

The University of New Mexico Foundation Developments

SPRING 2019

A LEGACY OF LOVE

Father, Daughter Contribute to UNM School of Medicine's Endowed Professorship in OB/GYN

BY MIRANDA FAFARD

Editor's note: To avoid confusion in the following article that contains two physicians named Dr. Curet, first names will be used after first mention.

Fathers leave lifelong imprints on their children in many ways. Imagine following in your father's professional footsteps and one day being able to honor the imprint he not only left on you, but also on the medical profession. That is precisely what Dr. Myriam Curet has done with a gift in her father's honor to The University of New Mexico's Dr. Ben Curet Endowed Professorship in OB/GYN.

In August 2018, Ben, professor emeritus in the UNM School of Medicine's Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, was recognized for his outstanding contributions to the school and to celebrate the newly created endowed professorship, which was funded by gifts from his colleagues, students and family. "The main purpose of this professorship is to provide funds for an individual who merits it, to conduct research in the area of maternal-fetal medicine," he explained. "I am very excited and happy for the department."

More than 30 years ago, Ben helped build the OB/GYN department at UNM. In addition, Ben also developed research programs for, and treated expectant mothers dealing with, substance abuse, pre-eclampsia, and gestational diabetes in New Mexico. He also spent 20 years traveling with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to Central and South America to improve education for medical residents and fellows, and to care for underserved patient populations.



Dr. Myriam Curet and her father, Dr. Ben Curet, enjoy an outing at a San Francisco Giants game.

Ben is also a devoted father, having inspired his daughter, Myriam, to become an accomplished surgeon and clinical professor. She reflects fondly on her childhood, during which, after church on Sundays, the family would go to the hospital and wait for her father while he worked.

As she began studying medicine, Myriam worked on research projects with her father and they even published papers together. "He was my role model for a successful academic career," she said. "I think very few people have the opportunity to also have a professional relationship with their parents, so it was incredibly meaningful."

After receiving her MD from Harvard University and completing both her internship and residency at University of Chicago Hospitals, Myriam completed

a fellowship at the UNM School of Medicine and was on its faculty for six years. After leaving UNM, she became a professor in the Department of Surgery at Stanford University. She now serves as the executive vice president and chief medical officer of Intuitive, a California-based company that creates innovative, robotic-assisted systems to help make surgery less invasive. Despite leaving UNM, she has kept in touch with colleagues here and shows her appreciation by regularly making gifts to the school, most recently in her father's name.

"After arriving in New Mexico, my father used his ability to look at what was needed and then go about improving the care of patients," said Myriam. "It's not just taking care of [patients'] routine needs; it's having an innovative vision and accomplishing it. He's made a huge difference in the lives of many. It's just so inspiring to me."

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FOCUSING ON THE BIG PICTURE

Prominent Photographer and UNM Alumna Enables Art Students to Create Success

BY HILARY MAYALL JETTY

Since the earliest days of photography's development as a documentary and artistic medium, New Mexico has enchanted anyone with a lens and viewfinder. Ever-changing plays of light illuminate dramatic vistas, skylines and architecture. Urban, rural, Native American and Hispanic cultures offer countless perspectives of humanity and history.

Susan Ressler's passion for New Mexico's photogenic nature ignited in the early 1970s. A recent graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and self-taught photographer, she had just completed a project documenting the harsh realities of life on a Canadian First Nations Reserve. Traveling through the U.S. Southwest, Ressler found herself in Gallup, N.M. "It was July 4th," she recalled, "so I figured I might as well stay a couple of days, and went to a rodeo." Something about the "wild west" nature of the town, and some striking parallels with her prior experience with indigenous peoples, motivated her to inquire at the office of *The Gallup Independent* newspaper.

"It just so happened that their photographer was on vacation," she said, "and they offered to hire me for a week. Two days later they asked me to join the staff. I stayed for a year, and fell in love with New Mexico." Ressler would go on to earn two graduate degrees from the UNM College of Fine Arts (CFA), an MA in 1975 and an MFA in 1986. After each of those accomplishments, she taught photography practice, theory and history at Indiana's Purdue University. However, the Land of Enchantment consistently beckoned.

