EDITORIAL

HEALTHCARE CURRENTS: A SPECIAL ISSUE FORUM



It is an exciting time at the *Business Forum*, a peer-reviewed, scholar-practitioner journal published by the College of Business and Economics at Cal State LA. The journal provided scholarly advice and application to business practice since the mid-1970s and is now renewed in a modern print-online format. Our articles have always aimed to advance business practice through application of research or theoretical synthesis of information relevant to business. This Healthcare Currents issue is not an exception, as we highlight an array of interesting topics from reviewing healthcare technology advancements that contribute to reductions in costs of care to helping managers understand wellbeing and mindful practices at work.

We open with two vignettes setting a practical context for the articles. The President of AltaMed Health Services Corporation shares how his company handles healthcare industry changes and leads the way into technological and service innovation in the underinsured Southern California communities and beyond. The "Mind Matters" initiative in the second vignette showcases one of the wellbeing programs that engender positive change in how work-and-study community members empower themselves with knowledge about compassionate engagement and managing stress. Echoing previous research on compassion and change (e.g., Avramchuk, Manning, & Carpino, 2013; Worline & Dutton, 2017), both vignettes illustrate the need for leaders to take their organizations further on a path toward social responsibility and human thriving.

The main Articles section begins with a review of technologies for monitoring and supporting patient care remotely. David Weinstein, Lonnie Barish, and Micah Frankel lead us on a fascinating journey into innovative market solutions targeting improvements in preventive care and therefore increasing its quality while reducing overall care costs. The quality-versus-costs dilemma (Bradley & Taylor, 2015) is central in the healthcare management field, and most articles chosen for this special issue try to tackle it in some practical way.

Addressing healthcare costs from a workplace angle, for example, Portia A. Jackson Preston synthesizes the literature on workplace stressors and shares evidence-based recommendations for dealing with employee burnout. Tom Larson and Deborah Compel Larson then take us outside of the workplace and into a South Los Angeles community to demonstrate through their research how the food deserts in urbanized environments coexist with the obesity epidemic and other healthcare cost drivers among our local population, including its working-age segment.

Among the key currents in our healthcare field is the set of monumental changes due to the enactment and ongoing implementation challenges of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA). Zhen Cui and Devika Hazra have examined the associated positive and

negative impacts on healthcare cost coverage and provide interesting, original statistics on who the ACA helped and who it failed in this regard. Their research gives insight into the issue of health insurance for the self-employed and suggests policymaking implications for healthcare coverage of part-time employees in the United States.

Mwadi Kakoma Chakulya, Francis Wambalaba, and Barbara W. Son bring into the spotlight an increasingly important, global view on employee healthcare financing through a unique case of Zambian copper miners. The authors' survey research illuminates the nuances in employee attitudes toward paying for healthcare costs, producing potentially useful lessons for the unionized miner workforces in particular and labor-management partnerships in general.

We then close with the article by Carol Blaszczynski that harnesses and showcases the power of workplace mindfulness through a synthesis of literature and current organizational practices. The author presents a compelling business case for mindfulness programs in different work settings and across employee and management job levels. The article furthers the encouragement from several authors of this special issue to build organizational communities for a sustainable workplace and a healthy society.

Finally, H. Rika Houston reviews *The Gene: An Intimate History*, a book by Siddhartha Mukherjee, that helps us to "challenge and reimagine preconceived notions of health and wellness" (Houston, 2018, p. 54). As we struggle to reconcile business imperatives with societal priorities (Rosenthal, 2018), there are paradigm shifts emerging to affect the core of what we know about our struggles, passions, and nature. The *Business Forum* journal aspires to bring our audiences fresh perspectives on how to work effectively and organize efficiently yet continue to live with wonder about a better world filled with creativity, innovation, and purpose. The Healthcare Currents issue attempts to deliver on this hefty promise.

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