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**images**

## Focus on Patient Experience

This edition of *Images* highlights two different initiatives aimed at providing a remarkable patient experience. Both initiatives resulted from the work of the Blueprint Panel, a group comprised of a cross section of North Memorial's key stakeholders whose goal is to develop practical ways for the organization to achieve its vision. Both initiatives should help the organization and its employees better understand what it's like to walk in the shoes of the patient and to learn how to consistently provide a remarkable experience.

Leader Rounding (page 7) is a way for leaders of the organization to learn – firsthand – the concerns of our patients. Various leaders will be visiting the bedsides of North Memorial patients for the next several months. Service Recovery (page 6) provides a consistent way to make things right for the patient before or after something goes wrong, and to ensure that the patient experience is favorable.



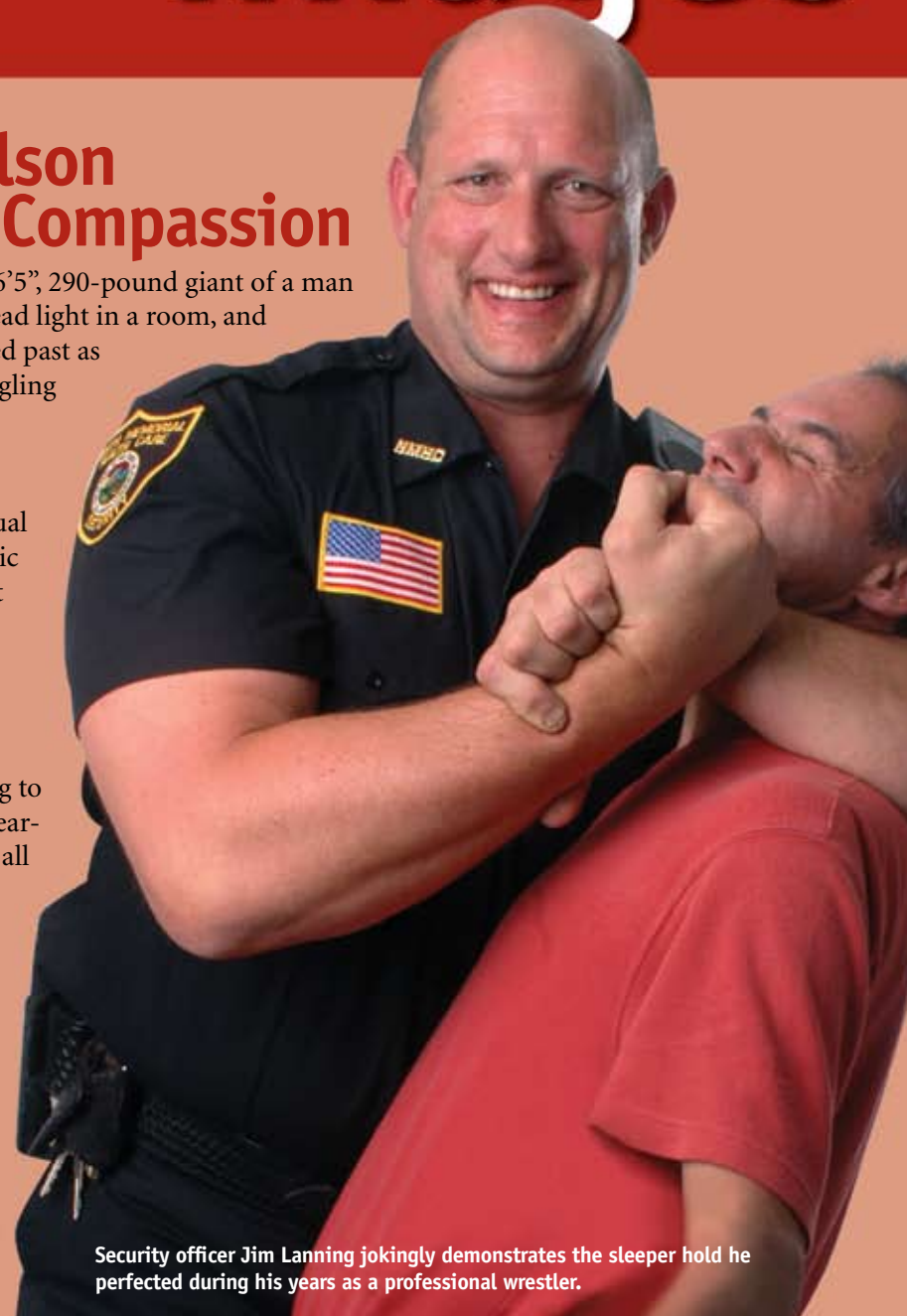
## From Full Nelson to Full Compassion

Take one look at Jim Lanning, a 6'5", 290-pound giant of a man who seemingly blocks the overhead light in a room, and it's not hard to imagine his storied past as a barnstorming wrestler and fledgling professional football player. Take a few minutes to engage him in conversation, and it's not hard to imagine that he's achieved an equal measure of success as a diplomatic and personable security officer at North Memorial.