"Every summer I came out to New Mexico, where I could do my own work, and be mentored by great professors," she said. "I missed that intellectual and artistic stimulation. I was in love with the mountains, the cultures, the tolerance of diversity here; it was always hard to leave."

In 1992, Ressler purchased a home near Taos, and moved in permanently after her retirement from Purdue in 2004. Her enduring love of teaching led her to create an online course on underrepresented women artists that she offered at UNM for eight years. Recently, her appreciation for UNM led her to establish the Susan Rebecca Ressler Endowed Scholarship in Art.

Patrick Manning, associate professor of photography at the CFA, affirms the impact of this gift. "Students often struggle to find the resources they

need to make their work as they envision it," he explained. "Often they compromise, reducing the scope and grandeur of their projects. This scholarship will allow an art studio student the freedom to more fully develop and execute his or her vision at a critical moment."

Ressler is an award-winning, world-traveling photographer, author and educator. Her work has been widely collected and exhibited, including in the Smithsonian American Museum of Art. In 2003, she edited *Women Artists of the American West*, an anthology celebrating the historical significance and contributions of these often overlooked artists. In stark contrast, her 2018 book, *Executive Order: Images of 1970s Corporate America*, reveals Ressler's penetrating insights into the wealthy and powerful, and is the first monograph of her photographs to be published.

Humanity, social commentary and an awareness of inequities in society are recurring themes in Ressler's artistic process. This, coupled with her enthusiasm for higher education, led to her legacy gift. "UNM has meant so much to me," she stated. "This gift can benefit any undergraduate student who wants to study the arts, not just photography. It just seemed like the right place to do this, to help young people in New Mexico."

To view some of Ressler's work, please see pages 12-15 of the fall 2018 issue of the UNM Alumni Association magazine, *Mirage*, which can be viewed online at issuu.com/unm-alumni-association/docs/mirage_f18 ■



Susan Ressler Photo: Roberto E. Rosales ('96 BFA, '14 MA); courtesy UNM Alumni Association

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LAUNCHING FUTURE LEADERS BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITY

New UNM Presidential Scholarship Program Sponsor Helps Open the Door to Educational Success

BY MIRANDA FAFARD

It's a tradition 43 years in the making, a legacy of changing the worlds of the state's most promising high school students. UNM's Presidential Scholarship Program (PSP) provides select incoming New Mexico high school seniors with an award that covers tuition, books and fees—based on merit and community service—through the generosity of individual and corporate sponsors.

Since 1976, more than 4,400 students have received Presidential Scholarships and have gone on to make positive and lasting impacts throughout New Mexico and beyond; some of them, by becoming sponsors themselves, also benefit students who come after them.

One of UNM's newest PSP sponsors is Lillian Montoya, president and CEO of CHRISTUS St. Vincent Health System in Santa Fe. Montoya is a PSP Alumna who cites her scholarship award as both reward and recognition for the efforts she placed on her academics and extracurriculars in high school. The scholarship was an added incentive to stay in New Mexico to earn her bachelor's degree in communications. "I felt special," she said. "The scholarship immersed me into a group that helped me feel connected to UNM and my college journey."



Lillian Montoya poses with her son, Joshua Rael, on Kinetta Beach, Greece, during a recent vacation.

Born and raised in Albuquerque, Montoya was the first in her family to earn a college degree. During her sophomore year at UNM, she became drawn to the subject of public policy. "I gravitated toward speech communication and political science," she said. "My studies allowed me to delve deep into what moves people and communities, and how to create systems change."

Montoya went on to earn her Executive MBA from UNM's Anderson School of Management, and recently was selected by the school as one of its 2019 Outstanding Hall of Fame Honorees. While an undergrad, she served as president of the Associated Students of UNM and, years later, she served as president of the UNM Alumni Association.

Every year, more than 450 students attend UNM with the help of a Presidential Scholarship, representing a wide range of economic and social backgrounds and ethnic groups. Montoya soon will be paired with a UNM freshman, whose college experiences she will share in through annual letters written to her by "her" student.

