

Spirit of Health

SUMMER 2022

A CHI Saint Joseph Health publication focused on building healthier communities.



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Saint Joseph Hospital Celebrates 50 Years of Heart Surgery p4

OUR MANY ACTS OF HUMANKINDNESS

Inside the Hospital,
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HELPING PATIENTS GET HEALTHY WITH WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY

for More than Two Decades

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CHI Saint Joseph
Health

Dear Spirit of Health readers,



More than 50 years ago on July 2, 1972, physicians at Saint Joseph Hospital performed the first mitral valve heart surgery in Lexington. This followed the first open heart

surgery in Lexington performed at Saint Joseph in 1959. Medicine and treatments have advanced a tremendous amount since then, and CHI Saint Joseph Health is honored to remain a leader in heart care for our communities to this day.

We are proud that Saint Joseph Hospital has long been known as “Lexington’s Heart Hospital” and that our cardiovascular surgeons continue to provide new hope to many patients through advancements in treatment options for many heart conditions.

In this issue of Spirit of Health, we focus on keeping your heart healthy and, when needed, how to access the care you need.

As always, you can also read stories about our outstanding employees who bring a Spirit of Service to our facilities and our communities. Meet Melissa Bennett, Marla Whitaker and Beth Gamble, three employees who embody

humankindness in their work and in their commitment to serve. We are also grateful for our special volunteers, who donate their time and talents to bring such unique services to our hospitals. Liz Young and therapy dog Spaulding bring smiles to the faces of patients and employees at Saint Joseph Hospital, while Ann King leads a team at Flaget Memorial Hospital to share the joy of Buddy Bears to newborns and other pediatric patients.

Twenty years ago, we launched the Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Saint Joseph East and are pleased to share what that program has meant to so many patients across Kentucky over the past two decades.

Thank you for supporting our ministry as we continue to serve communities across the Commonwealth.

Anthony (Tony) A. Houston, Ed.D., FACHE
Chief Executive Officer
CHI Saint Joseph Health

Cover

Hamid Mohammadzadeh, MD, FACS, FACCS, left, Nezar Falluji, MD, MPH, and Michael Schaeffer, MD, lead the structural heart team at Saint Joseph Hospital. The hospital recently celebrated the 50-year anniversary of the first mitral valve surgery on July 2, 1972.

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Spirit of Health Summer 2022

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When to See a Cardiologist

There are many reasons to visit with a cardiologist, but which type of cardiologist to see depends on your specific condition.



Ali Elfandi, MD, FACC

“There are many subspecialties in the field of cardiology,” said **Ali Elfandi, MD, FACC**, interventional cardiologist at CHI Saint Joseph Health. “There are general cardiologists who don’t do surgical procedures, and interventional cardiologists, like myself, who specialize in cardiovascular procedures. There are also electrophysiologists who specialize in the heart’s electrical system, imaging cardiologists and cardiologists who specialize in heart failure.”

Symptoms and Family History

“Patients are referred to a cardiologist anytime they start experiencing symptoms that may be concerning for heart disease,” Dr. Elfandi said, adding that having a family history of heart disease is another reason to visit a provider. “We look for first degree relatives with heart disease that started early in their life. Usually that’s heart disease before 55 in men, and in women, it’s usually heart disease before age 65.”

Some signs and symptoms that may indicate you need to see a cardiologist include:

- Chest pain
- Chest discomfort during physical activity
- Dizziness or fainting
- Heart palpitations/irregular heartbeat
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling in the legs or ankles

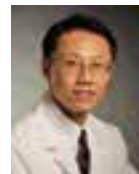
“People sometimes think symptoms have to be clear indicators of heart problems, but early signs can be very subtle,” Dr. Elfandi said. “Be proactive about your health and any new symptoms that arise.”

To find a heart specialist, visit [CHISaintJosephHealth.org/find-a-provider](https://www.chisaintjosephhealth.org/find-a-provider).



Stress and Your Heart

Everyone experiences stress at some point in their lives, whether it’s from a major life event like the loss of a loved one or something smaller and short-term like an approaching deadline. In the long term, however, stress can have serious consequences for your heart.



Steve S. Lin, MD

“Stress is a common, silent killer that can lead to heart disease if not addressed,” said **Steve S. Lin, MD**, interventional cardiologist and director of cardiovascular services at CHI Saint Joseph Medical Group – Cardiology. “It can negatively impact the heart in a variety of ways, including increased plaque buildup and elevated blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar.”

