO H. John Keimig, the nonprofit has strategically worked to improve health care and patient safety by empowering health care providers, patients and its own employees.

"Health care quality cannot be advanced without the empowerment of people," said Keimig.

Due in no small part to that philosophy – as well as Keimig's leadership – Healthcentric has experienced tremendous growth and transformation since its founding in 1994.

The Providence-based nonprofit originally started out as a quality improvement organization contractor for Rhode Island for the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Today it administers that contract throughout New England, and also provides quality improvement, education, consulting and other services throughout the country.

As Keimig pointed out, 2014 was a landmark year for Healthcentric; it was awarded a \$53.4 million contract by CMS to administer a Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement

Organization for New England. The nonprofit was just one of 14 government contractors chosen for the new nationwide QIN-QIO, a collaborative effort with initiatives aimed at improving care and coordination of care, fostering preventative activities and patient and family engagement, promoting IT use and reducing such dangers as medication errors or infections caused as the result of health care.

"This expansion has led to immense growth and additional opportunities over the past two years," said Keimig.

To accommodate that growth, Healthcentric opened up two satellite offices, in Woburn, Mass., and Brunswick, Maine. In subsequent years, it has also been awarded federal contracts and innovation projects aimed at improving care even further. Other initiatives have included creating and managing

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CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP | Edward "Ned" Handy, President and COO
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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT | Pawtucket Red Sox

ENTERPRISE COMPANY | Shawmut Design & Construction

LARGE COMPANY | Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island



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EDWARD O. "NED" HANDY III

president and chief operating officer
THE WASHINGTON TRUST CO.

INVESTED IN COMMUNITY:
 Edward O. "Ned" Handy III, The Washington Trust Co.'s president and chief operating officer, cannot remember a time in his career when he was not actively engaged in philanthropy efforts.
 PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

Philanthropy a natural for Handy

BY JACQUELYN GUTC | Contributing Writer

EDWARD O. "NED" HANDY III has big goals.

"To end homelessness. To end hunger. I would like to help the improvement of education," he said.

To say that he is involved in a lot of things with those aims in mind is an understatement.

In addition to being president and chief operating officer of **The Washington Trust Co.**, he's on nearly a dozen nonprofit boards and advisory councils – including those connected with the Rhode Island Hospital Foundation, Providence Foundation, Crossroads Rhode Island, Amos House, Providence College and Salve Regina University – and was just elected to the board of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. But for Handy, holding board positions isn't about recognition and expanding his resume.

In the words of Neil D. Steinberg, president and CEO of the Rhode Island Foundation and long-time friend, Handy "is a doer."

Steinberg said that Handy stands out as a member of the Rhode Island Foundation's board of directors because of his extensive knowledge of the state and his drive to see concepts through until they are a reality.

"Ned's not somebody who just shows up at board meetings," Steinberg said. "He's a civic leader. He's involved in the business community through the bank; he's involved in the nonprofit community; he lives in the community and grew up in the community,

and his passion for the community shows."

Handy is most proud of the capital campaign he chaired for the \$5 million Amos House community center that opened this year on the campus of the social service agency.

"Seeing the [four-story, 29,000-square-foot] building occupied and now completed and serving their constituents so beautifully, I'm proud of that. That stands out," Handy said.

Handy has most consistently been a part of the San Miguel School, a private middle school for at-risk boys in the Providence area. Handy was on the school's first board more than 20 years ago, and he and his wife – Polly Chatterton Handy, the current board chair – have mentored and sponsored students for many years.

"I'm very proud of what San Miguel has turned out to be and how many young men, at 50 a year, have gone through that school and their lives have been turned around because of it," Handy said.

Those who look at Handy's nonprofit involvement are likely to notice a pattern.

"For me, it's a good mix of things that are helping out with safety-net issues but also with things that are aimed at keeping people out of the safety net,"

Handy said. He is committed to helping ensure that everyone has equal access to opportunity.

Handy's passion for making a difference was instilled in him through his parents and their philanthropic efforts, and has grown throughout his career.

"I don't remember a part of my career when I wasn't working for a company that had a bent toward civic involvement," said Handy, whose career includes 18 years with Citizens Bank after starting his career as a 22-year-old with Fleet Financial Group.

That holds true at Washington Trust too, which Handy joined in 2013. The bank says more than 60 percent of its 600 employees volunteered in 2014. Handy hopes to help that number grow through leading by example.

"I hope that both by leading by example and by espousing a corporate culture that kind of assumes involvement in some way, shape, or form, that people will start early and be involved however they can," he said. "It's not a financial thing. It's time and energy and talent." ■

'It's not a financial thing. It's time and energy and talent.'

EDWARD O. "NED" HANDY III, The Washington Trust Co. president and chief operating officer



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PAWTUCKET RED SOX

NATURALLY ENGAGED: Pawtucket Red Sox's Paws pals it up with Noah Minucci, 8, of Cranston at the Whole Foods store there to benefit the Whole Kids Foundation, which has the goal of improving nutrition for children.
 PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

sponsors an annual “Walk and Roll” event that includes participants who use wheelchairs – all participants get game tickets. A pre-game ceremony on the field includes the presentation of a \$40,000 check to the school.

