Feet in good hands

Bristol Hospital welcomes new foot and ankle surgeon

By LORENZO BURGIO
STAFF WRITER

BRISTOL — Peter Bellezza just finished his second week as the first staff foot and ankle surgeon at Bristol Hospital Multi-Specialty Group and the Center for Orthopedic and Spine Health.

The podiatry field isn’t the most appealing, Bellezza said, but he developed an interest because it allows him to work with a variety of patients and the “tremendous amount of surgical training podiatry offers.”

After completing his residency in Seattle, Bellezza began looking for a position where, he said, he “could maximize all the training” he had received.

“Bristol Hospital was a job posting I was interested in that showed a lot of promise and potential,” he said. “It’s a smaller hospital, which is something I was looking to join, because I had trained at some very large hospitals.

“When I had my interview, being able to see the camaraderie with all the other orthopedists, Bristol Hospital Specialty Group and the administrators, it just felt like a family.”

Bellezza was born and raised in New Jersey. He earned his

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Family Day

Spider-Man, a.k.a. Dallen Pearson, and Brandon Sampson enjoy Family Day at the Bristol Boys & Girls Club Friday. See story on Page A3
Ankle surgeon joins Bristol Hospital staff

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master's degree in biomedical science from Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia, and obtained a doctorate from the Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine in North Chicago, Ill.

He completed his first year of residency training at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital in Virginia and his last two years at the Swedish Medical Center in Seattle, where he received accreditation in reconstructive rear foot surgery.

During his residency, he worked with about 30 different podiatrists and one foot and ankle orthopedist and logged about 1,300 procedures, he said.

He has performed about 37 first-assist total ankle replacements, which means working alongside another podiatric surgeon, he explained, adding that throughout those procedures he used six different ankle replacement systems.

Upon accepting the position at Bristol Hospital, Bellezza moved from Seattle to West Hartford. The move allowed him to be back on the East Coast and closer to his family, he explained.

However, Bristol's close-knit community is what attracted him to the area.

“You get to know your patients and the people you work with. Large institutions offer tremendous training, but you only get to know people that you see every day,” Bellezza said. “I wanted to be able to know the nurses on the floor personally and work with all the doctors and specialists to form relationships. Not just on a medical and professional level, but a personal level. I felt like I would be able to get that here in Bristol and that's why I came here.

“From my perspective, Bristol is a very hard-working, blue collar community, which is the type of community I like to be in. Bellezza hopes to expand the foot and ankle services at the hospital to provide unique procedures the community hasn't seen and coordinate care with partners at the Multi-Specialty group.

He noted that foot and ankle issues “that manifest at a lower extremity” can be caused by other conditions, so having a full medical staff to coordinate with and refer patients to is vital.

“The fact that our group has grown so much and we are adding providers, it seems like we can provide all the care that this community needs. All the coordinated care stays in the hospital and it's become very comprehensive in terms of all the specialists that we have,” Bellezza said.

Lorenzo Burgio can be reached at lburgio@centralctcommunications.com.

BRISTOL POLICE BLOTTER

Bristol police report the following:

Kimberly Marie Prescott, 27, of no certain address, was charged Aug. 4 with second-degree failure to appear.

Jacob E. Finn, 21, of 42 Field View Drive, Burlington, was charged Aug. 5 with failure to obey control signal, operation while under the influence and engaging police in pursuit.

Justin R. Bonhomme, 30, of 258 Queen St., was charged Aug. 5 with disorderly conduct.

Robert A. Lewis, 44, of 70 Fourth St., was charged Aug. 5 with fourth-degree sexual assault.

Conor Joseph Allen-Kelley, 19, of 3 Marion St., was charged Aug. 5 with second-degree breach of peace.

Robert E. Kowalczyk, 41, of 150 Stillwell Drive, Plainville, was charged Aug. 6 with third-degree assault, second-degree strangulation, second-degree breach of peace and conspiracy to commit third-degree assault.

Chad Gerald Daigle, 22, of 21 Skytop Drive, was charged Aug. 6 with second-degree breach of peace.

Kathleen Thayer, 55, of 924 Middle St., Apartment 4, was charged Aug. 6 with disorderly conduct.

Jason M. Coates, 47, of 182 Goodwin St., was charged Aug. 7 with second-degree breach of peace, third-degree assault and conspiracy to commit third-degree assault.

Eusebio Melecio-Brooks, 40, of 81 Seymour St., was charged Aug. 7 with criminal violation of a protective order and first-degree criminal trespass.

Juan Cruz, 29, of no known address, Bristol, was charged Aug. 8 with first-degree criminal trespassing, possession of a controlled substance or more than a half-ounce of cannabis and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Andrea Prienen, 40, of 258 South Main St., Thomaston, was charged Aug. 8 with issuing a bad check and sixth-degree larceny.

Stephen Angelillo, 43, of 31 Jeffrey Drive, Farmington, was charged Aug. 8 with evading responsibility injury/property damage, taking a restricted turn and failure to signal and reckless driving.

LOTTERY

For Aug. 11

Play 3 day: 0-5-2
Play 4 day: 3-7-2-5

For Aug. 10

Play 3 night: 0-8-4
Play 4 night: 0-2-6-1
Cash 5: 1-8-26-27-34

"The thing that I got a lot of experience in, which is unique to this area, is total ankle replacement,” Bellezza said. “That's something I hope we can bring to the hospital. I think in this area of Connecticut, there aren't many podiatrists that offer that procedure.

“To be able to bring that procedure to the community is a great thing. Patients don't have to travel far and we can offer the full range of special and surgical services in the community.”

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