We congratulate Jill Wilke, MS, RN, CPLC, on her recent graduation, having achieved a Master of Science degree in Nursing and Organizational Leadership from Winona State University and a new position at Lake Regional Hospital, Osage Beach, Missouri, as director of chronic care. Jill and her husband, Paul, now live in nearby Rocky Mount, Missouri, where Jill vacationed with her family as a child, next to Wonderland Camp. In addition to her position at Lake Regional, Jill and her sister will carry on the legacy of their grandfather, who founded the camp, which is tailored to those with cognitive disabilities.

Jill has worked for Gundersen Health System since 1997, first in P/NICU, then in the emergency room, and finally as lead educator for RTS. For those of you who have been touched by her compassion, sense of humor, and innovations, you understand that her contributions to health care will continue to make a difference.

Thank you, Jill, for everything. We will miss you!

If you would like to send a note to Jill please email it to berservs@gundersenhealth.org

Jennifer Marie Jonely, RN, MSN, RNC-OB, CPLC is the 2015 recipient of the Certified in Perinatal Loss Care (CPLC) of the Year Award. RTS Coordinator Jennifer Jonely is a pioneer in her field and has a passion for perinatal loss care. After completing her MSN in 2012, Jennifer initiated the role of Perinatal Palliative Care and Loss Coordinator at St. Luke’s Health System in Boise, ID, the first palliative care program with a perinatal focus in the state. Jennifer also received grant funding for a special program that provides devices to record an unborn baby’s heartbeat. Then, partner Build-a-Bear, places the recorded heartbeat into a stuffed animal, encouraging the development of a relationship with a family member whom they may never see alive and providing comfort for years to come after the loss.

Gina Jones, RN, CPLC (fourth from the left), an RTS Coordinator from Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston, TX, was one of six nurses recognized as Pillar Award winners during Nurses’ Week, 2015!

Chosen from more than 50 nominees, these nurses exemplify excellence in nursing and fulfill the six nursing pillars as

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defined by the Nursing Professional Practice Model. Gina was recognized for excellence as “Nurse as Collaborator,” which reflects her position as RTS Coordinator; regular provider of RTS Bereavement Training: Perinatal Death; Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance (PLIDA) board member; co-chair of the International Perinatal Bereavement Conference; and co-chair of PLIDA’s education committee. She expressed to Rana Limbo, “It was humbling, yet wonderful when they read the nomination, as it highlighted the things that are so dear to both of us. So many still do not know much about perinatal loss and this was a lovely way to spread the word on our work.”

Congratulations, Gina, and thank you for your extraordinary service to bereaved families!

The reach of Resolve Through Sharing

Below is a map showing the international reach of RTS, including military bases. The RTS Faculty has provided education to over 35,000 professionals, approximately 6,500 of them trained as Coordinators, since the first group was trained in September, 1981.

Rana Limbo, the program’s first Coordinator and parent support group facilitator, and Dr. Michael Hartigan, guest presenter, participated in the program’s first parent support group in October, 1981. The program continued to provide trainings for professionals and soon added a memory walk (1986), sponsored the National Perinatal Bereavement Conference in Chicago (1986), and held an annual burial for babies who were miscarried (1989).

In 1986, Rana Limbo and Sara Wheeler wrote *When a Baby Dies: A Handbook for Healing and Helping*, uniquely designed for bereaved parents and their professional care providers. They also conducted research in early miscarriage, discovering that approximately 75% of women experienced a sense of loss of a pregnancy or baby. The remaining women made sense of their miscarriage as a life experience, without feelings of sadness or loss. Drs. Limbo and Wheeler are currently writing the second edition of *When a Baby Dies*, which will include new and revisions of existing content.

RTS has had three national directors, seven Gundersen Health System coordinators, and currently has 14 national faculty members. Bereaved parents and family members have been the center of how and why our trainings are designed and presented for over 30 years.

Today, RTS offers three courses: bereavement training in perinatal death, bereavement training in neonatal and pediatric death, and bereavement training in pediatric and adult death.