For the Challenger Little League of Coventry, which is comprised of young ball players who are physically and mentally disabled, the PawSox sponsors an annual Challenger Clinic, which allows these players to practice, learn from and meet PawSox players right on the McCoy Stadium field.

Every July, the club hosts a U.S. citizenship swearing-in ceremony at McCoy Stadium. It's also hosted fundraising barbecues for the Little Sisters of the Poor and the local Home and Hospice Organization. For two years in a row it has held a Veterans Day luncheon in the PawSox clubhouse as a thanks to those who served their country.

“It's all about our overall willingness to help the community,” Tamburro said. “To help lift up those in need is the responsibility of a successful company. And we have a willingness to do our share in a quiet way.”

New programs this season include a “Hurl the Pearl” event that benefits families with children diagnosed with cancer. In the fifth inning of every home game, fans throw softballs into the sunroof of a moving Honda Odyssey. The softballs are sold for \$1 each. The event has raised more than \$10,000 for the Providence-based, cancer-support organization The Tomorrow Fund.

There's also “My Hero Mondays,” during which a local citizen is nominated by fans on the club website to be introduced at a Monday home game and throw the ceremonial first pitch. Joe Bradlee – special assistant to the president and general manager – said this program has been so popular that the club had to add Tuesday and Thursday games for introducing these local heroes.

He is glad this is another PawSox community initiative that's been a success.

“We all feel a moral and social obligation as a successful organization to give back in every way we can,” he said. ■

‘We all feel a moral and social obligation ... to give back in every way we can.’

JOE BRADLEE, Pawtucket Red Sox special assistant to the president and general manager

Team spirit stretches beyond the ballpark

BY MICHAEL J. DECICCO | Contributing Writer

IT'S DIFFICULT TO PINPOINT what exactly earned the Pawtucket Red Sox the Providence Business News' Business Excellence Award for Community Involvement for 2016. The ballclub's list of community outreach and charitable fundraising over the past 43 years is expansive.

First and foremost is the fact the Triple-A Boston Red Sox affiliate established a charitable foundation in 1999 that has donated more than \$1 million to a variety of community organizations. The PawSox were honored in 2014 with Minor League Baseball's John Henry Moss Community Service Award for being a team with a demonstrated and ongoing commitment to community service.

Pawtucket Red Sox Vice Chairman Mike Tamburro's community service starts with his and the club's 40-year involvement with Pawtucket Boys & Girls Club.

For 25 seasons, the ballclub has sent two

Boys & Girls Club youngsters between the ages of 10-14 to the Major League Baseball World Series – footing the bill for tickets, air travel and hotels. It sponsors the Boys & Girls Club of Pawtucket's RBI (Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities) team with a \$10,000 donation to help pay for uniforms and equipment. Tamburro also recently co-chaired the fundraising effort that built an \$8 million addition to the Boys & Girls Club headquarters.

Other programs and organizations the club underwrites every year include Meeting Street in Providence, at which Tamburro has been a board member for about 10 years. The club



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ALL TOGETHER NOW: Employee ownership and flexible work scheduling result in an engaged and productive workforce, say Shawmut Design & Construction managers. From left, Aimee Kingston, senior project manager; Gordon Zaniol, project manager; Beverly Smith, client-service manager; Peter Scolara, senior project manager, confer at the firm's Providence office.

PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

SHAWMUT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Enterprising by design

BY LIZ LEE | Contributing Writer

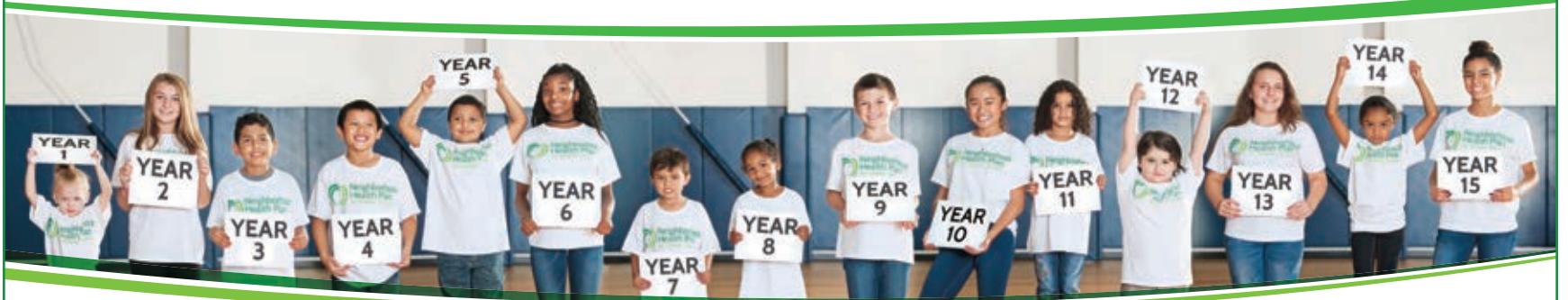
IT'S BEEN MORE THAN 75 years since the U.S. government amended the Fair Labor Standards Act, limiting the workweek to 40 hours, and popularizing the 9-to-5 schedule we've all come to know.