"I'd like to open the door to a UNM education for a student who doesn't yet fully know his or her potential," said Montoya. "The Presidential Scholarship is a signal to students that they worked hard and deserve a great undergraduate experience. I look forward to being part of that journey."

If you'd like more information about the PSP or would like to become a sponsor of a Presidential Scholar, please visit www.unmfund.org/presidential-scholarship/ or contact Terry Mulert at Terry.Mulert@unmfund.org or (505) 313-7679. ■

ADVANCING BY DEGREES

Jonas Foundation Benefits UNM College of Nursing Doctoral Students' Research

BY HILARY MAYALL JETTY

From bedside to boardrooms and battlefields, faculty positions and research labs, the nursing profession offers an impressive range of opportunities. Nurses have profound impacts on health care development, delivery and policies. Many have achieved academic master's level proficiency, but only one percent have doctoral degrees. Universities and nursing organizations have long recognized that PhD and DNP (Doctor of Nursing Practice) prepared nurses are critical for the profession's ability to advance the science, standards and practices of care.

When philanthropists Barbara and Donald Jonas learned of this need, they responded by creating a competitive nationwide scholarship program. The Jonas Foundation's Center for Nursing Excellence provides more than financial support for nurses seeking their ultimate degrees; it fosters leadership development, connects cohorts of students in online communities, and hosts them at an annual conference in Washington, D.C.

Jonas Veterans Healthcare Scholars, like U.S. Air Force Major Laurel Chiamonte, address the specific needs of our veteran population. Chiamonte is a clinical nurse specialist (CNS) who served on active duty for 12 years. Currently in

the Air Force Reserves, she is enrolled in the PhD program at the UNM College of Nursing. She is the College's third Jonas Scholar.

"My goal is to validate the role of the clinical nurse specialist in the Air Force," Chiamonte said. "A CNS has a background in leadership, facility needs assessment and program development. We influence nursing practice, impact patient care, nursing education, and deal with organizational and policy level issues."

UNM College of Nursing Dean Christine E. Kasper, PhD, RN, was a senior nurse executive in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and a professor in the Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing at Uniformed Services University in Bethesda, Md., where there were several Jonas Scholars. "It's an outstanding program," she said. "My students have always received massive benefits from it."

"The Jonas family is revered within the academic nursing community," she continued. "Their program has probably had the biggest impact on doctoral education of any foundation, and they've received awards from the major nursing organizations. Mrs. Jonas recently died, but they were very involved, always coming to D.C. to meet the students."

"My research is focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of health care to soldiers and vets, to help this population that has made great sacrifices for our country."

-U.S. Air Force Major Laurel Chiamonte

Since 2006, Jonas Scholars have achieved academic success while exploring new ways to approach complex healthcare issues and improve patient outcomes. Aside from general support for her PhD education, the Jonas scholarship will help Chiamonte travel to Air Force bases to meet with other CNS practitioners "My research is focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of health care to soldiers and vets," she said, "to help this population that has made great sacrifices for our country." ■

ENGINEERING AN EVERLASTING GIFT

UNM Engineering Alumnus Creates Endowment to Support Students' Senior Design Projects

BY KIM DELKER

Editor's note: The following article comes to us from Kim Delker, marketing manager of the UNM School of Engineering.

Last fall, with a major gift to the UNM School of Engineering's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, UNM alumnus Ted Woodard created a significant endowment, the Ted Woodard Student Project Fund, which will distribute a substantial amount of earnings each year in support of students' senior design projects. In addition, he donated a variety of electrical equipment he had collected throughout his career.

Woodard received a BS degree in electrical engineering from UNM in 1983, and then went on to earn a master's degree in telecommunications from the University of Colorado in Boulder.

As a student at UNM, Woodard said he remembers working in a co-op program, which allowed him to work one semester on, one semester off, to earn money for school while also gaining valuable experience. His work with the program made it possible for him to transition into top-secret U.S. Government work.

Woodard had a long career with the government that involved many highly-classified projects and



Left to right, Ted Woodard and his daughters, Rebecca, Kim and Susan, pose with a new friend during a dolphin swim in Florida.

missions. His roles included working as an aerospace engineer for the Defense Contract Management Agency of Lockheed Martin in Denver; the U.S. Army Space Command in Colorado Springs, Colo., and the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense in Arlington, Va.

