



Carol Emmott Foundation

Compass of Conviction

Brave Leadership When
the Ground Quakes

**2026 Christine Malcolm
Symposium**

February 25, 2026

2–4pm

Four Seasons Hotel, Chicago

Compass of Conviction:
Brave Leadership When the Ground Quakes

We know what worries us, but worries can't drive positive action. Our focus must be on the care that really matters and how we will muster our courage when everyone else is lost in survival mode. How do you create the future of healthcare in a climate of retreat?

Our speakers for the 2026 Christine Malcolm Symposium have all been tested by the prevailing storms pushing healthcare hither and yon and have found ways of staying connected to the values that drive their leadership. None claim it is easy or that they have perfected some way to stand firm every day, but all hold the conviction that the future belongs to those who will stay true to their calling of ensuring a health-care environment that is just, responsive to the needs of all members of the community, and cares for all.



Symposium Program and Order of Speakers

Following the Symposium, please join us for the Carol Emmott Foundation's Annual Open Reception and 10 year anniversary celebration starting at 6pm in the Lakeview Junior Ballroom.

Steady in Turbulent Times

Being a scientist today is difficult—some would even say ‘tragic.’ Being a leader of scientists today means being a cheerleader on the outside. Now add to this stewpot—you, the leader and a scientist yourself—are diagnosed with invasive cancer. Lessons learned while navigating these roles, staying true to yourself, your family, and your professional goals.



Debbie Thurmond, PhD
Director of the Diabetes and
Metabolism Research Institute
City of Hope

Everything Begins Within: Leadership Lessons for a System in Retreat

When Randi Woods stepped into the CEO role of a 30 year old community health organization, she inherited themes of exhaustion, transition, and retreat. She had to begin with her own reckoning as a Black woman leader who believed that everything begins within.



Randi Woods, MBA, MS, RN
CEO/President
Sisters Together and Reaching, Inc

Sometimes Hugs Save Lives

The stress of 2025 was unimaginable from executive orders, lay-offs, court challenges, death threats to colleagues, and continuous uncertainty about whether the job would be there or not. Sometimes hugs, the stories of others, and a new view can save your life.



Anh Thang Dao-Shah, PhD
Executive Director, Belonging, Experience,
and Engagement
John Muir Health

Steady Hearts, Strong Leaders: Navigating Disruption with Reflection, Wisdom, Purpose, and Connection

When the terrain is unpredictable, leaders need tools to support leading with heart, resilience, and grounded purpose.



Girlynda Gonzales, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer Acute Care
Medical Centers
John Muir Health

Designed for Balance: How my Leadership Journey was Fueled by the Choice to Have Dad Stay at Home

You don't have two worlds: at home and at work. Build a strong foundation by planning family life and leadership as an integrated strategic choice.



Vanessa Walker, DO, MMCi
Chief Medical Officer
Sutter Roseville Medical Center

Living in Courage: The 3 Cs

There are those moments when the potential cost of what you must say feels enormous. It's possible to face those moments if you have nurtured your own clarity, connectedness, and calm.

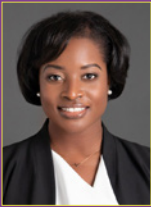


Carolyn Carpenter, MHA, FACHE
President National Capital Region
Johns Hopkins Health System

Pre-Recorded Speakers

Hurt Providers Hurt Patients: Addressing Provider-Driven Activation in the Emergency Department

What is the impact of provider stress, burnout, and secondary trauma on patient care, workplace culture, and wellness?

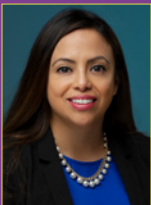


Jenice Forde, MD, FACEP, FACHE

Associate Professor and Chair, Department
of Emergency Medicine, Pennsylvania Hospital
Penn Medicine

Transformation

Sometimes leadership means creating belief where none exists and staying the course until others see what you saw all along. When senior leadership thinks they could do without you or your work, sometimes you have to rely on your own conviction and bring others along to see it.



Helena Kowalewski, MPPM, CPXP

**Vice President of Patient Experience
MaineHealth**

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The background of the entire page is a teal-colored map. A prominent compass rose is centered on the right side, with lines radiating outwards. The map shows various geographical features and labels, though they are faint and partially obscured by the teal overlay.

**Empowering women.
Strengthening communities.
Changing healthcare.**

 **Carol Emmott Foundation**

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