It's less than ideal for many of us, and is still the standard despite technological advancements and cultural shifts that have had profound effects on the way Americans live and work. It's a wonder then that more companies aren't doing what **Shawmut Design and Construction** is doing – working to create more flexible, individualized schedules for employees.

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“We believe that our people provide the best client service when they feel their best,” said Ron Simoneau, vice president and head of Shawmut’s Providence office.

In addition to the flexible work schedules, employees also benefit from things that include college-tuition reimbursement, a company-paid health coverage option and incentives to give back to the community. In addition to being named one of Providence Business News’ Best Places to Work this year, it was also named one of Fortune Magazine’s 2016 100 Best Work Places in the country.

But Shawmut’s flexible-schedule initiative is just one of several innovative programs the company has built its reputation on since it was founded in 1982. Today the Boston-based company – with about 80 workers based in Rhode Island – has completed high-profile projects in Providence, from the Bridge Building expansion at Rhode Island Hospital to the renovation of several historic buildings on the Brown University campus.

Though Shawmut’s presence in Rhode Island has grown substantially since it opened its Providence office in 2000, the market here has not been without its challenges, says Simoneau.

“A succinct approach where the most talented people work collectively to achieve common goals is a stark departure from ... the traditional concept of ‘low bid,’ which has plagued the construction industry for decades,” he said.

With this in mind, Shawmut uses an approach based on Lean Methodology, Target Value Design and Integrated Project Delivery to ensure stakeholders are fully engaged and accountable, Simoneau said.

And it must be working: In 2015, Shawmut experienced revenue growth of about 34 percent.

“Generally over 85 percent of our revenue is from repeat customers, which is incredibly high in an industry where you are only as good as your last project,” said Simoneau.

Shawmut’s most recent Rhode Island projects include the 34,000-square-foot performing arts facility on the Moses Brown campus, and the 13,000-square-foot Applied Math Building at Brown University.

The company is building Brown’s new School of Engineering, a 200,000-square-foot project that will be built using IPD, a method that Simoneau says takes collaboration to a completely different level. “Subcontractors and consultants all place their profits at risk and subject them to the outcome of the entire project, instead of their specific scope,” he said.

For instance, quality control and safety measures can be built into the design, he said. Or strategies can be incorporated into prefabrication of work once the project is looked at as a whole by all involved.

IPD is at the core of Shawmut’s Lean Initiative, a building technique that breaks down the construction process and makes it easier to understand for not only the client, but for partners and subcontractors as well.

Said Simoneau, “As a 100 percent, employee-owned company, each individual can really get behind and own this transformative initiative. It’s really been a great differentiator so far. And I think it will continue to be one for quite some time,” with customers ultimately benefiting from this enterprising approach. ■

‘We believe that our people provide the best client service when they feel their best.’

RON SIMONEAU, Shawmut Design and Construction vice president

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President & COO
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EXCELLENCE AT A LARGE COMPANY



HOME VISITS: One of Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island's newest initiatives includes multidisciplinary home health visits. Here Noel Hernandez, left, NHPRI community outreach specialist, and Terri Venditto, right, RN and medical case manager, visit NHPRI member Alt-gracia Martinez.

PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH PLAN OF RHODE ISLAND

Affordable health care the mission

BY TARYN PLUMB | Contributing Writer

NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH PLAN OF RHODE ISLAND is devoted to making lives better.






"There is a clear mission in everybody's day-to-day work," said Peter Marino, CEO and president of the Smithfield and Providence-based nonprofit HMO. "We want to provide great quality care at a price that at-risk populations in the state can afford."

In the process of working toward that goal, the 13-year-old health insurer has established itself as a leader in its industry.

Over the past three years, it has experienced tremendous growth across all levels of its business. Membership grew from 92,000 in November 2013 to 190,646 by the end of October 2016, with annual gross revenue more than doubling over the same time pe-

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riod, from \$430 million to \$1.01 billion. To accommodate that growth, Neighborhood Health has expanded its staff to 468 this year from 230 in 2012.

There are several factors that have allowed for that expansion, according to Marino. First and foremost: The Affordable Care Act. Being able to offer coverage through the state's health insurance exchange, HealthSource RI, opened the HMO up to several groups outside of its traditional Medicaid business, including adults without dependents, seniors and the disabled, and everyday Rhode Islanders seeking coverage.

Today, one in every six state residents is enrolled in a Neighborhood Health plan, Marino said. The HMO ultimately serves two-thirds of the Medicaid population in the state.

Another initiative is its INTEGRITY program, which launched in July 2016 and is targeted to those who are "dual eligible" – or able to receive both Medicaid (which is for low-income populations) and Medicare (which is for populations over 65 or those suffering from a severe disability, no matter their income).

Rhode Island is one of 13 states working on such a program through a partnership with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, according to Marino, who described it as a slow and deliberate roll-out that is still in its infancy.

"Care for those who are dual eligible is typically not well-coordinated across the country," he said. "We're at the forefront of trying to create a new way to provide their care at a price that everybody can afford. That's certainly one of our largest initiatives right now."

Another relatively new program is Health@Home, which was launched two years ago and hearkens back

to the roots of medicine. Analytics help to determine which patients might benefit from a certain kind of care. Once they are identified, nurses and social workers visit them in their homes and provide assessments. As Marino noted, in the process other non-medical needs are often discovered, such as housing, food security or heating issues. Their providers work with them to help resolve those needs so that they can better focus on their health.

