



UMANA RESPONDS!



By George Hrycelak, M.D.

The events of February 24, 2022, shook Ukraine and its diaspora to their fundamental and existential core. Ukraine is being militarily destroyed. Russia's aim is to cause as much pain, hurt, death and destruction as it can. This war defies reason, and strains credulity. But it is actually happening!

The result? Thousands killed, tens of thousands injured, hundreds of thousands suffering, and millions displaced. The scope of this trauma is unimaginable. The medical humanitarian needs boggle the mind, and beg for assistance. Ukraine now needs massive help. The consequences of war are catastrophic for health.

The Ukrainian Medical Association of North America (UMANA) and its sister organization the UMANA Foundation, have existed for decades as social, educational and professional associations. Our role has suddenly changed. The Ukrainian diaspora worldwide has stepped up with significant humanitarian help. We as individuals have all contributed. But UMANA knows medicine; we are dedicated to healing and preserving life. That's what we do. That's where our assistance is concentrated.

This issue of *UMANA News* will just scratch the surface of what is being done on a daily basis. Help is being distributed in many places as in many ways. As they say, "the situation is fluid".

Some of what has been done so far.

Official UMANA formal letters requesting humanitarian support for Ukraine have been sent to representatives of the U.S. government at the highest levels.

Individual chapters of UMANA have undertaken massive efforts to collect medical equipment, supplies and medication for air shipment to Ukraine via Poland and neighboring nations.

UMANA has partnered with the firm Viveo to provide easy-access tele-medicine consultation.

The UMANA Foundation has been the recipient of magnanimous donations from around the US and Canada, from Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians alike. These donations have enabled support of UMANA chapter activity, as well as financial support of other medical foundations:

- American College of Surgeons (Stop the Bleed)
- American Ukrainian Medical Foundation (AUMF)
- California Association of Aid Ukraine
- Embrace Global (portable incubators)
- Institute for Emergency Medicine (Warsaw)
- Kyiv Mohyla Foundation of America
- MedGlobal (portable ultrasound machines)
- RAZOM
- Revived Soldiers of Ukraine
- Ukrainian Catholic University Foundation
- Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA)
- United Ukrainian-American Relief Committee (UUARC)
- World Federation of Ukrainian Medical Associations (WFUMA-US)



HOW HAVE WE HELPED UKRAINE?

The UMANA Foundation, with help from multiple UMANA Chapters, has distributed **\$1,130,000** to help the victims of the war in Ukraine with medical relief and support of other medical foundations. Thanks to the generosity of many in-kind donors, medications and medical supplies valued at an estimated **25 million dollars** have been delivered to all regions of Ukraine.

UMANA CHAPTER NEWS

ILLINOIS BRANCH was the first chapter to collect, sort, and package **350 tons** of donated medical supplies worth over **\$20 million**, via **4 planes** to Poland with final destinations in Ukraine. The planes included 5 fully equipped ambulances. Over 800 suitcases of meds and supplies, including 120 single use wound vacs, were delivered to Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Kherson, Dnipro, and Odesa, and other

towns. The Medical relief team lead by **President Olena Gordon MD, Mariya Dmytriv MD, Olia Maihutiak MD, and Maria Hrycelak MD**, would like to thank all the volunteers who spent countless hours sorting and packing all the supplies in the Bensenville warehouse, and also the Wisconsin members **Douglas Davis MD, PhD, and Nataliya Uboha MD, PhD**, who organized the Germantown warehouse. We are truly grateful to the companies that donated space in these warehouses and helped transport pallets of supplies. Special thanks go out to the Consulate General of Ukraine in Chicago for their help.



Illinois Medical Relief Team and Wisconsin organizers



MICHIGAN BRANCH has been focusing medical relief efforts on a hospital in Kharkiv. They have purchased 2 ventilators and 3 critical care monitors for the Kharkiv Hospital. The branch also received a generous donation from



an individual physician practice and was able to coordinate the purchase and shipment of orthopedic external fixators to the military hospital in Lviv. In addition, efforts continue to source donations from medical suppliers and healthcare systems. Member **Ivanna Murskyj MD** and others continue to collaborate with the Ukrainian American Crisis Response Committee, the major relief organization in Michigan, to help sort and package supplies at the warehouse.

