

## Altruism during War: A Medical Student's Heroic Ambulance Adventure in Kharkiv, Ukraine

*By Borys Buniak, MD FACP*

In the midst of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, amidst the darkness and chaos, a signal of hope emerged in the form of a medical student from New York with EMT experience. Inspired by his recent attendance at the UMANA conference in Nashville TN, UMANA member **Danylo Jaremczuk**, a second-year medical student at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM), embarked on a two-week life changing journey into Ukraine. He used his UMANA scholarship, donations and even sold a few personal items to finance his trip.



Through his contacts in Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization and family friends in Kyiv, he made his way to Kharkiv to volunteer at their Ambulance Corps. Danylo's mission was to provide much needed assistance in the war zones of Eastern Ukraine. In a city ravaged by shelling, with danger lurking at every turn, his selflessness and dedication shone through as he fearlessly treated victims and offered relief for fatigued medical personnel – and even helped wash their dishes.

Danylo's journey was nothing short of extraordinary. To navigate the perilous streets at night undetected, he rode in a speeding ambulance with their lights off and with drivers who knew the streets by heart. The sound of nearby explosions served as a haunting reminder of the risks he faced, but it did not deter him from his noble duty.

Drawing upon his years of experience as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) at Potsdam NY, Danylo utilized his skills to assess injuries, provide immediate care, and administer life-saving treatments. He was impressed by the dedication and first aid knowledge of his team. Beyond his work in the ambulance, Danylo extended his assistance by treating military personnel at the Kharkiv Urban Center for Neuropathology and Neurosurgery. Collaborating with physicians, he helped assess the physical rehabilitation needs of the injured, further showcasing his commitment to comprehensive care and support.



Danylo's dedication to the people of Ukraine does not end with his initial journey. He recently accompanied a Medical Transport plane into Turkey which supplied ambulances to Ukraine. He also plans to return between semesters to deliver much needed medical supplies and provide relief for fatigued ambulance corps volunteers. We salute Danylo for his unwavering commitment to making a difference and remind us that even in the face of adversity, our humanity remains unbreakable. Together, let us support the humanitarian efforts in Ukraine and stand united in our pursuit for a more compassionate and just world. We encourage donations through **UMANA Foundation** at [www.umana.org](http://www.umana.org) (in memo please indicate UMANA-CNY-Syracuse) to help Danylo Jaremczuk purchase and deliver needed medical supplies to his new friends in Kharkiv.

# UMANA CHAPTER NEWS

**ILLINOIS BRANCH** gathered together at the Plast/UYCO Oselia campground in Round Lake Park, Illinois for their annual picnic on Sunday, August 20, 2023. More than 50 members and family enjoyed a delightful lunch despite the hot weather. A light lake breeze helped cool our members while **Dr. Olena Gordon**, Illinois President, held a short meeting about the work the Chapter has done to get medical supplies to Ukraine and discussed future plans.



**ILLINOIS BRANCH** members also took part in a Mega March in downtown Chicago on Saturday, August 26, 2023, for the 32nd Anniversary of Ukraine's Independence.



## 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

**UMANA News Acting Editor:** George Hrycelak, MD, Elmwood Park, IL  
**Copy Editing and Layout:** Nadia Zajac, Chicago, IL

**Electronic Version:** [www.umana.org/newsletter.shtml](http://www.umana.org/newsletter.shtml)

**Send your articles, letters, and comments to:**  
**UMANA News**

2247 West Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60622-8957  
Email: [umana@umana.org](mailto:umana@umana.org)

The Ukrainian Medical Association of North America

**NEW YORK METRO BRANCH** gathered together on September 17, 2023, for a "Meet and Greet" brunch at the Lenchur residence in New Jersey. After catching up with colleagues and meeting some new members, a brief meeting



followed to discuss future activities and projects. The chapter continues to collect medical/surgical supplies and plan to fund much needed frontline items, specifically tourniquets. This year the branch has welcomed 25 new members.

**ILLINOIS BRANCH** hosted "Surgery during Wartime", a presentation by Hnat Herych MD PhD, at the Ukrainian Cultural Center on October 28, 2023.

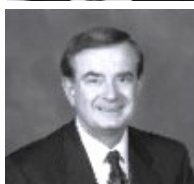


*Continued on Page 2*

## OBITUARIES



**ALYSKEWYCZ MD, Roman**, age 87. *Leopold-Franzen Universitat Innsbruck* 1965, member of UMANA New York Metro Branch, died October 6, 2023.



**HURA MD, Zenon Joseph**, age 82. *Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico* 1983, member of UMANA Illinois Branch, died June 7, 2023.



**MARUSHKA SKUBIAK RPh, Luba**, age 70, *University of Illinois College of Pharmacy* 1976, member of UMANA Illinois Branch, died October 7, 2023.





## President's Message

### Preparing to Celebrate UMANA's 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday! - Reflecting on our past to guide our future!

Dear Members of the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America,

As we approach the momentous occasion of our 75th anniversary in 2025, it's time to reflect on the incredible journey that has brought us here and the vision of our founders that still lights the way for our organization today.

