Empowering Change

RLMI is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization.
Our mission is to establish Lifestyle Medicine (LM), especially the adoption of Whole-Food Plant-Based (WFPB) nutrition, as the foundation for health and the healthcare system.

We envision a world where Lifestyle Medicine is the standard of care within the healthcare system, and where people are empowered to make lifestyle behavior changes based on the tenets of Lifestyle Medicine.

Help us to create that world.
Message from Ted Barnett, MD, FACLM, RLMI President and Board Chair

It gives me great pleasure to update you on our recent activities!

The last year has seen significant growth in the reach and influence of RLMI as we pivoted away from meeting in person to the use of Zoom for all of our live programs. We now reach people in most U.S. states, as well as Canada, Latin America, Europe, and Australasia.

Last fall our homegrown 15-Day Whole-Food Plant-Based Jumpstart became the third western-medicine based program to receive certification from the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM), after CHIP and Lift. We consider Jumpstart to be “the prescription for chronic disease,” and health professionals are now seeing the value of sending their patients to RLMI to reduce their dependence on medications, avoid invasive procedures, achieve better health, and increase happiness, joy and meaning in their lives.

In 2021, we reached over 600 participants with three live-facilitated life-changing programs: Jumpstart, CHIP and Lift. Each of these programs personally guides participants onto the path of a healthy whole-food plant-based lifestyle. RLMI helps them stay on the path with our Plant-Based Together alumni program — launched in 2021—which currently has over 1500 members. We also reached over 1800 people with our Lifestyle as Medicine lecture series in 2021. Additionally, with RLMI’s involvement in clinical studies we are helping to build the evidence needed to move the practice of medicine toward what RLMI does: using plant-based diet as a frontline treatment for chronic disease.

Working with the Rochester Academy of Medicine for accreditation, RLMI is unique in offering live Zoom-based programs where medical professionals can receive CME credit while interacting with patients. Last year we also launched our groundbreaking CME-accredited Lifestyle Medicine Grand Rounds, a first-of-its-kind monthly series which brings plant-based titans such as Neal Barnard, MD, Michael Klaper, MD and John McDougall, MD to discuss Lifestyle Medicine cases in front of hundreds of medical professionals. A grant from Michael Greger, MD puts medical and other healthcare students through Jumpstart. Our Director of Clinical Studies, Susan Friedman, MD, MPH, FACLM, is building RLMI’s influence with her peer-reviewed and award-winning publications. As the 2021 Founding Director of Lifestyle Medicine at the University of Rochester’s Highland Hospital, she is the public face of plant-based nutrition advocacy for the entire UR Medical Center system.

In 2021 AARP ran six webinars in NY state hosted by RLMI which will become a 9-webinar series for 2022, promoted nationally to its 38 million members.

As we look to the future, we are excited about bringing health, happiness, and joy to even more people as we expand our Plant-Based Together alumni program and scale up our Jumpstart.

To the world we say: You have the power to change your health. We’ll show you how.
Summary of 2021 Key Achievements

In 2021, we became a nationally recognized source for Lifestyle Medicine and plant-based education.

We rolled out 3 new Continuing Medical Education (CME) courses (Jumpstarting Health: Live Participation, Foundations, and Comprehensive courses), received American College of Lifestyle Medicine certification for our 15-Day WFPB Jumpstart, and launched a monthly CME accredited Lifestyle Medicine Grand Rounds for medical practitioners.

We innovated as architects of the cycle of culture change.

We continued our partnership with IHA (Trinity Health, Michigan) and initiated collaborations with other medical practices throughout the USA, ran a Healthy Immune System Webinar Series with AARP, and participated in myriad podcasts and interviews promoting LM and WFPB nutrition.

We became leaders in generating, analyzing and publishing data from Lifestyle Medicine interventions.

We published a paper, entitled “Jumpstarting Health with a 15-Day Whole-Food Plant-Based Program.”

We continued our partnership with University of Rochester in a randomized controlled trial of CKD (Chronic Kidney Disease) patients attending our Jumpstart.

We developed ongoing support for those pursuing positive lifestyle changes.

We implemented monthly support groups for alumni of our Jumpstart, LIFT, and CHIP programs, and launched our online community, “Plant-Based Together.”

RLMI directly engaged with many people through our offerings.

Lifestyle as Medicine Lecture Series - 1726
Lifestyle Medicine Grand Rounds - 349
CHIP (Complete Health Improvement Program) - 43
Lift Program - 71
Jumpstart - 510
Empowering Change with Lifestyle Medicine Programs

We offer all three ACLM-certified Lifestyle Medicine programs that are available in English.

lmeconomicresearch.org/certified-programs/

15-Day Whole-Food Plant-Based Jumpstart Program

Our signature program, offering dietary coaching and group support towards adopting a whole-food, plant-based diet to reduce and reverse chronic disease.

The Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP) is one of the world’s most scientifically proven, intensive lifestyle intervention solutions, designed to help support and facilitate the prevention, treatment, and reversal of chronic disease.

The Lift Project involves 10 fascinating lessons that take you on an educational adventure. Each lesson introduces a scientifically proven way to lift your mood and your life from the exciting fields of Neuroscience, Positive Psychology and Lifestyle Medicine.

Our Other Programs

A Plant-Based Diet: Eating for Health and Happiness (online course)
rochesterlifestylemedicine.org/courses/a-plant-based-diet-eating-for-happiness

Jumpstarting Health: Foundations, Live Participation, and Comprehensive Courses (offers CME credit)
rochesterlifestylemedicine.org/cme-practitioner-courses/
Our Event Series

The **Lifestyle as Medicine Lecture Series** (LAM) provided another memorable year of lifestyle luminaries. These monthly lectures are open to everyone and discuss the latest advances in lifestyle medicine research while providing actionable steps for better health. Some of the highlights included:

**Special guest Eric Adams, Mayor of New York City, presented his personal transformation from facing debilitating effects of diabetes to thriving on a whole-food, plant-based diet.**

**The distinguished Caldwell Esselstyn, MD provided a compelling lecture on how to prevent and reverse heart disease.**

**Internationally-known Lifestyle Medicine expert Dr. Darren Morton's captivating and uplifting presentation explained how we can lift our lives and those of others—and flourish!**

**Brenda Davis, RD presented evidence that debunked Keto, Paleo, and other low-carb diets and the efficacy of a whole-food, plant-based diet.**

**Neal Barnard, MD enlightened the audience on the latest research around the impact of diet on menopause and how to reduce symptoms.**

**Milton Mills, MD explained the latest findings about gut microbiome and its importance of overall health.**

**Carla Hightower, MD overcame her own prediabetes with plant-based nutrition and lifestyle changes and has dedicated her life to teaching others. Her lecture was focused on food cravings and how to make the healthy choice.**

**The Lifestyle Medicine Grand Rounds** (LMGR) debuted in September 2021 and were a big hit with medical professionals. Each month, a thought provoking patient case is unfolded to a panel of Lifestyle Medicine specialists who comment on the patient treatment. These complex cases often have multiple health challenges that are navigated. One CME credit is provided for free to attendees who learn about the power of using Lifestyle Medicine to treat their patients.

**Renowned guest panelists included Dr. Michael Klaper, Dr. Laticia Valle, Dr. John McDougall, and Dr. Neal Barnard.**

IHA is a cosponsor of LMGR and their talented Lifestyle Medicine doctors have been supporting the events. Special thanks to Dr. Robert Breakey and Dr. Melissa Sundermann for being regular panelists.
Donate

Please give generously to support our mission and our work. Small recurring donations are welcome!
rochesterlifestylemedicine.org/donate-to-rlmi

Refer 10 people to our programs

Your family, friends and patients.

Partner with us

Medical practitioners can run our programs.

Connect, like + follow us (“Rochester Lifestyle Medicine Institute”) “on social media!

rochesterlifestylemedicine.org

Thank You to Our Health Care Partners
Grants provide critical education to different communities, including those with low socioeconomic status, multiple comorbidities, and medical students. Providing those that need assistance while educating future healthcare providers is a two-pronged approach. Grants allowed RLMI to provide sixty-seven (67) full Jumpstart scholarships in 2021, and we hope to grow that number every year.

Jumpstart Scholarships for At-Risk/Underserved

Offers Jumpstart to 33 persons who are at higher risk for lifestyle illness due in part to social determinants of health, and would otherwise be unable to participate. Awarded by T. Colin Campbell’s Center for Nutrition Studies; $4,917; Grant Cycle: February 1, 2021 to January 31, 2022.

Jumpstart Scholarships for Medical Students

Offers Jumpstart to 50 medical students/trainees. Awarded by Michael Greger, MD and NutritionFacts.org; $7,450; Grant Cycle: June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022.

