

# CHANGING THE LIVES OF PATIENTS FOR THE BETTER: THE TRUE MEASURE OF SUCCESS FOR COLORADO'S BIOSCIENCE INDUSTRY

BY CASEY DEMCHAK

In the ongoing struggle to generate scientific breakthroughs and attract venture capital and angel investors, the true meaning behind Colorado's bioscience industry sometimes gets overlooked. However, it is never forgotten by the people who feel its profound impact at the very core of their lives.

These are the people whose lives have been saved or uplifted to a much better place because of the research, discovery and development of drugs and medical devices

being done in Colorado. These people are the patients, and their success is the true measure of *our* success.

As an emergency room nurse at Longmont United Hospital for 31 years, Marsha Ruggeri has helped ease the pain of others through her dedication to care giving. Her commitment to helping is a natural extension of the care she has always given her 19-year-old daughter, who has a disability that has required Marsha to lift her since she was a child.

Over the years the physical nature of her

work and parenting took an enormous toll on the congenital pars defect in lumbar five of her spine, which required an L5-S1 spinal fusion. Marsha also suffered from bilateral spinal stenosis. Put simply, all of this translated into a lot of pain.

To decrease blood loss and achieve an improved outcome, neurosurgeon Dr. Lee Nelson of Boulder Neurosurgical & Spine Associates advised Marsha to have her surgery at Exemplar Good Samaritan Medical Center in Lafayette, CO. This would enable him to utilize Medtronic's O-arm® imaging and StealthStation® navigations systems during her procedure.

"Dr. Nelson used the Medtronic systems to help minimize the invasiveness of my surgery and to help assure success," says Marsha. "He told me he could not have performed my surgery without these Medtronic devices because they made the procedure quicker, more safe and efficacious."

Having worked with Dr. Nelson in emergency room settings, Marsha felt a high level of trust when he said using the Medtronic systems would be a key to her surgery and recovery. "The end result has been quite good," reports Marsha. "I was able to go back to work after six weeks, but I really feel I could have been back with my colleagues after four weeks had Dr. Nelson given me the go ahead."

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*Marsha Ruggeri, Longmont, CO—received successful back surgery that utilized Medtronic's O-arm® imaging and StealthStation® navigations systems.*



Amy Becktell of Grand Junction, CO, had progressive, bi-lateral, hereditary, sensorineural hearing loss since her late teens. In 2009 at age 53, she decided to have simultaneous bi-lateral implant surgery with the Cochlear™ Nucleus® 5 system to help improve her hearing, communication and quality of life. “I had one life before my Cochlear™ implants, and a much better life after I received them,” states Amy. “It’s that extreme. I now have a brand new life. There’s really no comparison to how much I’m understanding and how much better I feel in social situations.”

Amy further states, “My Cochlear™ Nucleus® 5 implants have made a big difference at work, on the phone, and they have even improved my relationship with my husband. It feels great to know that this is now my new normal.”

Amy also actively participates in the online Cochlear™ Community. “I enjoy checking in to get updates on how fellow implant recipients are doing,” she says. “It’s a great place to talk and learn about technology, and it’s also a good place for people to express emotions they might not otherwise share with others who are not familiar with what they are going through.”

Her dedication to fellow implant recipients is evident by Amy’s leadership in the support group, Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), and in the Cochlear Awareness



*Amy Becktell, Grand Junction, CO—recipient of Cochlear™ Nucleus® 5 implants*

Network volunteer program. Cochlear is a very active supporter of HLAA, and today Amy is working to get an HLAA chapter established in Western Colorado.

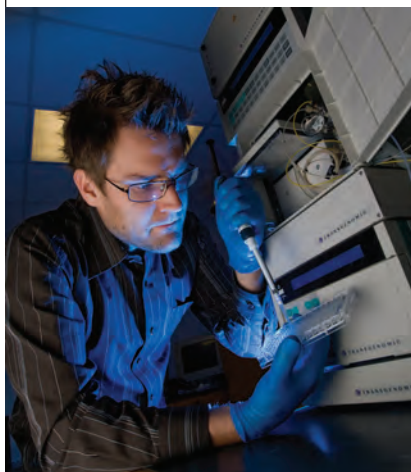
Marsha’s and Amy’s stories would not have been possible without the success of two Colorado companies in discovery and commercialization. They serve as a reminder that the greatest contribution bioscience companies make is to improve the lives of patients.



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