



Hospital News[™] *and* HEALTHCARE REPORT

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THE REGION'S MONTHLY NEWSPAPER FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS & PHYSICIANS
OUR 19TH YEAR SERVING THE HEALTHCARE COMMUNITY!



Dr. Ravi Behara

Digital Health: Transforming Care

BY RAVI BEHARA, PHD

Smartwatches can monitor our daily physical activity and exercise regimes, while glucose monitoring devices can measure our blood sugar level without a finger prick and communicate this information to care providers. Managing wellness and illness is becoming more digital, personal, and mobile. This is just the tip of the iceberg representing an enormous transformation currently going on in healthcare.

Digital health refers to the use of information and communications technologies in healthcare to deliver patient care in acute, chronic, and preventative contexts. It also includes applying these technologies to self-care and promoting wellness with the increased consumerization of healthcare. These include, among many others, technologies that focus on an individual such as wearable devices and personal medicine, those that address remote care such as mobile health solutions and telehealth, and those that support clinicians in making better decisions using decision support systems driven by artificial intelligence. While the focus is usually more on the technologies involved, it is essentially the use of near-ubiquitous digital information to develop treatments, diagnose conditions, deliver care, and actively monitor an individual's and a population's health and well-being.

These changes have not come about

Continued on page 15

Salute to Nursing

The Nursing Consortium of Florida; Focused on Collaboration, Education, and Outreach

BY VANESSA ORR

While the healthcare landscape has changed dramatically over the past three decades, one thing has remained the same: The Nursing Consortium of Florida, Inc. has been working to strengthen the field of nursing through collaboration, communication, and education.

Incorporated as a not-for-profit in 1997, the



**Nursing Consortium recognizes Florida's longest
licensed nurse with a DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award**
PHOTO CREDIT: CREATIVE PARTICLE

Continued on page 43

Memorial Healthcare System's Nurse Manager Council: Built to Support and Retain High-Performing Leaders

BY MONICA PUGA, MSN, RN,
SHELLY DELFIN, DNP, RN, AND
JESSICA JIMENEZ, MSN, RN

According to a recent survey by the American Organization for Nursing Leadership, 45% of nurse managers intend to leave their current role, a potentially critical situation for healthcare providers and nursing management given how much these leaders impact safety, quality, engagement, and fulfill one of the industry's most challenging r

While nurse manager dissatisfaction within Memorial Healthcare System never reached the level cited in the AONL study, we did, in the worst days of COVID-19, understand we had a looming crisis on our hands. The pandemic exacerbated our nurses' concerns about their own safety while the unprecedented circumstances in which they worked maximized stress on every shift. It was a difficult time for everyone, especially those on the front lines who were counted on



Monica Puga



Shelly Delfin



Jessica Jimenez

Continued on page 48



Kenneth Jones

Leading with Vision: Kenneth Jones and the Future of HCA Florida Northwest Hospital

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Kenneth Jones was appointed Chief Executive Officer of HCA Florida NW Hospital in March 2021, bringing a wealth of experience and leadership acumen to the role. Leading the 289-bed facility that has been a mainstay in healthcare for northern Broward County and southern Palm Beach County for over 30 years, Jones brings more than two decades of expertise in hospital administration and clinical operations.

His previous tenure as President of AMITA Health Saint Francis Hospital in Evanston, IL, highlighted his ability to manage substantial healthcare facilities adeptly. At HCA Florida Northwest Hospital, Jones's deep knowledge in critical service areas such as women's health and cardiovascular surgery is expected to drive significant advancements in care, addressing the dynamic needs of the communities served.

Vision for the Future

Following his appointment as CEO, Jones clearly envisioned the hospital's

Continued on page 51



SALUTE TO NURSES 2024

With Our Deepest Gratitude

Every day, the more than 50 nurses across our medical practice locations and hospital partner sites give unmeasurable amounts of care, compassion and expertise to our patients and families.

They’re committed to ensuring that infants, children and moms are healthy and thriving, and together we share our deepest gratitude for the impact they’ve made on countless lives.

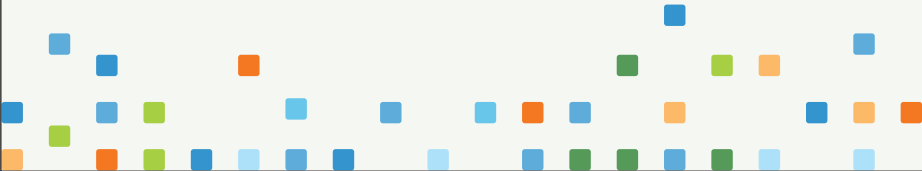
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Publisher’s Note

With Apologies
to Nurse Ratched ...



Ah, nursing, the unsung heroes of the healthcare world, the magical beings who sprinkle compassion and competence wherever they go whether it be in a large hospital, rural medical office or nursing classroom. Imagine a world without nurses, where the sound of "Stat!" in hospitals is followed by awkward silence and frantic googling.

Nurses are like the Swiss Army knives of healthcare, equipped with empathy, knowledge, and enough caffeine to power a small city. They're the ones who hold your hand during those terrifying moments, all while multitasking like seasoned circus performers. Need someone to decipher doctor's handwriting? Call a nurse. Need someone to calm down a patient who's convinced they're turning into a potted plant? Nurse to the rescue.

And let's talk about their superpower: their ability to either turn a hospital room into a place of comfort and hope or run a 300-bed hospital. With just a smile and a gentle touch, they can make even the most intimidating medical procedures feel like a walk in the park. They're the ones who know how to make you feel human again when all you want to do is crawl under the hospital bed and hide.

Nursing isn't just a profession; it's a calling, a sacred duty to care for humanity's most vulnerable moments. They see you at your worst and somehow manage to make you feel like you're their top priority. So here's to the nurses, the heartbeats of healthcare, the ones who make the world a little brighter, one patient at a time.

Charles Felix 

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NATIONAL NURSES WEEK



During National Nurses Week, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the nurses at the University of Miami Health System and around the world. Your compassionate care and healing touch impact lives, one patient at a time. Words cannot express the depth of gratitude from the communities you serve. **Thank you for all that you do.**



UMiamiHealth.org

The Rise of Corporate Medicine in Miami-Dade County: Balancing Efficiency with the Core Principles of Medicine

Over the past few decades, Miami-Dade County has seen a proliferation of corporate-owned healthcare entities, from hospitals and outpatient clinics to specialized care centers. These corporate entities promise efficiency, technological advancements, and a broader range of services, appealing to a population that values convenience and access.



BY CARMEL J. BARRAU, MD

This rising influence of corporate medicine has put the doctor-patient relationship under threat. With increasing corporatization, physicians find themselves navigating a complex landscape that often interferes with patient care and their professional autonomy.

Certain models of corporate medicine have transformed the traditional practice of medicine, turning physicians into employees rather than independent practitioners. This shift has led to a potential loss of autonomy and a focus on profit-driven models that may not always prioritize patient care.

Physicians are often constrained by corporate decisions, such as alternative treatment delivery options geared toward cost-saving measures which may not be applicable to a particular community.

The Dade County Medical Association (DCMA) recognizes the potential adverse effects of this shift towards corporatization. The association believes that the erosion of physician autonomy and the commodification of healthcare services pose, at times, risks to patient care and the integrity of the medical profession. Physicians are increasingly faced with bureaucratic hurdles, such as prior authorization requirements, that may impede their ability to make timely and informed decisions about patient care.

Despite these challenges, the DCMA also recognizes the role of physicians in adapting to the changing healthcare

landscape. Physicians must educate themselves about the business aspects of healthcare, understand hospital policies, reimbursement structures, and regulatory requirements. When deciding to join a group, physicians should be inquisitive about the corporate philosophy, and the goals of the merger. By doing so, they can better advocate for their patients and ensure that their voices are heard in discussions surrounding healthcare policy and reform. The goal is to strike a balance that allows physicians to focus on patient care while addressing the administrative and financial challenges inherent in today's healthcare system.

As Miami-Dade County continues to navigate the complexities of corporate medicine, proactive measures are needed to ensure that patient care remains at the forefront of healthcare delivery. Balancing the benefits of corporate efficiency with the values of personalized, compassionate care requires collaborative efforts from healthcare providers, policymakers, and the community.

The rise of corporate medicine in Miami-Dade County reflects broader trends shaping the American healthcare system. While the landscape is evolving, the core principles of medicine – compassion, integrity, and patient-centered care – must remain. By fostering dialogue, promoting accountability, and advocating for patient rights, physicians practicing in Miami-Dade County can chart a path towards a healthcare system that serves all residents equitably and effectively.

Since 1903, the Dade County Medical Association has advocated for the integrity of the patient-relationship in Miami-Dade County.

Dr. Carmel Barrau is President, Dade County Medical Association, Inc.

Malpractice Insurance EXPERT ADVICE

Different States, Different Rules for IV Therapy Practices

BY VANESSA ORR

NBC news recently reported that IV therapy—which delivers a high dose of mineral and vitamins directly into a person's bloodstream—has become a \$15 billion industry. This trend is attracting a lot of healthcare providers, including physicians, nurse practitioners (NP), physician assistants (PA), medi-spas and more.

While there are no federal regulations covering the administration of IV therapy, each state has their own rules that practitioners must follow.

"This is where things get a little fuzzy," says Kyla Murphy, Professional Liability Advisor, National Healthcare Practice with Risk Strategies. "Depending on the state, there can be strict rules or not many rules at all. This is one of the reasons that both doctors and patients are calling for consistency across the board."

In California, for example, 51 percent of a practice offering IV therapy must be owned by a medical corporation. In New York, a physician or physicians' group must own 100 percent of the practice. In Florida, both physicians and non-physicians can administer IV therapy, but the practice must have a physician as its medical director.

"While these treatments can be very helpful and impactful to a patient's health when given by a licensed professional, problems arise when they are administered by someone who is not licensed, or when the equipment is not sterilized properly," says Kyla Murphy. "Problems can range from infections to skin deformities, and in some cases, even death."

In Texas, for example, a woman recently died while being administered IV therapy.

"A lot of the problem goes back to compounding—just like with weight-loss drugs, compounding is being done in IV therapy as well," said Tom Murphy, SVP National Healthcare Practice, Risk Strategies. "People are mixing different medications and vitamins."

"This is why it's important for each provider to get regulatory guidance from the Department of Health or their board of medicine before offering these services to avoid potential legal or insurance-related exposures," he added.

In many cases, it is not physicians administering the therapy, but NPs, PA, and aestheticians. While they should be receiving guidance from the facility's medical director, this does not always



Kyla Murphy

occur. Providers should also be doing good faith exams, just as they would with any other patient.

"They need to check a person's medical history, make sure that the equipment is being sterilized properly, and also make sure that they are in compliance with the requirements of the state where they are practicing," said Kyla Murphy.

"There is not a one-size-fits-all solution," she added.

"Every person's body reacts differently. A 350-pound man and a 110-pound woman should not receive the same vitamin intake. Providers and patients alike need to call for consistency to make sure that what they are doing is safe."

She notes that patients should also ask questions before receiving any treatment, including whether a licensed provider is administering the IV; whether they are qualified to be offering this treatment, and who owns the practice.

Practitioners should make sure that they are compliant with state laws as well as with their insurance coverage. "IV therapy doesn't have the exposure or risk that some treatments do, such as weight-loss drugs, and we haven't seen the types of claims that we have with other procedures," said Tom Murphy. "In the professional liability world, there are still a lot of options for coverage, with carriers asking pretty standard things about compliance. However, if a facility is doing other treatments besides IV therapy, that may be a different story."

To date, Florida has not seen any lawsuits as a result of IV therapy, though there have been some claims as a result of patients getting infections after IV treatment because it was not administered properly. But as this area of medicine continues to grow, that may soon change.

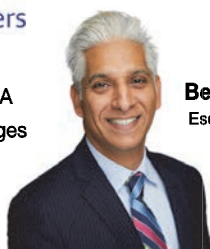
"I hear from many of these clinics every week wanting to do IV therapy," says Tom Murphy. "To this end, we have joined the American IV Association (AIVA), a national association designed to help everyone get into compliance. It's important to make sure that people get the education they need, and that the medical providers are doing what they need and have the proper training and tools to maintain patient safety."

For more information, contact Kyla Murphy at Kyla.murphy@risk-strategies.com or Tom Murphy at tmurphy@risk-strategies.com or call 800-966-2120

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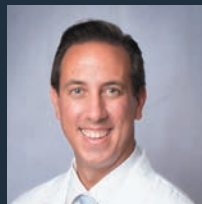
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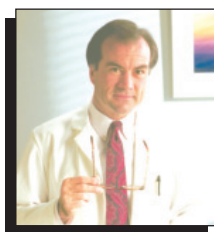


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When It Comes To Patient Care – Benchmark the Best

PART 1



BY JAY JUFFRE

In my line of work, I can see firsthand what many of the leading healthcare providers are doing to continuously improve patient care and satisfaction. I thought it might be interesting to unpack some of these this month as we are about to enter the second half of 2024. It is important to realize that there are also pitfalls to each of these and if there is not a thoughtful plan behind them, it may have the opposite impact on patients and their families. Let's start with Telemedicine. Nearly every top health system in the country is offering and embracing this.

The big question is why? Before instantly jumping to reducing costs (which certainly is a benefit), think about the ease and convenience for the patient. They can quickly connect with healthcare professionals and receive great care. It is important to ensure that the staff is great at interacting with the patient virtually. Bedside manners can take on a whole new definition in this case. It is also important for your team to recognize when a patient needs to come in. Despite the convenience and ability to access care remotely, sometimes nothing can replace in person examination and testing. Key is to balance the two.

Another trend that is creatively driving patient care is the idea of Personalized Medicine. Health Systems today are utilizing genetic testing to offer personalized treatment specifically tailored to that patient's unique needs – talk about elevated patient care. This process makes somebody feel like a person and not a number. The key here is to educate and inform the patient about how this new science works and the benefits your organization can provide for their total health.

The key to technological and scientific advances is to always bring it back to what and how the patient can benefit. All too often healthcare providers march forward with the latest and greatest without first making their staff experts and then highlighting the why for their teams and more importantly, the patient. More benchmarking insights to come next month.

Jay Juffre is Executive Vice President, Total Customer Experience, ImageFIRST. For more information on ImageFIRST, call 1-800-932-7472 or visit www.imagefirst.com.

FREE MED MAL EXPERT REVIEW



HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR MED MAL POLICY?

It's no longer just a matter of signs hinting at a hardening market. Indisputable evidence is now at the forefront. Malpractice rates are going up across the board. Weaker malpractice carriers are being placed into receivership or sold. Juries in Florida are making shockingly high awards. And this is only the beginning.

ISN'T IT TIME YOUR MED MAL POLICY GOT A CHECKUP?

Risk Strategies will perform a no-obligation comprehensive review of your current malpractice coverage. Few doctors and administrators have an in-depth knowledge of their coverage or insurer and may not be asking all the right questions. For instance, do you know the following about your coverage:

- Are the policy exclusions outlined and clearly defined?
- Do you have full or just limited rights to consent to any lawsuit settlement?
- Is defense coverage offered outside or inside the limits of liability?
- What are the "tail" provisions upon termination of the policy?
- How is your corporation, professional association or other entity covered?

These are just a few of the questions you should be asking in this volatile market. It's not too late for a no-obligation medical malpractice insurance review, just contact Risk Strategies at 800.966.2120 or matt@dannagracey.com.

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Upcoming Cleveland Clinic Cancer Conference Set for November 1-3

Save the DATE!

Cleveland Clinic Cancer Conference: Innovations in Multidisciplinary Care will be held November 1-3 at Margaritaville Hollywood Beach Resort.

This conference will provide disease specific, evidence-based, high quality and practical talks and exchanges to update the participants on the latest advances in the diagnosis and multidisciplinary management of the most prevalent cancers at all stages of disease and treatment.

The conference will cater to medical oncologists, hematologists, radiation oncologists, and other healthcare professionals involved in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cancer. Current, new and future advances in cancer care will be discussed. The role of emerging technologies, supportive care and non-pharmacologic care of the cancer patient will be addressed. In addition to didactic lectures, case-based discussions will address the more challenging situations faced by cancer caregivers.

By attending, you will be able to:

- Describe progress in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer
- Discuss the latest innovations in digital technologies and genomics
- Review recent updates in cancer research in a concise format, allowing translation of new knowledge into better care for patients with cancer

This activity is targeted to a national and international audience of practitioners and health care professionals, and is designed for physicians, fellows, residents, pharmacists, researchers, advance practice providers and nurses in the fields of medical, surgical and radiation oncology; palliative care; pathology; and pharmacology.

Register at ccfcme.org/CCCC2024.

Growing the Future:

TGH President and CEO John Couris Discusses the Academic Health System's \$550M Investment in the Tampa Medical & Research District

In just five years, Tampa General Hospital (TGH) has expanded its footprint from 17 to 150-plus locations in the Tampa Bay area and across Central Florida to the East Coast. This growth reflects TGH President and CEO John Couris' execution of initiatives prioritized in the ambitious TGH Master Facility Plan. Here, he discusses the latest accomplishments in the Tampa Medical & Research District, ongoing goals, and its impact on the region, the state and beyond.



John Couris

TGH is making a significant capital investment in the future of Tampa Bay and health care in Florida. What does that look like? We are executing a \$550 million capital commitment — our master facility plan — to deliver the most advanced technology and innovative care by creating a growing medical and research district in downtown Tampa. Anchored by TGH and the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine, the Tampa Medical & Research District is modeled after renowned medical districts in cities like Boston and Houston. It houses an ever-growing hub of

world-class clinical care facilities and academic, research and biotech spaces. We are excited to partner with USF Health on the district and are engaged in a multifaceted partnership with the Tampa Bay Economic Development Council to maximize the district's impact.

In the past two years, the district has grown to include the TGH Rehabilitation Hospital, a free-standing emergency department and the TGH/USF Health Precision Medicine Biorepository. We recently broke ground on the TGH Behavioral Health Hospital; in response to the increasing need for mental health and psychiatric services, the new hospital will offer a full range of inpatient and outpatient services led by psychiatrists from the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine.

In alignment with our new board-adopted, five-year strategic plan, the TGH Master Facility Plan also includes the construction of the new Taneja Surgical, Neuroscience & Transplant

Tower on the main hospital campus, which is estimated to open in 2027.

What is your goal for the Tampa Medical & Research District? Our goal is to make Tampa Bay an anchor of the health care landscape with the creation of a complete health care ecosystem. We want to create a vibrant, attractive and innovative hub that will motivate people to move here and start a business, or bring to our region the brightest research minds and clinical care providers. We are striving to deliver an environment with a robust infrastructure ripe with collaboration. We are actively working with other sectors, such as private equity and biotech, with a focus on intentional collaboration.

Today, the possibilities for the district feel limitless. We will be constantly developing, growing and investing in the district. We are looking to engage with new sectors, including our public school systems and independent schools, as well as museums, aquariums, and the arts and sciences. The district will be a source of constant and ongoing activity.

What impact will the district have on the community and the state? How will folks in other communities benefit? The district is already attracting renowned clinicians and researchers to Florida, result-

ing in increased access to experts, cutting-edge research, education and technology for patients and students. Once completed, the total economic impact of the district will be more than \$6.4 billion annually, including the creation of 41,500-plus jobs, approximately \$4 billion in GDP, and \$798 million in federal, state and local fiscal revenues. Additionally, it is estimated that the new Tampa General facilities, once completed, will make a \$1 billion economic impact across the region.

Individuals across the state will benefit from the work the district will generate, such as access to new therapies and treatments, and medical devices, or in terms of the ability to seek treatment in world-class facilities or expertise from clinicians in Tampa Bay, particularly for critical or complex cases.

Is there anything else you would like to add? The district and the facilities we invest in, along with other recent expansions, including acquiring the Bravera Health network in West Central Florida, and our growing network of expert physicians serving patients in Palm Beach and Martin counties, represent our commitment to providing citizens across Florida with increased access to world-class care.

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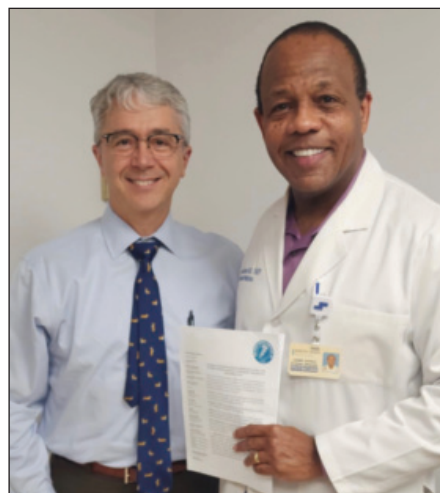
Dade County Medical Association and the Florida International University Board Trustees Forge Collaboration to Empower Medical Students and Residents

The Dade County Medical Association (DCMA) and Florida International University (FIU) on behalf of its Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, signed an agreement to allow medical students and residents from FIU to become members of DCMA during their time as medical students and residents.

The agreement is aimed at enhancing the educational and professional journey of medical students and residents in Miami-Dade County and connecting these future physicians from FIU with the health care community at large.

The DCMA, a professional organization that provides opportunities for medical education, networking, and advocacy in the medical field, is glad to extend its membership privileges to FIU medical students and residents.

Under the terms of the agreement, FIU medical students and residents are now eligible to become members of the DCMA during their tenure as medical students and residents. By joining DCMA, they will gain access to benefits such as educational workshops, participation in medical research competitions, and mentorship opportunities within the



**(l-r) Dr. Juan C. Cendan
and Dr. Carmel J. Barrau**

Miami-Dade County community.

Dr. Carmel J. Barrau, President of the DCMA, and Chairman of the Dean's Advisory Council for the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, expressed excitement about the collaboration: "We are delighted to welcome FIU medical students and residents into

the fold of the DCMA. This partnership represents a step forward in fostering collaboration and excellence in medical education and practice in our community."

Dr. Juan C. Cendan, Dean of the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine at FIU, echoed Dr. Barrau's sentiments: "This agreement signifies our commitment to providing our students and residents with additional resources and opportunities that enrich their educational experience and pave the way for their success in the medical profession."

The signing of the agreement was marked by the presence of Dr. Carmel J. Barrau, President of DCMA, and Chairman of the Dean's Advisory Council for the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, and Dr. Juan C. Cendan, Dean of Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine at FIU.

For more information about the partnership or membership inquiries, please contact Angel Bosch at abosch@miamimed.com or (786) 503-5375.

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AWARD-WINNING HEALTH CARE

At Jupiter Medical Center, we are expanding access to exceptional health care right where it's needed most, close to home. From offering the latest technologies in state-of-the-art surroundings to bringing together multi-specialty physician teams of the highest caliber, Jupiter Medical Center continues to be top-rated in quality, safety, and patient experience. We are proud to be recognized globally as a leader in health care and are committed to continuing to serve our community as the only independent not-for-profit hospital in the region.

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Expanding VA Care Like Never Before Across the West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System

COMPACT Act (Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment)
The COMPACT Act covers Veterans in acute suicidal crisis to go to a VA or community health care facility to receive free emergency health care – including ambulance transportation costs – and be eligible for inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days, including social work.

The West Palm Beach VA wants all Veterans and former service members to know that they can get the emergency suicide care they need, when they need it, no matter where they are AND may be eligible for these services at no cost.

- Eligible COMPACT individuals, regardless of VA enrollment status, are:
- Those who were discharged or released from active duty after more than 24 months of active service under conditions other than dishonorable.
 - Former members of the armed forces, including reserve service members, who served more than 100 days under a combat exclusion or in support of a contingency operation either directly or by operating an unmanned aerial vehicle from another location who were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.
 - Former members of the armed forces who were the victim of a physical assault of a sexual nature, a battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment while serving in the armed forces.

For more information, visit Emergency Medical Care - Community Care: Getting Emergency Care At Non-VA Facilities | Veterans Affairs or call the Customer Service Center at 877-881-7618.

PACT Act (Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics)

The PACT Act is a law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they've earned and deserve. VA recently announced that all Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving our country at home or abroad are now eligible for VA health care.