RTS White Paper, Investing in Resolve Through Sharing

Over the years, many people have approached us for help in creating a proposal or plan to bring RTS to their facility. Jill Wilke, MS, RN, CPLC, former RTS lead educator, developed *Investing in Resolve Through Sharing Creates a Culture of Compassion, Enhances Quality, Improves Patient and Staff Experience, and Supports National Standard Benchmarks* to outline research that supports bereavement care, possible returns on investment, and alignment with recognized best practices.

With tools such as a comprehensive list of regulatory and prominent end-of-life care standards, as well as ideas on how to increase memorial gifts to support your program, you will use this unique resource over and over.

You can download the white paper from [www.gundersenhealth.org/upload/docs/Bereavement/investing-in-resolve-through-sharing.pdf](http://www.gundersenhealth.org/upload/docs/Bereavement/investing-in-resolve-through-sharing.pdf)
Important resources

Amy Kuebelbeck, author of *Waiting With Gabriel: A Story of Cherishing a Baby’s Brief Life* and *A Gift of Time: Continuing Your Pregnancy When Your Baby’s Life is Expected to be Brief*, co-authored with Dr. Deborah Davis, has provided significant leadership in perinatal palliative care. Her website, perinatalhospice.org, provides access to a LISTSERV (listing of perinatal hospice programs worldwide, numerous resources for professional care providers and for parents, and updated references).

Drs. Joanne Cacciatore and John DeFrain are editors of a new book *The World of Bereavement: Cultural Perspectives on Death in Families*. The book features chapters on how grief is experienced by people in numerous cultures around the world, expanding on the importance of understanding a family’s context when providing care.

Have you ever wished you had just the right article as evidence for supporting a change in practice or as a citation for a key point in your thesis? The article below provides information that will help you. One suggestion: Go to www.pubmed.gov and search for CareSearch.


Suicide

Many lives have been touched by suicide. Two of RTS’s core courses, Bereavement Training: Neonatal and Pediatric Death and Bereavement Training: Pediatric and Adult Death, include suicide as content necessary for experts in bereavement care to understand. We have included in this issue of RTS Connection some key things to know, do, or say to support those affected by the tragedy of a loved one’s suicide.

1. Avoid saying “committed” suicide; instead say, “Died by suicide” or “Died from suicide.”
2. Loved ones of those who died by suicide feel alone and often ashamed. Suicide includes stigma: Those who survive feel tainted.
3. Siblings may feel abandoned and angry that their sibling left them.
4. Survivors of a loved one’s suicide often experience difficulty concentrating, memory loss, poor appetite, and wishing to be dead.
5. New research shows that traumatic brain injuries can lead to suicide.
6. Those whose loved one died from suicide are often asked, “What happened?” or “How did he die?” Those questions are intrusive and too personal. Instead say something like, “I am so sorry that your son died.”

Call for Proposals is OPEN for the 20th International Perinatal Bereavement Conference (IPBC), sponsored by the Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance (plida.org). The 2016 conference will be held September 28 through October 1 in the Phoenix area. Some of you have attended these excellent conferences. Resolve Through Sharing has been an integral part of planning, hosting, and/or presenting throughout the conference’s history, and we encourage you to consider presenting as well. If you have not presented in the past, this is an opportunity to become involved, either as a poster or concurrent session presenter. Any discipline whose work includes providing support to families when their baby dies will find conference topics to be a good fit with their expertise and provide invaluable opportunities for growth.

The Call for Proposals is open until July 1, 2015. Please consider participating in this uniquely designed conference focused on improving care for families when their baby dies, and help us increase the number of proposals by sharing this information with others. Thank you!

www.perinatalbereavementconference.org
Gundersen Health System’s Dahlberg Scholar Award and Nursing Research on the Green

Rana Limbo, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC, CPLC, FAAN, was selected as the 2015 Dahlberg Scholar, supported by the Gundersen Medical Foundation’s Philip J. Dahlberg, MD Nursing Lectureship Fund, which provides continued support for Nursing Research on the Green. This support throughout the past 14 years has enabled national experts in various fields of nursing to share expertise in nursing research and evidence-based practice.