Stress can also lead to behavioral changes.

“Unhealthy behaviors, such as nicotine, alcohol, inactivity, poor diet, weight gain, insomnia — all kinds of things can lead to worsening of existing risk factors,” Dr. Lin said.

Decrease Stress to Increase Heart Health

To keep stress at bay, find healthy ways to manage it. Try:

- Eating a healthy diet full of fruits and vegetables
- Exercising at least 150 minutes per week with activities that get your heart pumping
- Finding laughter throughout your day
- Limiting alcohol intake
- Meditating and practicing mindfulness
- Not smoking
- Sleeping at least 7–9 hours per night
- Socializing with friends and family

If you feel like stress is impacting your heart, find a cardiologist at [CHISaintJosephHealth.org/find-a-provider](https://www.chisaintjosephhealth.org/find-a-provider).





The structural heart team at Saint Joseph Hospital performs minimally invasive procedures in the heart catheterization lab

Structural Improvements

The structural heart program at Saint Joseph Hospital uses the latest minimally invasive techniques to treat problems with the heart's valves and other components.

Conditions affecting the valves, chambers, walls and muscles of the heart are known as structural heart disease. A variety of conditions fall into this category, but some of the most common issues are narrowing of the aortic valve and leakage of the mitral valve. Thanks to technological and technical advancements, patients at Saint Joseph Hospital have more treatment options — and, for many individuals, surgery isn't necessary.



Nezar Falluji, MD, MPH

Closing the Door on Dangerous Blood Clots

If you have atrial fibrillation — the most common type of irregular heartbeat, or arrhythmia — you have a higher risk for stroke. Atrial fibrillation can cause blood to pool and clot in a small pouch in the heart called the left atrial appendage (LAA). A clot can travel to and block an artery that carries blood to the brain, causing a stroke. Implanting a small device, either the WATCHMAN™ or Amplatzer™ Amulet™ Left Atrial Appendage Occluder, closes the LAA to reduce stroke risk without medication.

"LAA occlusion is for patients who can't take oral anticoagulation therapy, or blood thinners, because of the risk of bleeding episodes or falls, or problems with taking medication as prescribed," said

Nezar Falluji, MD, MPH, an interventional cardiologist at CHI Saint Joseph Medical Group – Cardiology and director of the structural heart program at Saint Joseph Hospital. "With the patient under general anesthesia, we make a small cut in the groin and send WATCHMAN or Amulet through a catheter inside a vein to the LAA. The procedure takes 20 or 30 minutes, and patients return home the same day or the next day."



Hamid Mohammadzadeh, MD, FACS, FACCS

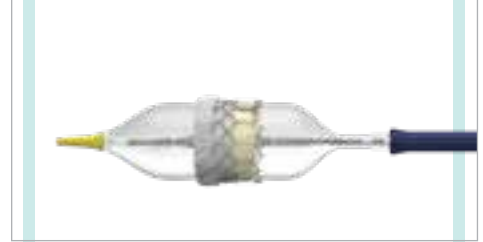
Sending in a Replacement

Four valves ensure blood flows on a one-way path through your heart. The aortic valve opens and closes to allow blood to enter the aorta, a major artery that helps carry blood to the rest of your body. If this valve opening narrows, the heart has to work harder to supply blood. A procedure called transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) installs a new valve without open-heart surgery.

"We perform TAVR through a puncture in the groin," said **Hamid Mohammadzadeh, MD, FACS, FACCS**, a cardiovascular and thoracic surgeon at CHI Saint Joseph Medical Group –



The structural heart team works cohesively to perform several different procedures, including the transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), top at right, and the MitraClip procedure, bottom at right.



Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery, and Saint Joseph Hospital. "Using real-time imaging to guide us, we send a bioprosthetic valve through a catheter inside an artery and deploy it inside the dysfunctional aortic valve. The new valve starts working right away. TAVR uses a far smaller incision than open heart surgery, and the length of stay in the hospital is much shorter."



Michael Schaeffer, MD

Michael Schaeffer, MD, an interventional cardiologist with CHI Saint Joseph Medical Group – Cardiology and Saint Joseph Hospital, said patients with aortic valve stenosis today are receiving new technologies that have completely revolutionized treatment. "It has extended the lives of millions of people. It's not that often in medicine that you see the paradigm shift in this way," Dr. Schaeffer said. "Before 2000, if you had aortic valve stenosis and you were too infirm to have open heart surgery, it was most likely going to result in your demise."