If a Veteran served in Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq, or Afghanistan, deployed to any combat zone after 9/11, deployed in support of the Global War on Terror – health care benefits are at the service of America's heroes waiting to be used.



But VA did not stop there - Even if Veterans never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or serving on active duty here at home or abroad – by working with chemicals, pesticides, lead, asbestos, certain paints, nuclear weapons, x-rays, and more – they can enroll, too.

Veterans do not need to be sick or file a claim; all you need to do is show that you served in one of those locations or operations – or participated in one of the activities that could have exposed you to toxins or hazards.

Better, more affordable health care is waiting for Veterans.

For more information, visit [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) to learn more and call (561) 422-VETS (8387) get started.



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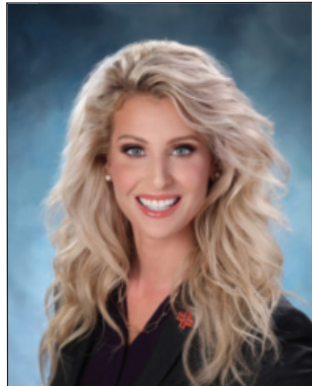
Ashley Vertuno, CEO of HCA FL JFK North Hospital, Recipient of the ACHE 2024 Robert S. Hudgens Memorial Award for Young Healthcare Executive

Ashley Vertuno, FACHE, chief executive officer of HCA Florida JFK North Hospital in West Palm Beach, has been awarded the esteemed Robert S. Hudgens Memorial Award for Young Healthcare Executive of the Year by the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE). This prestigious accolade recognizes exceptional achievement in healthcare management, specifically honoring individuals under 40 years old who hold CEO or COO positions in healthcare organizations and are Fellows of ACHE.

In November 2020 Charles Gressle, HCA East Florida Division President appointed Ashley Vertuno as CEO of HCA Florida JFK North Hospital. At the time Ashley was HCA Healthcare's youngest CEO. Charles Gressle's belief in Ashley's abilities reflects HCA Healthcare's commitment to nurturing and empowering emerging leaders.

Ashley has cultivated a culture of excellence, assembled high-performing teams, and championed strategic initiatives to enhance healthcare delivery in West Palm Beach.

Beyond her professional achievements, Ashley's dedication to community service is exemplary. She has served in leadership roles for various charitable organizations, including the American Heart Association and the Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida. Ashley's commitment to mentorship and support for emerging leaders is evident in her involvement in local Women Colleague Networks and advisory boards.



Ashley Vertuno

Reasons for Hope This Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Although this commemorative month was established in 1949 to raise awareness of the number of people with mental health conditions and to reduce stigma, its focus is just as needed today, especially as work continues to reduce barriers to timely access to care for a growing number of people.

Florida's acute care hospitals are strong advocates for a robust behavioral health care system that delivers the right care in the right setting at the right time. Mental health needs do not conveniently happen between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday – our system must be designed and supported to meet people where they are, when they need help, based on delivering quality outcomes and focusing on recovery.

The challenges are big. More than 63 percent of adults with mental illness receive no treatment. Florida has more than 200 federally designated mental health professional shortage areas, which leaves just 21 percent of the need for mental health professionals being met. Drug overdoses and suicides are increasing. Nearly 650,000 Floridians have a serious mental illness, including 1 in 6 homeless individuals.

The effects of unmet behavioral health needs are felt in every aspect of our community life, from schools and workplaces to jails and the courts. About a quarter of people with a serious mental illness have been arrested at some point in their lifetime because their illness, often due to a lack of treatment, leads to behaviors in the community that result in an interaction with local law enforcement, leading to more than 2 million jail bookings annually. High school students with depression are more than twice as likely to drop out of school as their peers. Families are strained and stressed seeking help for loved ones. Employers are seeing ever-increasing numbers of their employees in need of mental health support.

The scope and magnitude of the problem can feel overwhelming. But there is cause for optimism.

With strong leadership from the governor and legislature, there's meaningful state investment in proven programs and in expanding access to services. During the just-concluded legislative session, there was a notable focus on removing obstacles to timely behavioral health care. The Legislature has made great progress over the last few legislative sessions to pro-



BY MARY MAYHEW

pel our mental health system forward in the best interests of all those who depend on it.

More than 50 bills were introduced that focused on bolstering the behavioral health workforce, improving access to the continuum of behavioral health care, and improving the involuntary commitment process.

Among those that passed:

- HB 7021 makes significant changes to the Baker and Marchman Acts, which have not been modified since their original passage more than 50 years ago. With its many provisions, HB 7021 underscores the need for a person-centered approach to providing flexibility, resources, and support for those with mental illness and substance use disorders. It revises the criteria for involuntary admissions and expands the role and capabilities of behavioral health professionals to streamline the process of involuntary commitments.

- SB 330 creates a new designation for behavioral health teaching hospitals to train healthcare professionals in evidence-based behavioral health care practices and provide comprehensive services to patients in need.

- SB 7016 expands mobile response teams to ensure coverage in every county in the state and authorizes clinical psychologists and psychiatric nurses to practice to the fullest extent of their training and education.

In addition to these new laws, the budget appropriates significant new funds to enhance and expand the behavioral health system, including \$11.5 million for mobile response teams, \$8.3 million for Medicaid reimbursement for primary care and behavioral health providers for services provided under the collaborative care model, and \$21.5 million for expansion of community-based behavioral health services.

The many challenges to our behavioral health care system cannot be solved overnight, and much more needs to be done to ensure that every Floridian can access the behavioral health care they need when they need it. It is our moral imperative to collectively work together as a state and in our communities to drive person-centered care at the heart of a modern mental health delivery system.

Mary C. Mayhew is the Florida Hospital Association President and CEO.

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FAU College of Nursing Celebrates 45th Anniversary

Florida Atlantic University Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing is celebrating its 45th anniversary as an institution of academic excellence. Philanthropists Christine E. Lynn, Holli Rockwell Trubinsky and Joseph Trubinsky, FAU President Stacy Volnick, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Russ Ivy and Interim Vice President of Institutional Advancement David Green were among the guests at the college's anniversary celebration on Thursday, April 18.

The college has grown from six students in 1979 to over 1,200 today, offering baccalaureate to doctoral degree programs, on-demand professional development certificate courses, innovative research and community engagement. Over the last four plus decades, the college has graduated nearly 10,000 students to help address the nursing shortage locally and nationally, and opened the FAU Northwest Community Health Alliance (FAU/NCHA) Community Health Center in West Palm Beach and the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center in Boca Raton.

The FAU/NCHA Community Health Center is the only university in Florida designated as a Federally Qualified Health Center Look-A-Like by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. Thanks to the generous support of donors, the college recently opened a state-of-the-art Advanced Nursing Simulation and Clinical Learning Laboratory at the Davie campus.



Dr. Jacquie Marshall, Associate Professor and Director of Assessment, Evaluation & Student Success; Holli Rockwell Trubinsky; Florida Atlantic University Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Russell Ivy; Christine E. Lynn; Florida Atlantic University Interim Vice President of Institutional Advancement, David Green; Florida Atlantic University Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing Dean Safiya George; Florida Atlantic University President Dr. Stacy Volnick; Terry Fedele, Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing Advisory Board Chair Photography credit: Jeffrey Tholl

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Registration is now open at a reduced cost of \$250 until May 30, 2024. Discount code will be applied at checkout.

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Convergent Procedure to Treat AFib Offered at Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital

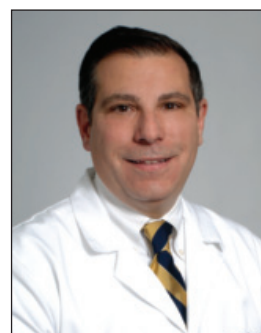
Well over 2.5 million adults in the United States have atrial fibrillation (AFib), according to the American Heart Association. Although it is the most common type of heart arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) disorder, it still presents potential danger.

“A-fib is a big problem and can be very debilitating for some patients,” says Philip Bongiorno, M.D., a cardiothoracic surgeon at Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital. Left untreated, AFib can cause blood clots and stroke.

For people with AFib who have not had success with medication or previous ablation treatments, a new approach called the Convergent procedure is now available and offered at Weston Hospital. A collaborative effort between a cardiac surgeon and an electrophysiologist, Convergent is a minimally invasive two-step treatment. In the first step of the process, the patient undergoes ablation to the outside of the heart through a procedure involving two small incisions in the chest area. Ablation uses heat or extreme cold to destroy small areas of the heart tissue and create scarring that helps get a patient’s heart back into normal rhythm.

At the same time, patients receive the added benefit of having the left atrial appendage removed. This appendage is the part of the atrium that collects blood clots and is thought to be the cause of most strokes related to AFib.

“Removing the left atrial appendage is essentially a ticket for patients to come off blood thinners,” Dr. Bongiorno says. “The biggest problem with AFib is



Dr. Philip Bongiorno

strokes, and the blood thinning used to prevent strokes leads to bleeding. Some patients can’t even tolerate blood thinners, so this is a good solution for them.”

In the second procedure, which takes place between two and six weeks later, ablation is done to the inside of the heart. This also utilizes a minimally invasive approach in which access to the heart is obtained through a catheter inserted through the

groin.

Both procedures require an overnight hospital stay and patients are back to normal activity in about a week or so.

Treatment is essential for living with AFib. Typical first-line treatment is medication aimed to control the heart rate, blood thinners to prevent strokes and, sometimes, medication to get the heart back into a normal rhythm, Dr. Bongiorno says. Ablation procedures are a second line of treatment for patients who have symptoms from AFib or who do not wish to continue medications. Standard ablation procedures are minimally invasive, performed through a catheter and can be done to the inside or outside of the heart.

“We generally offer Convergent to patients with persistent AFib – people who have it maybe a little worse,” Dr. Bongiorno says. “This should be perhaps the last ablation these patients have to have – their last and best ablation.”

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Bongiorno or another cardiothoracic specialist at Cleveland Clinic in Florida, call (954) 659-5320 or visit ClevelandClinicFlorida.org/Heart to learn more.



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ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Caren Bock

Let's Connect:
ACHE of South Florida Spotlight



BY LOIS THOMSON

Caren Bock explained the simple reason why she chose nursing as a career: "It truly was to give back and to help others." She said that idea has always been at her core since she was young, and as she developed, she naturally gravitated toward leadership and mentoring others. And she has been doing that for more than 20 years.

Currently chief nursing officer at HCA Florida Woodmont Hospital, Bock has been with HCA for more than eight years and has been in her current position for 1-1/2 years. As CNO, she believes her role and her legacy "is building leaders, and that culture is defined by embracing life and improving life around us. We need to take care of patients; we care like family, truly making sure we're improving their quality of life."

She said that in order to do that, it's important to make sure the right services are being offered, and the highest quality of care is being provided. "The way to do that is to ensure that you are also building up those around you. I'm huge on mentoring others and making sure everybody feels like they belong."

Bock considers herself to be very blessed to be part of HCA, "as we live the mission, 'Above all else, we are committed to the care and improvement of human life.'" Being a part of something greater is supported by the numerous leadership programs HCA offers. "They provide leadership opportunities, so I'm able to look at all facets, including opportunities to help improve those processes in the hospital system."

During COVID, for example, she said she was chosen to attend the Jack Massey College of Business to obtain her Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, which is the highest level of process improvement certification one can obtain. "I also had the privilege to be a part of the HCA executive development program, which is a year-long program in



Caren Bock

Harvard leadership. At that point they introduced us to ACHE (American College of Healthcare Executives), and that's how in 2019 I became a member."

When Bock joined ACHE, she went to her first congress, an annual, four-day conference featuring various types of leadership discussions in the industry. "I was just wowed," she exclaimed. "Everyone shares the same mission to provide a vision of excellence for healthcare. It was very impactful for me at that point; I bought in, and I have now been a part of ACHE for five years."

Bock said she loves the South Florida Chapter and is very involved. "I think the networking possibilities and truly the opportunities they give you for leadership are amazing." She also mentioned an ACHE fellowship – FACHE – for which she has met all the criteria and will be sitting for certification.

She encourages others to take advantage of what the organization has to offer. "I've always been an advocate for other leaders to join, it really elevates your leadership. Again, I've met so many people through ACHE, and we continue to lean on each other and ask questions, and it's a good forum for that high-level executive platform."

Through HCA and ACHE, Bock has been able to achieve much success in her goal of giving back and helping others. "I have many people in my tenure that I have mentored, and they have grown; to me, that is my success as a leader – it's seeing other people grow." One reason being a leader is so important to Bock is, as she said, she has had mentors along the way whom she looked up to and who have helped her greatly. "So, I want to also be that type for others."

Bock's enthusiasm for that role is evident. She pointed out: "You hear it in my voice, I have a deep-rooted passion for healthcare, and being a part of ACHE has really impacted that. I look forward to bringing more value to the community."

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BE IN DEMAND

Impactful Innovation at Jupiter Medical Center

BY SUE MACDONALD

For some institutions, innovation is a goal. A promise. A vision.

At Jupiter Medical Center, innovation is all of those factors and so much more. Innovation is a fluid, everyday reality defined by the health care we provide today and the vision of health care we are building for the future.

Jupiter Medical Center takes pride in its embrace of excellence in health care delivery and patient experiences. Together, we continue to grow and innovate by providing world-class health care, expanding facilities and technologies, and recruiting nationally renowned clinicians to our region.

Innovation is practiced daily through the expertise of our exceptional clinicians and dedicated support team members. It is powered by our faithful community partners and inspired donors who embrace the value and impact of doing our best today while continuing to transform the future of health care for future generations. Here's what innovation looks like at Jupiter Medical Center:

A 90,000-square-foot Surgical Center: The Johnny and Terry Gray Surgical Institute offers 16 "smart operating rooms" to accommodate complex surgeries, complemented by two hybrid suites that support the ability to transition seamlessly from minimally invasive surgery to an open procedure, enhancing patient experience.

The center's "operating rooms of the future" use state-of-the-art digitally integrated equipment, allowing surgical teams to access and transmit patient images from the operating room to other multidisciplinary specialists for real-time consultations. As they wait for a loved one, whether they are in the next room or in a different time zone, patients' family members will receive real-time updates via leading-edge communication technology.

Expanded Emergency Department: Our Petrocelli Emergency Center features advanced clinical equipment, spacious patient and triage areas, and expansive waiting areas for loved ones. Serving as the "front door" of the hospital, the emergency department has increased capacity by 30%, meeting the health care needs of even more members of our community. New technology includes a dedicated CT scanner featuring True Fidelity technology that leverages Artificial Intelligence to perform deep learning imaging reconstruction.

Next Day Oncologist Appointments at the Anderson Family Cancer Institute: The hospital's team of multidisciplinary cancer experts are ushering in a new era of cancer care in South Florida. Building on their estimable accreditation and clinical expertise, the team launched a simple but powerful patient-centered concept: next-day oncologist appointments for patients newly diagnosed with cancer. Immediate access to cancer experts and the additional support of an oncology nurse navigator



combine to support innovative, compassionate and patient-focused cancer care.

Expanded Care for Cardiac and Stroke Patients: Patients with heart disease, including atrial fibrillation and valve defects, can take advantage of innovative procedures at the Robson Heart & Vascular Institute and our Atrial Fibrillation Center of Excellence. Working in conjunction with our Thrombectomy-Capable Stroke Center, awarded High-Performing by *U.S. News & World Report*, clinicians and team members treat heart disease and the underlying conditions that cause strokes. Leading-edge procedures include transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) and endovascular aneurysm repair (EVAR).

What drives innovation at Jupiter Medical Center? Dedicated leaders, physicians, and team members who provide the highest level of care to discerning patients throughout South Florida. While generous support from our community members and donors is an investment in the region's only independent not-for-profit hospital for future generations to come.

Indeed, the future of health care in our region is bright. Thanks to our colleagues and supporters, it's being illuminated and driven by innovation.

For more information, visit jupitermed.com.



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A message from our President **Keeping Our Patients/Customers**

Patients or customers? Over the last few years, this distinction has interested many writers. Those of us who have some age on us, have always referred to people seeking or getting treatment/care in hospitals as patients. Is it time to look at that distinction?

In recent years, there has been a shift in some healthcare settings to also view patients as "customers" or "clients." This shift is often influenced by a more consumer-oriented approach to healthcare, where individuals are seen as consumers who have choices about where they seek care. From this perspective, hospitals may focus on improving the patient experience, providing high-quality service, and meeting the expectations and preferences of those seeking care.

Ultimately, whether a hospital refers to individuals as patients or customers can depend on various factors, including organizational culture, strategic objectives, and the evolving dynamics of the healthcare industry. Some hospitals may use



Jaime Caldwell

both terms interchangeably or adopt a hybrid approach that acknowledges both the clinical and consumer aspects of the patient-provider relationship.

Whether we call them patients or customers/clients, the end result is still the same... we need to retain the ones that we have and we need to reach out to new ones.

Optimizing patient access is one of the methods employed to accomplish both goals. The South Florida Hospital and Healthcare Association will explore these issues at our 18th Annual Summit, Linda S. Quick Memorial Lecture Series entitled, "Optimizing Patient Access."

The Summit, on June 12 at the Charles F. Dodge City Center will explore the importance or reasons why optimizing patient access is important, technologies including AI that will be used to assist in the process, how existing workforces will be impacted by the shift to optimizing patient access, and what are the top-line impacts associated with this shift in focus.

You can find our sponsorship and registration information at www.sfhha.com and click on our Calendar page. I'll be seeing you in June!



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Cover Story: Digital Health: Transforming Care

Continued from page 1

only because of advanced technologies but the realization over two decades ago which was brought into sharp focus by the Institute of Medicine reports, that delivering safe and quality care is a priority. This was followed by a concerted effort by the federal government to move the national healthcare information infrastructure into the 21st century. The long-term positive impacts of policy, technology, and investment are unmistakable when we compare it to where healthcare was at the turn of the century. But like all transformations, it is neither linear nor without significant challenges. In addition, we are in the midst of the 4th industrial revolution. Healthcare, like every other industry, is going through upheaval and transformation due to this. Rethinking the possibilities in healthcare for individuals, organizations, and communities using Digital Health is imperative.

Zipline, the largest drone delivery provider in the world, developed its systems originally providing medical drone delivery service for the Rwandan government starting in 2016. It now delivers more than 75% of blood supply in the country outside the capital city. Zipline's drone delivery services have resulted in a 67% reduction in blood wastage across Rwanda, and more importantly resulted in a 51% reduction of in-hospital maternal deaths due to postpartum hemorrhage. More recently, in 2022, Zipline became the first company to receive FAA approval for long range drone delivery in the U.S., and now delivers to customers in Arkansas, Utah and North Carolina. The company partners with Walmart, Pfizer, and medical centers such as Cleveland Clinic and Michigan Medicine. Walmart will begin home delivery with Zipline in the entire metro Dallas-Fort Worth area this year. It will soon be operating across all states in the U.S.

These changes are further being accelerated by the sudden emergence of generative AI in everyone's consciousness since the launch of OpenAI's chatbot ChatGPT in November 2022. It became the fastest-growing consumer computer application in history by reaching an estimated 100 million monthly active

users in just two months. It generated 1.63 billion visits in February 2024. But ChatGPT and other Large Language Models (LLMs) have become the foundational models for a variety of applications. Microsoft, working with OpenAI, is bringing this advanced AI to users through Copilot, adding intelligence to its productivity products Microsoft 365 apps. Specifically, Microsoft is launching a variety of AI solutions in healthcare to support clinical, administrative and operational, and consumer decision making and workflows. Initial results from implementations show significant reduction in provider burnout and reduced cognitive burden, reduced time spent on documentation and higher job satisfaction. But an all-important metric of shorter time-to-intervention has dramatically improved, thereby leading to better patient care and outcomes.

The Executive Education Programs at Florida Atlantic University's College of Business is responding to this technology driven societal transformation by providing a variety of learning opportunities. Specifically in healthcare, we will be launching a Digital Health certificate program this Fall. The certificate program will provide participants with a strong foundation in understanding established and emerging digital health technologies, help develop provider and workflow centric strategies to successfully deploy such solutions while managing the challenges in their implementation and provide guidance for measuring and monitoring the efficacy of their use in improving clinical and business outcomes. Specifically, the program will explore digital health solutions and technologies including mobile health, Internet of Medical Things (IoMT), Software as a Medical Device (SaMD), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, blockchain, and digital twins. In addition, organizational challenges including cybersecurity, technology governance, and cultural transformation will also be addressed.

Dr. Ravi Behara is Professor, IT & Operations Management Department, College of Business, Florida Atlantic University.

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BROWARD HEALTH CORAL SPRINGS

Brittany Baisley, MSN, APRN, FNP-C

Nearly a decade ago, Brittany Baisley, APRN, FNP-C, began her career at Broward Health Coral Springs in the inpatient post-operative surgical unit. Today she is nurse manager of the medical/telemetry unit, responsible for day-to-day operations, patient observers/companions and monitor technicians.

Baisley leads with compassion and empathy, taking great pride in the positive impact her actions have on her patients and colleagues. She is a strong advocate for professional development and serves as chairperson for the Nursing Professional Development Council which strives to promote development in nursing at Broward Health.

"I've always been a nurturer and have wanted to help people in any capacity that I can," Baisley said. "That led me to enroll in Health Occupation Students of America in high school, which then solidified my decision to pursue a career in healthcare."

Baisley earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Florida Gulf Coast University, a Master of Science in Nursing and a Family Nurse Practitioner certification at Florida Atlantic University.



Nicole Florez-Furmanski, RN

Nicole Florez-Furmanski, RN, began her career working in physician offices, first as a receptionist and then as an office manager, before pursuing her lifelong dream of becoming a nurse. Her journey is a testament to her dedication, fortitude and commitment to the nursing profession.

As a quality management specialist and a sepsis coordinator, Florez-Furmanski's responsibilities include reviewing all sepsis cases and all mortalities, reviewing cases for nurse peer review and tracers on each unit, leading committee meetings and working with risk management on investigations.

Florez-Furmanski says that the most important part of her job is ensuring that nurses and providers follow best practices for the safety and treatment of patients. "Being a nurse is not just a job or career, it's who I am," she said. "I love helping people and making a difference in their lives."

Florez-Furmanski earned her Associate in Arts in Nursing from Miami Dade College, an Associate of Science in Nursing from Azure College and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from St. Thomas University.



Sissy Stephen, RN

Sissy Stephen, RN, brings 28 years of neonatal care and management experience to her position as nurse manager of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Broward Health Coral Springs.

In this position, Stephen initiated a new NICU strategy in which premature babies are fed fortified 22- or 24-calorie breast milk instead of 20-calorie breast milk from the Broward Milk Bank Depot, providing them with additional nutrition that's vital to their survival, growth and development. The Milk Bank Depot provides a safe location for women to donate their extra breast milk to help at-risk babies.

"I have an innate love and compassion for babies, especially those born prematurely or with medical complexities," said the highly respected NICU nurse manager. "That drove my desire to become a NICU nurse."

A 2023 March of Dimes Woman of Distinction, Stephen earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, AZ, where she is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Nursing Leadership.



BROWARD HEALTH NORTH

Jillian L. Wirzman, RN CNM, CPMHN (c)

Jillian L. Wirzman, RN, has devoted the last 32 years to the nursing profession. She is a highly skilled, patient-focused nurse who has enjoyed a nursing career dedicated to promoting quality patient care.

Wirzman serves on the hematology/oncology team in the Cancer Center at Broward Health North, providing care to newly diagnosed and existing cancer patients, as well as patients with other hematologic disorders.

Certified in the ONS/ONCC Chemotherapy and Immunotherapy Administration, Wirzman earned a Master of Science in Nursing from D'Youville College in Buffalo, NY, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Ryerson University. She also holds a Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing certification.

Jillian truly enjoys her infusion center team at Broward Health North. "Always work hard and have fun in what you do because that is when you are most successful," she said. "You have to choose to do it."



Nancy Lekanides, RN

Nancy Lekanides, RN, brings 42 years of nursing experience to her position as a nurse specialist, responsible for cardiovascular patients who need diagnostic and interventional services.

