

Episode #13: Kathryn Correia Goodbye

Host: Anna Loomis

Guests: Kathryn Correia, Anna Loomis, Jonathan Stephens

Jonathan Stephens:

Hello, everyone. This is Jonathan Stephens, your Creative Project Manager with Legacy's marketing team. You're listening to a special edition of Legacy's Engaging Our People podcast. For today's episode, we'll first rewind before the pandemic changed the world. I had the distinct pleasure of showing around our new President and CEO, Kathryn Correia. Being able to connect with Kathryn was an amazing experience. Now, six years later, it seems like a whole lifetime has gone by. The nature of healthcare has changed since the pandemic. The direction of our hospitals and clinics looks a little different, and two of the incredible women leaders who have seen us through the toughest times in modern healthcare history have done their work. They've helped redirect our financial path, reinforced our Lean Legacy operation system, and led with integrity and authenticity in addition to their expertise. Let's take a listen to an interview between our outgoing Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Anna Loomis and outgoing President and CEO Kathryn Correia.

Anna Loomis:

Hi, I'm Anna Loomis. I'm the Chief Financial Officer here at Legacy Health.

Kathryn Correia:

My name is Kathryn Correia, and I serve as President and CEO of Legacy Health.

Anna Loomis:

We are here today to have a conversation with Kathryn Correia as she gets close to her retirement. Kathryn, with what you've learned over the last few years, what would you have told yourself on day one at Legacy?

Kathryn Correia:

Wow, that's a pretty deep question. How far do you want to go?

Anna Loomis:

As deep as you want.

Kathryn Correia:

I've had about six months of being able to reflect. I've got time to do that. As I think through the last years here and everything that we've been through, I would have told myself something I actually did tell myself, but I needed to keep telling myself, so I sort of forgot. As I think about everything we've been through, the ups and the downs and all of what's happening with healthcare, when I came here, I told the board I absolutely needed full-time communications. I think we've learned, as we've gone through all of the challenges, all of the things that have happened when we went through the pandemic and then some of the aftershocks of the pandemic, that while we were great every day having communication when we were in the throes, we didn't resource our communications department appropriately for what needed to happen after that.

We can't live on adrenaline. Healthcare loves to live on adrenaline. But when we stopped having that adrenaline rush of the need for every day, we took too much of a step back. As I think about our challenges going forward, that would be one thing I told myself at the beginning, my reflection now, and it would be my advice for Legacy going forward.

Anna Loomis:

Great. Thank you, Kathryn. What are a couple things that Legacy accomplished that you are grateful you were a part of?

Kathryn Correia:

Wow, that's another... That's a pretty broad spectrum question again. I think about one of the most touching moments came early when I started at Legacy. That was to be able to go up to the St. Helens Clinic and to see their original building, and to sit with the physicians and have the conversation, not just about the building, but what it meant for their patients for them to be there. They actually let me sit in a conversation about how was the best way to treat folks that were addicted to opioids, and I was so touched about the work that they did. I was so grateful then that legacy replaced that clinic. To see the pride and to see the sense of energy when that clinic opened, that, to me, talked about what Legacy is all about. That was one really, really great thing to see.

Other examples are of that with Silverton, watching Silverton go through its transformation. I love Silverton when I first went there. To see that change and to see how they have managed to take a really tiny hallway of an emergency department and have it now be something where they can really do the work that they need to do. Those are some of the physical things to be a part of. I think being part of how we looked at the pandemic, and coming together, and learning and reflecting, both as a organizational senior team. To watch what each of the individual parts of the system did when they went forward, I think that was a great effort as well, so lots that I was glad to be a part of.

Anna Loomis:

All those are examples of where Legacy's cared for the most vulnerable part of our communities, which is pretty incredible.

Kathryn Correia:

Yeah.

Anna Loomis:

As CEO, what did you care most about?

Kathryn Correia:

I think the first and most appropriate response is response that every CEO will give you and having this conversation to think about that... But it's true, it's our employees. I want to give a little bit of examples to make that not seem to be the usual administrative blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I want to make it real because I think it's really very tangible at Legacy. When I first came here, I did an extensive visit every site, and I mean every site. If there was an MOB, I was in every clinic in that MOB. I saw some things that were incredible in the hospitals and the clinics when I was there.

When I was at the Broadway clinic, a houseless individual walked in. He wasn't a patient of the clinics. Immediately, he was cared for, and put on a gurney, and sent to the hospital. All of the other patients in

that clinic were also cared for. I was just amazed that at the care that we had of those patients. Then, through the pandemic, I watched our employees given a credible and a high-risk situation. I was at Meridian Park and we were, of course, on lockdown and nobody... Visitors were not allowed. There was a mother there. She had six children and she was dying of cancer. Legacy found a way, and I won't out anybody because people broke some rules, but they found a way to isolate her and to protect that family and those children, and for them to be able to see their mother.