Dr. Limbo and Dr. Sigurd Gundersen, III, M.D., Chairman of Gundersen Medical Foundation

Senior Consultant—RTS

The role of Senior Consultant—RTS functions as Lead Educator and embodies the ideals of the RTS program. The employee will develop and speak at RTS trainings and other conferences, demonstrating expertise in bereavement care across the continuum from prenatal through geriatric patients and families.

The Senior Consultant—RTS will possess evidence-based knowledge in the areas of bereavement care, curriculum development, publishing, research methodology, quality and safety, national healthcare initiatives, social media, and palliative and end-of-life care.

The Senior Consultant—RTS will be recognized as the face of RTS, taking a leadership role in maintaining the focus of RTS as person- and family-centered care, delivered with empathy and compassion by an interprofessional team.

Skills required in this role include the ability to teach, write, guide system-wide organizational change, demonstrate empathic and compassionate care, and interpret research.

Additionally, the Senior Consultant—RTS will collaborate with RTS staff on program and materials creation, business development, and conference logistics; Gundersen internal bereavement program leaders; and RTS national faculty on teaching, writing, and research.

If you or someone you know is interested in this position, please contact Ann Weidner, Lead Recruiter, Gundersen Health System at (608) 775-0106 or amweidn@gundersenhealth.org

Growth and transformation: Results from a precious daughter’s death

Aracely Rodriguez and her friend created Embrace the Journey in memory of their babies. Aracely wrote the following to RTS associate director Rana Limbo: “Dr. Limbo, I have to share with you that shortly after we got our Emmery’s diagnosis, one of the first people we met with was a RTS nurse. She was so kind and gentle. I will never forget her face or name: Chandra Jones. She was a very special part of my journey. I will strive in honor of my sweet Emm to be a family’s ‘Chandra Jones.’ Thank you for teaching such beautiful compassion.”

“Every year for Emm’s birthday, we anonymously donate a baby girl outfit for the first little girl born on November 3rd. I always drop it off at the hospital the night of the 2nd so it’s ready to be delivered if a sweet baby girl comes at midnight. Two years ago...”

Continued on page 5
Judy Friedrichs, MS, RN, CPLC, perinatal bereavement coordinator at Rush Presbyterian St. Luke’s in Chicago, has for many years supported families when they receive a devastating prenatal diagnosis. Her work includes acting as one-to-one support, support group facilitator, and innovator. In addition to directly caring for families and staff, she helped to develop the perinatal loss care certification exam and is currently working toward the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. Below are photos of carts she and RTS coordinator Pam Ferguson created to hold supplies necessary for providing care to bereaved families.

AfterTalk

Lisa Bogatin and Larry Lynn created the website www.AfterTalk.com as a place of comfort and insight for those who have experienced the loss of a loved one. Blogs, live blog talk radio, and information on all types of grief and loss comprise this outstanding site. Uniquely designed as a safe, confidential place for one’s private writing, the website also features a weekly column by internationally known grief expert, Dr. Robert Neimeyer.

Lisa summarized a recent response from Dr. Neimeyer to a woman who had written to him about the death of her husband. “She was emotionally paralyzed and unable to leave her house. Bob told her (along with other sage advice) to wake up the next day and go to a different supermarket to shop. The following day, he told her to wear something that she wouldn’t normally wear…” He was…engaging her in a change of ritual.”

Continuing on the theme of ritual, this summer, Dr. Rana Limbo will be writing a blog post and participating in blog talk radio for AfterTalk on her book, Meaningful Moments: Ritual and Reflection When a Child Dies (co-authored with Kathie Kobler).

In conjunction with the information provided in this issue on suicide, here are two AfterTalk posts for adults and children who are survivors of suicide.

http://www.blogtalkradio.com/aftertalklive/2014/10/29/episode-4-survivors-of-suicide


Growth and Transformation continued

when we dropped it off, Chandra, our RTS nurse with Emmery, was the nurse who we left it with. It was so sweet to see her.”