Since moving to Florida in 1999, Lekanides has spent her career at Broward Health, first in the emergency department, then in the ICU during COVID and now in the cardiac lab. She is focused on providing exceptional care to patients to ensure they have safe and positive experiences and outcomes.

"I want to make our patients feel like they are family while they are with us," Lekanides said. "Each person that I meet fills some small part of me that I never knew was missing, and that is a wonderful feeling. To see the smiles on the faces of patients and their family members when we save them is worth more than anything I can buy."

Lekanides earned her Associate of Applied Science in Nursing from Orange County Community College, Middletown, New York.



BROWARD HEALTH IMPERIAL POINT

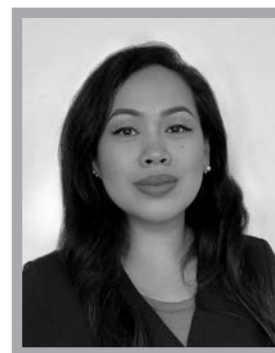
Daryll Bales-Cale, RN

A native of the Philippines, Daryll Bales-Cale, RN, spent 15 years in the advertising industry before deciding she wanted a more meaningful and fulfilling career. That's when she moved to the U.S. to pursue a career in nursing.

Today Bales-Cale is a compassionate and skilled cardiac telemetry nurse in the Progressive Care Unit at Broward Health Imperial Point, where she is the primary nurse for multiple patients during 12-hour shifts. She fosters collaboration with interdisciplinary healthcare teams to deliver cohesive, evidence-based exceptional care that drives positive patient outcomes.

"I chose nursing because it resonates deeply with my personal values, allowing me to extend kindness, empathy and compassion during a person's most vulnerable moments," Bales-Cale said. "I am grateful for the steadfast support from my Broward Health Imperial Point family."

Bales-Cale is a 2023 Daisy Award honoree and a graduate of Broward College.



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CHRISTINE E. LYNN COLLEGE OF NURSING

Lisa Wiese, PhD, MSN, RN, GERO-BC, PHNA-BC, CNE, FGSA

Associate Professor, 2024 Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing Faculty Award for Outstanding Scholarship

The focus of Dr. Wiese's research is increasing the understanding, early detection, and prevention of Alzheimer's disease in rural populations. This interest extends from her own mother's diagnosis and family's experience with dementia in her native West Virginia. Dr. Wiese is the principal investigator of a five-year \$4.2 million RO1 grant from the National Institute on Aging of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in collaboration with the University of Miami, Colorado State University and Washington State University. The project, "The Role of Air Quality and Built Environment in Social Isolation and Cognitive Function Among Rural, Racially/Ethnically Diverse Residents at Risk for Alzheimer's Disease," involves adults ages 45 and older who have not been previously diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) within five communities along Lake Okeechobee.



Beth Pratt, PhD, MS, BSN

Assistant Professor, 2024 Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing Faculty Award for Excellence in Research

Dr. Pratt and Dr. Cheryl Krause-Parello's research project is titled "On the Double: A Veteran-driven Dissemination Campaign Spreading Awareness on PTSD Treatment Options." The project is spreading awareness and actively disseminating available Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) funded research on psychological and pharmacological treatment options for PTSD to increase the reach of evidence to veterans and the clinicians who treat them. Dr. Pratt earned a Doctor of Philosophy in nursing and Master of Science in nursing education from Florida Atlantic University, a Master of Science in forensic science from Florida International University, a Bachelor of Science in nursing from Johns Hopkins University, and a Bachelor of Arts in biology from St. Olaf College.



Maria Ortega, DNP, APRN, GNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, CDP, FAANP, FAAN

Associate Dean of Clinical Practice; Director, Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center (MWC) and Professor in the Practice Teaching Track

As MWC Director, Dr. Ortega's clinical practice specializes in Gerontology, Psychiatry and Mental Health caring for aging adults through the diagnosis, treatment, and management of acute and chronic conditions, as well as providing integrated mental health care for persons with mental health, comorbid mental and physical conditions, and those experiencing Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD). Dr. Ortega was recognized by FAU Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing for her research projects focusing on Caring-Based Dementia-Specific Services and Supports and Alzheimer's Disease.



Narisco Quidley-Rodriguez, PhD, BSN, RN

Assistant Professor,
2024 Daisy Award recipient

Dr. Quidley-Rodriguez received the Daisy Award for Extraordinary Nurse Educators. This award recognizes nursing faculty who inspire and educate future nurses with skill and dedication. It honors educators who go above and beyond to mentor and support their students, exemplifying the values of compassion and excellence in nursing education. More than 500 nursing schools have adopted The DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nursing Faculty to celebrate nursing educators who inspire their students. Dr. Quidley-Rodriguez is also a psychiatric-mental health registered nurse who has worked in acute crisis stabilization units providing care to people across the lifespan. His research interests include health disparities among the LGBTQIA+ community where he seeks ways to address these disparities and promote health equity.



Laurie Martinez, PhD, MBA, MSN, RN, AHN-BC

Assistant Professor

Dr. Martinez was recognized by FAU Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing for her studies on the role of pet dogs and well-being in military adolescents. The research will provide insight into how pet dogs support adolescents while a parent or guardian is in the National Guard, Reserve, is a veteran, or on active duty. Dog ownership is suggested as a contextual resource of strength to counter the effects of adolescent military-specific stressors and promote positive outcomes. Her other research interests are community and holistic health, with particular interest in the biopsychosocial experiences of children and adolescents with special health care needs.



BROWARD HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Nemala Laudat, RN

A family tragedy had a profound influence on Nemala Laudat. She began her career in business and banking but transitioned to nursing after her cousin died of cardiomyopathy at 19. Laudat believes if she was in the healthcare field, she would have recognized the warning signs before it was too late.

While attending nursing school, Laudat served as a patient observer at Broward Health Medical Center, a position her mom also holds. Today Laudat is an RN and assistant nurse manager responsible for the daily operations of a 30-bed unit with 55 employees, who are all focused on patient care, safety and experience.

"I truly love helping people. It is my greatest passion in life," Laudat said. "You have to have the heart to care and to think of others even when you are in need. As Hippocrates said, 'Cure sometimes, treat often, comfort always.'"

Laudat graduated with a BBA from Manhattan College, an MBA from Nova Southeastern University and an ASN from Keiser University.



Siobhan Deasy, RN

No two days are alike for Siobhan Deasy, RN. That's because as a rapid response nurse, Deasy is a member of the critical care team that responds to patients that demonstrate rapid signs of clinical deterioration, acting quickly to coordinate and provide treatment, wherever the patient is in the hospital.

"Because every day is different and you never know where you will be called to, it's imperative that we stay on our toes," Deasy said. "But the key is the relationships we have with our work family. We work together collaboratively and are always supportive of each other."

Deasy also enjoys her role as an educational resource that includes assisting new staff members with proper assessments, while guiding them through medical emergencies.

A native of Ireland and a nurse since 1993, Deasy joined Broward Health Medical Center in 2001 as a critical care nurse first in the medical ICU then in the trauma ICU.

Deasy earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Nova Southeastern University.



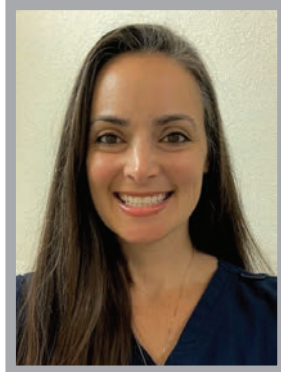
MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Brittany Laviano, MBA, BSN, RN, CNOR

As a quality data specialist at Memorial Healthcare System, Brittany Laviano's role is to track clinical information that can be used to improve outcomes. "Our focus is then on developing new and innovative ways to support patient care and safety while also developing tools to help nurses better understand the changes we're looking to implement," said Laviano, a nurse for more than 14 years.

The opportunity to spot trends that quantify what works and what doesn't is something Laviano takes pride in, since it helps clinical team members improve processes and procedures. The emphasis on learning and improvement has always been a priority for her, and why she has always worked with high-acuity patient populations. "The complexity of their cases allows us to push the limits of our knowledge and improve our nursing skill sets. It's an exciting environment to work in."

Laviano was born at Memorial Regional Hospital and grew up in Hollywood before starting her career at Fort Myers-based Lee Health.

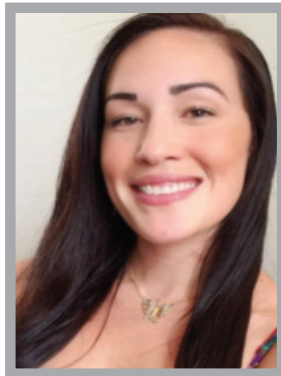


Jessica Shedaker, RN III

Jessica Shedaker started her healthcare career as a patient transporter and was considering many different avenues to advance in the field, but nursing wasn't one of them. That all changed when her first child, Savannah, was born in 2013. "That lit a fire under my butt, and I enrolled in Broward College's nursing program."

Shedaker started on an intermediate care unit before transitioning to endoscopy after her twins, Scarlett and Oliver, were born. "I appreciate that you can do so many endoscopic procedures that can help patients avoid invasive surgery," she said. "We're able to spot cancers before they become problematic, and also provide advanced treatments for those that have already been diagnosed."

Now approaching her 15th year in the Memorial Healthcare System (seven as a nurse), she is happy with her career choice and only regrets not making it sooner.



MEMORIAL PRIMARY CARE

Chiquita Howell, MSN

Approximately 20 years after she first began working in the Memorial Healthcare System, both in the Adult IMCU and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Chiquita Howell transitioned to the ambulatory world last year. The director of nursing was attracted by the opportunity to have a greater impact within the community, specifically mentioning the system's "One City at a Time" initiative that brings healthcare services directly to underserved individuals in south Broward County.

Howell has oversight for all clinical operations at Memorial Primary Care, which includes its newly-opened Sickle Cell Medical Home. When asked what she enjoys about her career and Memorial, Howell responded, "I enjoy leadership and developing people; colleagues are an extension of my family. Memorial is great about providing the tools and resources to help nurses blossom."

Howell is a native South Floridian that attended Miami Edison Senior High School. She completed her undergraduate studies at Barry University, graduate studies at Nova Southeastern University, and is a proud member of the South Broward Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

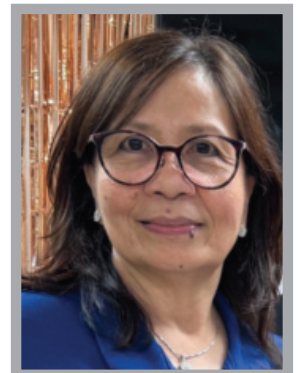


MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL SOUTH

Gemma Velasco, BSN, RN

For Gemma Velasco, nursing is much more than just a career and being a manager more than just supervising others. "It's my role to serve the staff, be their advocate, and lead them to good patient outcomes. Our Memorial culture means we take good care of the caregivers."

A nurse for more than 40 years, including the last 21 in the Memorial system, Velasco believes strongly in creating a unit environment that prioritizes kindness, humility, and compassion. She's firm but fair, and quick to offer a warm smile and homemade goodies to nurses that look to her for leadership. "We've got a lot of different personalities and individuals from many cultures," said Velasco, a native of the Philippines. "So being a trusted advisor that's clear about expectations and holds everyone equally accountable goes a long way toward creating relationships that make a difference for our team and the patients we serve."

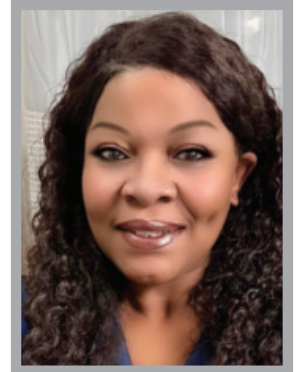


MEMORIAL PRIMARY CARE

Donnette Grimes, LPN, CM

A nurse for more than 25 years, Donnette Grimes is now helping patients reach their goals as a chronic case manager on the care team. She says building a trusting relationship is the key to assisting those who may lack knowledge and fear the unknown when it comes to their own health. "We have many different nationalities and cultures we work with, so it's important I meet them at their level and speak their language. Some have traditionally not trusted or even believed in medicine, so our monthly outreach helps break down barriers."

Grimes makes referrals to specialists, assists with prescription refills, appointments for labs, and other technical challenges that may arise. She provides patients her direct phone number and wants them to know she will always be an advocate for their health. When asked how she views all she's accomplished during a lengthy career, Grimes replied, "success is liking yourself, what you do, and how you do it."



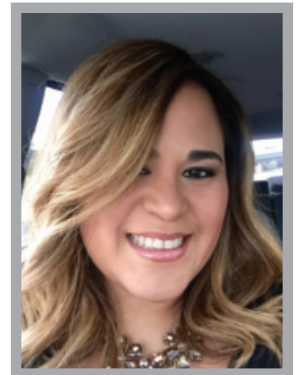
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PEMBROKE

Cynthia Rogers, BSN, RN

Cynthia Rogers had already been a nurse for three years when her own health scare, and the care she subsequently received, profoundly influenced her professional ethos.

"I had an acute brain bleed and spent time in the ICU at both Memorial Regional Hospital and Memorial Hospital Miramar," said Rogers. "The ordeal transformed me not just physically, but also spiritually and professionally. It taught me the true power of nursing is not only to heal, but to inspire and promote the family-centered culture critical to delivering the best outcomes."

In the nine years since, Rogers has held a variety of positions, from working bedside with ER trauma patients at Regional to clinical manager at Miramar's emergency department to her current role as a nurse manager at Memorial Hospital Pembroke. Each day she strives to embody the spirit that impacted her as a patient and foster an environment that feels like family.



Danielle Sheehy, BSN, RN

Danielle Sheehy, a nurse manager overseeing multiple departments within Surgical Services, hadn't considered a future in leadership when she started her career. Now, 13 years later, she can't see herself in any other role.

"To have the ability to positively impact and help develop nurses, including nurse residents and fellows, provides a real sense of pride and purpose," said Sheehy, who joined Memorial Healthcare System in 2016. "To help nurses reach their full potential, as my mentors Deb Shepard, Nicole Digiacomo, and Siobhan Davis did for me, is an amazing feeling."

Sheehy's bedside career started in the Emergency Room, and it was there she was able to see firsthand the significant impact a nurse can have. "I happened to know the family of an 18-year-old patient we kept alive utilizing multiple resuscitative attempts and emergency surgery following a motorcycle accident. About six months later, I saw my patient at a family event, fully functional and doing well."

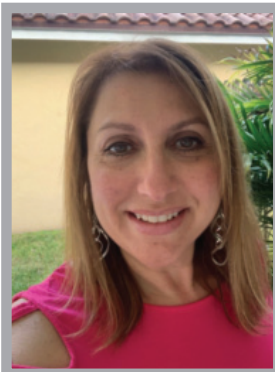


JOE DIMAGGIO CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Ilyse Richman, RNC

A comment by a grandmother she was caring for, 'you'd make a great nurse one day,' provided Ilyse Richman the confidence to pursue a career she has excelled in for nearly 30 years. Richman has always worked with NICU patients, whether at the bedside, as a nurse manager, or in her current role as a quality data specialist at the children's hospital. "I was hooked on NICU after doing a clinical rotation at Yale. Then when my oldest son was born with an abdominal defect, it provided new perspective I could bring to the parents of my patients."

Today Richman's focus is on improving quality and safety through staff engagement and the implementation of evidence-based best practices. She leads several committees with NICU staff that review healthcare acquired conditions and has been known to sing her way through teaching videos, if that helps make the point. "I'm not afraid to make a fool of myself to engage and motivate our team," she said.



Miriela Alvarez, RN III

Miriela Alvarez takes her responsibilities as a clinical leader seriously and works to make a difference for fellow nurses, patients, and families at the children's hospital. To that end, she is part of its Shared Governance Council and chairs the Night Shift Council.

"I enjoy training our novice nurses and helping them get comfortable with the Memorial way of doing things, since the education they receive in schools can be a little different," said Alvarez, a nurse in the Memorial Healthcare System since 2006. "The work I do with our councils is also very important, since the night team has unique challenges that require a strong advocate."

Alvarez points to the creation of brochures about appendicitis that offer an overview of the treatment process prior to a doctor arriving in the morning to provide additional perspective. Another recent improvement was having a supply of hearty snacks available for patients and families to eat after the kitchen closes.



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WEST

Joelle Hester, BSN, RN III, MSM

For the past 45 years, Joelle Hester has been a nurse within the Memorial Healthcare System. Her three adult children were born at Memorial hospitals, and it is the only place she's ever worked.

"I started my career as a surgical technologist and, in 1986, became an RN and remained in the operating room as a surgical nurse; was later promoted to team leader for cardiovascular services," said Hester. "I transferred to Memorial West as an educator, and then moved to labor and delivery. The OR was my first love but, 24 years later, I'm still enjoying my time in labor and delivery."

Hester says she'll work regular shifts as long as her health allows, which will no doubt be a comfort to her patients, who routinely post glowing reviews and request her when they return to give birth to another child. "I love seeing babies born and have been around long enough to help deliver the kids of my own children's friends. Nursing is all I've ever wanted to do," said Hester.

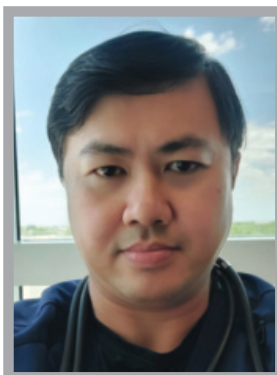


Wendell De Matias, RN III

Wendell De Matias is proud of the teamwork within his unit, in part because it decreases stress among nurses in what can be difficult circumstances, but more so because it's something his patients require.

"We care for stroke patients on 4 Central, and they require additional effort," said De Matias, a nurse for 13 years, including the past 11 with Memorial. "Many are unable to move or speak, which leads to depression, and it's important we collaborate, understanding the new circumstances patients and families are facing."

De Matias is a floor leader, preceptor, and/or resource nurse. He is approachable and kind, with a passion for ensuring a positive onboarding experience for new employees. A former "Nurse of the Year" that is consistently nominated for the Daisy Award, he shares his profession with three brothers that were among the first to encourage him to pursue caregiving as a career.



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MIRAMAR

Mandy Crespo, BSN, RN, CMSRN

Nursing informatics, and the opportunity it presents to communicate data, information, knowledge, and wisdom that improve patient outcomes, is what Mandy Crespo is focused on. The co-chair of the Nursing Informatics Focus Group committee has a passion for technology, "bettering EPIC," and the impact her work can have for those who trust Memorial with their care. "One example is the auditing we do and the data it provides helping decrease the time it takes to get pain medication to sickle cell patients," said Crespo, a graduate of Barry University. "Floor audits enable us to share trends, best practices, and educate the nursing staff to improve overall patient care." Crespo knew as a teenager in the medical magnet program at Blanche Ely High School that she wanted to be a Memorial nurse. She joined Memorial Hospital West in 2008, working bedside, as a preceptor, and ultimately charge nurse, before becoming clinical manager at Memorial Hospital Miramar seven years ago.



Sharon Frankel, BSN, RNCOB, CEFM

Sharon Frankel has spent nearly all of her 34 years as a nurse working in labor and delivery. Even after all that time, seeing a baby being born still fulfills her in a very special way. "It's very emotional and makes your heartbeat faster. Being part of that family's life story is indescribable."

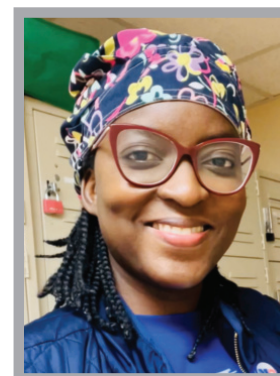
While Frankel is providing care at what is expected to be a special time, the reality is some parents experience a loss. In those situations, it's the nurse's job to be compassionate, empathetic, and a good listener, and why Frankel has extensive training in bereavement counseling.



MEMORIAL REHABILITATION INSTITUTE

Sandrine Ndongo, BSN, RN

Working with patients who have had strokes or traumatic brain injuries, as Sandrine Ndongo does, requires helping them overcome both physical and mental challenges. "It's a very emotional time when they are just beginning to process what has happened. I'm focused on showing patients I care, that it's important they accept assistance, and embrace the process required to get better." Ndongo has been with Memorial for the past two years and works to get individuals back to their highest level of ability. Her efforts are aided by a rehabilitation institute program that introduces current patients to those that have previously been in the same circumstances. "Seeing those that have been where they are helps overcome depression and fosters a more positive attitude," said Ndongo, a charge nurse. "The most rewarding thing is seeing those that trusted us leave in a better place, and knowing our team helped make that miracle happen."



MEMORIAL PHYSICIANS GROUP

Karen McCandless, BSN, RN, MBA

After more than 33 years with Memorial Healthcare System, Karen McCandless will be retiring in August. During her career, she contributed significantly to the success of the system, first as a pediatric nurse at Memorial Regional Hospital, then with Memorial's pediatric home health agency, its cystic fibrosis center, and physician's division. When she joined the doctor's group in the late 1990s, it had five specialty programs; today it has 83 specialties at 96 locations in 14 cities and three counties. McCandless' operational and clinic expertise made her a valuable member of the physician group's leadership team and a driving force behind the building of the Joe DiMaggio Children's Health Specialty Center in Wellington. She also procured grants and established donor relationships that provided aid to families that couldn't afford their child's care. "The formation of multi-disciplinary teams as a standard part of the patient experience is something I also consider part of my legacy. It allows us to provide next-level care to chronic and complex cases that require the collective knowledge of a wide variety of specialists," said McCandless.



365 WELLNESS

Roshini Singh, ARNP

"Healthcare should be accessible, personalized and affordable," Roshini Singh says. "I strongly believe that if you invest your time, energy and focus into preventative health care, you will thrive. Both physically and mentally."

A National Board-Certified Nurse Practitioner, Roshini is dedicated to giving back and enriching people's lives through healthcare advocacy and accessibility.

She earned her Nurse Practitioner license with a focus in Family Medicine from the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners and earned her Master of Science degree in Nursing from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton and has been in the medical field for over a decade.

Her passion for preventative health care led to the creation of 365 Wellness - a direct primary care practice providing mobile medical services throughout Palm Beach County including everything from annual physicals to birth control management to lab draws to healthy living practices such as smoking cessation, nutritional counseling and much more.



Sue Mosley, BSN, RN

Sue Mosley, Manager of Employee Health at Jupiter Medical Center, is a beacon of leadership and was awarded "Leader of the Year" in 2024. She began her career at JMC in 1997, joined the occupational health team in 2002, and assumed managerial responsibilities in 2004.

Throughout her tenure, Sue has consistently embodied JMC's values by constantly demonstrating integrity, collaboration across all levels of the organization, and treating everyone with respect. She always ensured her team provided comprehensive care for employees, from pre-hire screenings to ongoing health needs. Amidst challenges like the pandemic, Sue leads with courage, ensuring the safety of team members through tireless efforts to provide the team with COVID testing and flu vaccinations.

As Sue approaches retirement this year, her legacy of excellence in employee health sets a standard for future leaders to uphold, leaving an indelible mark on the organization's culture.



Luellen Hatcher, BSN, RN, CPHQ

I became an RN in 1977 and received my BSN from FAU in 2004. For my first 19 years at JMC I worked in Critical Care, Nursing Supervision, and Interventional Radiology. Twenty years ago, I made the difficult decision to leave direct patient care moving to Quality Improvement. I soon realized that I was still contributing to patient care, by supporting bedside nurses and physicians in a different way. The nursing profession allows us many opportunities to affect positive outcomes in patient's lives.

I enjoy being part of the JMC organization that is recognized as the "Best" and provides world class care! JMC gives me the opportunity to gain experience and advance my career in a supportive environment. Reflecting over my 47 years, I love being a nurse! I have appreciated all the mentoring, teamwork, friendships, and varied roles nursing allows.



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NURSES WEEK 2024

Our nurses are
the heartbeat
of the Memorial
Experience.