"Primary care is really the fundamental solution to that," said Marino, adding that, as a result, Neighborhood Health has seen a reduction of more than 30 percent of emergency room visits in that population. "It's really a homegrown initiative here."

Another strength is Neighborhood Health's diversity: It has employees who speak multiple languages, and in some cases come from the populations they serve. "There's a real good connection between our members and the folks that work here. That's another piece of the puzzle that really has helped us be successful."

He said the goal is to continue to develop Neighborhood Health's diverse array of offerings and help to make the health care process easier and more accessible.

"We've had a very successful couple of years here," said Marino. "We want to make sure that we stick to our fundamentals and do them well." ■

'There is a clear mission in everybody's day-to-day work.'

**PETER MARINO,
Neighborhood Health Plan
of Rhode Island CEO and
president**

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As President of the Rhode Island Hospitality Association, Dale Venturini helps her industry grow and thrive. Thanks to Dale, business is better than ever and students from around the country will see just how bright a future in the hospitality industry can be. Dale recommended Rhode Island as the site of the National Restaurant Association's 2018 ProStart Invitational, which will bring more than 350 high school competitors to the RI Convention Center to test their management and culinary skills. That one event will pump nearly \$1 million into the Rhode Island economy. To find out how you can promote Rhode Island to your group, visit RecommendRI.com.

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EXCELLENCE AT A MIDSIZE COMPANY



BETTER OUTCOME, LOWER COST: Michelle Wu, Ximedica vice president of quality, and Bradley Codkind, design insurance engineer, discuss a project at the company's Providence headquarters.
 PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

XIMEDICA

Staying one step ahead

BY JOHN A. LAHTINEN | Contributing Writer

BACK IN THE MID-1980S, fellow Rhode Island School of Design grads Stephen Lane and Aidan Petrie formed a company devoted to providing an innovative and creative platform for introducing medical-technology products to the marketplace, among other things.

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All of us with the Pawtucket Red Sox and with the PawSox/Skeffington Charitable Foundation express our sincere gratitude for the honor you have bestowed upon us.

In this first year of new management, we have endeavored to augment the spirit of community outreach long practiced by Ben Mondor and Mike Tamburro.

We are gratified that these initial efforts have connected with our community.

We look forward to enhancing that connection, and to taking the PawSox/Skeffington Charitable Foundation to new heights.

Thank you again.

Larry Lucchino, Dr. Charles Steinberg, Dan Rea, and everyone at the Pawtucket Red Sox

Today, that company – known as **Ximedica** for the past decade – is a leader in the innovation, development and commercialization of medical and health care products. Its customer roster ranges from Fortune 100 med-tech and pharma companies to emerging tech startups.

“Our services provide a value solution for development and commercialization under a fully regulated quality-management system that provides flexibility, reduces risk and time to market,” said Randall S. Barko, Ximedica’s president and CEO for nearly five years. “Ximedica has no products of our own. We are an extension of our customers and provide virtual resources as needed.”

Since Ximedica is developing new and innovative products, confidentiality is tantamount. To that end, the company has built a fire wall system into its standard operating procedures that allows it to work simultaneously with competitors on similar products with the assurance of maintaining confidentiality with dedicated resources exclusive to the individual engagement.

According to Barko, Ximedica’s revenue has increased 229 percent since 2013, reaching \$53.8 million in 2015. That figure, he said, is expected to surpass \$60 million this year.

In the past three years, the company’s full-time staff has increased from about 75 to almost 150 with expansions in its Providence and Minneapolis offices and the acquisition of San Francisco-based Bridge Design in 2015. In July, Ximedica acquired AccelBiotech in Los Gatos, Calif., which should bring the employee figure to more than 200 into 2017.

Recent Ximedica projects have included Gecko Health Innovations and its prototype cloud-based CareTRx™ device, which adds intelligence to inhal-

ers; Accelerate Diagnostics’ ID/AST, a system used to provide identification and minimum inhibitory concentration-based susceptibility results direct from sample in hours instead of days; and 3Derm Systems, which is developing a hand-held stereoscopic imaging system for remote skin monitoring.

“In today’s health care environment, innovation is not innovation unless it provides a better outcome at a lower cost,” Barko said. “That does not mean that the device or product must be a lower price, it means the total cost of the procedure, the length of stay, the risk of infection – the better outcome – is a lower cost to the health care system. We take pride in being part of a better solution that impacts patients by improving outcomes, enhancing lives and helping our customers achieve their business objectives.”

Joe Gordon has been with Ximedica for 14 years, serving as director of technical innovation for the past three. Often “accused” by fellow employees of having the best job, Gordon says exposure to a variety of projects, technologies and clients keeps his role exciting and fresh.

“I feel very fortunate to have worked at a place for as long as I have and never felt bored,” Gordon said. “Innovation is core to my role. The breadth of challenges requiring novel solutions is what keeps my job interesting. We have assembled an amazing group of vibrant, talented individuals with a passion for what they do.”

Barko says that Ximedica strives to become a trusted adviser with its customers.