Clip Fix

If the two leaflets, or flaps, of the mitral valve don't close properly, blood can leak backward into the heart. This can increase the risk for atrial fibrillation. Repairing the valve with a dime-sized device called MitraClip™ can restore a proper seal and keep blood from flowing the wrong way.

Like other structural heart procedures, MitraClip implantation is performed via a puncture in the groin to insert a catheter. Once the catheter is in place inside an artery, the MitraClip is guided to the mitral valve.

"We perform MitraClip implantation with the patient under general anesthesia," Dr. Falluji said. "MitraClip brings the edges of the two leaflets together to ensure reduced leakage. It's a highly sophisticated, meticulous procedure that can take one to five hours. Patients go home the following day and can resume normal activities within a few days."

Dr. Schaeffer said the number of cases using such things as TAVR or MitraClip has increased, as baby boomers age and begin to have problems with their valves. He also said the earlier the diagnosis, the better outcomes with treatment.

"If someone has an evolving valve problem, they should be seen by a cardiologist and evaluated, then by someone connected to a structural heart program," he said. "We're learning the longer these conditions go on, the more cumulative damage to the heart occurs."



Ann Louise Jones, APRN

Ann Louise Jones, APRN, a recently retired nurse practitioner for cardiothoracic surgery at Saint Joseph Hospital, remembers the first mitral valve heart surgery performed there in 1972 — 50 years ago this summer. The first open-heart surgery was performed at Saint Joseph Hospital in 1959. Two years into her career, Jones was present for the pioneering operation — an open mitral commissurotomy to repair the patient's mitral valve.

"It was like going to the moon," Jones said. "I'm proud of our patient outcomes. I think ours is one of the top heart surgery programs in the country."

New Hope for Patients

Heart valve conditions aren't the only structural heart problems the team treats. They also treat congenital heart disease, or structural abnormalities present at birth, including holes in the heart, such as atrial septal defect, ventricular septal defect and patent foramen ovale, among others.

"Many patients with structural heart disease may have been told they're not a candidate for treatment or that medications are their only option," Dr. Mohammadzadeh said. "With all of these new technologies that arrive or improve seemingly every day, a patient who might not have been a candidate for a procedure in the past may be eligible for one now."



Learn more about how we care for hearts at CHISaintJosephHealth.org/lexington-heart-vascular-care.



Eat Smart for Your Heart

A heart-healthy diet doesn't have to be bland and boring.

Most people don't experience heart attacks until midlife or older, but the fatty plaque that causes them can start building up in your arteries as early as childhood. That's why it's important for your whole family to eat a heart-healthy diet, like the Mediterranean or DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet.



Thomas Goff, MD

"We have extensive research to show these diets reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease," said **Thomas Goff, MD**, cardiologist at CHI Saint Joseph Medical Group – Cardiology. "These diets are high in fruits, vegetables, fish, poultry, whole grains, nuts, legumes and vegetable oils. They support moderate intake of low-fat dairy and seafood, and limit intake of processed foods, refined carbohydrates, sugar-sweetened beverages and sodium."

Getting Started With a New Diet

Unlike trendy weight loss diets such as the ketogenic (keto) diet, switching to the Mediterranean or DASH diet might not result in immediate weight loss, but the long-term health benefits of your new eating habits are worth it.

Start making simple changes, like replacing ground beef with ground turkey or chicken, using spiraled zucchini instead of noodles and snacking on kale chips instead of potato chips.

"I also always encourage my patients to shop the perimeter of the grocery," Dr. Goff said. "When you start to travel down the aisles you get into the processed foods and refined sugars, which should be avoided."

Need tips on sticking to a heart-healthy diet? CHI Saint Joseph Health can help. Find a provider today at CHISaintJosephHealth.org.

Exercise Your Heart

If you're looking to improve your heart health, you may be wondering what kind of exercise to do.



Anna Goodlett, BSN, RN-BC

In short — any exercise that gets your heart pumping is the way to keep it healthy. "Aerobic exercise — brisk walking, running, etc. — is good for the heart but strength training has its place in heart health as well," said **Anna Goodlett, BSN, RN-BC**, manager of cardiac rehabilitation, the electrophysiology and interventional radiology labs, and the cath labs at Saint Joseph Hospital. "Strength training decreases fat and increases muscle mass, allowing positive changes to your cholesterol levels and overall fitness and weight."