Uplifting work
with purpose,
compassion with
impact on the
lives we touch,
hand in hand for
our patients and
each other,

**Rising
Together.**



MOUNT SINAI MEDICAL CENTER

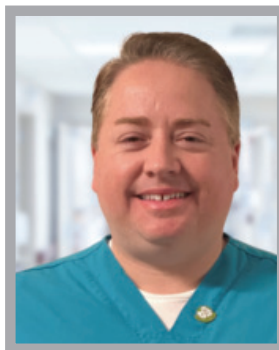
Gal Dardashti, RN

Gal Dardashti, a registered nurse at Mount Sinai Medical Center's Emergency Center in Miami Beach, recently won a DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses for her pivotal role in saving a patient from life-threatening complications. When the patient was admitted to Mount Sinai while on Coumadin and displaying slurred speech, a CT scan revealed that there was internal bleeding in the patient's brain. With her skills, steadiness, and quick thinking, Gal swiftly administered life-saving medications to stabilize the patient and minimize further complications from the hemorrhaging. Thanks to Gal's quick response—and ability in maneuvering difficult medical cases—the patient's condition was stabilized and has since been discharged after receiving medical treatment. Gal is an example of the excellence, dedication and expertise offered by Mount Sinai's skilled team of nurses.



George Jordan, RN

Registered Nurse George Jordan at Mount Sinai Medical Center has been recognized by patients, family members, staff, and students for his exceptional commitment to healthcare. Recently honored with a DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses, George's influence, from being a proactive mentor to future nurses to his steadfast dedication to patient care, has set as an example for all within and beyond the Mount Sinai community. A Mount Sinai student nominated him after witnessing firsthand how he worked in the hospital, motivated by his "go-getter" attitude. George's impact truly extends beyond his professional responsibilities, touching the lives of every physician, patient, or student he encounters. Through education, engagement, and empowerment, he inspires those around him with his knowledge and kindness, leaving a lasting impact on Miami Beach's nursing team. George's embodiment of compassion and dedication to high-quality care enriches and fortifies healthcare excellence in South Florida.



HOLY CROSS HEALTH

Kelsey Howard, BSN, RN

Kelsey Howard, B.S.N., R.N., began working at Holy Cross Health in October 2023 as a Nurse Clinician in the Emergency Department (ED). Her role includes reviewing staff educational needs and adhering to evidence-based practice around emergency medicine. Passionate about education, she's in the process of creating a curriculum for the Nurse Residents in the department. Additionally, she is collaborating with ED physicians, in-patient nurses and risk management staff to ensure proper orders for telemetry monitoring. Howard is focused on redesigning the educational program to assess monitoring competency of ED technicians. She completed her degree from Nova Southeastern University in 2020.



Ethel Alvarez, BSN, RN

Ethel Alvarez, B.S.N., R.N., became an ICU nurse at Holy Cross Health in 2020 in the neurosurgical intensive care unit. In 2021, she transferred to the cardiovascular intensive care unit (CVICU). Alvarez epitomizes commitment and excellence. She consistently provides exemplary care to post open heart patients and has mastered the intricate treatment protocols with finesse. Her expertise has enabled her to climb the clinical ladder to a Level 3 nurse who mentors and trains other registered nurses to excel in open heart care. She manages and administers complex treatments and utilizes advanced technologies to care for patients. Her innate empathy effortlessly connects her with patients and families. Alvarez's clinical acumen, compassionate care and proficiency extends beyond the bedside as she actively engages in hospital and community activities and committees to advance patient care. She's a shining example of what it means to be a dedicated and skilled nurse who strives to make a profound impact on the lives of those she serves. Alvarez graduated from Mercy Hospital College of Nursing in December of 2012. She then obtained her BSN from St. Thomas University in 2022.



We salute your extraordinary care

Pediatric nursing demands extraordinary skill and boundless compassion. In honor of National Nurse's Week, we celebrate our remarkable pediatric nurses for their indispensable role in caring for patients and families at Nicklaus Children's Hospital. Their unyielding commitment to clinical excellence and compassionate care reaffirms that here, children matter most.



Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Where Your Child Matters Most™

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25
YEARS

Health Care Heroes® Awards program celebrates 25 years of recognizing and honoring the tremendous efforts, dedication, and achievements of our healthcare professionals, first responders, institutions and volunteers as well as others who have contributed to the health care delivery system and overall welfare of South Florida and its residents. We also Celebrate the 2024 Honorees.

Health Care Heroes® Award Categories

- Equitable Advisors Lifetime Achievement
- Health Care Professional
- First Responder
- Nurse
- Individual of Merit
- Organization/Program
- Youth Volunteer

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GREATER MIAMI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2024 HEALTH CARE HEROES®



MAY 15, 2024

TO HEALTH CARE HEROES SUPPORTERS:

To Health Care Heroes Supporters:

South Florida is becoming a global destination for top-quality healthcare, and the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce has been at the forefront of the industry's evolution. Our annual Health Care Heroes celebration recognizes the leaders who have fueled that growth and continue powering our best future. For more than two decades, Health Care Heroes has been the premier community gathering where our local outstanding professionals are honored by top leaders from hospital systems, physician groups, managed care providers, biomedical innovators, goods and services suppliers, and other pillars of the healthcare economy.

There may be no industry changing as quickly, and no local economy better positioned to harness the power of that change. South Florida is also uniquely vulnerable to business and regulatory movement due to our unique population. That's why it's more important than ever for the healthcare leaders of South Florida to find common ground and work together in ways that benefit all our neighbors. That work starts with close, collaborative relationships that celebrate our shared success at events like Health Care Heroes.

This year, the Health Care Heroes® Awards program celebrates 25 years of recognizing the tremendous efforts, dedication, and achievements of our healthcare professionals and first responders. The luncheon program will feature a special anniversary video tribute and honor the achievements of physicians, nurses, researchers, institutions, volunteers, and others who have contributed to the health care delivery system and overall welfare of South Florida and its residents. We are excited to celebrate the results of an extraordinary and rewarding partnership between Equitable Advisors and the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce for 25 consecutive years. Consistent partners like Equitable Advisors and presenting sponsor Florida Blue are the foundation for us to strengthen and grow our healthcare community.

Every year the number and strength of our Health Care Heroes nominees grows, making it more difficult for judges to pick just one recipient from each category. This is a testament to the relentless pursuit of excellence that defines this honor and, indeed, the mission of healthcare in South Florida and around the world.

Sincerely,



Eneida O. Roldan, MD, MPH, MBA
Chairman, Healthcare Committee
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

Luis G. Chiappy, CFP, CLU, ChFC, LUTCF
President, Southeast Complex
Senior Manager, South Florida Branch
Equitable Advisors, LLC
Founding Sponsor, Health Care Heroes®



JUDGES

Dayne Alonso, MBA, PA-C
Physician Assistant/
Chief Operating Officer
Heme On Call, LLC

Antonello Bonci, MD
Founder,
President, and Chief Scientific Officer
GIA Healthcare

Kim Griffin-Hunter
Managing Partner, South Florida
Deloitte

Alvaro Molina
Market Leader
Florida Blue

Bridget A. Pelaez, MA, BSN, RN, EMT-P, CEM
Director-FIU Disaster Response Team
Assistant Director, Division of
Operations and Safety
Florida International University

Bryan Stewart, PhD, NREMT
Campus President
Miami Dade College –
Medical Campus

Peter N. Wood
Vice President for Planning and
Government Affairs
Community Health
of South Florida, Inc.

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25TH ANNUAL HEALTH CARE HEROES AWARDS LUNCHEON

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MAY 15, 2024
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AWARD CATEGORIES

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL, NURSE, INDIVIDUAL OF MERIT,
ORGANIZATION/PROGRAM, FIRST RESPONDER, YOUTH VOLUNTEER,
AND EQUITABLE ADVISORS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

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EQUITABLE ADVISORS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT

NELSON L. ADAMS, III, MD, FACOG

Founder, Metro-Miami OB/GYN Associates, PA

Beyond the scope of his obstetrics and gynecology practice, Dr. Nelson L. Adams has woven himself into the very fabric of South Florida's healthcare landscape. His journey is marked by a relentless pursuit of excellence, leaving an indelible mark on the community. He doesn't merely deliver babies; Dr. Adams delivers hope, compassion, and a standard of care that elevates him to the status of a true Health Care Hero.

Within his medical and clinical practice, Dr. Adams has displayed unparalleled leadership. As the first African American chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and first African American chief of staff at North Shore Medical Center, he has broken barriers and set an inspiring precedent for others in the field. His roles as chief of medical staff and chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Jackson North Medical Center demonstrate his commitment to providing high-quality care for the residents of Miami-Dade County.

Dr. Adams is not only a practitioner; he's a healthcare administration leader. As chairman of the board of directors at Sunshine Health, he oversees a plan dedicated to improving community health one individual at a time. His leadership as founder of Metro Miami OB-GYN Associates and medical director for Greater Miami OB-GYN Associates at Sheridan Healthcorp showcases his dedication to enhancing healthcare accessibility in South Florida. Beyond his clinical and administrative roles, Dr. Adams was pivotal as the cofounder of Access Health Solutions, which has since evolved into the Sunshine Health Plan.

In the academic arena, Dr. Adams is a product of Miami's public school system. He has been the chairman of the board of Meharry Medical College, his alma mater, since 2016, and is a resolute advocate for education. His role as founding chair of Florida International University's (FIU) Center for Leadership, along with his former position as FIU clinical professor at the College of Medicine, reflects his commitment to nurturing future leaders and shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals. Serving as the 107th president of the National Medical Association, he has made a significant impact on physicians at both local and national levels.

Through his community health initiatives, Dr. Adams has demonstrated a commitment to the well-being of vulnerable populations in South Florida. Past initiatives like "Walk a Mile with a Child" and the Maternal Child Health Initiative display his dedication to community health education and providing care to at-risk, low-income pregnant women. Later in life, he accepted the call to ministry in 2009 and subse-

quently pursued seminary training at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, earning a master's degree in Pastoral Ministry a few years later. Dr. Adams is an associate minister at the historic St. John Baptist Church in Overtown. His weekly radio talk show – Health Talk on AM 1490 WMBM – further extends his reach into the community.

Dr. Adams is a staunch advocate for health equity. While serving as president of the National Medical Association, he participated in legislative efforts, including testifying before the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Health, which highlighted his commitment to eliminating racial and ethnic inequality in health.

Dr. Adams assumed the role of Host Committee co-chair for the inaugural Black Health Summit, a groundbreaking event orchestrated by the Health Foundation of South Florida, where he has dedicated his service over the past three years. He was chairman of the board at the St. John Community Development Corporation, which focuses on revitalizing the Overtown Community. Additionally, Dr. Adams is chair of the Stakeholder Awareness, Education & Engagement Working Group for the Underdeck, a planned vibrant greenspace uniting the Miami community. His engagement in myriad boards and organizations is evidence of his unwavering commitment to the prosperity of the community he calls home.

Dr. Adams' leadership in clinical practice, medical institutions, community health, nonprofit organizations, and advocacy efforts collectively contribute to his exceptional achievements and multifaceted impact on healthcare in South Florida.



"More than a distinguished physician, Dr. Adams stands as a towering figure in the community, a trailblazer who has carved paths toward education, innovation, and health equity."

Loreen Chant
President and CEO
Health Foundation of South Florida

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HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

SUZANN CASTRO, MSN, RN, CPN

Director, Psychiatry, Clinical
Observation Unit & CIC
Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Suzann Castro is a remarkable leader and a beacon of organizational courage and clinical expertise. Open, transparent, and logical in her problem-solving approach, she goes above and beyond for both Nicklaus Children's Hospital and the patients and families it serves. Ms. Castro began as a certified nursing assistant 24 years ago and now serves as the nursing director of the Clinical Observation Unit, Inpatient Psychiatry Department and Unit, and the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU), where she oversees the operation and clinical aspects of each department, a total of 155 FTEs. In 2019, she led the 2 North staff and hospitalist team through the transformation of an Infant Medical/Surgical Unit into Nicklaus Children's successful Clinical Observation Unit. Despite facing challenges, Ms. Castro's voice of reason and positivity propelled the team to surpass organizational goals within the first year, maintaining high Clinical Excellence Index and patient satisfaction scores. The CICU achieved notable improvements in productivity, implementing assistant nurse manager roles, restructuring staffing ratios for better resource utilization, and enhancing patient satisfaction scores. In 2022, the executive leadership team approved the expansion of a 20-bed inpatient behavioral health unit to better cater to the needs of children in the community, which Ms. Castro spearheaded. Now, Nicklaus Children's has the largest inpatient behavioral health capacity to care for the children under 18 years of age in the community. Simultaneously, Ms. Castro oversaw the Intensive Outpatient Program, doubling its size during the COVID-19 pandemic with a hybrid platform to address the mental health crisis among pediatric patients. Notably, the program achieved its lowest rates of hospital readmissions in history. Ms. Castro's collaboration with the Nicklaus Children's Hospital Foundation also led to successful fundraising efforts, highlighting her passion for mental health advocacy.



"Suzann Castro is an exceptional leader with an unwavering commitment to delivering amazing patient care to every child who relies on Nicklaus Children's for expert pediatric care. She is not only a healthcare hero for these kids but also for the clinical teams she leads. Suzy is a driving force of innovation and compassionate care, always advocating to improve wherever possible. Nicklaus Children's is honored to have Suzy on our team."

Iris Berges
Vice President of Operations
Nicklaus Children's Hospital

NICHOLAS NAMIAS, MD, MBA, FACS, FCCM

Chief, Division of Trauma and Acute
Care Surgery
Medical Director, Ryder Trauma Center
President of Medical Staff, Jackson
Memorial Hospital
Jackson Health System



Dr. Nicholas Namias has been devoted to patient care, public health, education and research throughout his entire career. As the medical director of Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial, he leads one of the busiest trauma centers in South Florida, which treats more than 4,000 adult and pediatric patients annually. As a result, the center has developed a worldwide reputation for clinical excellence since its inception in 1992. Dr. Namias also spearheaded the expansion of advanced trauma care to the south part of Miami-Dade County, opening a Level II trauma center at Jackson South Medical Center in 2016. Ryder Trauma at Jackson South stands on its own as a full-service, around-the-clock trauma center, but unlike other Level II trauma centers, it also has immediate and unlimited access to the cutting-edge resources of Ryder Trauma Center at Jackson Memorial. Under Dr. Namias' leadership, the Miami Burn Center has transformed into one of the leading burn treatment facilities in the nation and the only such center in South Florida. The center has pioneered many advances in the treatment of burns for adults and pediatric patients, and it is one of five American Burn Association (ABA) verified burn centers in the state. Dr. Namias has brought his expertise to other countries in dire need of advanced care, including leading a team of burn surgeons to build an advisory relationship with the Asociación Pro-Niños Quemados de Nicaragua to motivate them in their specialization of burn care. His involvement with organizations such as the Panamerican Trauma Society has been influential in improving trauma care in North, Central and South America. His team also helped train trauma doctors in Israel, who are currently treating survivors of the Hamas attack. Because of Dr. Namias' advocacy work, Ryder Trauma was awarded the Mission ZERO grant, which helped partially fund Ryder Trauma's military-civilian partnership. Ryder Trauma serves as the only Army Forward Surgical Team Training Facility in the U.S., preparing military healthcare personnel to provide trauma care to those injured on the battlefield.

"For 35 years, Dr. Nicholas Namias has been at the forefront of healthcare, saving hundreds of patients suffering from traumatic injuries and severe burns. Under his leadership, both the Miami Burn Center and Ryder Trauma Center have earned national and international reputations for clinical excellence."

Chris Ghaemmaghami, MD,
MHCM, FACHE, FACEP
Executive Vice President/Chief
Physician Executive & Chief
Clinical Officer
Jackson Health System

MONICA PAYARES-LIZANO, MD, FAAOS, FAAP

Pediatric Orthopedic Surgeon
Program Director, Cerebral Palsy & Spasticity Program
Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Dr. Monica Payares-Lizano is a pediatric orthopedic surgeon and serves as program director of the Cerebral Palsy and Spasticity Program within the Orthopedic, Sports Health and Spine Institute at Nicklaus Children's Hospital, South Florida's only specialty licensed hospital exclusively for children. She also provides care as part of the multidisciplinary Brachial Plexus and Peripheral Nerve Program, Hemophilia Treatment Center, Neural-Tube Defect Clinic (Spina Bifida), Neuromuscular Program and the Spasticity and Movement Disorders Clinic for children and teens affected by cerebral palsy.

She has several publications in peer-reviewed journals and has been presented nationally and internationally at medical conferences. She is the cofounder of Fundación Juan Jose Payares Bustos, an organization she created with her family to honor her late father, which provides educational and vocational training to children and families in his rural hometown of Galerazamba, Colombia.

This nonprofit also organizes mission trips to deliver medical care to residents of this community. At the foundation, Dr. Payares-Lizano developed a clinic for primary care and organized a large, multispecialty health brigade with the goal of providing medical attention to approximately 1,200 patients of all ages. For the last two years, the foundation was able to bring a patients from Colombia to get life-changing surgeries at Nicklaus Children's Hospital.

In addition, Dr. Payares-Lizano is involved with Sharing for Kids, a Miami-based nonprofit focused on improving health and education for underserved children in Cartagena, Colombia. Dr. Payares-Lizano also remains an active mentor with the Hispanic Center of Excellence at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and has volunteered with Mentoring in Medicine since 2007, a nonprofit that works with students in disadvantaged areas to prepare them to become healthcare professionals.



"Dr. Monica Payares-Lizano is an exceptional pediatric orthopedic surgeon who goes above and beyond for all of her patients. She has a passion for her work."

Chad A. Perlyn, MD,
PhD, MBA, FACS
President, Nicklaus Children's
Pediatric Specialists (NCPS)
Plastic and Craniofacial Surgeon
Nicklaus Children's Hospital

NURSES

ELIZABETH JOSEPH,
APRN-BC, MPHNurse Practitioner & Educator
Jackson Memorial Hospital

A board-certified nurse practitioner, Elizabeth Joseph is a nurse educator and coordinator for Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) at Jackson Health System (JHS) where she has worked for over 30 years. After observing the impact of climate change on society, especially among the vulnerable population in Miami-Dade County, she wanted to do her part to mitigate these effects. In 2019, she attained a Sustainable Development Certificate from Harvard University, and while pursuing a master's degree in Public Health, she completed an internship at the World Health Organization in Geneva. She is a certified climate speaker from the CLEO institute (Miami) and has delivered several presentations on climate change and its impact on health, locally, nationally and internationally. Ms. Joseph is one of the founding members and the co-chair of the Climate Committee at Jackson Health System, where one of the goals is to make JHS carbon neutral. Through her leadership, JHS has diverted over 185,000 pounds of medical waste previously being discarded into nearby landfills, resulting in JHS receiving Environmental Excellence Awards in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Ms. Joseph is also the co-chair for the Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments (ANHE) Practice Forum, the only national nursing organization focused solely on the intersection of health and the environment. She also volunteers in underserved communities with exceptional health needs, going to Haiti on three separate occasions after the 2010 earthquake and contributing over 1,000 hours of her personal time to develop nursing content and training guidelines for staff and administration at Bernard Mev hospital, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She has also volunteered her services with Konbit Sante, a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization formed to support the development of a sustainable healthcare system in Haiti.



"Elizabeth Joseph's service to the community truly embodies nursing's social policy perspective that as nurses, our relationship and practice is not only with the patients we care for in formal healthcare settings, but is also about how our caring practices affect society as a whole."

Bridgette Johnson
Director, Nurse Scientist
Jackson Health System

CLEO REYNOLDS, RN, MBA

Nursing Administration Supervisor
Mount Sinai Medical Center

Cleo George Reynolds lifelong work and career as a healthcare professional in South Florida has spanned more than five decades. As the first African American nursing administrative supervisor at Mount Sinai Medical Center (MSMC), Ms. Reynolds is dedicated to expanding the nursing sector to be more inclusive racially, ethnically, culturally and geographically. She has mentored hundreds of nursing graduates, urging them to be committed to excellence in their craft. She has observed nursing programs and practices in health centers throughout the U.S., as well as in Europe, Africa, Dubai and the Caribbean to gain insights into nursing around the world. In an effort to have an impact in welfare-to-work initiatives, she developed a training program to assist low-income and single mothers to become certified nursing assistants. Many of her program's graduates have entered higher education programs to become registered nurses, serving as a beacon of light to others who see the possibility of breaking the cycle of poverty and having a new vision for the future.

Her activism as a member of Chi Eta Phi, the nursing sorority, has focused on enhancing positive health initiatives in the community including coordinating back-to-school programs for inner-city youth in Miami and their parents by providing lectures on proper handwashing, dietary guidelines and health screenings every year since 2017; participating in COVID vaccines, screenings and counseling for the elderly community in Miami Beach during the pandemic; and assisting in the organization of holiday gift cards to needy families at Thanksgiving. Reynolds also acted as the project director for Heart Health events that provided nursing scholarships for motivated young individuals, and helped coordinate multiple walk-a-thons for St. Jude and March of Dimes as well as participated in the distribution of food and clothing to the needy in conjunction with Camillus House.



"Cleo George Reynolds is a South Florida homegrown hero (born and raised) and a role model for healthcare excellence. She has provided extraordinary contributions to the South Florida community as a nurse for more than 50 years through distinguished service, leadership and exceptional mentorship."

Kamamori Gonzalez
Director of Nursing
Mount Sinai Medical Center



CONGRATULATIONS

To our 2024 Healthcare Hero Award Honoree

Individual of Merit Category

Jayne Sylvester Malfitano
Harcourt M. and Virginia W. Sylvester Foundation

Jayne Sylvester Malfitano has been a beacon of support for South Florida cancer patients for more than two decades, and currently serves as chair of Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center's Board of Governors. Her compassionate advocacy for superior cancer care has resulted in increased access to education, screenings and enhanced support services for cancer survivors.

Thank you, Jayne, for your remarkable contributions over the years to increase access to quality cancer care for all.



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NURSES

JORGE A. VALDÉS, DNP, CRNA, APRN, FAANA

Interim Dean & Fellow

Florida International University Nicole Wertheim
College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Dr. Jorge Valdés is an accomplished nurse anesthesiologist, university administrator and health advocate with over 26 years of experience as a clinician and administrator. As the interim dean of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences at FIU, Dr. Valdés' primary focus has been on positioning the college as a leader in addressing health challenges in the state through a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to community health. This approach involves partnering with the state legislature, community hospitals, and higher education institutions to enhance the pipeline of diverse healthcare providers from the classroom to the workforce.

Dr. Valdés recognizes the transformative role of FIU in shaping healthcare by ensuring education is achievable and attainable. He is enhancing the academic foundation, hands-on training, and clinical experiences necessary to prepare students for careers in nursing, nurse-anesthesia, physical therapy, occupational therapy, athletic training, health services administration, and speech language pathology. He takes great pride in FIU's role in increasing minority representation in health care. As a Cuban American who works in the field, he strongly believes that training the university's diverse student body in culturally competent healthcare practices can help reduce health disparities and inequities.

Under his leadership, the college has prioritized student success outcomes, awarding over \$2.6 million in student scholarships across all health disciplines and achieving four Top 50 ranked programs among public universities in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*.

Additionally, the college has addressed the nation's nursing shortage head on by establishing partnerships with local hospitals to offer full scholarships to undergraduate nursing students and secure job placements upon graduation. This initiative has led to a significant increase in admissions to the college's undergraduate nursing program, doubled the programs admissions cycle, thereby bolstering the state's nursing workforce.



"Dr. Jorge Valdés' rise from starting as a CRNA 22 years ago to becoming the head of South Florida's top nursing school has been defined by unwavering perseverance and a profound commitment to advancing healthcare education and advocacy for the nursing profession."

Michelle Caldera
Director of Strategic Initiatives
FIU Nicole Wertheim College of
Nursing & Health Sciences



CONGRATULATIONS, CLEO!

Mount Sinai Medical Center would like to honor
Cleo Reynolds, RN as a GMCC Health Care
Heroes finalist for her dedication and service.