When the toll of various health issues made keeping up with the demands of such sensitive work impossible, he retired from classified government work in 2003. He now lives in Colorado.

"Although my health issues have prevented me from being able to continue as an engineer," said Woodard, "I am grateful to UNM for all it provided me."

Woodard especially remembers doing a senior design project and having great difficulty buying the supplies he needed. He hopes this fund will help future students create and engineer their projects without the worry of cost.

"One of my favorite memories at UNM was working with my advisor, Dr. Martin Bradshaw, on my senior design project, which was a variable-diameter Savonius wind vane," said Woodard. "The greatest compliment I ever received during school was when Dr. Bradshaw purchased my creation!"

Woodard said that he first began thinking about giving back to UNM after reading an article about Dana C. Wood, an alumnus from the Department of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering, who made a transformational estate gift to programs in that department and to the Formula Society of Automotive Engineers program.

"Everyone takes for granted that they are going to live forever," he said. "I've been given a chance to give back, and it's important to take advantage of that when given the opportunity. I was here [at UNM] so long that there is a soft spot in my heart for the University." ■

UNM People Changing Worlds

“BEADING” THE WAY TO HEALING

Beads of Courage Program at UNM Children’s Hospital Brings Comfort to Patients, Families

BY MIRANDA FAFARD

When you first step into the Child Life playroom at UNM Children’s Hospital (UNMCH), you’re met with a sense of calm and warmth. Up on the sixth floor of UNM Hospital, with a 180-degree view of northern Albuquerque and beyond, the playroom is a welcoming environment where young patients come to play, relax, learn, visit with family, and take their mind off their medical care for a moment.

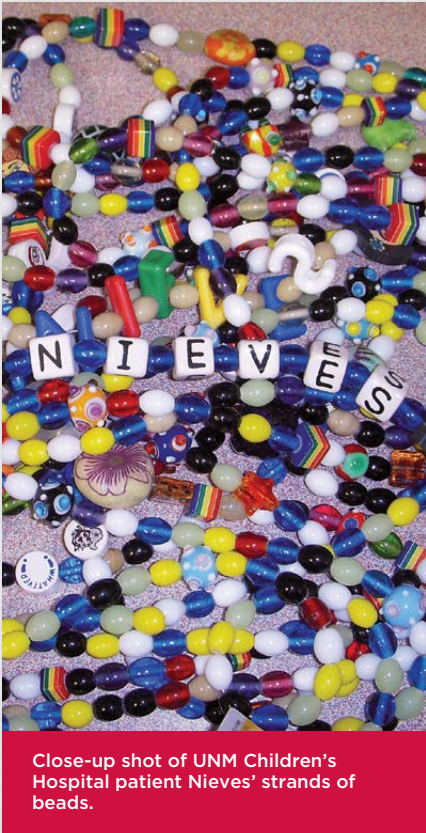
The UNMCH Child Life program is the largest of its kind in New Mexico, providing age-appropriate education and preparation that helps patients and their families to understand and cope with diagnoses, treatment and rehabilitation through therapeutic play, music therapy, art therapy and pet therapy, among others.

But there’s one very special Child Life program to help patients take some of the strain off their journey: Beads of Courage, in which children earn specific hand-crafted beads based on their illness and treatment and strand them together. Beads of Courage is a national program designed to support and strengthen children and their families coping with serious illness.

Heading UNMCH’s Beads of Courage program since its introduction five years ago is Amy Funk-Herrera, a Certified Child Life Specialist with an infectiously positive attitude and a deep love for the program and the children. “There’s literally a bead for every step of their medical journey,” Funk-Herrera said. “It’s a visual therapeutic way for kids to share their story.”



Amy Funk-Herrera



Close-up shot of UNM Children’s Hospital patient Nieves’ strands of beads.



Peter Winograd

Currently, there are 575 children enrolled in the program at UNMCH. When a child enters the program, they’re given a string, a hand-sewn pouch to carry their strand of beads in, and alphabet beads that spell out their name, along with a Daily Bead Prescription journal, letting them know what kind of bead they’ll receive for each procedure they have throughout their journey, whether it be months or years.