“We constantly work to establish credibility and a spirit of openness in all we do,” he said. “We operate on facts, not opinions and focus on results. ... We know that whatever was ‘good enough’ today will not be ‘good enough’ tomorrow.” ■

“We know that whatever was **“good enough”** today will not be “good enough” tomorrow.’

RANDALL S. BARKO,
Ximedica CEO and president

Congratulations to the 2016 Business Excellence Recipients!

We are honored to receive the Excellence in Diversity award. Committed to our mission of improving the health and wellness of the diverse communities we serve, we are proud to be recognized as a leader in Rhode Island.



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PROVINCE MORTGAGE ASSOCIATES INC.

MAKING CONNECTIONS: Province Mortgage Associates CEO, President and Executive Director David Currie, center, makes a point of creating a work culture that values employees, who in turn value the firm's customers. Operations Manager Glenn Tourtellot is at left.

PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

Cohesive culture, happy customers

BY MICHAEL J. DECICCO | Contributing Writer

RECOGNIZED AS ONE of the Best Places to Work by Providence Business News seven times within the past eight years, **Province Mortgage Associates Inc.** knows what it's about and what its customers expect.

"We've always stayed true to who we were and are," President, Executive Director and CEO David Currie said. "We could've gotten a lot bigger, but not without losing sight of who we are."

Who they are is a trusted residential and commercial mortgage broker and lender that stays true to its small-company origins. That is possible, said Currie, because "we hire like-minded people. Do that, and it's contagious. You grow with the right people with the same moral compass."

Province Director of Corporate Relations Donald Wilson said when the company started in 2005, "We were just a tiny company in a sea of mortgage lenders."

The company decided to differentiate itself by staying small, focusing on the client experience

and quite literally being cohesively principled. Province Mortgage quickly created a list of principles that all employees must adhere to, including the creed that they are all reflections of one another "in and out of office."

Not all of those who sell mortgages always have a vested interest in the success of the homebuyer, Wilson said. Because of its client-focused philosophy, Province, on the other hand, calls its lenders "mortgage advisers" and operates more like a close-knit family.

"As a fully delegated lender, [this] company can personally guide the client from origination and approval to underwriting and closing," Wilson said.

He proudly notes that 100 percent of Province's business is from

referrals, and the vast majority of the customer-satisfaction surveys are answered with positive feedback.

"We get around 30 surveys back per month, all with positive comments," he said. "The main reason they give, it's always the service. Our closing costs are reasonable. Our rates are competitive. But it's always the service. That's why our clients actively refer others to us."

Province itself reaches out into the community, and in unique ways. In 2013, the company started an internal Accountability Coaching Boot Camp designed to teach better daily work habits. This boot camp has been extended into a free community outreach and training program for Realtors and other professionals with sessions held across Massachusetts, Rhode Island and even Connecticut.

The challenges the company has overcome, Wilson said, include adjusting to the federal Dodd-Frank regulations in 2011 and the Truth in Lending Integrated Disclosure Regulations in 2015.

These regulatory changes made it easier for consumers but created tremendous pressure for mortgage companies to comply. "Province is humbled and proud to share that we thrived!" Wilson said. "Our leadership has stayed way ahead of these changes while proactively feeding this information to our entire team."

Another challenge came in the form of a loss that hit too close to home at Province.

In 2013, Operations Manager Chris Amaral was diagnosed with cancer and died one year later. The company organized the First Annual Chris Amaral Memorial Mini-Golf Tournament in his memory. The Sept. 17, 2016, event at Mulligan Island Golf and Entertainment in Cranston raised \$10,000 for The Tomorrow Fund, which aids children and their families dealing with cancer.

The loss and planning of the memorial event symbolizes the staff's family-like closeness in handling any future challenges that come its way. ■

'It's always the service. That's why our clients actively refer others to us.'

DONALD WILSON,
Province Mortgage
Associates director of
corporate relations

SOJOURNER HOUSE



MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

Sojourner House staff, including from left, Executive Director Vanessa Volz, Manager of Immigration Advocacy Gloria Greenfield, Director of Operations Sarah DeCataldo, intern Grace McClinticy and Volunteer Coordinator Elizabeth Dugan, are focused on finding solutions to domestic and sexual violence through advocacy and ministering to the needs of victims.

PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

Supports shifting to meet changing client needs

BY JOHN A. LAHTINEN | Contributing Writer

SOJOURNER HOUSE was founded in the mid-1970s by Providence residents and Brown University students, recent alumnae and staff members concerned about the prevalence of domestic violence but the lack of community resources available to deal with it.

“The agency was initially completely volunteer-run and offered limited programming,” said Vanessa Volz, executive director since 2011. “But in the 1980s, it grew to include paid staff, and the agency acquired a building that was converted into an emergency shelter, or safe house, which is still used today.”

In 2002, Sojourner House opened Providence’s only drop-in and advocacy center for domestic violence aid.

According to Volz, the agency’s residential program in particular has grown over the last five years and now includes not only an emergency shelter, but also transitional housing, a shelter for male victims, permanent supportive housing, and by the end of the year, housing for victims of trafficking.

“In August,” Volz said, “we expanded our mission statement to reflect the fact that the work that we are doing is helping victims of not only domestic violence, but sexual violence as well.”