NEW YORK METRO BRANCH has been very busy collecting, purchasing and shipping medical supplies to Ukraine. So far 500 military grade IFAKS (Individual First Aid Kits) and 50 wound vacs have been sent, with plans to purchase external fixators. **President Ruta Cholhan Lenchur MD, Marta Lopatynsky MD, Irena Karanetz MD and Ola Monastyrsky MD** have been instrumental in the acquisition and distribution of the supplies. Many individual members have been able to obtain large amounts of medicines as well as medical and surgical supplies through their generous hospitals. The Branch is working the Ministry of Health in an attempt to fulfill their most urgent needs and verifying that supplies are reaching locations throughout Ukraine. In addition, the Chapter is in the process of planning a fundraising event.



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UMANA News

The Newsletter of the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America is published quarterly by UMANA with the objective to promote good fellowship and to uphold and enhance the best interests of UMANA. The newsletter serves as an impartial forum for the information for its members. UMANA cannot guarantee the accuracy of all information contained herein. Some information has been obtained from third party published and oral sources and may not have been independently verified. The treatment of articles, view, and opinions expressed in UMANA News is not necessarily endorsed by UMANA.

Distributed to members and friends of UMANA

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The Ukrainian Medical Association of North America



President's Message

Dear UMANA members:

Being faculty at UCONN School of Medicine, over the last several weeks I was twice asked to speak at UCONN's Vigils for Ukraine. This is a compilation of my speeches.

Our hearts have been touched deeply by the images of war crimes begin inflicted on the Ukrainian people by the Russian Federation over the past weeks.

But let me take you back in time before there was internet, when totalitarian regimes could completely control the flow of information.

The year is 1918. The Bolshevik revolution has just taken place. Many of the rebels were fighting not so much against capitalism, but rather, against Moscow, in order to have a free country. Ukraine declared its independence in January 1918 with Kyiv as its capital. Moscow had other ideas.

On the 29th of January 1918, a force of 4,000 to 5,000 professional Russian soldiers were sent by Moscow to Kyiv to bring Ukraine back under Moscow's control. The new Ukrainian republic hadn't even formed an army, so it gathered a militia to protect Kyiv, consisting of 400 men, half of them students, many of whom had never handled a gun. The two sides battled at a town called Kruty. Tragically, half the Ukrainians were massacred.

One of the survivors, named Ivan Sharyj, wrote the first eye-witness account of the battle. In his poetic and evocative essay, he described how Moscow's "Red Guard" planned "to place the shackles of slavery" back on the hands of the newly independent Ukrainian nation. He compared Moscow's soldiers to vicious, blood-thirsty animals. When Stalin came to power, he started repressing anything and everything Ukrainian. Ivan Sharyj's account had created enemies in Moscow, so his friends urged him to flee the country. He chose to stay in his beloved homeland under an assumed name. But in the fall of 1929, the secret police came to his home and arrested Ivan. His 7-year-old daughter watched in horror. Ivan was tortured for weeks. His mother-in-law would come to the prison and bring him clean clothing, taking back his clothes, soaked in blood. Shortly thereafter Ivan was executed.

Over the next three years, countless Ukrainian intellectuals and community leaders experienced execution or exile to labor camps. Churches were destroyed and priests were arrested. Then in 1932, farm produce, most notably wheat, was seized at gunpoint, confiscated, and exported. Up to eight million Ukrainians died of starvation during this man-made famine, the Holodomor.

Ivan Sharyj's daughter, Ludmyla, was an eye-witness, having seen starving Ukrainian villagers staggering into Kyiv and having seen the road littered with other, less fortunate villagers. But she survived the Holodomor as well as World War II and came to America in 1950.

Ludmyla was my mother, Ivan — my grandfather.

Then when the Soviet Union broke up, in 1991, Ukraine had a referendum on independence. A certain amount of mystery surrounded the vote, since under the USSR people had learned to keep their opinions to themselves. When the votes were counted, an overwhelming 92% had voted for independence!

So now, in 2022 when you see Ukrainian civilians actually lying down on the road in front of Russian tanks to stop their advance, you should know that they have not forgotten the battle of Kruty, and they have not forgotten the words of the Ukrainian National Anthem:

"Our bodies and our souls, we will lay down for our freedom."

Слава Україні! Glory to the heroes!