Mount Sinai
MEDICAL CENTER

Our Mission: To provide high-quality health care to our diverse community, enhanced through teaching, research, charity care, and financial responsibility.

INDIVIDUALS OF MERIT

THEODIS (THEO) KENDRICK

Founder, Nationwide Youth Outreach Athletics

Manager, Shipping & Receiving Supply Chain Management
Division, Jackson Memorial Hospital

Theodis Kendrick grew up in Overtown and knew first-hand how fundamental it was to have mentors, be part of a community, and be involved in organized sports to stay out of trouble. While looking for a community basketball team for his son, he realized there was more to be done for kids in the Miami Gardens area and took it upon himself to create a basketball team with eight of his son's friends. What began as a community team called Nationwide Sports Basketball turned into a lifelong mission to make an impact on the lives of inner city kids in Miami-Dade and Broward County.

Mr. Kendrick founded Nationwide Youth Outreach & Athletics, a nonprofit organization that strives to provide educational assistance such as tutoring, literacy programs, mentorship and social action. Individualized educational support is provided through a partnership with a well-known tutoring agency to ensure that all athletes receive assistance to help increase their overall academic achievement. Nationwide also provides kids many opportunities to excel in basketball, hosting an annual basketball showcase for high school athletes to show off their talent in front of college recruiters.

Many of the kids have gone on to play sports at a collegiate and national level and others have earned academic scholarships. Nationwide also hosts a monthly Youth Summit that gives members an opportunity to learn about financial literacy, connect with law enforcement and learn about ways to make a positive impact in their community. Nationwide also hosts a back-to-school event, holiday toy drive, and a gun violence prevention event each year. More than 300 kids benefit from Nationwide's efforts annually.



"A passionate youth advocate, Theo Kendrick has been dedicating his life to working with at-risk kids, transforming their lives while also creating a brighter community."

Rosa Costanzo
Senior Vice President
of Strategic Sourcing
Jackson Health System

JAYNE SYLVESTER MALFITANO

President

Harcourt M. and Virginia W. Sylvester
Foundation

For Jayne Sylvester Malfitano, philanthropy runs in the family. A longtime advocate for South Florida cancer patients, Mrs. Malfitano is chair of the board of governors of Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, and has served on the Sylvester board since 2001. She is also president of the Harcourt M. and Virginia W. Sylvester Foundation, a charitable organization created by Mrs. Malfitano's father, Harcourt M. Sylvester, Jr., in honor of his parents. An active member of the University of Miami board of trustees and the University of Miami Health System board of directors, Mrs. Malfitano has continued her father's passionate advocacy for superior cancer care in South Florida. Under her guidance, the Sylvester Foundation collaborated with The Pap Corps Champions for Cancer Research to establish Sylvester's Game Changer vehicles, a fleet of mobile units that bring cancer screenings and health information to underserved communities. In 2023, the Sylvester Foundation provided a \$5 million gift to Sylvester's esteemed Cancer Survivorship Services program, which provides exercise and nutrition support to cancer survivors, as well as access to support groups, seminars, workshops and more. Mrs. Malfitano is a longtime volunteer for the Dolphins Cancer Challenge (DCC), the annual walk/run/bike ride fundraiser that is the National Football League's #1 fundraiser. With more than \$12 million raised this year, the DCC has contributed more than \$75 million for local cancer research in the past 14 years, with every dollar going directly to Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. Her most enduring legacy, however, is the NCI-designed cancer center in Miami that bears her family's name. In her nearly 40-year involvement with the University of Miami, Mrs. Malfitano has facilitated more than \$62 million in gifts directly from her family and has introduced countless friends to the great work of the center.



"Jayne Sylvester Malfitano has been an incredible advocate for Sylvester and every patient we treat. She has been steadfast in her commitment to carrying on her family's mission to drive cancer prevention, early detection and clinical care for all."

Stephen D. Nimer, MD
Director, Sylvester
Comprehensive Cancer Center
University of Miami Miller School
of Medicine

INDIVIDUALS OF MERIT

CRAIG ZINN

President & CEO

The Craig Zinn Automotive
Group



"For Craig Zinn, being a good businessperson is just as important as being a good person in business. This simple philosophy can be felt in every aspect of the business."

Durée Ross
President & CEO
Durée & Company

Celebrating over 43 years as an automotive entrepreneur, Craig Zinn began his entrepreneurial journey in 1979. Today, the Craig Zinn Automotive Group, renowned for Craig's personal 'hands-on' management approach, operates in South Florida as the authorized dealer for Toyota of Hollywood, Lexus of Pembroke Pines, Acura of Pembroke Pines, Lexus of North Miami and Subaru of Pembroke Pines. The group's success comes through a combination of hard work and industry expertise, customer and employee relationships and giving back to the community. Most recently, Mr. Zinn established an endowment of \$500,000 at the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital to support the Animal Assisted Therapy program, which helps enhance patients' moods, reduce their anxiety and stress and provides them with a sense of comfort and companionship. The endowment will provide crucial funding for an additional therapy dog for the hospital and the supplemental costs associated with having a pet handler on site. The Craig Zinn Automotive Group actively participates in the Subaru Share the Love Campaign and has donated over \$1.5 million to the community. Subaru of Pembroke Pines is one of the largest donors to the program and the #1 Lifetime Donor in the Eastern Region and #2 Lifetime Donor in the nation. Donations have been made to numerous community nonprofits, including the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital and the Humane Society of Broward County. The Craig Zinn Automotive Group is also the proud donor of the "Short Stop" area at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital's emergency room. In 2021, the area was renamed the Craig Zinn Automotive Group Shortstop, recognizing and honoring the Craig Zinn Automotive Group's continued commitment to the hospital and its programs.

ORGANIZATIONS/PROGRAMS



BABY STEPS: NURSE-LED TRANSITION OF CARE FOR NICU INFANTS AND CAREGIVERS

Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Annually, over 10 percent of newborns in the U.S. require admission to a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), and preterm births disproportionately affect low-income and racially and ethnically minoritized groups. The period of transition from the NICU to home is often difficult, and adverse social determinants of health (lack of transportation, financial challenges, language barriers, etc.) further exacerbate challenges faced by infants and caregivers. In 2020, researchers and clinicians at Nicklaus Children's Hospital and the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Sciences partnered to create and launch Baby Steps, a nurse-led telehealth transition of care program for infants discharged from the Nicklaus NICU that improves health equity and patient outcomes through access to holistic, language concordant, and culturally sensitive nurse support during the acute period of transition from NICU to home. Caregivers are contacted by a trained Baby Steps nurse within the first 48-72 hours after discharge, and the service can be accessed on-demand for two weeks. The program is delivered through a telehealth approach, which allows for visual connection and assessment, review of the home environment, lactation/feeding support, and anticipatory guidance from the comfort of the home environment. The program is available free of cost and the intervention is delivered in the caregiver's preferred language. Since its inception in 2020, Baby Steps has demonstrated a significant impact on patient outcomes: over 700 patients have been enrolled in the program, with over \$1 million in averted costs and over 50 percent reduction in 30-day readmissions and emergency department/urgent care use. Nearly 100 percent of respondents reported high satisfaction with the program and over 90 percent would recommend Baby Steps to other families. Beyond South Florida, the Baby Steps program has helped to shape the national dialog on the importance of NICU transition of care support, the need to address key concerns during the acute period of transition from hospital to home, and the role of nurses in effectively providing telehealth transition-of-care services. Nicklaus Children's Hospital is South Florida's only licensed specialty hospital exclusively for children. The 307-bed hospital is a five-time Magnet-certified hospital, and is renowned for excellence in all aspects of pediatric medicine with many specialty programs routinely ranked among the best in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report* since 2008. The hospital is also home to the largest pediatric teaching program in the southeastern United States.

"Since launching in April 2020, over 700 neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) patients and caregivers across Florida have been enrolled in the Baby Steps program, creating a significant impact on the health of the South Florida community."
Danielle Altares Sarik, PhD,
APRN, CPNP-PC
Director of Nursing Research
and Evidence-Based Practice
Nicklaus Children's Hospital



FIREFIGHTER CANCER INITIATIVE

Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center

Firefighters save lives and property, but their service takes a heavy toll on their health. Smoke is a powerful lung irritant and studies link fine particulate matter to premature death. Worse, residential and commercial fires emit a witch's brew of toxic chemicals when plastics in furniture, clothing and consumer goods melt. Occupation-acquired cancer is the leading cause of death among firefighters, accounting for 70 percent of deaths. Firefighters are 14 percent more likely to die from cancer than the general U.S. population. Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center is dedicated to protecting the firefighters who protect us around the globe. Sylvester launched a Firefighter Cancer Initiative (FCI) nine years ago to better document and understand the excess burden of cancer among firefighters and identify novel, evidence-based methods for reducing risk. FCI is now a coalition of healthcare workers, scientists and occupational health and safety experts with international reach that helps save lives and improve firefighter health worldwide.

The FCI:

- Created the first population-based registry in the U.S. to estimate cancer risk for firefighters.
- Developed the first support program for firefighters navigating a cancer diagnosis.
- Created a firefighter-specific tumor bank
- Identified mechanisms by which firefighters are re-exposed to carcinogens post-fire.
- Developed evidence-based strategies for decontamination to reduce such exposure.
- Inspired new designs and practices to decontaminate fire trucks, with best practices now used at fire departments across the country.
- Informed presumptive legislation in Florida, which recognizes cancer as an occupational illness; firefighting is recognized by the International Agency for Research on Cancer as a Class I carcinogen.
- Fostered mandatory fire decontamination protocol that academy students must review to become firefighters.

In addition, FCI hosts an annual symposium, which was attended by nearly 1,000 people in 2024. It deploys a fleet of mobile healthcare units to do health checkups and cancer screenings at fire stations and it collaborates with the Dominican Republic on cancer screenings, accounting for different equipment used. FCI currently leads 24 research projects, including assessments of the mental health of urban search and rescue firefighters, the relationship between firefighter lifestyle behaviors and cancer incidence, and an investigation into the occupational and lifestyle cancer exposure risks for Florida-based female firefighters.



"FCI does work that changes lives. This is a collaboration with national and international firefighters, who are a critical part of the coalition because they drive our science behind this 'citizen science' initiative."
Dr. Erin Kobetz, PhD, MPH
Director and Principal Investigator, FCI
Associate Director for Community Outreach
and Engagement
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center

ORGANIZATIONS/PROGRAMS

PROJECT DA²RE

Care Resource Community Health Centers, Inc.



With financial support from the Merck Foundation, Care Resource created Project DA²RE (Disparities in Care Addressed through Access, Retention, and Equity) in 2019. They identified social determinants of health, including housing instability, food insecurity, lack of transportation, mental health needs, and substance use, as major barriers to accessing HIV care and medication adherence for People Living with HIV (PLWH).

Project DA²RE focuses on rapid linkage to care and works to address immediate needs that prevent PLWH from staying in care. After meeting immediate needs, the linkage coordinators work with clients to strengthen their economic well-being and overall wellness through HIV Primary Care (comprehensive medical, dental, and connection to specialty care); Behavioral Health services; transportation services; food assistance; and emotional and social support. The project has grown from serving only Miami-Dade County to include Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

Key program highlights include steady participant enrollment, with 136 participants currently enrolled in the program, 75 percent of whom are previous clients that were initially either lost to HIV care or not engaged in their care. Project DA²RE's Priority Client protocol proved to be effective in assisting clients to reach viral suppression. Clients with viral load (VL) >200 are enrolled and closely monitored until viral suppression is attained, and an internal interdisciplinary team meets every two weeks to review medical records and social determinants of clients struggling with retention in care or viral suppression. In 2021, the project established an emergency housing partnership with Extended Stay America (ESA) and the Community Rightful Center (CRC).

Currently, 56 hotel reservations and over 20 referrals to CRC Temporary Housing Employment Program have been made for project participants with the goal of preventing homelessness while a permanent housing situation is being secured. According to a case study by the Office of Infectious Disease and HIV Policy (OIDP), the combined benefits to patients and the community generated by Project DA²RE greatly exceed the cost of providing its medical treatment and wraparound services. The return on investment (ROI) of the project is 762 percent. For more information about the Project, or to inquire about services, please contact Melvin Fort, Retention Manager with Care Resource, at mefort@careresource.org or 305-576-1234. Ext: 231

"Project DA²RE goes beyond medical care to prioritize the social determinants of health that can prevent People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH) from being linked to care, staying in care, and taking their HIV medication as prescribed."

Ron Ledain
Director of Marketing, Health
Promotion and Linkage
Care Resource Community Health
Centers, Inc.

FIRST RESPONDERS

ERNESTO FERNANDEZ

Police Officer
City of Miami Police Department

City of Miami Police Officer Ernesto Fernandez is currently assigned to the Field Operations Division, where he patrols the Allapattah Net Area. As a field training officer, he trains new officers to work safely, skillfully and productively, with a professional attitude at all times.

He is also a part of the Crisis Intervention Team, where he responds to individuals who suffer from mental illness and provides them with assistance as needed. Office Fernandez is also a certified breath test operator, which includes collecting evidence from individuals operating a motor vehicle under the influence.

One example of Officer Fernandez's commitment to the community occurred on July 19, 2023, when, almost at the end of his shift, he observed a 10-year-old boy run past his vehicle with a cellphone and no shoes.

When he stopped to ask the child what he was doing, the boy did not answer and kept running, so he followed him into the marina area. There, he saw ripples in the water and what appeared to be the silhouette of a child. He jumped into the river and was able to grab the boy and get him on a boat, where he was able to open up the child's airway enough for the boy to breathe on his own.

Later information showed that the child suffered from a severe case of autism and was non-verbal, and had run away from a Miami Dade home. This rescue hit especially close to home for Officer Fernandez as his own son, Dylan, is on the autism spectrum.



"Officer Ernesto Fernandez is not the typical patrol officer. He consistently goes above and beyond his scope of duty to enhance his career and to be the best officer he can be."

Elijah Taylor
Police Sergeant
City of Miami Police Department



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FIRST RESPONDERS

SHANTI HALL

Division Chief of Emergency Medical Services
Miami-Dade Fire Rescue



"As a woman in the fire service, there are tremendous challenges, but Shanti Hall is the prime example that anything can be overcome. Her team is diverse, and she encourages and empowers other women and minorities to follow their dreams because if she can do it, others can, too!"

Alexa Diaz Formidoni
Vice President of Development
Neighbors 4 Neighbors

After serving in the military, Chief Shanti Hall was looking for a career in which she could support her community. She has served with Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (MDFR) since 1995 and is now the Emergency Medical Services Division Chief, one of only four female chiefs in upper leadership.

Chief Hall began transforming medical services provided by MDFR from a model of only providing 911 emergency medical service to offering proactive and preventive services that connect underserved and vulnerable populations with healthcare options that may help prevent the need for these services. Chief Hall and her team established the two-hour Health Emergency Life Protection (HELP) program, which is designed to train the public on how to be prepared for emergency health situations. HELP expands typical community CPR classes by adding training in bleeding emergencies, choking emergencies, cardiac emergencies, overdose emergencies, and early stroke recognition. This class is designed to empower individuals with no medical background or training with skills that can save a life while emergency responders

are on the way. While the program was initially developed for the professional staff at the fire department, it's now branching out to the public, starting with community groups and religious institutions. Last year, Chief Hall established Miami-Dade County's first Community Paramedic program as a way to create new pathways for improved access to healthcare through partnerships between Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, healthcare facilities, medical social workers, and other community-based healthcare services.

She is also developing an all-new Mobile Integrated Health program at MDFR that includes crisis intervention, mental health support and addiction recovery services that will help address the serious mental health and addiction crisis in the community through specialized units that perform targeted services for mental health and addiction illnesses.



CONGRATULATIONS

To our 2024 Healthcare Hero Award Honoree

Organization/Program Category

Firefighter Cancer Initiative (FCI)
Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center

FCI is pioneering evidence-based solutions to reduce cancer risks among firefighters. From groundbreaking research to mobile health care units, they're transforming firefighter health globally. Congratulations, FCI, for your exceptional commitment to saving the lives of honorable men and women who tirelessly dedicate themselves to this noble cause every day!



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FIRST RESPONDERS

WILLIE WILLIAMS

Chief, Health and Safety Division
Miami-Dade Fire Rescue



“Chief Willie Williams deserves recognition as a health care hero for his dedication to providing healthcare services to fellow healthcare providers. He remains a beacon of positivity within the emergency response community, inspiring fellow firefighters, as well as his family, friends, and students.”

*Alwyn Leiba, Ph.D., MBA-HCM
Dean, School of Health Sciences
Miami Dade College
Medical Campus*

Chief Willie Williams is a person of humility and integrity. He started his career at the age of 19 years old working as a firefighter and paramedic for the City of Sunrise Fire Rescue Department before being promoted to the rank of fire lieutenant at age 22. Nine years later he became fire captain and rose to the rank of division chief of Emergency Medical Services at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. During his tenure, Chief Williams worked with Miami-Dade County political officials and the Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue department’s executive staff to develop and implement the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department’s Emergency Medical Technician Scholarship Program. Since 2014, this program has provided a way for young men and women from disenfranchised communities to become successful in the allied health professions. The program is so successful, in fact, that many of its graduates are currently firefighters, nurses, physician’s assistants and other healthcare providers. Chief Williams has taught a large majority of EMT instructors who are currently working within Miami Dade College’s Emergency Medical Services program, and also developed an EMS mentoring program which allows former students to return to his class and assist new students with navigating through the unfamiliar portions of the EMT course. Chief Williams recently taught a diverse group of mental healthcare professionals how to recognize firefighters exhibiting signs and symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This course was in response to the Champlain Towers collapse in the Town of Surfside and is designed to give emotional healthcare providers better insight into the culture of the fire service.

YOUTH VOLUNTEER RECIPIENT

ANA PUJOL

President & Founder, Ana Pujol TV,
Student, New World School of the Arts



Ana Pujol is the president of Lungs for Life Miami, a student-led nonprofit dedicated to raising funds for the Lung Cancer Research Foundation. She organizes fundraisers, manages social media, and helps volunteers find the right job. She is also the associate director of Tristen’s Tinker Tots, another peer-led nonprofit that has raised over 150 toys for kids in a Title 1 elementary school. She has participated in toys and arts and craft drives for patients at Nicklaus Children’s Hospital, and has provided media services to 305 Pink Pack, the only program in South Florida that gives women with all types of cancers the equity they need to access their cancer care and recover from it. Last summer, Ana volunteered with Breakthrough Miami as a teaching fellow where she was responsible for developing and delivering project-based learning lesson plans which not only met the curriculum criteria but kept a group of fifth graders engaged. Moreover, she is a staff writer for The Pure Life Magazine, a teen-run Miami-based pop culture digital publication. Ana was elected the class vice-president in her junior and senior year, and is also the president of BeHip; an organization that inspires teens to deliver health information to their peers. She is an active member of the Key Club and English Honor Society, and the founder and president of her school’s broadcast journalism and news program, NWTV. She established her social media account, @AnaPujolTV, to network with other journalists and to create work within the community. Despite Ana’s mother being bedridden after a car accident for about six months, Ana was also able to hold a part-time job at Starbucks to provide for personal expenses in addition to all of these other roles.

“Outgoing, charismatic, diligent, persistent, ambitious, and independent are just a few of the adjectives that come to mind when describing Ana. Given her exceptional qualities of leadership, scholarship, and citizenship, I recommend Ana for the Health Care Heroes Award.”

*Avice Warren
CAP Advisor
New World School of the Arts*



Join us in honoring the remarkable **Dr. Nelson Adams III**, Health Foundation of South Florida Board Member, for receiving the prestigious **2024 Health Care Heroes®** Equitable Advisors Lifetime Achievement Award. This esteemed accolade recognizes individuals who have made an indelible mark and shaped history in the healthcare industry of South Florida.

Dr. Adams, your lifelong dedication and unwavering commitment to advancing health equity have truly transformed countless lives. Your pioneering efforts and profound impact resonate deeply throughout our community, inspiring us all to strive for excellence and compassion in our work.

As we applaud your extraordinary achievements, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your tireless advocacy and unparalleled contributions to healthcare. Your legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.

Congratulations, Dr. Adams, on this well-deserved honor! You are a true **Health Care Hero**, and we are privileged to celebrate your incredible journey.

- Your **Health Foundation of South Florida** Family!

YOUTH VOLUNTEER RECIPIENT

AIDEN BARRERAS
Special Olympics Unified Partner
Student,
Miami Palmetto Senior High School



“Aiden Barreras is a shining example of a community hero who has made a significant impact. His efforts inspire us all, reminding us of the transformative power of empathy, inclusivity, and the profound impact one individual can have on the lives of others.”

Sergio Xiques
Regional Director, South Region
Special Olympics



Congratulations to our nominees for
the Greater Miami Health Care Heroes Awards

Nicklaus Children’s Hospital would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to:

Health Care Professional

Dr. Monica Payares-Lizano, Pediatric Orthopedic Surgeon

Suzanne Castro, Director, Psychiatry

Organization/Program

Baby Steps



Nicklaus
Children’s
Hospital

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Rudy Molinet, RN, MPH, FACHE

Rudy Molinet, Ph.D., is an adjunct professor at Florida Atlantic University's College of Business, teaching leadership and strategic planning courses in FAU's Executive Master of Health Administration and Executive & Professional Master of Business Administration programs.

A longtime health executive, Molinet brings over 40 years' experience in senior healthcare management and executive experience in operations, marketing, sales, and board development in a variety of healthcare settings, including non-profit healthcare organizations, home health and inpatient and outpatient mental health.

Molinet earned his Bachelor of Science in Nursing with honors from Hunter College. He completed his Master of Public Health in Administration at Columbia University, graduating with honors.

Molinet is board-certified in healthcare management as a fellow of The American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE). He received the prestigious Regent's Award from ACHE for his service and commitment to the South Florida chapter in 2021. He is the chair of the board of directors at Holy Cross Health, a 557-bed acute care hospital and integrated health system in Fort Lauderdale.

Prior to opening his consulting firm Artemis Synergies, Molinet served as executive vice president for Stadtlander's/CVS ProCare, a national specialty pharmacy specializing in caring for people living with HIV and organ transplants. He has served on several non-profit boards as well.

Molinet's impact on students is far reaching, mentoring those he has taught longer after they have left his class. His students leave his classroom understanding the value of making connections, networking, and personal branding.



Djenane Spence Andre, RN

Djenane Spence Andre is pursuing an Executive Master's in Healthcare Administration at Florida Atlantic University. She is continuing her education in the EMHA program to improve her leadership skills and healthcare management. She currently holds a bachelor's in nursing, with a minor in Spanish.

With over fifteen years of experience, Andre has worked as a surgical trauma nurse, surgical charge nurse and sterile processing manager. Her expertise includes surgical instrument sterilization, inventory management, employee evaluation, recruitment, education organization, and payroll handling.

She knows that continuing her education is critical to staying updated with the constantly changing healthcare landscape, enabling her to make a significant impact on patient outcomes and organizational efficiency. Her goal is to become a senior leader in nursing, specializing in healthcare administration.

Djenane aims to improve healthcare delivery, focusing on quality improvement and patient safety. She mentors aspiring nurses and serves on the committee of the Palm Beach George Snow Scholarship.



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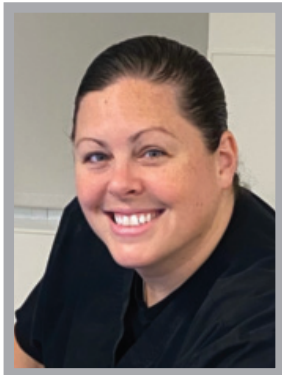
Vanessa Motel, BSN, RN, CEN, PMD

Vanessa Motel is a registered nurse at UHealth - University of Miami Health System whose boundless energy and compassion never wavered after facing a life-threatening illness.

Having a lifelong passion for helping others, Vanessa worked as an EMT and a paramedic through 9-1-1 services. Transitioning from first responder to an emergency department registered nurse was not just her career goal, but a deeply personal journey that took an unexpected trajectory.