In New York City, January 1950, nearly seventy-five years ago, a group of dedicated and visionary medical professionals came together with a dream. They envisioned an organization that would not only connect Ukrainian healthcare experts across North America but also serve as a beacon of hope and healing for countless individuals in need. Their vision was a testament to the enduring spirit of resilience and compassion that has defined our community for generations.

The founders of the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America understood that together, they could accomplish far more than they could individually. They recognized the importance of unity in the face of adversity and the power of collaboration. Their dreams were big, and their hearts were even bigger.

Today, as we prepare to celebrate our 75th anniversary in 2025, it's a moment to not only remember our founders but also to rededicate ourselves to their vision. Our members have achieved many levels of excellence and most recently reached levels of cooperation and helping Ukraine beyond the expectations of many! The impact has been felt by many in Ukraine and all our members have been incredible in their efforts. We have provided medical assistance, supported the community, and fostered a sense of belonging and unity among our members.

But as we look to the future, we must remember that the work is far from over. The world of medicine and the world is ever-evolving, and the challenges we face today are unique. We must continue to adapt and innovate, just as our founders did in their time. Their vision was not static; it was a living, breathing idea that adjusted and grew as the world changed. It's up to us to do the same.

Every member of our association plays a crucial role in this endeavor. Whether you are a seasoned professional or just starting your medical journey, your dedication and passion are vital to keeping the vision of our founders alive. Together, we can make a lasting impact, just as our founders intended.

As we prepare to commemorate this remarkable milestone in 2025, let us also celebrate the great vision of our founders. Let us renew our commitment to their ideals of unity, compassion, and excellence in healthcare. Together, we can ensure that the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America continues to shine as a beacon of hope, healing, cooperation, and education for another 75 years and beyond.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication, your accomplishments are outstanding and here's to a bright and inspiring future!

Warm regards,

Marta Lopatynsky, MD

## UMANA CHAPTER NEWS

### *Continued from Page 2*

**OHIO BRANCH** held its biennial picnic on September 10, 2023, at St. Pokrova Ukrainian Catholic Parish in Parma, Ohio. More than 70 adults and children attended, mingling with old colleagues and making new friends. **Dr. Michael Samotowka** presented a slide show of his experiences in Ukraine. In coordination with MedGlobal, he travels every other month to war torn regions and provides surgical care to injured Ukrainians. The Chapter met several physicians displaced by the war in Ukraine. A good time was had by all.



# UMANA MEMBER NEWS



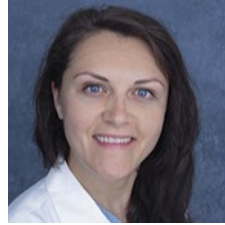
**Nicholas BUNIAK MD** (New York Metro Branch) presented three posters and won “Outstanding Presenter Award” at the American College of Gastroenterology conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, this October 2023.



**Peter KUJTAN MD** (Toronto Branch), recently retired after 35 years in family practice at the Credit Valley Hospital in Mississauga, Ontario.



**Roksolana DEMIANETS MD** (Southern California Branch) is a second year resident in Pathology at the University of California — Irvine.



**Khrystyna LEVYTSKA MD** (Southern California Branch) finished her residency in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is now a Clinical Fellow in Gynecological Oncology at Cedars Sinai in Los Angeles.



**Timothy DEMUS DO** (Michigan Branch), started his residency in Urology at University of Michigan Health-Sparrow in Lansing. He graduated from the Nova Southeastern University of Osteopathic Medicine.



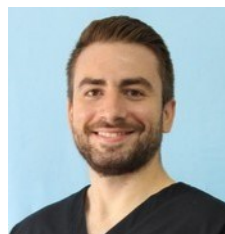
**Ivan SHEVCHYK MD** (Northern California Branch) finished his residency at the University of California Davis Health in 2022, and is now an Emergency Medicine Physician at Kaiser Permanente in Sacramento.



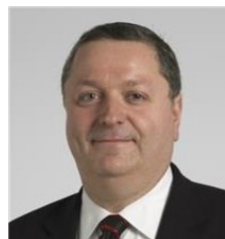
**Yuri DEYCHAKIVSKY MD** (Washington DC/Maryland Branch) and **Jaroslaw DZWINYK MD** (Illinois Branch) recently were awarded Ukraine’s National Order of Merit (III Degree) by President Zelensky in Washington, DC. They received these honors for their long standing work and support of Ukrainian wounded soldiers.



**Adrian SOSENKO MD** (Pennsylvania Branch) completed his residency in 2022 at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. He is now a practicing Urology in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.



**Peter TYLAWSKY DDS** (New York Metro Branch) recently celebrated his second year of dentistry at the Ironbound Dental Center in Newark, New Jersey.



**Andrew ZURA MD** (Ohio Branch) is now president of the Ohio Society of Anesthesiologists and previously served as secretary/treasurer in 2019. He continues to practice at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation.



**Andrea HAWRYLUK OD** (New England Branch), completed her residency in primary care and ocular disease at the Hudson Valley VA Medical Center, and is now practicing optometry in White River Junction, Vermont.

**YOUR NEWS NEEDED!  
PLEASE SEND TO:  
[umana@umana.org](mailto:umana@umana.org)**