In the few weeks since Russia invaded Ukraine, UMANA members have gone from hospital to hospital to gather supplies, solicited donations to charter planes, even sent ambulances. Couriers have flown with suitcases filled with medications to Poland and back, only to get new suitcases and fly again. Members have gone to protest marches, written and lobbied American politicians, given newspaper and TV interviews, organized and attended fundraisers, and reached deep into their pockets to donate. UMANA has formed partnerships with several telemedicine companies. UMANA members have even gone into Ukraine to bring them medical equipment, to train doctors, and to treat patients.

Glory to the heroes! They are all around us!

Др. Лев Волянський
Dr. Leo Wolansky

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CENTRAL NEW YORK—SYRACUSE BRANCH has obtained 500 bullet proof vests. UCCA and Fort Drum are arranging for the delivery to Ukraine. **Borys Buniak MD** has helped collect and sort medications and medical supplies from hospitals, clinics, ambulance/fire departments and churches. The Chapter is planning a benefit golf tournament and hoping to arrange a benefit rock concert in Syracuse to raise additional funds for medical supplies. They are also working with Catholic Charities and Interfaith to discuss refugee accommodations/medical needs of refugees.



OHIO BRANCH partners with a Cleveland entity Medwish, that collects and stores surplus hospital equipment for transport. The Branch, led by President **Marusia Strus MD**, helped pack 27 pallets being shipped to Poland for further distribution—under the auspices of the Ministry of Health. UMANA-Ohio has received,

organized and sent equipment, principally critical care equipment from ICU's, from University Hospital Med Center (Case Western Reserve). They have also partnered with the Fund to Aid Ukraine. These supplies were combined with those of Medwish, and are also in transit.



MARYLAND/DC BRANCH President **Roxolana Horbowyj MD** discussed possible collaboration with a representative of 911Ukraine. Discussion ensued about telemedicine: considering the various concurrent efforts from the US (e.g., <https://www.teladoc.com/>) and elsewhere, we had the opportunity to learn about the following flourishing product, which is home-grown in Ukraine and expanding globally: <https://idis2go.net/> - potentially useful in the US as well. This model seems to share some similarities with the US based product lead by Taras Silecky: <https://www.rijuven.com/>

PENNSYLVANIA BRANCH: President **Ihor Fedoriw OD** expressed his gratitude to UMANA Foundation for forwarding a \$5,000.00 Grant to United Ukrainian American Relief Committee In Philadelphia toward medical and humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Board members **Dr. Oksana Baltarowich** and **Dr. Markian Shust** are currently planning a Post Covid19 Dinner Meeting at a local restaurant. **Ihor Rak, MD**, now a retired senior pharmaceutical company executive, will share his pilot experience coaching and mentoring Ukrainian professionals.

UMANA MEMBER NEWS



Tanya BUCIERKA, MD (Member-at-Large in Oregon, former UMANA Foundation scholarship recipient), Ukraine has a very special place in my heart; both sets of grandparents immigrated from Ukraine after WWII, and I've spent multiple summers there with family, and also grew up in a large Ukrainian community in Rochester, NY.

Just like many of you, I could not stand to watch the atrocities in Ukraine happening on TV. In the middle of March, I held a fundraiser with Coldfire Brewing in Eugene, Oregon

and raised \$6400 for UMANA.

I spent the last 3 weeks in April 2022 in Western Ukraine practicing global health and disaster medicine. I did everything from treating refugees in shelters, schools, and gymnasiums; to lecturing about chemical warfare; to helping hospitals plan their mass casualty protocols; to working with MedGlobal sponsored by UMANA to teach ER/ICU physicians and general surgeons about the use of POCUS in the setting of trauma and critical illness. The UMANA Foundation supplied 8 portable ultrasounds. We were able to do hands on training and then also were able to mail Butterfly POCUS devices to hospitals in the East and then provide virtual lectures to teach the physicians and answer any questions. This was an experience I will never forget, and I hope to return to Ukraine to volunteer again in the near future.

I truly wish the entire world could witness the resilience of the Ukrainian people that I saw through my own eyes.

UMANA logo sighting in Poland

More photos and chapter news can be found on our updated website: www.umana.org



UMANA ILLINOIS DEBUTANTE BALL RETURNS

After a two year absence, on February 26, 2022, the Illinois Chapter of UMANA hosted the presentation of debutantes at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago. Donations collected the day of the ball totalling \$17,000 were dedicated to the Crisis in Ukraine.