Subsequently, a bump on Vanessa's knee led her to a Merkel cell diagnosis, which had spread to her lymph nodes. Her paramedic experience and newfound nursing knowledge aided her through years of surgeries and immunotherapy.

Today, Vanessa is cancer-free and the chair of the nursing practice council, working in a new position that allows her to remain in the ER. Her experience not only guides her nursing practice but allows Vanessa to make meaningful contributions and connections with her UHealth patients.



CLEVELAND CLINIC WESTON HOSPITAL

Virginia D'Onofrio, RN

Virginia D'Onofrio, RN, has been with Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital since 2011. She has a deep sense of compassion for patients, and she goes out of her way to put patients first. Virginia strives to enrich her knowledge in all things nursing and inspires everyone around her to do the same. She is well respected by her peers and selflessly volunteers to teach and motivate others for success. As a result, she was awarded the Nurse Support Award in 2012. As an innovator, Virginia initiates new ways to improve processes and outcomes. She established a monthly Diabetes Support Clinic and was Chair of Epic Superusers from 2017-2022. She co-chaired the Niche Committee from 2015-2022 and she was a member of the Professional Development Committee, the Research Committee, the Nursing Informatics Committee, and the Better Breathers Patient Support Group. Virginia was a key player in 2020- 2021 during COVID when she was a Team Lead at the triage center, and she assisted in developing protocols for the testing tent. She is board certified in Gerontology and Ambulatory Nursing and she is currently working toward a master's degree in informatics.



Avalon Grantham, RN

Avalon Grantham has been a nurse in 3 Tower, an inpatient acute cancer unit at Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital for over five years. Avalon came as a daisy awarded, BSN, oncology- certified registered nurse. She has made an enormous impact on the unit by championing shared governance as our unit-based council co-chair, helping to pre-empt a large majority of the new nurses in the department. Avalon has also taken time to lead the team by serving as a relief charge on both days and nights when needed. She is a true patients-first nurse and is often recognized for giving excellent care and amazing support to her colleagues. Avalon helped to begin the bell ringing process for our cancer patients at the end of their treatment, which has brought joy to patients after a difficult journey through chemotherapy treatment. She has shown the ability to navigate this changing world of healthcare. Avalon continues to positively impact others as she pursues her advanced degree in nursing.



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Nicole A. Gonzaga Gomez, DNP, MS, CRNA, ARNP, CHSE

Nicole A. Gonzaga Gomez, DNP, MS, CRNA, ARNP, CHSE, is a candidate for induction as a 2024 Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (FAANA). The 2024 induction will take place during the Awards and Recognition Luncheon on August 3, during the AANA Annual Congress in San Diego, California. Dr. Gomez is an Assistant Professor of Clinical and Associate Director of the School's Nurse Anesthesia Program. FAANA designation distinguishes Dr. Gomez as a premier anesthesia provider with a high level of skills, training, experience, achievement, and professional standards. She has a vested interest in teaching and learning modalities with peer-to-peer mentoring in simulation-based education. Her publications have centered around innovations for simulation in healthcare and for nurse anesthesia clinical practice improvements. She was co-principal investigator on a mixed-reality Magic Leap™ collaboration addressing operating room/airway fires in simulation-based education. She is active in state, national, and international professional organizations.



Nichole Crenshaw, DNP, APRN, AGACNP-BC, ANP-BC, CHSE, FAANP

Nichole Crenshaw, DNP, APRN, AGACNP-BC, ANP-BC, CHSE, FAANP, associate dean for undergraduate nursing programs and associate professor of clinical at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies, is in her second year serving as a program director of the innovative "Care Partners Dedicated Educational Unit" (DEU) collaboration between the school and Jackson Health System. The educational initiative she helped found was recently awarded a \$125,000 grant under the Florida Department of Education's "Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund" to increase the number of nursing professionals prepared to enter Florida's nursing workforce. Together with a \$75,000 contribution from Jackson, the award supports clinical rotations and scholarships for 16-full-time Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) students from the school, allowing increased enrollment capacity for the 12-month program. Dr. Crenshaw also serves as Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the University of Miami.



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Salute to Nursing...

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Broward Health Nursing: Navigating Today's Challenges, Charting Tomorrow's Health

The pandemic ushered in a new era of unprecedented challenges and transformations across various sectors, with nursing withstanding a substantial impact. We saw significant numbers of highly qualified nurses choose to leave the profession for new opportunities or to retire, while others opted to resign from established positions to accept lucrative travel nursing jobs. Without a reserve of qualified newly licensed nurses waiting in the wings to take these vacant positions, it was what many in healthcare called "the perfect storm."

Fortunately, even in the wake of the unforeseen COVID-19 pandemic, the nursing landscape is changing in positive and exciting ways. Broward Health, for example, is developing and implementing innovative strategies that attract and retain nurses with new opportunities for career growth and development.

With so many promising nursing opportunities available for college graduates and those interested in pursuing a second career, Broward Health is reimagining the traditional pathways for nursing that are designed to reengage even more people back into healthcare professions. Today, the opportunities for professional growth in nursing are outstanding, and at Broward Health we are working closely with nursing students and novice nurses at the start of their careers to support their passions and preferred nursing career paths, which has helped to foster retention and career confidence.

Innovative Approaches to Specialty Nursing

With the workforce transitions of the past few years, there are now more specialty nursing roles that need to be filled. Recognizing the critical need for nurses in specialized areas, such as perioperative services, Broward Health has implemented creative initiatives to recruit and train nurses for these roles in collaboration with our academic partners. These innovative approaches provide exciting opportunities to specialty nursing areas that in the past were not readily available to nurses at the start of their careers.

Through our strong partnerships with academic institutions and our innovative first-year Nurse Residency Program, nurses are empowered early on to pursue their passions and chart meaningful career pathways within the Broward Health system. Broward Health's commitment to this approach underscores its commitment to nurturing a culture of professional growth and continuous learning to equip nurses with the skills and confidence needed to excel in their chosen specialties.

Education and Transition to Practice

The positive news is that nursing student enrollment is trending upward, with Broward Health admitting dozens of new residency cohorts monthly. Broward Health has taken proactive steps to improve its collaboration with nursing academic partners, including Broward College, Kaiser University and Nova Southeastern University, by significantly enhancing clinical rotations, offering flexible scheduling options and optimizing nursing residency programs. By providing diverse pathways and support systems, Broward Health aims to attract and retain top nursing talent while ensuring a skilled and competent workforce.

At Broward Health, students, upon completion of their first year of nursing school, can apply to become a "nurse extern," where they work part-time and one-on-one with a nurse mentor to advance their nursing skills, gain hands-on practice and experience firsthand our vibrant employee culture. This supportive program helps students to become better equipped for the transition to nursing and further elevates the quality of care patients receive in our hospital system.

To bridge the gap between academics and clinical nursing practice, Broward Health continues to invest in revolutionizing its Nurse Residency Program, which is a yearlong, evidence-based program that transitions students between nursing edu-



BY EILEEN MANNISTE, MSN, RN, AND SYLVIA SLOANE JONES, DNP, MSN, APRN, RNC

cation and "real-life" professional nursing practice. One of the primary goals of the program is to improve the new graduate's ability to think critically and develop the ability to manage outcomes, promote patient safety and deliver quality bedside care. To that end, Broward Health requires newly licensed nurses to engage in a unique and innovative residency program where they learn clinical competence, leadership skills, procedural policies and patient safety and quality care measures gained through hands-on skills training,

virtual hospital experiences, seminars, lectures and coaching.

Broward Health is finding immense success through non-traditional learning methods, such as clinical scenario escape rooms, where nurse residents move through a three-day team experience and 15 different missions, which include diagnostic scenarios, patient communication and education situations, emergency response circumstances and more. Residents receive critical thinking clues such as rhymes, puzzles, locked boxes and invisible ink pen messages to help them complete their missions. These experiential training courses help to build confidence in new nurses, while making learning fun and engaging.

Community Engagement and Health Promotion

At the heart of Broward Health's mission is a commitment to serving the community and promoting overall health and well-being. Now in its 86th year, the Broward Health sense of purpose is stronger than ever before. Nursing at Broward Health is not just a profession but a calling — an opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of patients and in our communities. We expect all our nurses to closely align their standards of compassionate care with Broward Health's mission and vision for the community.

We are focused on educating the community through various programs, from stroke awareness screenings and educational events to memory disorder clinics and assessments. Broward Health nurses proactively engage with local high schools, licensed practical nurse programs and community organizations, providing educational opportunities and firsthand experiences to inspire the next generation of healthcare professionals. By fostering strong connections and delivering targeted healthcare initiatives, Broward Health empowers individuals and communities to lead healthier lives and reduce healthcare disparities.

Supporting Nurse Well-Being and Resilience

In light of the challenges posed by long hours, high workload and the potential for burnout, Broward Health places a strong emphasis on supporting the well-being and resilience of our nurses. With a central pool of 500 nurses serving all medical centers, the healthcare system ensures seamless patient care and dedicated team support. Collaboration among nursing, allied health partners and other departments creates a cohesive environment focused on exceptional patient care and compassion. This shared purpose drives Broward Health's mission and vision, creating a welcoming and compassionate atmosphere for both colleagues and patients alike.

Looking ahead, as Broward Health continues its mission to champion a healthy community, nurses remain at the forefront of delivering compassionate and high-quality care. By embracing emerging trends, addressing workforce challenges and fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration, Broward Health is poised to lead the way in shaping the future of nursing and healthcare delivery.

Eileen Manniste, is Chief Nursing Officer, Broward Health North.
Sylvia Sloane Jones is Manager of Nurse Residency Programs,
Department of Learning, Broward Health.

Holy Cross Health Receives Accreditation from American Nurses Credentialing Center Practice Transition Accreditation Program



BY CRYSTAL
CARUTHERS, MSN, RN

Holy Cross Health earned accreditation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center Practice Transition Accreditation Program, which sets the standard for residency or fellowship programs that transition registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses into new practice settings. This validates and legitimizes our program as utilizing best practices in preparing nurses in the transition from books to bedside. Under my leadership, the program has demonstrated excellence in preparing residents for thriving careers in nursing.

When Holy Cross Health's nurse residency program was established in 2008, it became the first nurse residency program in Broward County. In fact, I was part of the program's first graduating class! I feel I've come full circle to now be the program manager and support the program in receiving accreditation. I am very proud to work for an organization that always supports improvement and growth of new-to-practice nurses.

The program curriculum for the original graduating class was created by the training and development team. Over the last 16 years, the program has been transformed and reimagined as more than 550 nurses have since been trained and graduated.

In 2010, Holy Cross partnered with Vizient, Inc., and the program became known as the Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program at Holy Cross Health, which still exists. The year-long residency program helps transition new nurse residents into their first clinical role. The program implements an evidence-based curriculum that focuses on leadership, patient outcomes and professionalism, while also building confidence, improving decision-making skills, enhancing clinical nursing leadership practices and promoting the incorporation of research-based evidence into practice.

Residents train in a simulation lab, get hands-on practice with specialty equipment and therapies, and receive mentorship, career development and shadowing opportu-

nities where they become immersed in various specialty areas to determine if a certain specialty area is of interest.

Holy Cross partners with Broward College for some didactic courses, as well. For example, nurse residents take a three-day course to become competent in reading cardiac rhythm strips. Residents that are hired into critical care units also take a four-week Essentials of Critical Care Orientation course.

With the strain on all healthcare providers during COVID-19, the nurse residency program was heavily relied on to meet the staffing needs for our patients and reduce contract labor needs. During the pandemic, we onboarded three times the number of new-to-practice nurses than ever before. Normally, the program onboards 20 to 30 nurses annually, but in 2021, we onboarded nearly 100 nurses. Hands-on experiences, structured orientation and flexible learning options were all introduced to the program to meet the diverse needs of nurses coming directly out of nursing school. Today, nurse residents have a much better retention rate compared to newly hired experienced nurses and the overall national average. Hiring nurse residents into vacant positions has become a strong strategic strategy for Holy Cross Health.

The Nurse Residency and the Professional Practice teams are lifelong resources for graduates of the program, offering continuing education, certification and navigation of transfers and promotions throughout the Holy Cross and Trinity Health system, of which Holy Cross Health is part of. Nurse Residents are followed by the nurse residency team throughout their second year on a formal and informal basis. Workshops surrounding research and evidence-based practice, career advancement and wellbeing retreats are offered to nurse residency graduates to continue supporting these nurses in their professional growth. Nurse Residents are matched with nursing mentors to help guide them in their professional goals and are also encouraged to contact the residency team anytime during their career for guidance, shadowing opportunities and support.

Crystal Caruthers is Nurse Resident Development Manager at Holy Cross Health.



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VITAS® HEALTHCARE, PALM BEACH

Jessica Patino, RN

As an on-call supervisor, Jessica Patino ensures the continuity of care for hospice patients and serves as a patient advocate and coordinator. She joined VITAS in 2021 as an inpatient team manager, returning from a prior role as a field nurse for the VITAS Palm Beach program.

With experience as a nurse care manager, acute care nurse, and charge nurse, Jessica offers a depth of clinical care expertise to the end-of-life patients and families she serves. She holds an AAS in nursing from New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn, NY.



Sarah Maywald, RN, BSN

Sarah Maywald began her nursing career in hospice as a student nurse and later gained clinical experience in neurorestorative care and rehabilitation. She joined VITAS in 2023 and serves patients nearing the end of life in their homes, assisted living facilities, and inpatient units. Sarah's versatility enables her to adapt to many environments. She also worked previously as a home health aide and CNA.

Sarah believes in lifelong learning and holds a BSN from Resurrection University in Chicago, IL, and a bachelor's degree in health sciences from DePaul University, also in Chicago.



VITAS® HEALTHCARE, MIAMI

Naidy Ulloa Perez, ARNP, FNP, MSN

With more than 21 years of medical care experience, family nurse practitioner Naidy Ulloa Perez is a dedicated hospice team member. She began working with VITAS in 2015 as a RN and took on her current role three years later. Naidy focuses on wound evaluation and management and nurse education.

Naidy has been recognized at VITAS with two BEST awards for excellence. She earned her MSN from Miami Regional University and a medical degree from the Higher Institute of Medical Sciences in Matanzas, Cuba. She also holds Wound Care Certification from the National Alliance of Wound Care and Ostomy.



Maria Teresa Merino-Cuadrado, RN

Maria Teresa Merino-Cuadrado began her nursing career in 2007 with a local home health agency. In 2012, she found her passion for end-of-life care when she joined VITAS, serving multiple cities in the South Miami area. In 2014, she became a mentor for incoming nurses and staff from all disciplines.

Maria Teresa provides compassionate end-of-life care for patients and families and has received multiple five-star reviews and accolades for her skills and expertise. Graduating from nursing school in Cuba, Maria Teresa also earned a medical degree from the Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de Villa Clara, Cuba.



VITAS® HEALTHCARE, BROWARD

Marlen Gonzalez, RN

With two decades of healthcare experience, Marlen Gonzalez, RN, specializes in delivering culturally sensitive clinical care to diverse populations. Her hospice expertise includes eight years as a hospice case manager before moving to VITAS as a hospice primary nurse in 2022. Marlen relies on her strong clinical judgment and empathy skills as she serves her Broward County patients and their families.

She is earning her BSN from Carleen Home Health School in Lauderhill, FL, and also holds a medical degree from the Medical Science Institute in Havana, Cuba. She is bilingual and earned certification in intravenous therapy.



Veronica Young, RN

As a compassionate and dedicated nurse, Veronica Young, RN, serves hospice patients with exceptional clinical care. She joined the VITAS admissions team in 2016 after working as a school nurse in Miami-Dade County schools. Veronica takes pride in educating patients and families on what to expect in the end-of-life process. Her focus is on patient-centered care, and this drives her passion for hospice.

Veronica earned a BSN from Chamberlain University in Miramar, Florida, after receiving an ASN degree from Excelsior University and completing an LPN program at McFatter Technical College in Davie, FL.



PALM HEALTH FOUNDATION

Dercas Caneus, BSN

Florida Atlantic University

With support from The Helen K. Persson Nursing Education Fund at Palm Health Foundation, Dercas Caneus is becoming the compassionate nurse she always aspired to be. Dercas loved science as a little girl and is now living her dream to leave a meaningful legacy that benefits the world through nursing. As a child of Haitian immigrant parents, she saw the impact that nursing can have on her community by breaking down cultural barriers within healthcare. From the beginning of her nursing career as an orthopedic nurse assistant, she experienced how compassion and companionship can start the healing process. And as she gained experience in a hospital setting, she sought to comfort families during a loved one's last moments, and to share the joy in a patient's recovery. Through it all, she has valued the art of connecting with people, something that will be so important when she becomes a critical care nurse after completing her education.



Lisa Kirk Wiese, PhD

Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing

Palm Health Foundation salutes trustee Lisa Kirk Wiese, Ph.D., associate professor at FAU's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, for bringing over \$5 million in research funding to Palm Beach County and the Glades to increase understanding, early detection, and prevention of Alzheimer's disease in rural populations. Community collaboration, framed by Drs. Boykin and Schoenhofer's "Nursing as Caring" philosophical model, which includes determining "what matters most" to residents, is the hallmark of Dr. Wiese's research and scholarly work. Her community-engaged research is led by a group of faith-based health educators, chaired by Antoinita Ifill of Healthier Glades, a foundation initiative. This includes hiring residents in health research; planning, assessment, data collection, evaluation, and developing interventions to address needs. Community leaders participate in profiling their contributions in Dr. Wiese's scholarly presentations and publications. This powerful collaboration of community partners, launched through state and federal funding, and now sustained by the foundation, is focused on empowering rural, older racially/ethnically diverse adults to age in place through dementia awareness, detection, and management.



 **NURSES WEEK**
AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION

Cover Story: The Nursing Consortium of Florida; Focused on Collaboration, Education, and Outreach

Continued from page 1

Consortium started as an informal network of nurse leaders who first came together to address community needs following Hurricane Andrew. The Consortium now has more than 70 member organizations, including schools of nursing, hospitals and other providers of nursing services such as hospice organizations, nurse staffing agencies, and more. Consortium membership has grown through the Treasure Coast counties and the Florida Gulf Coast and new organizational members from throughout Florida are welcomed.

"Our conferences, held twice a year, focus on an aspect of nursing with broad appeal to practicing nurses, new graduates, advanced practice nurses, educators, and executives," said Board President Jean Seaver, MSN, RN, Associate Vice President, Learning & Development, Broward Health. "We provide this continuing education not just for contact hours, but as a way for members to connect with other members of the Consortium for networking, information sharing, and collegiality."

The Consortium has a recruitment and retention committee to identify, share and build upon initiatives that are helping members reload their COVID-depleted nursing workforces.

"There isn't really a nursing shortage, per se, in Florida—there is a nursing retention problem and a nursing image problem," said Seaver. "A lot of people enter the profession based on what they've seen on TikTok and what they've heard on YouTube, and that's not really what the profession is about. So we really like to focus on what nursing is."

The Consortium has developed Day in the Life of a Nurse™, a nationally recognized program that shows high school and middle school students the real work that nurses do. The program offers both in-person experiences and curated and interactive virtual content that engages thousands of students each year; nurturing early interest in healthcare careers.

"The virtual program came about as COVID transformed how we lived, worked, and learned; it forced us to go online to continue creating interest among young folks regarding the nursing profession," said Board President-Elect W. Jason Dunne, DNP, MN, RN, CNE, Vice President, Operations,

Arizona College of Nursing. "In the first year that we launched it, we reached more than 5,000 Miami Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach county school students, introducing them to nursing careers."

"Nurses work in many different aspects and parts of the globe and in general, community members don't truly understand what a nurse does," he continued. "I think people believe that nursing is only someone at the bedside administering medication, but nursing is so much more than that. The program and its online modules expose students to all the different types of nursing from hospital-based to community-based to academia and more."

The Consortium is also starting nursing summer camps to further expose area youth to the nursing profession. The organization's advocacy committee helps members engage policy leaders on matters of importance to nursing, and its community engagement committee helps connect nurse leaders to opportunities to serve on community and foundation boards.

Another of the Consortium's strengths is its ability to bring various entities together to collaborate on major issues facing the profession, such as the fact that 1 million nurses nationwide are expected to retire by 2030.

"This is going to exacerbate filling positions locally and nationally and will create challenges in terms of recruitment in other parts of Florida," said Dunne. "That's why it's important that we reach across the state to bring together practice and education partners, to share our signature programs with them and their communities, and to learn about their innovations and best practices, too."

One of the keys to the Consortium's success, according to Ralph Egües, Jr., Executive Director, Nursing Consortium of Florida, is that unlike some nursing organizations that focus on a particular practice specialty or exclusively on leaders or educators, at the Consortium, everyone at the table is an equal partner. As a result, major changes are able to take place with the input of many.

"For example, there has been a tremendous evolution in the way that we are onboarding new nurses today," said Egües. "In the past, when we hired a large number of nurses, we also had a large number of very experienced nurses in units who could integrate new hires

into the culture and organizational practices. During COVID, we lost many of our experienced nurses, so now we have to be more intentional with our onboarding programs. It helps to have multiple organizations sharing what's working and what's not."

"By convening nurse leaders from different organizations to share what each is trying, all gain greater insights into what is needed to radically transform an aspect of what they're doing," he added. "The Consortium is fertile ground for bringing leaders in nursing practice and academia together to assess and address our biggest challenges, which, frankly, is unique among nursing organizations."

The Consortium will hold its next conference Caring Connections; Discovering Magic at the Intersection of Technology & Nursing in late June at Walt Disney World near Orlando, and is exploring venues in other parts of Florida for future conferences as well.

To learn more about all that the Nursing Consortium of Florida does, please visit www.NursingConsortium.us.

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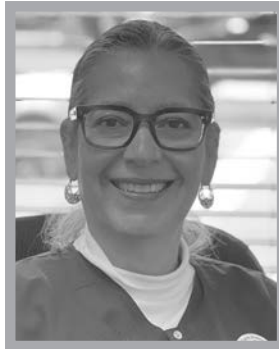
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HEALTH CARE DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

C. L. BRUMBACK PRIMARY CARE CLINICS

Liliana Blankenship, RN

Liliana Blankenship, RN, is a registered nurse at the Health Care District of Palm Beach County's Jupiter Community Health Center where she compassionately cares for adult patients. Before joining the Health Care District, Blankenship held various nursing positions, including six years at a public health and immigration correctional facility, as well as roles in hospital settings. Bilingual in Spanish and English, Blankenship's ability to communicate effectively bridges language barriers, enhancing patient care. Blankenship earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia, and holds a Master of Business Administration from Santiago de Cali University in Colombia, South America. Blankenship is certified in basic life support (BLS) and chronic care management (CCM).



Dalina Aldas, RN

Dalina Aldas is a registered nurse at the Health Care District of Palm Beach County's Lantana Community Health Center, providing primary nursing care to pediatric patients. With nearly two decades of healthcare experience, Aldas' journey underscores her commitment to healing. Originally trained as a general doctor in Cuba, she extended her expertise globally, offering medical aid following the 2005 Pakistan earthquake and providing essential services to patients in Bolivia. Upon relocating to the United States, Aldas transitioned through various healthcare roles, including certified nursing assistant (CNA), licensed practical nurse (LPN), and case manager, before completing the registered nursing program at the International Institute for Health Care Professionals in Boca Raton, FL.



EDWARD J. HEALEY REHABILITATION AND NURSING CENTER

Sheila Heslop, RN

Sheila Heslop, RN, is the Restorative Nurse Manager at the Health Care District's skilled nursing facility, where she helps residents live as safely and independently as possible. Since relocating from Jamaica to the United States, Heslop has worked in nursing capacities for 30 years, providing compassionate care at skilled nursing, assisted living and rehabilitation centers. Heslop is dedicated to achieving exceptional patient outcomes, delivering quality care, ensuring customer satisfaction, fostering staff camaraderie, and obtaining stellar ACHA survey results. She is a skilled mentor to other nurses, particularly those just entering the field, and her impact has inspired numerous individuals to pursue nursing. Her ethos of "if you didn't start, you can't finish" has empowered many to achieve their goals. Heslop received her licensed practical nurse (LPN) degree from North Technical Education Center and her registered nurse (RN) degree from Palm Beach State College.