As someone who wasn't allowed to see my parents when they were ill, that was incredible to me, that we found that way very quietly. Those things happen all the time. As I think through how the compassion as we experienced a terrible shooting, how employees had compassion, not just for themselves, which was amazing, the outpouring, but that they also cared for patients at the same time. Our employees are incredible. They care for each other. They care for our patients. They're caring for our communities and the community services that we do. Yeah, our employees, without a doubt.

Anna Loomis:

I couldn't agree with you more. Our employees are amazing. You speak about joy in your work. What moments brought you joy while you were at Legacy?

Kathryn Correia:

Well, to lift up maybe a little bit. Can you imagine me as CEO bundled in... I was really glad I had a warm coat with gloves, and a hat, and a mask. I worked at the 1120 building, and I swabbed noses for COVID testing. I am a parent, I understand what comes out of people's noses and stuff. Oh my God. I remember that I love healthcare and I remembered why I am not a direct caregiver, but that was fun. That was fun to be able to do that and to share that experience. That was joy. We had our patient food support program. Delivering groceries and seeing it from end to end, and to be able to capture that with the folks, I was really impressed with how we made that come together with so many different people, with so many different parts. Everybody had to rise above what they do on a day to day to make that program work until it was well-oiled. To see how grateful the patients were, that was really, really joyful. I can keep going. There was a time when I was the-

Anna Loomis:

[inaudible 00:09:54] joy. That's good.

Kathryn Correia:

To watch people do their work and to be really excited about improving their work. Salmon Creek leaders asked for me to come up and to talk about how they were instituting the patient care bundle early in our work relative to how patient flow through the system, and I was amazed at what they were tackling. They took a big bite. They took a really big bite relative to what needed to change and how they needed to implement the bundle, and they were excited to share that. That's always joyful, because when people improve their own work, and they're proud of it, and they see the results, to me, that's joy.

Anna Loomis:

Thank you for sharing all of this. What makes you excited for Legacy's future?

Kathryn Correia:

I have two major things that I wish that I... I want to have a ringside seat, but when I have returned most recently, there's a piece of me that goes, "Oh, I want to be a part of that too." The first is, I think, that the combination with OHSU. We talk a lot about how that will help Legacy, but I want to say Legacy is the opportunity to improve OHSU. Our ability, our wide expanse of community care, is exactly what a world-class academic institution needs in order to be able to rise in the rankings, have more places that they can teach more people, have more outlets for those clinical experiences, which are so important, and to be able to really broaden research. I'm excited for what Legacy can do with OHSU for us but also for OHSU. The other thing that I'm excited about just recently happened. I didn't know it at the time, but I asked Amy Chaumeton if she could talk to me a bit about the work that is being done on inpatient throughput.

We weren't able to bring everybody else in, Kecia or the people, just from a scheduling perspective. But for an hour, I listened to Amy talk about her deepening understanding of how we use Lean not just as a tool, but how we use it as a management philosophy, how we use it as a way of doing our work so it's not extra work. It's how we can do our work. It's also a way about how we make improvements, because we've always made improvements and then we take our eye off the ball and our performance goes down a little bit. She talked about really incorporating that sense of sustainability for what we do and how it's about not just improving, which is important, but how we sustain the work. Because, to me, being able to sustain the work is really showing respect for people, respect for all of the work that our employees have done. I'm excited because I feel like the seeds that we're planted that I was able to bring to Legacy are taking root.

Anna Loomis:

They absolutely are, and they're growing. Kathryn, we've talked about your experience as a CEO at Legacy. Would you be willing to talk about your experience as a patient at Legacy?

Kathryn Correia:

Absolutely. I would, because I think never before have I had to have care of this amount and for this duration. I knew as the CEO, and when I was able to go and see the work, that we have highly dedicated people in this organization and a lot of expertise. It's another thing to experience it as a patient. I never felt like I was being treated differently because I was A CEO. Many times, people didn't necessarily know I was the CEO because I saw everybody around me being treated the same. As the patient, the dedication of the staff was incredible and the expertise, because we have to have that clinical expertise, but they knew. They just instinctively knew when they needed to do a little extra care or when something wasn't quite right as a patient. Meaning that if I was scared, or nervous, or if I needed a little more education about what I needed to do when I got home from the hospital.