With 11 full-time staff members and three part-timers, the agency is in the process of hiring another full-timer, and possibly two more

part-timers.

Revenue at the end of the 2015 fiscal year approached \$750,000; and while the financial statements are not yet final for this year, Volz expects the agency to exceed \$970,000.

Its client base, she said, is varied.

“Our clients are primarily victims and survivors of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence,” Volz said. “Many come to us in an emergency, having recently experienced a crisis. Others have already left an abusive situation but need ongoing support and resources. Sometimes family members or friends also reach out to us to ask how they can be supportive of a loved one who is in an abusive situation.”

Offering programming and support beyond its housing programs and drop-in center, Sojourner House also provides free, confidential HIV testing and education, financial literacy workshops, youth programming (including parenting classes), and prevention and educational programs designed primarily for middle and high school students.

The agency’s immigration advo-

cacy program for undocumented victims of abuse received an Innovation Award from the Rhode Island Foundation in May.

Kelly Henry, the agency’s manager of residential advocacy, says family and friends often assume that the work she does must be draining or depressing.

“I find it to be the opposite,” Henry said. “I am passionate about working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence because they have so much hope and resiliency. I am very lucky to be able to witness the amazing growth and change that my clients and their families go through.”

Sojourner House is always looking to create innovative solutions to help underserved communities, including LGBTQ, undocumented, men and survivors of human trafficking. According to Henry, a huge part of the agency’s effort involves the ability to innovate.

“Domestic and sexual violence have been part of our society for a very long time,” Henry said. “In order to find solutions, we are going to have to keep at it and find new ways to change systems and attitudes about intimate partner violence.”

Volz echoed the sentiment: “We’re not afraid to try new things and develop new programs, especially when we realize that there are groups that are being underserved and need our help.” ■

“We are going to have to keep at it and **find new ways to change systems and attitudes about intimate partner violence.**”

KELLY HENRY,
 Sojourner House manager
 of residential advocacy



PROVIDENCE WARWICK CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

IT TAKES A TEAM: The Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau team works on multiple fronts to increase the profile of Providence and Warwick, with the goal of growing the tourism and convention business here.

PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

R.I. boosters and so much more

BY JACQUELYN GUTC | Contributing Writer

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT to find a bigger fan of the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau than Kristin Stone. She is general manager of the Providence Riverboat Co., which joined the PWCVB's program about three years ago.

"I cannot even begin to tell you how much it has changed our business and changed our lives," said Stone, whose partner Thomas McGinn bought the company in 2004. "It's been an unbelievable shot in the arm for us. That being said, we work it to its fullest."

That means the couple says yes to every opportunity offered by the PWCVB – which has a goal to grow the meeting and visitor industry in the area – including taking part in giveaways and making tours available to bloggers and journalists, along with attending monthly meetings where marketing experts help educate business owners.

Stone said that what was originally a part-time business for McGinn that catered to locals hanging out at The Hot Club, where the boat embarks from, has tripled its business since joining the PWCVB. It's shifted to a tourism focus, and she said tourism is 80 percent of the business.

Stone said the PWCVB made them see how beneficial a tourism focus could be. She and others in the hospitality industry believe

that the organization has been instrumental in bringing more tourism to the area.

Providence has certainly gotten on the map in the last couple of years, garnering attention from national media, including Travel + Leisure, The New York Times, Thrillist, NerdWallet and USA Today.

"That, for us, is important because it tells the potential visitor, from a third-party perspective, that Providence is a great destination," said Martha Sheridan, president and CEO of the PWCVB.

The bureau helps the city nab high-profile events, such as first two rounds of March's NCAA men's basketball tournament.

"Our team worked really hard for a year preparing for that tournament, and we worked in conjunction with Providence College and our partner at Dunkin' Donuts Center, and we sold out every game," Sheridan said. The group added a festival and closed down streets to help expand the event, which the PWCVB estimates generated \$3.5 million in direct

spending.

Innovative collaborations help the organization put Providence on the map.

The initiative Recommend Rhode Island encourages residents to be ambassadors, prompting their associations and groups to consider the Ocean State for their events. The bureau recognizes these residents through newspaper ads, website mentions and an annual Shining Star Award. This year, the award was given to Gov. Gina M. Raimondo for her part in securing Rhode Island for the National Governors Association's summer meeting in July.

The PWCVB also serves as the go-between for businesses and organizations here, and those considering coming to the area.

A significant tool for the organization's marketing efforts is social media. On Facebook, it offers giveaways and utilizes live video, which seems to resonate. Facebook followers increased 19 percent in the 2015 fiscal year to 27,680. In the 16 months since, the number of likes has grown 65 percent to more than 45,800.

PWCVB's overall efforts appear to be paying off too, with a 37 percent increase in convention-related hotel rooms booked in 2016 over 2012, despite more people booking directly online, Sheridan said. And PWCVB income, which mostly

comes from a hotel tax, increased 27.6 percent in 2016 over 2011 to \$3.8 million.

"It's remarkable to me the amount of income they are generating for the state that nobody even knows about," Stone said. "They are really the under-the-radar, unsung heroes of this state of ours." ■

'They are really the under-the-radar, **unsung heroes of this state of ours.**'

KRISTIN STONE,
 Providence Riverboat Co.
 general manager



HIGHLANDER INSTITUTE

A WHOLE NEW WORLD: Highlander Institute is dedicated to spreading innovation to transform education. Here, left, Eric Butash, director of operations for the nonprofit, discusses smartphone potential with staff at Central Elementary School in Lincoln.

PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

Highlander bets on tech-learning blend

BY SARAH PARSONS | Contributing Writer

FIVE YEARS AGO, Pleasant View Elementary School in Providence ranked as one of the lowest-performing schools in the state. Only 17 percent of the school's third-grade students were considered proficient in math.

But visit Pleasant View today and you'll experience a totally different school. In 2014, Pleasant View saw the most statistically significant growth in standardized test scores in Providence: second-highest in the state.

Some of the credit for this transformation goes to **Highlander Institute**, an education nonprofit in Providence. The organization worked with Pleasant View staff and administrators to draft and secure a R.I. Department of Education "Innovation Powered by Technology" grant. Highlander then trained teachers in blended learning – integrating data and technology such as laptops, and educational software into the classroom – to improve students' learning and performance.

"The reality is that learning has to look different in this rapidly changing and complex world," said Dana Borrelli-Murray, the organization's executive director. "We think that by personalizing

learning using this blended kind of model, we will be able to do that."

This innovative approach has helped Highlander Institute morph from a tiny nonprofit into a nationally recognized leader in education. The organization grew from five employees to 20 between 2012 and 2016, while funding quadrupled during that time period. It now works in 50 schools, including those in Rhode Island, other New England states, and even as far as Oklahoma and Nebraska.

"By embedding its experts in our classrooms, Highlander provides invaluable coaching to our teachers and school leaders," said Superintendent of Providence Schools Christopher Maher. "Over the past five years, their involvement has grown from a presence in one school to on-site supports in nearly half of the district's schools."

In addition to using technology, part of the blended-learning model Highlander works to implement

involves reshaping the classroom itself. Walk into a classroom receiving Highlander's coaching and you might see groups of students clustered at different learning stations they can rotate through, with more one-on-one and small-group interaction with the teacher.

There's also a social justice component. Highlander aims to spread this learning model to resource-strapped schools most in need of innovation.

"We're trying to create better systems for all kids, not just schools that can afford technology," said Borrelli-Murray. "This is the way we're going to reshape learning."

In addition to providing contract support in school districts, Highlander Institute offers FuseRI, a two-year fellowship program for Rhode Island teachers to receive free training.

The organization's EdTechRI program brings together educational technology companies and teachers for monthly meetups. The tech developers pose questions or highlight problems they're having with particular products, and teachers provide feedback. And the EduvateRI initiative, meanwhile, works with researchers, companies, schools, nonprofits and

community partners to turn Rhode Island into an education innovation cluster, the same way many people see Silicon Valley as a hub for technology innovation.

Highlander also hosts an annual blended-learning conference, which has followed a similar growth trajectory as the institute itself, becoming a nationally recognized event.

"When we started, it was 50 people at a cafeteria in a school," said Borrelli-Murray. "Last year, we sold out with 900 people at the R.I. Convention Center."

Next year's conference will take place March 31 and April 1. Borrelli-Murray said Highlander is expecting educational leaders from all over the country. ■

'We're trying to create better systems for all kids, not just schools that can afford technology.'

DANA BORRELLI-MURRAY,
 Highlander Institute
 executive director



A2B TRACKING SOLUTIONS INC.

IN THE KNOW: A2B Tracking Solutions founder, CEO and President Peter M. Collins has built a company that uses bar codes and digital technology to help the U.S. military and civilian clients keep track of millions of assets from its Portsmouth home.

PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

Keeping track when it matters most

BY SARAH PARSONS | Contributing Writer

THE U.S. MILITARY manages 30 million critical assets every year, from tool cribs in Washington, D.C.'s Navy Yard to Humvees rolling through the mountains of Afghanistan. Keeping track of this material is nothing short of a logistical nightmare.

"This problem has become basically the 100-pound gorilla in the military that's weighing down budgets," said Peter M. Collins, founder, CEO and president of **A2B Tracking Solutions Inc.** in Portsmouth. "Maintenance of equipment costs billions and billions of dollars."

That's where A2B Tracking Solutions comes in.

The company, which has been operating for 22 years, works with all branches of the U.S. military, and its suppliers and contractors to register and track supplies using bar codes, microchips and cloud-based software. To simplify, instead of manually tracking inventory with a clipboard and stubby pencil, everything is monitored digitally using advanced technologies, allowing for full traceability as products move throughout the supply chain and between different facilities. To date, A2B Tracking's software has registered about 25 percent of all

U.S. military assets.

Collins said this software saves the military \$3 billion to \$5 billion every year. Staff members don't need to waste valuable time manually tracking inventory or hunting for missing products, and the military doesn't waste money replacing lost supplies.

"What might take 30 days to do manually, you can do in a single day with our technology," Collins said.

The innovation also improves readiness and effectiveness. The U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps can't conduct missions if they're missing critical supplies.

"There's this continuous logistics need to know what you have, where it is and is it ready to go," Collins said. "[With A2B Tracking] the military can get better insight to deploy and be effective when they go out into harm's way."