Sandra Lovett, RN

Sandra Lovett, RN, is a registered nurse at the Health Care District of Palm Beach County's skilled nursing facility. Lovett is a seasoned healthcare professional with 40 years of healthcare experience, having advanced from CNA to RN. She has compassionately cared for residents at the Healey Center for nearly 25 years. Lovett is an asset to the nursing team, offering medical expertise and a reassuring sense of familiarity and trust to those in her care. She is a team player among colleagues and maintains an excellent rapport with residents and their families, even in challenging times. Previously, Lovett was an RN at the former Columbia Hospital in West Palm Beach, FL. She received her associate's degree in nursing from Palm Beach Community College and her bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Phoenix.



LAKESIDE MEDICAL CENTER

Tracey Baker, RN

Tracey Baker, RN, is a clinical educator at Lakeside Medical Center, the Health Care District's acute-care teaching hospital in Belle Glade, FL. Baker consistently goes above and beyond in this role, often adjusting her schedule to support the nursing team and providing guidance whenever needed. Baker joined the Lakeside Medical Center team in 2014 as a telemetry RN and worked as a circulator nurse in the operating room before transitioning to her current position. Prior to joining the Health Care District, she worked as an RN at the former Glades General Hospital and as a vocational nurse educator for high school students in the Glades, initially with the Palm Beach County School District and later with the Academy for Nursing and Health Occupations. Baker earned her nursing degree from the RN program at Palm Beach Community College in Belle Glade, Florida, following a decade-long career as a licensed practical nurse.



Julia Francioni, MBA, BSN, RN

Julia Francioni, MBA, BSN, RN, is an experienced healthcare leader currently serving as the Assistant Vice President of Nursing at Lakeside Medical Center, the Health Care District's acute care teaching hospital in Belle Glade. In this role, Francioni oversees plans, organizes and evaluates the effectiveness and care delivery of all nursing functions at the hospital. With a rich background in nursing, spanning critical care, emergency services, cardiovascular, and surgical care at hospitals in Florida and Kentucky, Francioni brings a wealth of clinical and leadership expertise to her role. Most recently, she served as the Director of Nursing Emergency Services at AdventHealth Sebring in Sebring, FL. Francioni received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Master of Business Administration (MBA) with a focus on Healthcare Administration from Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, IN. She is a member of the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) and the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL).



PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOL HEALTH NURSES

Jennifer Crosby, RN

Jennifer Crosby, RN, is a registered nurse at Elbridge Gale Elementary in Wellington, Florida, for the Health Care District of Palm Beach County's School Health program. Crosby started her school health nursing career with the Health Care District in 2012 and recently returned after prioritizing time to raise her three sons. Her dedication shines through as she expertly manages a busy school health clinic, providing comprehensive care for students, including several with chronic health conditions. Crosby's wealth of knowledge and experience positions her as a trusted preceptor for new hires and nursing students. Crosby earned her nursing degree from Clayton State University in Morrow, GA.



Zuzel McCarthy, RN

Zuzel McCarthy, RN, has been a registered nurse at Liberty Park Elementary School with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County's School Health program for 16 years. Prior to joining the Health Care District, McCarthy worked as a registered nurse in the Emergency Department at Miami Children's Hospital. McCarthy's work ethic has fostered strong relationships with school staff, contributing to a collaborative environment. Additionally, she volunteers as a mentor and preceptor for new nurses, sharing her expertise and nurturing future healthcare professionals. She is fluent in Spanish and English, enhancing communication with the school's diverse student population, parents, and guardians. McCarthy earned her nursing degree from Miami-Dade College in Miami, FL.



SYLVESTER COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

Johanna Garibaldi, RN

Johanna Garibaldi, RN, nurse navigator for the Firefighter Cancer Initiative, plays a pivotal role in protecting the firefighters who protect us. Cancer due to their occupation is the leading cause of death among firefighters, accounting for 70% of deaths. Firefighters are 14 percent more likely to die from cancer than the general U.S. population. At Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, Garibaldi helps by:

- Raising awareness about the risks to firefighters locally, nationally and worldwide.
- Ensuring they receive needed healthcare.
- Inspires nurses to prioritize this at-risk population.

She is a passionate advocate for education, prevention measures and research opportunities to promote firefighter health, inspired in part by her background in emergency medicine, including experience as a paramedic with a local fire department and as an emergency room nurse.



Jessica MacIntyre, DNP, ARNP, NP-C, AOCNP

Jessica MacIntyre, DNP, ARNP, NP-C, AOCNP, is a national leader advocating for oncology nurses. She is the new president of the Oncology Nursing Society, which represents 100,000 nurses and 35,000 members. ONS helps nurses build skills to improve oncology care, science and best practices. She has been a nurse at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center for 20 years, where she is executive director for Sylvester's clinical operations. She became interested in cancer care when she was in high school and her grandmother was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. She loved her grandmother's intimate connection with her nurses and how they treated her compassionately toward the end of her life. Today, she is intent on training up the next generation of nurses and nurse practitioners. In her new position at ONS, she will help bring more visibility to Sylvester, the only NCI-designated cancer center in South Florida.



Karelia Falcon, BSN, RN

Karelia Falcon is working her dream job as a charge nurse at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center in Doral. Building meaningful relationships with patients who become like family during the course of their treatments motivates her every day. "My patients teach me what is hope, what is bravery," she says. Celebrating with patients who become cancer-free is always a gift because she witnesses true joy in patients, families and colleagues. Karelia is grateful for the opportunity to lead her colleagues as a charge nurse. "I know I'm in the right place," she says. Karelia began her nursing career after immigrating to the U.S. from Cuba at age 26. She holds an Associate of Science in Nursing from Florida National University in Miami and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Ariz. Outside work, she enjoys volunteering at her children's schools and caring for her pets.



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI HEALTH SYSTEM

Patrick Moore, BSN, RN, CV-BC, MEDSURG-BC, GERO-BC

Patrick Moore was a middle schooler when he received exceptional nursing care during an outpatient procedure on his finger. He was so inspired by the nurses that he asked his mom to buy them flowers—and ultimately pursued a career in the profession. Patrick earned his Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Miami in 2019. He now serves as a charge nurse in the Cardiothoracic Stepdown Unit at the UHealth Tower in Miami, where he's responsible for the safety of 32 patients and making sure his fellow nurses have the resources they need. "When I'm charge nurse and someone wants to praise one of the other nurses, it makes me happy to see that my coworker gets recognition. It shows me my coworkers are making differences," he says. It makes his day when patients thank him, too. Outside the hospital, Moore enjoys hitting the beach and gym.



CONVIVA

Marlin Wehbe, APRN

Marlin Wehbe, APRN, Family Nurse Practitioner at West Kendall Conviva and Tamiami Conviva, always knew nursing was her destiny.

Caring for others came naturally to the Dominican Republic-native, as both parents are doctors. Hard work, passion and dedication to senior patient care makes Marlin a truly outstanding nurse and a woman who strives to reach her full potential.

She earned dual bachelor's degrees (Biology and Nursing), a master's degree and is pursuing a Doctorate degree.

"I could have followed in my parents' footsteps, but I sought a more holistic approach," she said. "I wanted to stay at a patient's bedside and care for them longer. I wanted to nurture them. A nurse's heart is different. I love my patients. They are family."

Marlin assists in the breast cancer and HIV communities, volunteers at a local animal shelter, chairs Conviva's Mentorship for Nurses committee, and serves on Conviva's Advanced Practice Provider Steering Council.



Palm Health Foundation Salutes Nurses Who Pay it Forward



"I get to pay forward what nurses have done for my family by ensuring my patients feel heard and truly cared for." —Stephanie Kurzejewski, BSN, RN

Stephanie Kurzejewski knows the pain a family goes through when a loved one is seriously ill. She felt it when her nephew Harrison was diagnosed with a fatal disease at birth. And she lived through it again when her husband Michael's brain condition led to years of surgeries, ICUs, and a long recovery to return to her and their two children.

At Harrison's and Michael's bedsides, she experienced nurses' compassion, strengthening her resolve to enter the profession. Scholarships made possible by *The Debra Coffman Howe Nursing Scholarship Fund* and *The Sutton Kailey Nursing Advancement Fund* at Palm Health Foundation supported her BSN, and now her APRN, so she can provide the compassionate care for others that her family received.

Learn how you can pay it forward by supporting nursing scholars. Visit PalmHealthFoundation.org/Scholarships to learn more or contact Carrie Browne at CarrieB@phfpbc.org.

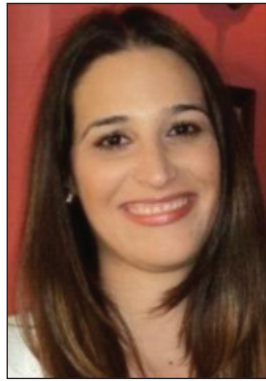
KIDZ Nurse Practitioner Loreta Gonzalez Vento Rises to the Occasion

BY VANESSA ORR

Loreta Gonzalez Vento, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, is always up for a challenge. From working as a neonatal nurse practitioner in the NICU, to helping implement a new telemedicine program during COVID for NICU babies and fellow colleagues, to taking on a completely different role as a nurse practitioner in Nicklaus Children's Hospital's Genetics Division, Vento has excelled at every role she's taken at KIDZ Medical Services.

Vento first interacted with KIDZ medical staff while working at South Miami Hospital as a registered nurse in the NICU. KIDZ provides specialized neonatal, pediatric, and obstetrical healthcare throughout South Florida.

"I walked into the interview, and I already knew a number of people because KIDZ staffed our NICU," said



Loreta Gonzalez Vento

Vento, who also worked in the adult ICU for two years after becoming a nurse practitioner. "When I applied for a position with KIDZ as a pediatric nurse practitioner in cardiology, they welcomed me with open arms. But instead of working in cardiology, they wanted me in the NICU because of our previous history there."

Vento worked in the NICU for three-and-a-half years, including during the pandemic. During that time, she helped implement the NICU's follow-up telemedicine program, which provided continuity of care for parents after they took their babies home.

"At the time, many pediatricians' offices weren't open or had very restrictive appointments, so it was up to us to keep track of these babies to make sure that they were thriving," explained

Vento. "We'd call the parents within 24-48 hours after leaving and go through an assessment to determine how the babies were doing. From that program, we had three admissions—including one for breathing problems—caught during the telemedicine sessions."

Vento said that she loves being able to help sick babies survive and also being there for parents at the most difficult times in their lives. "NICU is my heart; working with these families was an amazing experience that I cherish with my life," she said.

When Vento became pregnant with her second child, however, she realized that the hospital schedule would no longer work for her growing family. Instead of letting her leave, KIDZ encouraged her to stay and work with them in another capacity. Vento now works as a nurse practitioner in the Genetics Division at Nicklaus Children's Hospital.

"For being such a large company, KIDZ knows and values its employees and what they need, and really works to

accommodate them," said Vento. "I love my profession, but I love my children more. And now I don't have to go anywhere else to continue doing what I love."

While she says she was thriving while working in the NICU, Vento notes that working in genetics presents an entirely different challenge.

"It's like reinventing yourself at 37 years old after thriving and growing in an area that you could do with your eyes closed," Vento said. "In my previous role, I could do a procedure, or put a line in, or give medication—I could fix things," Vento said. "But now I have to go from being a fixer/doer to first understanding and then evaluating what we find. It's a completely different approach."

But for Vento, accepting new challenges has been worth it.

"Nursing is a rewarding career, and if you're open to it, it will open up new opportunities for growth," she said. "Good thing I'm always open to a new challenge, especially one that will ultimately help others."

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Cover Story: Memorial Healthcare System's Nurse Manager Council: Built to Support and Retain High-Performing Leaders

Continued from page 1

to provide leadership and guidance to an increasingly inexperienced workforce while working a job that too often left them exhausted, burnt out, and lamenting their poor work/life balance.

Introduction of Shared Governance and Participatory Leadership

Out of that, however, came a strategic initiative whose positive impact continues to resonate to this day. What began as a peer group to provide support to each other and help govern practices evolved into a systemwide Nurse Manager Council that is directly impacting retention, quality, safety, and finance. Part of Memorial's strategic plan for nursing, the council empowers nurse leaders with a collective voice that gives them more control over their lives and careers and has become a model for shared governance and participatory leadership.

There are 12 nurse managers on the council, representing the six hospitals in the Memorial system and more than 50 leaders with that title, whether they work with inpatients, in the operating or emergency rooms. The council's first order of

business was establishing a set of core values important to them, which were, in essence, lead with heart, do what's right, show up and make a difference, and trust your voice will be heard. They then defined areas of great concern, which included poor work/life balance, disorganized onboarding, and lack of professional development opportunities.

While they established priorities, nurse managers also bonded with each other. Professional friendships developed that might not have otherwise, given the size of our organization, and the leaders provided support for each other, regardless of where they worked. Additionally, seasoned nurse managers began mentoring newer counterparts and shared best practices that can be utilized across Memorial Healthcare System.

Improving Outcomes

For the past two years, the Nurse Manager Council has been empowered to meet and make decisions about anything related to workflow and nurse practice, with a number of policies and procedures since implemented that increased employee retention, job satisfaction, and engagement:

- Adoption of flexible, 40-hour work schedules
- Development of nurse manager core competencies
- Standardization of the onboarding process

Memorial Healthcare System leadership, at both the system and hospital level, is seeing the quantifiable fruits of the council's labor. Given the estimated \$80,000 cost to replace a nurse manager, our turnover/vacancy rate dropping from nearly 17% to 6% is significant and demonstrates the importance of the nurse manager's role in staff retention. Memorial retains nurse residents from year one to year two of their careers at an impressive 94% (the national average is 67%), which can also be attributed to strong leadership. We've also reduced pandemic-era staffing costs for travel nurses by \$130 million and now have a waiting list of nurses hoping to join our organization. The bottom line is the improved work environment for nursing staff not only increased retention, but also positive patient outcomes and satisfaction.

What's Next?

Moving forward, our Nurse Manager Council will be evaluating their scope of

responsibilities and will use evidence-based research in search of healthier professional environments that foster and encourage innovation in practice. While we don't yet know what recommendations may come from this aspect of the council's agenda, we do know executive nurse leadership and hospital CNOs are interested to hear the recommendations.

Since its inception, the Nurse Manager Council has had our collective buy-in and support, which aligns with the Memorial culture that values the voices of all our caregivers and prioritizes a healthy environment for nurses to practice and grow.

Monica Puga is the chief nursing executive at Memorial Healthcare System.

Shelly Delfin is the chief nursing officer at Memorial Regional Hospital South and Memorial Rehabilitation Institute.

Jessica Jimenez is a nurse manager at Memorial Hospital Miramar and co-chairs the Nurse Manager Council.

To learn more about nursing opportunities at Memorial Healthcare System, visit www.mhs.net.

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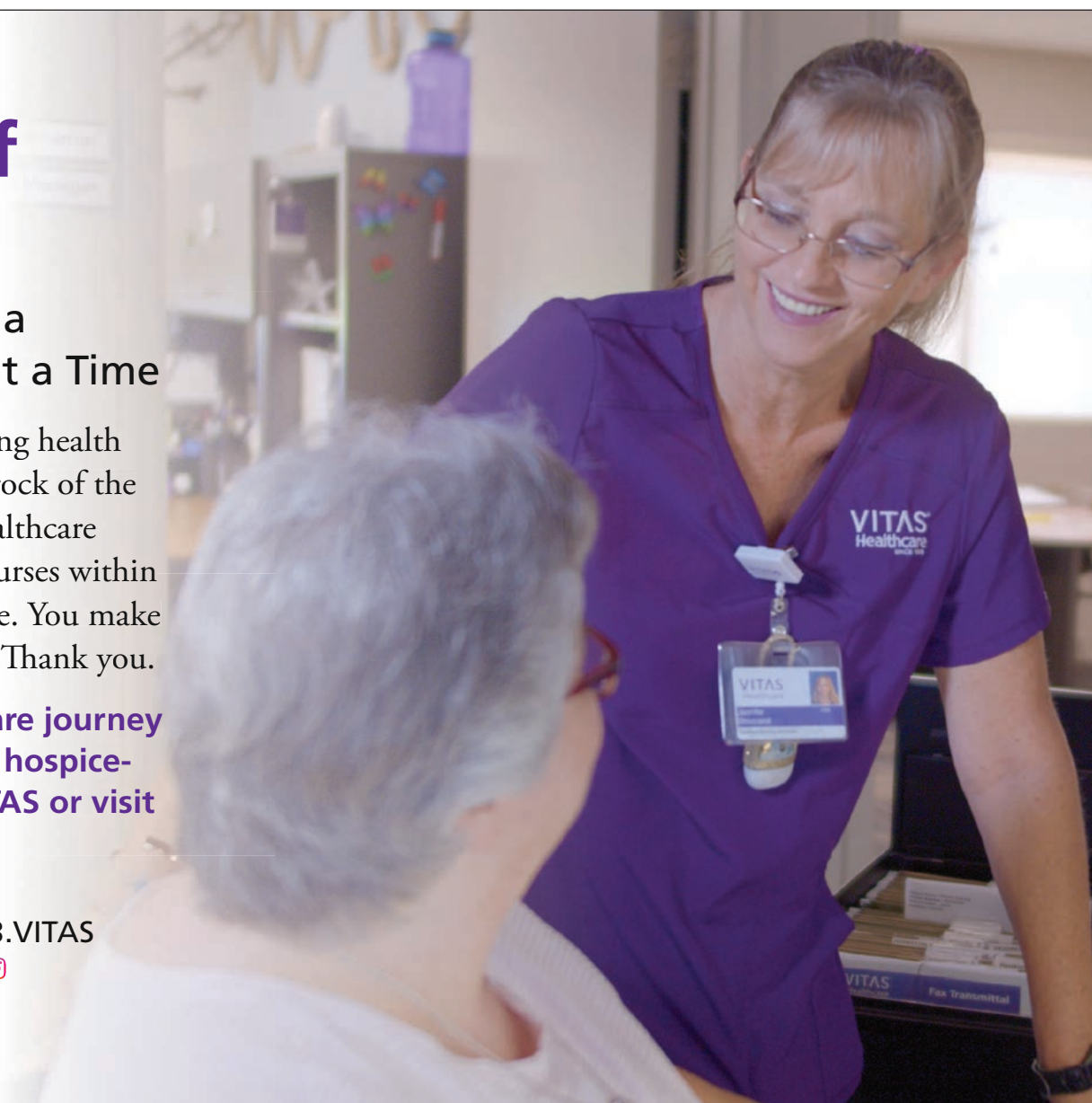
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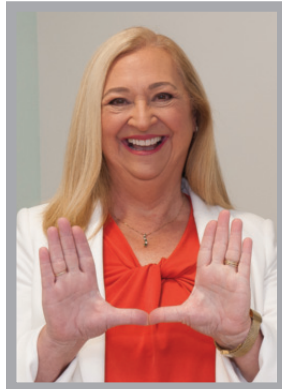
Miami Nursing Dean Retires

Dean Cindy L. Munro shaped the future of health care education at UM's School of Nursing and Health Studies

BY ROBIN SHEAR

Cindy L. Munro arrived on the University of Miami's verdant Coral Gables campus August 15, 2017, excited for her first day on the job as new dean of the prestigious School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). Soon virtually everything changed with Hurricane Irma's September 10 arrival in South Florida. "In the wake of the devastating storm, I was impressed by how quickly and seamlessly our school family came together," said Munro.

Monumental change was a constant thereafter, and Munro was ready for it. "As sailors, my husband and I have a saying we use out on the water. 'Other people have plans, but people on a boat have intentions,'" she explained. "Rather than



Cindy L. Munro

a rigid plan about getting from A to B, you have a larger vision for where you want to go. You adapt to changing tides, winds, and storms with the long-term goal in mind and the ability to adapt to whatever is happening at the moment."

Adapt she did, navigating the School through high-force hurricanes, a once-in-a-century pandemic, massive nursing shortages, and many more sweeping changes. Now, after seven years at the School's helm, she is making a big change of her own. On May 31, Munro is retiring. "I am leaving at a time when the school is exceptionally strong," she said. "It's on such an incredible trajectory that it is poised to become a national leader in a way that very few schools of nursing or health studies are able to achieve."

UM President Julio Frenk said Munro "led the School of Nursing and Health Studies to new heights" during her dean-

ship. "The result is that our communities are benefiting from graduates who are compassionate and committed leaders in their field."

Early on, Munro articulated a vision for SONHS to be Novel, Optimistic, World-changing (NOW). That vision characterized for Munro "the kind of faculty and students I want - people who are forward-thinking about new solutions to patient problems, people who really do believe they can change the world and are willing to give it a shot," she said.

Meanwhile, her own ability to pivot quickly and embrace new opportunities helped grow the School's reputation as a leader in health care education. "The goal of any leader is to build that stability into the organization so you are ready to roll when the VUCA situation comes along," she has said, referring to the military acronym for Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous.

She also established rigorous benchmarks for research funding, educational programs, accreditation, first-time pass rates, and more. She oversaw the launch

of world-class facilities and innovative academic programs at the School. A top-25 nursing school for National Institutes of Health research funding since 2021, SONHS hit an all-time funding and ranking high in fiscal year 2023. "Dean Munro has recruited really stellar faculty members who have truly elevated the School's research portfolio," said Guillermo "Willy" Prado, UM's Interim Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

Fellow Dean Kenneth R. White, of the MGH Institute of Health Professions School of Nursing, was a student of Munro's when she taught at Virginia Commonwealth University. Munro, he said, encouraged him to "think big" and "be confident in his ability to lead."

She has bestowed this legacy of bold optimism on the educational mission of SONHS as well. "We should embrace the idea that the world we'll have in 30 years will be much more conducive to improving outcomes for patients," Munro has written. "We should be running headlong into the future, ready to get there."

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Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital Adds Gastroenterologist

Gastroenterologist Gavin Harewood, M.D., has joined the medical staff at Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital. After earning his medical degree from the National University of Ireland in Galway, Ireland, Dr. Harewood completed his fellowship in gastroenterology and a residency in internal medicine at the Mayo Clinic and Foundation. He also completed a residency at the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in Dublin, Ireland.

Dr. Harewood's specialty interests include ulcerative colitis/Crohn's disease, colon cancer screening and management, and pancreatic disease. He provides comprehensive and compassionate care to patients with digestive disorders.

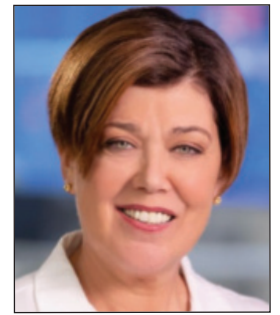


Dr. Gavin Harewood

Dr. Peggy Duggan of Tampa General Hospital Recognized as a 2024 Chief Medical Officer to Know

Tampa General Hospital's (TGH) Executive Vice President, Chief Physician Executive and Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Peggy Duggan, has been recognized on Becker's Hospital Review's list of "180 Hospital and Health System Chief Medical Officers to Know" for 2024, which highlights exemplary and innovative clinical leaders, and this latest accolade marks her third consecutive recognition by Becker's on this list.

Since joining Tampa General in 2021, Duggan has played an integral role in the academic health system's continued growth and strategic initiatives to advance world-class clinical care, patient safety, and outcomes through her leadership with the organization. With the recent integration of the Bravera Health Network, now TGH North, her CMO role has expanded to include the entire Tampa General enterprise, in addition to the academic medical center.



