

## PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

Origin stories are the best. The acorn becomes an oak tree. Mutants become X-Men. Frankenstein becomes Frankenstein: "It's alive! It's alive!"

So I went back and looked through my notes for *Life Support*. On August 12, 2015, I wrote the first words:

"On the right, we see a hallway and a door. The door leads to a patient's room (left). The room contains a bed, a chair, and an IV pole. . . ."

Over the next few months, I took more notes. "Many staging questions exist," I scribbled. "For example, should Karl be on stage the entire time?"

Somehow, this became a play. I had a first draft in September and a fifth draft in December. In January 2016, we started rehearsals.

And now it's April. The play doesn't belong to me anymore—if it ever did.

It belongs to the stellar cast and crew. I am so grateful for their efforts, and I think you will be too.

Welcome! Thank you for joining us. Thank you for being part of this work.



## WHAT IS PALLIATIVE CARE?

- Focuses on the whole person and the relief of symptoms
- Helps patients carry on with daily life, including tolerating medical treatments
- Appropriate at any stage of illness and can be provided at the same time as curative treatments

For more information:

Palliative Medicine Program

410-955-8305

[http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/palliative\\_care](http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/palliative_care)

# LIFE SUPPORT

*A play about Palliative Care*

by Madeline Leong, MD

Galen Theater  
[www.galentheater.com](http://www.galentheater.com)

## ABOUT THE CAST & CREW

**ELIZABETH UNG** (*Rachel*) is currently achieving her BA in Theatre Studies at UMBC with emphasis on Acting, Costume Design, and Playwriting. Previous acting credits include: *Voracious* (UMBC), *The Pillowman* (4615 Theatre Company), and *Utopia Parkway* (Single Carrot Theatre). She would like to thank her friends and family for the support, as well as the dedicated cast and crew for this production!

**RODNEY BONDS** (*Karl*) has acted before. He's doing it again.

**ANN TURIANO** (*Lori*), last seen in *The 39 Steps* with The Collaborative Theatre, has performed with Subversive Productions, The Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, Single Carrot Theatre, Compass Rose Theater, and Center Stage. Ann received her BA in Acting from Point Park University and holds an MA in Advanced Theatre Practice from the Central School of Speech and Drama in London.

**ERIC PAUL BOELSCHE** (*Pembroke*) has been living and working as an actor in the Baltimore region for the past five years. He has worked with theatre companies such as Open Space Arts, Mobtown, and Single Carrot Theatre. His past performances include: *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead*, *Bent*, *VIP* (by Aldo Pantoja), and *The House of Yes*.

**BRENT ENGLAR** (*Director*) has directed new plays for the Capital Fringe Festival, the Charm City Fringe Festival, and the Mobtown Players (where he met Madeline). He is also a playwright and the Baltimore Regional Representative for the Dramatists Guild of America.

**BRIAN S. KRASZEWSKI** (*Stage Manager*) has worked as a Stage Manager, Director, Producer, and Set Designer/Scenic Artist for the Mobtown Players and Reisterstown Theatre Project. He also acts and sings and was most recently in the Spotlight UB/StillPointe Theatre production of *Assassins*, as Leon Czolgosz.

**MADELINE LEONG, MD** (*Playwright*) is a doctor and a writer. She works in Palliative Care at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

## CAST

DR. RACHEL LI	Elizabeth Ung
KARL EVANS	Rodney Bonds
LORI EVANS	Ann Turiano
PEMBROKE EVANS	Eric Paul Boelsche

Director: Brent Englar  
Stage Manager: Brian S. Kraszewski  
Sound Design: Adam Kunsberg

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and leave \$\$ for the actors in the tip jar!

## THANK YOU:

Joann Bodurtha, MD • Colleen Christmas, MD •  
Patricia Davidson, PhD, MEd, RN • Jim Corey •  
Paula Eissmann • Natasha Gill • Erica Johnson, MD •  
Joy Leong • Thomas Smith, MD • Betsy Stone &  
the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*Life Support* is a play about palliative care. As the son of a hospice worker, I share Madeline's concern that our culture does not encourage—at times, *discourages*—honest, compassionate dialogue about death and the meaning of dying well. I admire her efforts, as a doctor, to balance the not-always-consistent goals of saving lives and relieving suffering.

As a playwright, however, Madeline does not only engage in dialogue, she crafts it—between fully realized characters, as you will hear: people living and dying with the fallout of choices they've made . . . and not made. First and foremost, *Life Support* is a good play. In dramatizing the end-of-life of Karl Evans, Madeline does not pretend to have easy answers. Karl's story is not a template to impose unreflectingly on every dying person, any more than his son, wife, and doctor are models of wisdom or even effectiveness.

In the end, what matters most is the dialogue. If you leave this performance a more active, engaged participant, we'll have succeeded.