There are colored beads for IV pokes, various tests and clinic visits; textured beads for challenges with medication or mobility; glass beads for surgeries; specially shaped beads such as fish for transferring units or traveling to another hospital; glow-in-the-dark beads for radiation treatments; and the coveted purple heart bead, which represents the end of treatment.

“They’ll memorize the bead checklist and tell me exactly which beads they need,” said Funk-Herrera. “I had a kiddo who went through months of chemotherapy and surgery for a limb amputation. She counted 26 stitches she had removed and wanted a bead for every single stitch. Her beads represent her courage and resiliency.”

However, there is one bead that no family ever wants to receive—the butterfly bead, which means a child has passed away. If that does happen, the family can keep their child’s strand of beads to remember them by. “It’s a way to honor their experience and bravery,” said Funk-Herrera. “Parents will hang the beads around a favorite stuffed animal or make bracelets and necklaces for different family members to wear. It honors the child’s legacy.”

To share in a patient’s journey, and if the budget allows, UNMCH also offers beads to siblings as a way to support siblings and recognize their special role in the family. “They have different beads, so when they finally see each other, they can talk about the meaning of them and share their stories,” said Funk-Herrera. “It’s another way to uplift everyone in the family.”

Gifts of Healing

Each year, private giving bolsters the Beads of Courage program. A new donor recently stepped up with a major gift to the program, and his is a familiar name to the UNM family: School of Law Professor Emeritus Peter Winograd, who is also a supporter of the UNM Cancer Center and the UNM Presidential Scholarship Program. In addition, he has endowed a scholarship at the School of Law and a visiting professorship at the College of Nursing.

“The beads are so little, but they mean so much,” Winograd said. “‘Courage’ is an understatement for the children who go through something like this. When you see these little kids, it just makes your eyes tear up.”

Feeling a bit of a personal connection to what some of UNMCH’s children have gone through, Peter speaks about seeing pictures of children who proudly display their beads. “Some of them have bead strands that are so long, that when they hang them around their neck, they’ll drag along the floor!”

When asked about such gifts to the program, Funk-Herrera said, “I’m very thankful to Professor Winograd and others like him who believe in this program as much as we do and who see the significance of these tiny beads. These generous people are helping support children and their families in more ways than they may even imagine. Without their generosity, we wouldn’t be able to provide this program.”

If you’d like to contribute to the Beads of Courage program, please contact Anndee Wright Brown at Anndee.WrightBrown@unmfund.org or (505) 313-7608. ■

A CAPITOL IDEA

Anonymous Donor Honors a Legacy, Proffers an Endowment at UNM’s School of Law

BY HILARY MAYALL JETTY

If there was a Disneyland specifically for law students, Washington, D.C. might just be the Magic Kingdom. Aspiring attorneys have exceptional opportunities to witness the law in action, from arguments at the Supreme Court to Congressional hearings and federal administrative proceedings.

Each year, six students at the UNM School of Law spend their fall semester living in the D.C. area, working at law firms or government and non-profit agencies. They attend weekly seminars, and experience an awe-inspiring perspective of our nation’s history through museums and cultural events. D.C.-based law school alumni assist students in finding work, and plan convivial social activities.



Ted and Sally Occhialino

UNM law school faculty spearheaded this immersive program. Some were alumni of Georgetown Law School, including former Dean and Professor Emeritus Fred Hart and Professor Emeritus Ted Occhialino. Since the 1970s, Occhialino has been highly respected by students and colleagues for his courses and expertise on Civil Procedure. In 2014, he volunteered to be the program’s first director. “We knew Washington was a special place to study law,” he said, “and we wanted to give that experience to our students.”

Occhialino and his late wife, Sally, then an academic advisor at the UNM Anderson School of Management, had deep personal ties to D.C. They also owned a condominium there, where they hosted lively dinners and discussions with students. “Sally was particularly effective at making students feel comfortable in Washington,” Occhialino noted. Her warmth and engagement were greatly missed after her death.

Donations in her honor, and eventual additional support from alumni and other donors, resulted in the establishment of the Sally and Ted Occhialino Semester in D.C. Fund, named by the law school in recognition of their dedication.