On page 4 is what Aracely calls her “most favorite picture” of her family: Carlos (father), Carlos (son), Oscar, Aracely, and Emmery.

Aracely, thank you for this beautiful photo that helps us know your family.

Position Statement

RTS is beginning work on a new position statement on maternal death. If you would like to assist Rana Limbo and Kathie Kobler with the statement, please email Dr. Limbo at rklimbo@gundersenhealth.org
RTS bereavement education in a retreat setting!

Rocky Mount (Lake of the Ozarks), MO  
August 24-28, 2015

Attend RTS Bereavement Training:  
Perinatal Death, or Pediatric and Adult  
Death, or RTS Coordinator Training, or  
attend all three.

This conference will provide our  
signature, evidence-based education—  
the difference is the atmosphere. The  
venue, Wonderland Camp, is nestled  
within towering oak trees, steps from the  
Lake of the Ozarks. It is a casual setting,  
so we encourage you to wear your shorts,  
t-shirts, and flip flops, and take the  
opportunity to relax and reflect in this  
peaceful atmosphere.

You have the option of staying in  
cabins on the camp property. Each  
cabin sleeps 4-6 people (ideal for those  
who are attending together) for the  
very economical price of $25/day, per  
person. Cabins include air conditioning,  
bathroom with showers, and bedding.  
You will need to bring your own towels  
and toiletries. If you would like to  
stay in a cabin by yourself, make your  
reservation early as there are a limited  
number of cabins available.

What’s included?  
Breakfast, lunch, and snacks will be  
served at the camp and are included in  
the course registration fee (evening meals  
and drinks will be at your expense).You  
will have access to the camp amenities,  
including paddle boats, heated  
swimming pool, splash pad, and  
swimming and fishing at the lake. The  
grounds also offer a spiritual sanctuary  
and many quiet, beautiful spots for  
hiking or relaxation.

Evening activities  
Optional activities will be offered  
Monday through Thursday evenings.  
Monday – Pontoon boat ride and  
dinner at Jolly Rogers Grub ’n Grog on  
the lake  
Tuesday – On-site activities and dinner  
at Wobbly Boots Roadhouse Barbeque  
Restaurant  
Wednesday – Wine tasting, brick oven  
pizza dinner, and painting at Shawnee  
Bluff Winery  
Thursday – Pontoon boat ride and  
dinner at Coconuts Caribbean Beach  
Bar & Grill on the lake

No matter what you enjoy—relaxation  
and quiet or classic summer activities—  
this is a unique opportunity that you  
can’t miss. Come to learn, reflect, and
take some time for you. If you prefer, you can stay in a hotel in nearby Osage Beach. We have a special room rate with the Holiday Inn Express (see brochures on website for details). If you are staying at a hotel, you may still use the camp amenities.

SPACE IS LIMITED – REGISTER SOON at www.gundersenhealth.org/rts
Don’t miss this opportunity for a rewarding educational experience.

Upcoming training

RTS Bereavement Training: Perinatal Death and RTS Coordinator Training

August 11–13
Central Valley General Hospital
Hanford, CA

August 24–26
Wonderland Camp Retreat
Lake of Ozarks, MO

September 30–October 2
NYU Langone Medical Center
New York, NY

October 6–8
Centra Health Virginia Baptist
Lynchburg, VA

November 3–5
Penn Medicine: University of Pennsylvania Health System
Philadelphia, PA

RTS Bereavement Training: Pediatric and Adult Death

August 27–28
Wonderland Camp Retreat
Lake of the Ozarks, MO

RTS Bereavement Training: Neonatal and Pediatric Death and RTS Coordinator Training

January 27–29
Florida Hospital for Children
Orlando, FL

Register at www.gundersenhealth.org/rts
To find out how you can bring RTS training to your facility or community, contact berservs@gundersenhealth.org