On the surface, the two careers seem as disparate as the environments in which they take place. But not so much, according to Jim. "Life's a stage," says the 16-year-veteran of North Memorial. "We all put our game face on when we come to work."

Originally, Jim hoped his game face would appear as part of the offensive line for a team in the National Football League. He was signed as a free agent by the Dallas Cowboys out of college but did not make the team's final roster. After

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Security officer Jim Lanning jokingly demonstrates the sleeper hold he perfected during his years as a professional wrestler.

# From Full Nelson to Full Compassion (continued from p1)

that, he enjoyed a brief stint with the San Antonio Gunslingers of the United States Football League.

Jim then took to the wilds of professional wrestling.

He chased his dream in small, outlaw wrestling leagues where he earned \$35 to \$50 per night. "That's where guys get their start," says Jim. "It's where you learn how to

become a 'sports entertainer.'"

After serving his apprenticeship in the lower echelons of professional wrestling, "Big Jim Steele" made it to the big time. He worked with wrestling great Verne Gagne and was trained by Ed Sharkey, whose list of clients included Jesse Ventura.

Jim's arrival on the national wrestling scene was timely. He joined with other Americans to wage the first three-way *battle royale*, matches often involving 10 to 20 wrestlers at a time. The tour took them to the other side of the world, including wrestling-crazed places like South Africa where Jim's team made the cover of the *Johannesburg Times*. "We performed in front of ten thousand people and they could become violent, throwing whiskey bottles at us and everything else," recalls Jim. "We were escorted by the South African police and accompanied by special police dogs."



Jim achieved his greatest fame in the ring as the evil Soldat Ustinov, joining forces with Boris Zhukov to form a Russian tag team that won the championship in Las Vegas in 1987. "It was always good vs. evil and the ring was the theater," says Jim, who always played the bad guy but seems quite the opposite in real life.

"It was a hard way to make a living. We had no health insurance and you had to play injured. But I learned a lot about people."

**"You learn to appreciate the simpler things in life and you learn to treat all people with respect."**

Jim has found that the skills he developed in the square circle – such as the ability to entertain and humor an audience – have helped him at North Memorial. Whereas a "takedown" for Jim once involved putting the likes of Sergeant Slaughter on his posterior, his current definition of a takedown is the skillful diffusion of a potentially explosive situation.

"We're here to safeguard the environment for our patients, visitors and staff, and sometimes that means injecting a little humor into a tense situation. I've also learned that it's *how* you say what you say, not *what* you say that makes a difference.

"Hands on action is a last resort here. We [security officers] really work in crisis prevention and achieve



much more with words than actions." Jim has been a crisis intervention instructor for four years and has trained both staff and fellow officers.

In some situations, Jim and other security officers are seen as "health care soldiers."

"When there's an out-of-control person in the ED, staff is extremely happy to see us," says Jim. "They know we'll bring the situation under control."

Jim has also found himself to be a welcome party in situations where he least expected it. He tells the story of an elderly woman walking down a hallway, weighed down by bags she was carrying. Jim asked her how she was doing and she mentioned that her husband had just passed away in Hospice. She said she was used to her husband driving and getting all the bags in the car and that she felt lost without him. "I arranged to have her car brought down to the discharge area and loaded everything into it," says Jim. "I then asked if there was anything else I could do for her, but figured there probably

wasn't. To my surprise, she told me that yes, there was one more thing I could do for her. She said, 'I could use a big hug.'" Jim obliged. "It felt like a real send-off for her to start the rest of her new life. It was very touching."

After living the glamorous life of a professional sports entertainer, Jim has a unique perspective in how he views his job and how he views what transpires at a major metropolitan hospital. "I've been at the top and I've been at the bottom," says Jim. "You learn to appreciate the simpler things in life and you learn to treat all people with respect."