Jumpstart Scholarships for the Underserved/At-Risk

Offers Jumpstart to 60 persons who are medically underserved due to social determinants of health, and would otherwise be unable to participate. Awarded by VegFund; $10,000; Grant Cycle: July 2021 to July 2022.
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Byron: I started the Jumpstart which was more than three years ago now. I was a bit skeptical, I have to admit, but in the two weeks that we did the program I dropped about 11 pounds. But the most profound effect of the program, after I continued it, was that for the last 20 years, I’ve been a type 2 insulin dependent diabetic; after about three months following the program, I noticed that my insulin intake went to zero, and that my hemoglobin A1C, a measure of how bad your diabetes might be, went to normal levels of about 5.3, 5.4. And even now, three years later, my fasting glucose levels without any insulin is between 50 and 60 milligrams per deciliter, which is far, far away from the pre-diabetic measure. So, that's my story... I took off a bunch of weight during the Jumpstart; I’ve kept most of that weight off and I’m pretty thankful for it, thank you.

Sandy: I had harassed Byron because I was an unhealthy vegan. I was a vegan for animal rights, and thought I could eat anything I wanted as long as it didn't involve animals and that I would be healthy. I harassed Byron, and for my birthday, he gave me a promise that he would go to Jumpstart and go for the two weeks. Byron and I were in the very first program that you all had. So, that's how it started, with a birthday present to me, and he never stopped after he started his birthday present, and it's still a birthday present to me because he's much healthier. Then what happened for me (and it could not have been a placebo effect because I had no idea this would happen) was that I had had one shoulder replaced, a joint replaced. I was going to have the other one replaced and in between times I had done the Jumpstart and all of a sudden, the pain went away in my other arm that was going to be replaced. So, I go to the doctor and I say I don't know what's happened, it was pre-op, and I said it's so strange that I don't have pain anymore and the only thing I can think of is a change in my diet and he said “oh yes, that's in the literature.” I thought, my goodness, why didn't they tell you that! Also, I improved my eating from the unhealthy vegan to a healthy vegan, and my cholesterol dropped which is really the reason I had joined, besides getting Byron there, was to reduce my cholesterol, and that reduced. So, we are so grateful for this program. It has changed our lives, we can get old together, a lot healthier, and do more things.
I was the support person for a group that decided to do the 15-day Jumpstart and I also wanted to be a part of it. I like to make sure that I “practice what I preach.”

I was looking for a physician at the time. I found a physician I’ve never been to. I took her the Jumpstart plan and she was elated. She was so excited, she’s like, “This is what the evidence is saying. This is the only thing that is proven to work to reverse diabetes and heart disease.” She was beyond excited and she’s like, “I’d love to bring this program to the clinic.” It’s a big clinic out here that I go to.

So, that was really interesting, I was really shocked by her reaction and encouraged. Diabetes is the “disease of choice” that attacks my family. I did want to really continue to be vigilant and so I did have some goals of my own.

I was really, really happy because I just retested my blood work. I dropped 13 points, so now I’m out of that just bridging into the pre-diabetic phase. I’m away from that so I’m really, really, grateful.

All of my numbers were fantastic and I’d say that if someone were starting, I would for sure give it 24 hours, and read through all the materials.

I was supposed to be the support person for people. I had people that were just really scared to do this and so the takeaway I think that really helped me help other people was do it for 24 hours. It’s not like you can’t eat anything. Eat clean for 24 hours - that really did the trick because then it’s a mental game...

I would say, if you’re ever planning on doing whole-food plant-based and a Jumpstart like this, you want to do it in this community. I was really overwhelmed and a little shocked by how authentic the staff is and I think that you’re just going to find that if there’s ever a lifestyle change that you want to make, you can do it with this group.

Watch our video featuring more participant testimonials at youtu.be/tuvesn2QxyU

*lightly edited for clarity
We would like to thank all of the people and organizations who help RLMI pursue its mission: empowering people to take charge of their health with lifestyle changes and a plant-based diet.

THANK YOU to the donors who sustain us with gifts of every size, including those who have supported us with grants (Accountable Health Partners, Ardmore Institute of Health, Center for Nutrition Studies, Google, Nutrition Facts, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, and VegFund).

THANK YOU to our Local Advisory Board members and our Scientific Advisory Board members, who help guide us and provide us with important connections to the medical and scientific community as well as the community at large.

THANK YOU to our Lifestyle as Medicine lecturers and Grand Rounds presenters and panelists, who generously share their knowledge about healing through lifestyle change with dedication and enthusiasm.

THANK YOU to our growing body of health care professional partners, including IHA, Internal Medicine of Brighton, and Plant-Based Telehealth. You are important vectors for bringing about change in the healthcare system!

THANK YOU to our talented and loyal team, staff and volunteers, who carry out the mission.

THANK YOU to our program participants who are RLMI's lifeblood and its reason for being!

THANK YOU to all of our friends and supporters around the world!

We want to thank each and every one of you for your commitment to RLMI.

Together, we can do a world of good!