Goodlett suggests getting the same amount of exercise as the American Heart Association recommends: at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic exercise with two days of strength training per week.

"If reaching 150 minutes a week seems too big a stretch for you right now, start small," she said. "Good habits build on each other and every step counts!"

The Cardiac Rehabilitation Program

CHI Saint Joseph Health's cardiac rehabilitation program teaches patients how to live a healthier life after a cardiac event with exercise, nutrition and stress management.

"We teach patients how to get back to life, often in a healthier fashion than they led prior to their cardiac event," Goodlett said. "We do this while monitoring their heart, ensuring they are exercising at a level that is safe for them, but also challenging enough to produce those good effects for their heart."

Goodlett said there's control when it comes to heart health.

"You may not be able to change your age or your family genes, but the steps you take toward a healthy lifestyle have a huge impact," she said.

For more information on the cardiac rehabilitation programs at CHI Saint Joseph Health, call 859.313.4793.



Our Spirit of Service

At CHI Saint Joseph Health, each employee leads as an embodiment of our values and faith. Many of our employees, including those featured here, answer the call to serve with compassion, integrity and humankindness.

Beth Gamble, PhD, MSN, RN, embodies the values and mission of CHI Saint Joseph Health, both at work and in the community. Caring for and supporting the people around her comes naturally to Beth, who is the residency coordinator for the registered nurse graduates who come to work at CHI Saint Joseph Health. She loves giving new nurses the support and encouragement they need to successfully transition from the academic setting. Her kindness and encouragement also reach far beyond the hospital walls. She participates in a unique athletic program that helps men in addiction recovery grow and succeed in the community.

Read her story on page 10.



Striving for Greatness

A CHI Saint Joseph Health senior vice president aims for excellence inside the health system and in the saddle.

In December 2019, Melissa Bennett, DHA, RN, CPPS, NEA-BC, FACHE, joined the CHI Saint Joseph Health team. Since then, she's taken on the roles of senior vice president, market chief nursing officer and chief operating officer. Bennett works alongside other health care executives and employees to ensure every CHI Saint Joseph facility provides excellent care to every patient.

"Every CHI Saint Joseph Health team member brings unique talents to the table," Bennett said. "I get to interact with all of them. Together, we think through how to continue doing our best for patients and their families."



Melissa Bennett, DHA, RN, CPPS, NEA-BC, FACHE, senior vice president, market chief nursing officer and chief operating officer, CHI Saint Joseph Health, says participating in saddlebred horse shows has helped her maintain work-life balance.

Doug Shiflet Photography

Back and Forth and Back Again

Originally from Ohio, Bennett earned a bachelor's degree in nursing, learned about travel nursing and jumped in feet first to take care of patients in different parts of the country.

Then, in the 1990s, she held various positions at Healthcare Corporation of America, including executive leadership roles that taught her to manage teams within a large, multisite system.

Bennett eventually returned to Ohio to help care for her father, earn her doctorate degree and work at a local hospital. When another hospital system purchased and closed her facility, the lifelong horse lover knew where she wanted to settle: In Kentucky.

"It was the best career move I ever made," Bennett said. "How we minister to our community, patients and families and keep the healing presence of God in all we do ... that drew me."

Riding Her Way to Balance

"My work-life balance is made possible by horses," said Bennett, who has two saddlebred horses, Camouflage and Ann's Royal Memory.

On a good week, Bennett rides them twice a week. On a great week, she's at a horse show, making an appearance in the saddlebred circuit. In June, Bennett and Camouflage were Grand Champion in the Three-Gaited Show Pleasure Adult category. They will compete in the Kentucky State Fair this summer.

"When I get on a horse, I don't worry about anything," Bennett said. "I can put my phone down for one or two hours, reconnect and get re-energized to take on whatever life has for me."

At CHI Saint Joseph Health, life has her working on something new right now.