At the heart of A2B Tracking's offering is its UC! Web cloud-

based tracking system, launched in 2013. The system uses bar codes to identify, track and report assets. In 2016, it also incorporated the use of Radio-Frequency Identification, or RFID. Scanning using RFID tags is 15 times faster than with bar codes, and it also allows for better accuracy, more precise scanning and a greater amount of information. UC! Web also works on mobile computers, tablets and smartphones.

Collins said the company is experiencing solid double-digit growth year over year. Part of the reason for its success is not just its innovative product, but its long history of work with the military.

In 2004, the Pentagon called on A2B Tracking as an industry expert to help shape its policy on managing assets. The fact that A2B Tracking's technology is military-grade and can be used in the harshest of environments is another factor that sets it apart from competitors.

"It's really where our specialization comes in," Collins said. "Our competitors don't support the military to the extent that we do."

It's not just the military that uses the UC! Web software, though. A2B Tracking also works

with colleges and universities, as well as businesses that lease or rent equipment.

"We deal with those that manage everything from 2,000 items inside their own custody up to many millions," Collins said. "Everybody has this problem, but we scale [our technology] depending on the kind of environment we're getting brought into."

Moving forward, Collins will continue investing to drive greater growth. He said A2B Tracking plans to increase support to the software engineering, industrial engineering, and sales and business development areas of the company in the future. ■

'What might take 30 days to do manually, you can do in a single day with our technology.'

PETER M. COLLINS,
A2B Tracking Solutions
 founder, CEO and president



TUFTS HEALTH PLAN

WALKING THE WALK: While Tufts Health Plan sees tailoring products to minority communities as a business imperative, it also invests in developing diverse talent in-house. The Operations Up! group mentoring program has had success in creating upward mobility for minority groups in the company. From left, Darrell Thomas, participant and call center supervisor; Jennifer Chin, participant and claims supervisor; Benise Donahue, senior program manager (of Operations Up!), business performance team; Natasha Vega, participant and member services supervisor; and Jason Kao, participant and business analyst.

COURTESY TUFTS HEALTH PLAN

Diversity trend spurs better service, growth

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

ABOUT 18 MONTHS AGO Tufts Health Plan, which provides health insurance to 1 million customers in New England, was surprised by demographic news that appeared to portend opportunity.

A survey by the company found that Tufts' customer group was only 15 percent ethnic and racial minorities, in contrast to 26 percent for the whole population in Massachusetts, the insurer's home state.

Juan Lopera, Tufts' vice president for business diversity, who quoted these figures from the U.S. Census Bureau, said, "We were surprised at how under-represented our members were with diverse groups. We have ground to make up, and a huge opportunity for business growth."

Further, Lopera said, the Census Bureau says the population of the Bay State is expected to remain flat through 2020, but the proportion of minorities is expected to grow by 10 percent. (Census Bureau projections say non-Hispanic whites will be 44 percent of the U.S. population by 2060.)

"Ethnic minorities are growing in double digits," Lopera said. "This is an opportunity to tailor our products to them." Lopera

called Tufts' movement into minority communities a business imperative.

Tufts defines diversity as racial and ethnic minorities, veterans, elderly people, and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Outreach to these groups of people quickly became a major element in the company's Vision 2020 corporate strategy.

"We put in place an ambitious goal: to double the diversity of our membership by 2020," Lopera said.

Lopera, a Spanish-speaking Latino who had been with the company for several years, was named to the new role of VP of business diversity in 2015.

Early in its diversity campaign, Tufts chose five communities in Massachusetts with populations that were 50 percent or more minority groups. Tufts created marketing materials in Spanish and made sure that primary-care doctors favored by Hispanics were brought into the Tufts network. In a year, the number of Medicare-el-

igible people in those towns served by Tufts doubled.

Many initiatives are companywide. Earlier, Tufts had used bilingual people on staff to take customer calls if a translator was needed. With Vision 2020 backing, Tufts created a language academy to teach people how to handle technical health care terminology in several languages.

Tufts has partnered with community organizations already working with minorities, such as Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston.

Diabetes falls heavily on blacks and Latinos, partly because of diet. Lopera described an effort to retrain Latino cooks in preparing beans more healthfully – with less sodium and using brown rice – in a demonstration that mimicked a popular Spanish soap opera production. Similarly, Tufts worked with Fenway Health to teach employees how to talk with LGBT customers about sensitive topics like gender reassignment surgery.

Tufts' efforts to invest in traditional minority groups embraces customers and also its own employees. Lopera said the Tufts Health Plan staff is 69 percent women and 32 percent people "from diverse communities." The company runs the Operations Up!

initiative, which develops young minority-group employees with management potential with a combination of teaching and mentoring to help them move up in the organization.

Many senior staff members of Tufts serve on boards of organizations in minority communities. Lopera, for instance, is a member of the Association of Latino Professionals of America. Employee groups within the company, such as the YMCA Achievers, composed largely of black professionals, volunteer with groups that include the Dimock Community Health Center in Roxbury, Mass., which historically has had a large black population. ■

'Ethnic minorities are growing in double digits. This is an opportunity.'

JUAN LOPERA,
 Tufts Health Plan vice president for business diversity

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Wishing you continued
success in the future.



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