Dr. Peggy Duggan

Cardiac Electrophysiologist Joins Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital

Ricardo J. Hernandez, MD, FHRS, is a cardiac electrophysiologist who is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in cardiac electrophysiology and cardiovascular disease. Dr. Hernandez earned his medical degree from Ponce School of Medicine in Puerto Rico. He completed his residency in internal medicine as well as fellowship training in both specialties at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

Dr. Hernandez's specialty interests include cardiac arrhythmia management, syncope, sudden cardiac death prevention, bradycardia, cardiac device implantation (pacemakers and defibrillators), cardiac resynchronization therapy, lead extraction, subcutaneous loop recorder implantation, radiofrequency ablation of arrhythmias, cardioembolic stroke prevention, and left atrial appendage occlusion device implantation. He is fluent in English and Spanish.



Dr. Ricardo J. Hernandez

Cleveland Clinic Appoints Lisa Yerian, MD, as Executive Vice President and Chief Clinical and Operational Improvement Officer

Cleveland Clinic has named Lisa Yerian, M.D., as the new Executive Vice President and Chief Clinical and Operational Improvement Officer.

Since July 2023, Dr. Yerian has served as the Interim Chief Clinical Transformation Officer.

Dr. Yerian received her bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame in 1996 and a medical degree from the University of Chicago-Pritzker School of Medicine in 2000. She completed residency training in Anatomic Pathology and a fellowship in gastrointestinal and liver pathology at the University of Chicago.

She joined the staff in Anatomic Pathology in 2004 and has held several pathology and health system leadership positions. She has served as Director of Hepatobiliary Pathology and Section Head of Surgical Pathology. Lisa holds a joint appointment in the Transplantation Center. She is a former member of the Board of Governors.



Dr. Lisa Yerian

Hematologist and Oncologist Joins Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital

Yehuda Galili, M.D., is a board-certified hematologist and oncologist at Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital. Dr. Galili earned his medical degree from the Ross University School of Medicine in Dominica, West Indies. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Orlando Regional Medical Center and postgraduate training in hematology and oncology at the Orlando Health Cancer Institute, where he gained extensive experience in managing complex and rare cases.

Dr. Galili has a passion for treating patients with blood disorders and cancers, and his specialty interests include hematology, benign hematology, and hematologic malignancies. He is committed to providing compassionate and evidence-based care to his patients, and to staying updated on the latest advances in his field.



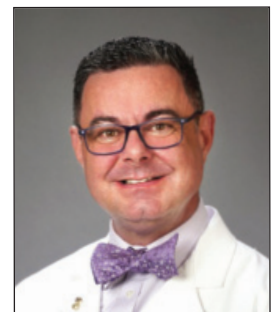
Dr. Yehuda Galili

Sean Xavier Cavanaugh, MD, Joins Baptist Health as Radiation Oncologist

Board-certified radiation oncologist Sean Xavier Cavanaugh, M.D., has joined the Eugene M. and Christine E. Lynn Cancer Institute, part of Baptist Health, at Boca Raton Regional Hospital. He specializes in treating all types of cancer and cancer-related pain with advanced radiation therapies.

Prior to joining Lynn Cancer Institute, Dr. Cavanaugh served as a radiation oncologist and the regional medical director for GenesisCare in Lakewood Ranch, FL. He was also an adjunct professor at the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, GA.

Dr. Cavanaugh earned his medical degree at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine and completed a radiation oncology residency at the University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio, MD Anderson Cancer Center.



Dr. Sean Xavier Cavanaugh

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Cover Story: Leading with Vision: Kenneth Jones and the Future of HCA Florida Northwest Hospital

Continued from page 1

future, especially as the facility celebrates its 40th anniversary.

"We're proud of our history in the community, but we're also excited about the future," Jones shares.

Under his leadership, the hospital aims to expand its already robust offerings, including renowned cardiovascular services, women's health, emergency medicine, and newly added neurosciences and orthopedics. These additions respond to the population growth and evolving health needs of the Northern Broward and Southern Boca areas.

"So many of these services tie that to our community health," he explains.

Jones also emphasizes the importance of education in healthcare's future, highlighting the hospital's commitment to training the next generation of medical professionals.

"We have over 150 residents who are part of our graduate medical education program," he notes, stressing the value of building a strong internal team to support the hospital's growth.

Cultivating Innovation

Jones also prioritizes creating a culture of innovation within HCA Florida Northwest Hospital. He explains that the hospital's values - centered around "excellence always" - inform its approach to hiring and operations, ensuring that every team member contributes to the mission.

"Our focus and our values are always around excellence, and 'always' really ties back to accountability, leadership, willingness, attitude, you first, and safety," Jones says.

One practical example of innovation under his leadership involved improving operational efficiency through technology.

"One of the things that came up from our recent colleague engagement survey is around resources," he recalls.

Staff feedback highlighted the need for better equipment tracking, which led to a partnership with a company to implement infrared technology and tagging for real-time equipment location.

Jones proudly reports, "Our staff is spending less time hunting down various pieces of equipment and more time on clinical care."

This proactive approach not only streamlines hospital operations but also directly enhances patient care, reflecting Jones' commitment to the community's health and the well-being of his staff.

These initiatives, led by Jones, demonstrate a forward-thinking approach that promises to keep HCA Florida Northwest Hospital at the forefront of healthcare innovation and community service, ensuring a resilient and responsive healthcare environment for the region.

Guiding Principles of Leadership

Jones emphasizes that the core of his leadership in the complex healthcare environment is deeply rooted in fostering a strong organizational culture. "Culture is where we spend most of our time," Jones asserts.

It revolves around teamwork, patient interaction, and the expected behavior toward treating everyone as family. He values accountability, leadership, wellness, and attitude but places a paramount emphasis on safety.

"Safety is a tremendous priority. We have safety huddles that take place daily," he explains, highlighting the proactive measures taken to address potential risks and the importance of storytelling in learning from near misses.

Trust forms the cornerstone of his philosophy—trust among teams, physicians, and patients. This, Jones believes, leads to personal connections that ultimately result in better healthcare outcomes.

"Developing that personal connection so that our staff feel like they have personal connections with each other and with leadership ... we believe that leads to better outcomes," he says.

Building a Cohesive Team

Jones articulates several strategies to maintain a motivated and engaged workforce. Rounding or interacting with staff to understand their choices, needs, and the required resources plays a crucial role.

"Rounding is tremendously important, as is being responsive and listening to our staff's needs," he says.

Inclusion in decision-making processes also fosters a sense of belonging and engagement. Jones mentions establishing colleague networks such as the Women's Colleague Network, Black Colleague Network - which he chairs - and the Veterans Colleague Network. These groups help strengthen the sense of connection among staff.

"All those things tie back to their relationship, particularly their relationship with their frontline manager," he adds, underlining the critical role of managers in preventing staff turnover by fostering positive relationships and providing frequent feedback and support.

Staying Ahead in Healthcare

To remain at the forefront of healthcare innovation, Jones relies heavily on data and community feedback, integrating insights from multiple stakeholders, including physicians, patients, and the board. This information helps navigate market and population trends.

"We use data, and of course, the voice of our community to provide insight on market trends, population trends, competitive trends," he says.

Strategic resource allocation according to existing strengths and identified opportunities is crucial. Decisions are made about where the hospital can most effectively deliver high-quality services. Community engagement, through meetings with homeowners' associations and other community groups, is also vital for keeping the hospital responsive to the needs of its community.

By integrating these strategies, Kenneth Jones ensures that HCA Florida Northwest Hospital not only adapts to the changing landscape of healthcare but excels in delivering top-notch services tailored to the unique needs of its community.

Impactful Initiatives and Community Health

One specific initiative that stands out in enhancing community health under his leadership is the expansion of resources within the women's service line.

"We have a high-risk maternal-fetal medicine clinic that sees high-risk patients, where we have a level three NICU and a high-risk navigator," Jones explains. This navigator is crucial in coordinating care by visiting various OB offices and community partners, ensuring patients can seamlessly transition between appointments and overcome potential barriers. The initiative is bolstered by partnerships with organizations like the March of Dimes to provide community education and outreach, contributing significantly to community health.

Additionally, the OB-GYN residency program at HCA Florida Northwest Hospital is pivotal in addressing physician shortages in obstetrics and gynecology, thus enhancing the hospital's responsiveness and capacity to effectively meet urgent community needs.

Leadership Lessons and Future Vision

Reflecting on the challenges faced in leadership, Jones highlights the difficulty of changing historical perceptions of the hospital.

"The most challenging aspect is that you have historical perceptions of what the hospital has been, and things do change," he states. Overcoming this involves recasting the facility's vision, not focusing on the past but rather on where it is headed in the next five to ten years.

This vision involves a strategic focus on quality, safety, and engagement, which are crucial for building momentum and improving performance. Jones emphasizes the importance of direct engagement, relationship building, and demonstrating progress as essential strategies to foster trust and support for the hospital's forward-looking initiatives.

For more information, visit

<https://www.hcafloridahealthcare.com/locations/northwest-hospital>.

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WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...

Lee Health Completes Renovation at Outpatient Center at Surfside in Cape Coral

The second phase of the Outpatient Center at Surfside in Cape Coral is now open.

Located at the intersection of Veterans Parkway and Surfside Boulevard, the medical facility will now offer orthopedics, rheumatology and rehabilitation services, while also featuring a breast health center, imaging, lab services and primary care physician offices on site.

The second phase of the project is also bringing Lee Physician Group specialists in orthopedics to Cape Coral, so residents will no longer need to travel to Fort Myers for appointments. Additionally, rheumatology specialists will be available full-time, giving Cape Coral patients more access to specialized care.

Phase two of the project added 15,000 square feet to the two-story complex, which originally opened its doors in 2015.



Surfside(l-r) David Rybicki, VP Outpatient Services; Theresa Everly, Board Member; Donna Clarke, Board Chair; Scott Nygaard, Chief Operating Officer; Larry Antonucci, President & CEO

Generous Donation Establishes New Urology Center at Jupiter Medical Center

Jupiter Medical Center is pleased to announce a generous donation from Joe and Barbara Charles to establish the “Joe and Barbara Charles Center for Urology.” The donation will enable the independent, not-for-profit hospital to create more access to urological care by recruiting a team of highly specialized physicians, including a urologic oncologist, and acquiring additional state-of-the-art technology. The multidisciplinary team will specialize in general urology and urological cancers.

The new Center will expand access to an extremely in-demand medical specialty – it has been reported that 50 percent of men and women will experience a urological condition in their lifetime. Through extensive research and planning, Jupiter Medical Center identified a growing need for specialized urologists, especially in Palm Beach and Martin Counties, where the population has increased 11.33 percent and 9.96 percent, respectively, creating delays in care for urological conditions.

Patrick O. Tenbrink, M.D., a board-certified urologist, will start his new position with the Jupiter Medical Center Physician Group (JMCPG) as the Director of the Center for Urology beginning this summer. He will head the new program under the leadership of Rogerio C. Lilenbaum, M.D., FASCO, SVP, and Chief Physician Executive, and Director of The Anderson Family Cancer Institute. The Center will be located at the Anderson Family Cancer Institute on Jupiter Medical Center's main campus.

Jupiter Medical Center's urology care team will offer preventative, diagnostic, management and surgical care for patients of all ages with various urological conditions, including incontinence, benign prostate hyperplasia (BPH), pelvic floor dysfunction, kidney stones, undescended testis, interstitial cystitis and more.

Joe and Barbara Charles have been active contributors to Jupiter Medical Center, donating state-of-the-art technology and contributing to the new Johnny and Terry Gray Surgical Institute.



*Barbara and Joe Charles
Photo credit: Jerry Rabinowitz*

HCA Florida Kendall Hospital Unveils Cutting-Edge Surgical Robot

HCA Florida Kendall Hospital proudly introduces the latest advancement in surgical technology by acquiring the da Vinci 5 Surgical Robot. This state-of-the-art system represents a significant leap forward in minimally invasive surgery and underscores HCA Florida Kendall Hospital's commitment to providing patients with the highest standard of care throughout South Florida.

This new robot, the only one of its kind in South Florida, is poised to revolutionize surgical procedures with its precision, dexterity, and enhanced visualization capabilities.

“We are thrilled to bring this one-of-a-kind surgical robot to HCA Florida Kendall Hospital,” said Ben Harris, chief executive officer. “This cutting-edge technology allows our surgeons to perform complex procedures with unparalleled precision, which can result in shorter recovery times, reduced risk of complications, and improved outcomes. Our patients will now have exclusive access to advanced treatment options previously unavailable in this region.”

This surgical robot is suitable for various procedures, including urological, gynecological, and general surgeries. Its versatility and precision make it an invaluable tool for surgeons across multiple specialties. It enables them to perform intricate procedures with greater accuracy and control. Its minimally invasive approach minimizes trauma to surrounding tissues, which can lead to faster recovery times and shorter hospital stays for patients.



WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...

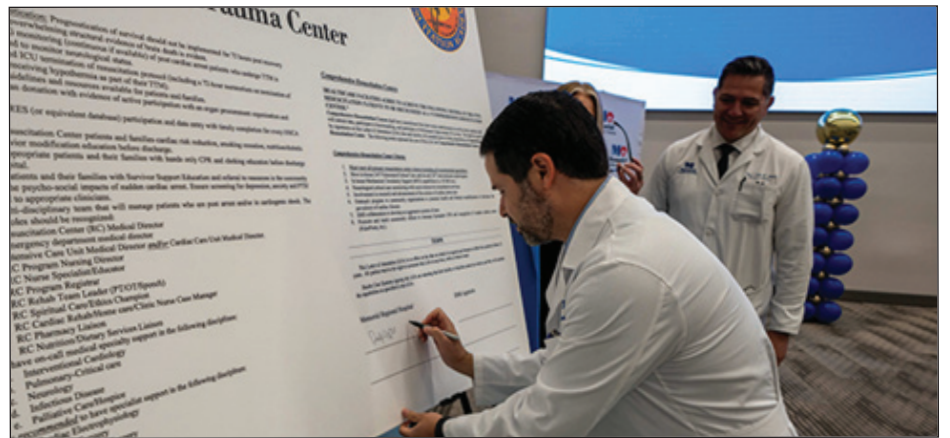
Memorial Regional Hospital Becomes Florida's First Resuscitation Center for Excellence

Memorial Regional Hospital is the first hospital in the state of Florida to become a Resuscitation Center of Excellence (RCOE), meeting over 30 required evidence-based criteria in cardiac arrest care. Memorial Healthcare System signed the program attestation alongside the Association of EMS Medical Directors and chiefs from surrounding Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies.

As part of the program, Memorial commits to expand and enhance cardiac arrest care through collaborative efforts with EMS agencies to offer patients advanced therapies that have been shown to improve survival, including extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) and rapid, around-the-clock interventional cardiology coverage for lifesaving procedures.

Dr. Ben Abo, President of the Florida Association of EMS Medical Directors (FAEMSMD) states, "by developing a progressive and aggressive Center of Excellence, it provides a strong basis to improve cardiac care and collaboration statewide."

The chance of surviving a cardiac arrest outside of the hospital environment is relatively uncommon, at around 10% of cases. However, through EMS collaboration allowing access to these treatments and by improving bystander CPR and AED use rates, the likelihood of survival can be significantly improved. For this reason, the program also aims to integrate regular bystander CPR courses into the community, alongside providing extra educational materials centered on preventing cardiac diseases and using AEDs.



Baptist Health Foundation Receives \$5 Million Gift from Walsh Family for Baptist Health Fishermen's Community Hospital



Baptist Health Foundation announced that the Walsh family, owners of Ocean Properties Hotels and Resorts / OPAL Collection, has made a \$5 million gift to Baptist Health Foundation in support of the construction of the medical arts building at Baptist Health Fishermen's Community Hospital in Marathon, FL.

The gift was recognized with the naming of the Walsh Family Medical Arts Building which is located on the hospital campus.

The Walshes are longtime donors to Baptist Health's Bethesda Hospital in Boynton Beach, and have supported many Baptist Health Foundation fundraising events. They are well-known community leaders in Palm Beach County, where they are based. Their philanthropic organization, OPL Charities, has given millions of dollars in support of schools, libraries, museums, food banks and other organizations.

The new hurricane-resistant Walsh Family Medical Arts Building at Fishermen's Community Hospital spans nearly 10,000 square feet, and will house primary care physician offices and specialty services like orthopedics, gastroenterology, oncology infusion, physical therapy and rehabilitation services. It will allow the oncology infusion area inside the hospital to relocate to a bigger space, adding two more chairs and a lab area. The new building will also allow for greater clinical collaboration and make imaging and testing services more convenient for patients.

Delray Medical Center Is First Hospital in South Florida to Treat Heart Arrhythmia with Innovative AVEIR™ DR Dual Chamber Leadless Pacemaker

Delray Medical Center is the first hospital in South Florida to offer an innovative treatment for patients with slow or irregular heart rhythms, using the new AVEIR™ DR dual chamber leadless pacemaker system. The first surgery was performed at the hospital by Dr. Mark Freher on April 18th.

Approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in June 2023, the AVEIR DR system, which is manufactured by Abbott, provides a new minimally invasive option to treat people who require pacing in two chambers of the heart (both the right atrium and right ventricle). Unlike traditional pacemakers, leadless devices are implanted directly into the heart and eliminate the need for cardiac leads. Traditional pacemakers require an incision to implant a battery in a pocket under the patient's skin in the collarbone area. Wires from the battery are then stretched through veins and attached to the heart muscle.

"We believe offering this innovative new treatment will help improve the lives of our patients by reducing their exposure to the kinds of lead and pocket-related complications associated with traditional pacemakers," said Daniel Listi, Delray Medical Center's CEO. "This is another affirmation of our commitment to providing the communities we serve with groundbreaking technologies and treatments that meet the healthcare needs of residents."

Jackson West Medical Center Becomes First Certified Healthcare Facility in Doral to Treat Severe Types of Heart Attacks

José Milton Memorial Hospital at Jackson West Medical Center has become the only, fully certified ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) healthcare facility in Doral. A STEMI is the most severe type of heart attack; they are life threatening and require quick assessment and treatment. This accreditation will give patients who live in Doral, Medley, and other surrounding neighborhoods access to receiving life-saving treatment from board-certified cardiologists within distance of their homes.

"We consistently strive to achieve the highest level of quality care for our patients, and we are proud to have earned the STEMI accreditation," said Ivan Mendoza, MD, FACC, chief of cardiology at Jackson West. "This certification affirms that Jackson West is equipped with advanced technology, a state-of-the-art facility, and a highly trained medical team, including expert cardiac catheterization laboratory staff and specialty physicians, all dedicated to rapidly diagnosing and treating heart attack patients."

The cardiology team at Jackson West were required to perform more than 200 hours of cardiac cauterizations and other cardiac procedures to earn this certification.



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Jersey Mike's Raises \$146,958 For Golisano Children's Hospital In March

During the entire month of March, Southwest Florida Jersey Mike's asked customers to "round-up" at the register to donate to Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida. Then, on March 27 during Jersey Mike's Annual Day of Giving, 15 local restaurants donated 100% of the day's sales. The participating local stores raised \$146,958 to help fulfill the region's critical pediatric health care needs through innovative programs, technologies and services. "We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Jersey Mike's franchisees, staff, and patrons for their unwavering support year after year, enabling Golisano Children's Hospital to deliver exceptional care to children in Southwest Florida," said Lee Health Foundation Senior Director of Development Katy Martinez. "Community partnerships significantly assist Golisano Children's Hospital in delivering on its mission of providing lifesaving care close to home, and Jersey Mike's consistently rises to the occasion in a truly remarkable manner."



The 15 Southwest Florida locations donating proceeds to Golisano Children's Hospital were in Venice, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Cape Coral, Fort Myers, South Fort Myers, Estero, Bonita Springs and Naples.

Since Month of Giving began in 2011, Jersey Mike's nationwide has raised over \$113 million for charities, including \$524,158 for Golisano Children's Hospital.

Around the Region... Around

Lee Health Announces Board of Directors Officers for 2024

Lee Health is pleased to announce the newly elected officers of its Board of Directors for 2024.

Officers Donna Clarke (chair), David F. Collins (treasurer) and Dane Allen (secretary) will all retain their positions, with David Klein becoming the new vice-chair.

Clarke has been re-elected as board chair for 2024. Elected in 2014, Clarke has served for nine years. She is a former Florida State Representative and has served as an adjunct professor with the State College of Florida.

Klein was elected as the new vice-chair. He was elected to the board in 2022 and is a nationally recognized healthcare executive. Klein's career includes 41 years of service with BlueCross BlueShield with 10 years as the chief executive officer (CEO) of Excellus BlueCross BlueShield. He is also a director of United Way and an advisor to Florida Gulf Coast Marib College of Health and Human Services.

Allen has been re-elected as secretary. Elected in 2022, he serves as a member of the Board's Governance Committee and Audit Committee. Allen is the Assistant General Counsel for The Hertz Corporation. He is a nationally recognized corporate governance expert, having served on the Board of Directors of the national Society for Corporate Governance from 2019 to 2023, where he also served as Chair of the Education Programs Committee.

Collins will retain his position as treasurer. Elected in 2012, Collins has served for 11 years. He has been a mortgage banker for more than 29 years and has served as a board member for PACE Center for Girls of Lee County, and as treasurer for the PACE Capital Campaign.

Go Red for Women Movement Celebrates 20 Years of Impact With Palm Beach Luncheon

Local changemaker Dr. Deeawn Roundtree presented with Woman of Impact award

Heart care is the new self-care according to the Palm Beach County 2024 Go Red for Women Luncheon's energetic keynote speaker, Dr. Suzanne Steinbaum. Steinbaum, a New York-based cardiologist of more than 20 years and one of the founders of the Go Red for Women movement, encouraged the 400 luncheon attendees to take their heart health seriously.

The luncheon celebrated the culmination of this year's local Go Red for Women campaign, which brings awareness and funding to women's heart health. Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States, and the No. 1 cause of death for moms.

"Twenty years ago, Go Red for Women was launched as a movement to bring attention to women's heart health," says Pam Rauch, 2024 Palm Beach County Go Red for Women Chairwoman and a Florida Power & Light Company vice president. "That meant more women participating in heart research, more funding for that scientific focus, and a bigger push for heart health awareness among our moms, daughters, friends and more."

The luncheon highlighted the local work of this year's Woman of Impact and Teen of Impact nominees: Dr. Abeer Aziz-Siddiqui with HCA Florida, Kimberly Lea with Palm Beach State College, Angel O'Neal with HCA Florida Primary Care, Desiree Reavis with Omni, Dr. Deeawn Roundtree with Roundtree Training & Consulting, and teens Ella McDermott and Katherine Yang.

Each nominee fundraised and participated in activities to raise awareness for heart health in women over a nine-week campaign. The 2024 Palm Beach County Woman of Impact is Dr. Deeawn Roundtree, and the Teen of Impact is Ella McDermott.

"We are grateful to everyone who has helped elevate the Go Red for Women message and raise critical funds in support of our local mission," Rauch says. "This work is far from over, but from improving nutrition access in local food deserts to providing free blood pressure resources at libraries and churches, we are making considerable progress in helping this community improve cardiovascular health."

Go Red for Women is nationally sponsored by CVS Health and Together to End Stroke is nationally sponsored by Encompass Health. Sponsors of Go Red for Women in Palm Beach County include Florida Power & Light Company, Blue Lake Service, The Garcia Companies, HCA Florida Healthcare, supported by the HCA Healthcare Foundation, Mount Sinai New York, CITY Furniture, Comcast, Cross Country, The GEO Group Foundation, Medtronic, Pike Electric, Quanta Infrastructure Solutions Group, LLC, rbb Communications, Utility Power, ACRT, Ash Grove, The Atlantic Group at Morgan Stanley, AV-Worx, Bank of America, CEI, Inc., Cornerstone Solutions, Curley & Pynn Public Relations, Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Greenberg Traurig, P.A., Gunster, Jupiter Medical Center, Lewis, Longman & Walker, P.A., McNicholas & Associates, Oxbow, Rogers Design Group, Stuart Cardiology Group, The Spear Group and Wellington Regional Medical Center. Media sponsors are WPBF, Hubbard Radio West Palm Beach, Florida Weekly and Jupiter and Stuart Magazines.

For more information about the Palm Beach County Go Red for Women movement and the Woman and Teen of Impact initiatives visit Heart.org/PalmBeachGoRed.



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