I would say, across the board, inpatient, outpatient, emergency rooms, surgery, radiology, laboratory, a physical therapy, so I've been through that piece of the continuum, everybody was consistent. It wasn't most of the people, which I think a lot of healthcare systems can claim that they're compassionate. For the most part, they are, but this was 100% across the board. Even when the process didn't work out right or something wasn't happening easily, they never threw a different department or a different employee under the bus. They never excused what was happening. It was always, "Let me make this better. How could we get this done?" even if it meant going the extra mile, which they did. That consistency, I think, is rare. I've never seen it before, so as a patient, I'm eternally grateful.

Anna Loomis:

Thank you for sharing that. What is your departing message you'd like to leave us all with?

Kathryn Correia:

The one thing that I would love to see Legacy continue forward is to never lose that sense of the compassion. But beyond that, the commitment that all 14,000 people make every day for each other, the compassion that they have for each other to the commitment they have to do the best job, and to keep on really believing that their work, it's the most important work that we can do. Keep doing that.

Anna Loomis:

If you could wave a magic wand about what Legacy could start doing, what would that be?

Kathryn Correia:

What I wish that we could maybe not necessarily start but do more of is have more fun and, I think, celebrate the work that we're doing, celebrate all of the great improvement work, celebrate our wins, because when we find joy, it's wonderful. When we spread joy through celebration, we magnify it, so I would sprinkle that pixie dust, if I could, on Legacy going forward.

Anna Loomis:

Kathryn, what are you going to be doing next?

Kathryn Correia:

Well, that's a good question. I think everybody who faces retirement really needs to have a plan because you can't go from 60 to zero overnight. My plan includes continuing to get healthy. I've had great, great care here, and I want to build on that and really begin moving forward but in a way that gets me back to where I was physically from an exercise perspective. It's always been important to me. It's always been a way that I have experienced de-stressing, when I exercise, so I am excited to start Pilates, and more walking, and things like that. That's one.

Second, my husband and I really, because of all of the demands, we haven't seen parts of the Pacific Northwest that we want to see. While we have that time to be able to go see parts of Washington, and Eastern Oregon, and all kinds of places, we want to do that for sure. For continuing on in healthcare, I'm going to stay as a board member of Catalysis, which is an organization devoted to reinforcing and advancing using Lean in healthcare. I love that it's healthcare-specific, and we have some great people on that board. It's really exciting to continue to be part of that. And then read, so continue to... There's a million great books out there. That's the plan for right now.

Anna Loomis:

Well, thank you for sharing. It's fun to hear about what you're headed into here.

Kathryn Correia:

Yeah, no skydiving.

Anna Loomis:

But really hope that you are able to continue to heal and love that you're going to be able to continue to give back to healthcare and the community.

Kathryn Correia:

Thanks.

Anna Loomis:

Great to hear. Legacy is a much, much better place because of you, [inaudible 00:19:56] our communities. I'm going to ask you one last question. How would you sum up Legacy in one word?

Kathryn Correia:

The word that always comes to mind is love. We've had a good conversation, the things that we're proud of, the things that bring joy. As I think about all of those mixed together, I think that the common thread is love. We don't talk about that very much in the business of healthcare, but none of this would happen and none of it would happen in this special way that Legacy has. That's our secret sauce. I can say, having been a CEO at other institutions, other parts of the health system, from the insurance side to all different aspects, that every healthcare organization talks about the care and compassion, but only Legacy can claim love. That's how I think of it, or that's how I think of us.

Anna Loomis:

I think love also summarizes you as a CEO.

Kathryn Correia:

Oh my gosh.

Anna Loomis:

That's been the core of who you are. [inaudible 00:21:22].

Kathryn Correia:

Thank you [inaudible 00:21:29].

Jonathan Stephens:

Anna and Kathryn have led with quite confidence and courage. Neither has released time in the spotlight, but both ensured Legacy was on the best possible path for the future to serve our people, our patients, and our communities. As we move forward toward the culmination, we're also equipped with better skills to manage challenges related to finance, safety, engagement, and more because of these two individuals serving on our leadership team.

If you've made it this far, you've nearly made it to the end of this special edition of Engaging Our People podcast. As we've said in the other episodes, this podcast is for all of us at Legacy. We are all a part of something bigger than ourselves, and we are more than just our jobs. I hope you enjoyed hearing Anna and Kathryn reflect on their time at Legacy, because I know I did. As a reminder, we value you and your feedback, so please take a moment to send an email to podcast@lhs.org to share your ideas for stories and how we can better engage our people through the podcast. Thank you for listening to the special edition of our podcast. Be safe and be well.