Annual fundraising provides a modest scholarship for each student to defray a portion of the costs they must cover. “D.C. is thrilling, but it’s also expensive,” Occhialino stated. “Students need funds for airfare, housing, food, transportation and incidentals, so many aren’t able to go, even though they are certainly qualified.”

An anonymous donor has recently created an opportunity for sustaining this program in perpetuity. A significant initial gift, with an additional matching component, will endow the Sally and Ted Occhialino Semester in D.C. Fund when the match is fully realized by donations from the community.

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A Legacy of Love
(Continued from page 1)

In turn, Ben is inspired by Myriam. “As a parent, the greatest reward you can have is to have your offspring follow your footsteps and be better than you,” he said.

The Dr. Ben Curet Endowed Professorship in OB/GYN is a permanent research position that will continue to enrich the academic environment at the School of Medicine and push the frontiers of research. It is the highest academic award, and tribute, that a university can bestow on a faculty member, as well as an honor to the named holder of the position.

“I’ve been in academic medicine all my life,” Ben said. “Teaching and research are very important. It feels great knowing that what I’ve done for the department and for my colleagues merited creating this professorship.”

Both Ben and Myriam have the same hope for the future of the professorship—that others are inspired by the work done at UNM so that patients’ lives are improved every day, and that the holder of the professorship uses this opportunity to make a difference at another level.

“My father is my idea of what a hero really is, and what I hope all of us would aspire to be,” said Myriam. “To have that appreciation in the form of this professorship is touching.”

If you’d like to contribute to the Dr. Ben Curet Endowed Professorship in OB/GYN, please contact Megan Dugan at Megan.Dugan@unmfund.org or (505) 328-6529. ■

A Capitol Idea
(Continued from page 3)

This endowment will enable more students like Albuquerque native Taylor Bui to participate. Bui, whose academic interests include criminal, constitutional and civil rights law, was part of the fall 2018 D.C. cohort. The financial support he received was crucial, and his experience was life-changing. “I was able to get a full-time unpaid position with the Department of Justice,” he said. “I also got to attend a DOJ conference on the opioid crisis, and a meeting of U.S. attorneys from across the country. I had time to spend whole days at the Smithsonian,” he added, “and I stood at the National Archives in front of the Constitution for half an hour, just being amazed.”

Occhialino acknowledges the enduring advantages of the program. “When our students go to D.C., they see a bigger world,” he explained. “We always hope they will come back home to practice with that richer experience; then, New Mexico’s government, universities and legal system will benefit.”

That’s Taylor Bui’s plan. “I loved the contrast of being in D.C.,” he said, “but I still want to serve the people of New Mexico.”

If you’d like to contribute to the Sally and Ted Occhialino Semester in D.C. Fund, please contact Nickie Vigil at Nickie.Vigil@unmfund.org or (505) 277-0554. ■



Left to right: Taylor Bui poses with U.S. Sen. Tom Udall and U.S. Rep. Ben Ray Luján in Washington, D.C.

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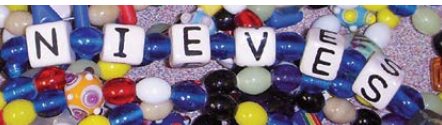
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Ways to Give

You can give to the UNM Foundation through unrestricted gifts, which are used for the University’s greatest needs. You can also give to a multitude of initiatives within the University’s schools, colleges and programs, including scholarships, dean’s funds, student organizations and annual giving campaigns. Supporting events or endowing programs, professorships and chairs are also great ways to give. Gifts may take a variety of forms including, but not limited to, cash, securities, real property, bequests or other estate plans. In addition, you may choose to give in memory or in honor of a loved one, colleague, or mentor.



The UNM Foundation has a variety of giving societies including:

- The UNM President’s Club, supporting presidential initiatives for enhanced academic excellence and student enrichment through annual, unrestricted gifts.
- The Cherry and Silver Society, recognizing alumni who give within 12 months of graduation and then at least once every calendar year thereafter.
- The New Horizons Society, recognizing donors who have included UNM in their estate plans.
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