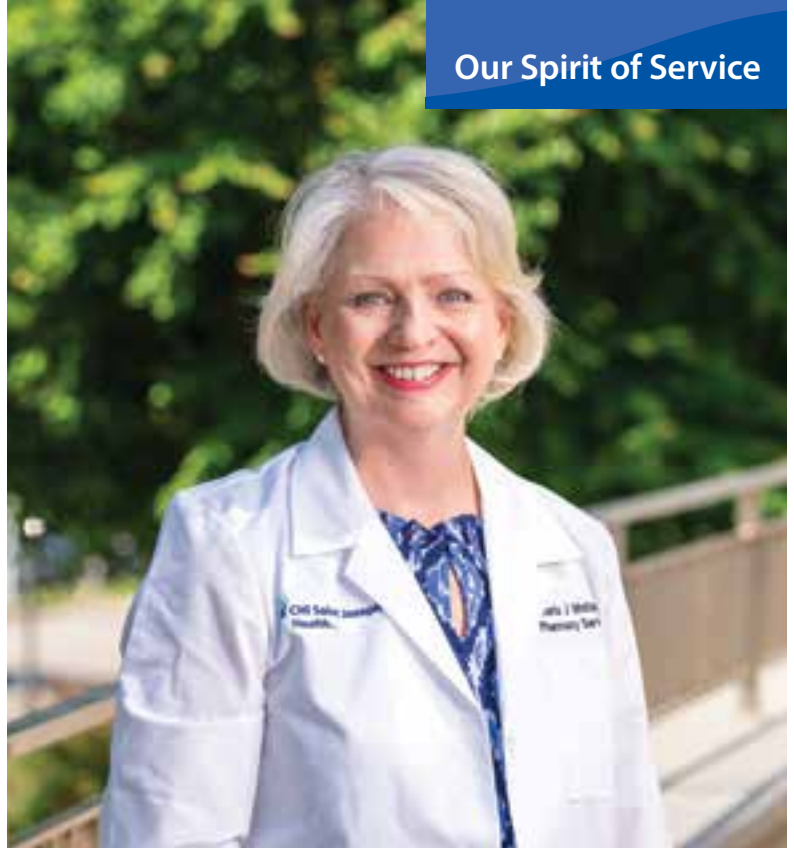
"The model of nursing has been the same for 50 to 75 years, but health care has changed," Bennett said. "The pandemic has shown us we need to think differently. As a result, we are developing some fascinating pilot programs that have the power to change what nursing looks like."

“ One of my goals is to help nursing and clinical leaders be the best they can be.”

— Melissa Bennett, DHA, RN, CPPS, NEA-BC, FACHE, senior vice president, market chief nursing officer and chief operating officer, CHI Saint Joseph Health

Destined for Saint Joseph Hospital

Recipient of the CHI Saint Joseph Health Leader of the Year 2021 award, Marla Whitaker has dedicated her life to her community and loves every minute.



Marla Whitaker, PharmD, director of pharmacy at Saint Joseph Hospital, Saint Joseph East and Saint Joseph Jessamine, was 15 years old when she took a job at the local pharmacy in her hometown. That experience influenced her later decision to go to pharmacy school.

“Prior to graduation, I got a job at the VA in Lexington and discovered a passion for hospital pharmacy,” Whitaker said.

In 1986, she joined the pharmacy team at Saint Joseph Hospital and has worked there full-time ever since — it’s a place where she continues to find great pleasure.

“The work is vibrant and always evolving,” Whitaker said. “My career at CHI Saint Joseph Health has given me joy beyond measure.”

Stepping Up Service

In 2021, Whitaker was recognized as the CHI Saint Joseph Health Leader of the Year, an honor she described as “humbling beyond words.” It was certainly well-deserved.

As COVID-19 infection and cases spread during the first years of the pandemic, Whitaker said the pharmacy team took on many more roles. They increased their level of care to patients and staff, assisting with the employee vaccination effort and helping out

at the monoclonal antibody clinic, the state’s outreach mission and more.

“We have such a dedicated, loyal staff of pharmacists and technicians,” said Whitaker, who is quick to recognize those who help make the pharmacy service possible, including Eric Miller, PharmD, market director of pharmacy services, and Greg Giles, market vice president of operations.

“Our executive leadership makes our mission possible,” she said. “I love collaborating with our large, multidisciplinary team in the hospital pharmacy.”

Saint Joseph Hospital and Saint Joseph East also have pharmacy residency programs, and Whitaker says she really enjoys interacting with the residents.

“It’s so fun and rewarding to watch those young minds go from a new graduate to a seasoned clinical pharmacist within a year,” she said. “They quickly become family.”

Looking ahead, Whitaker said her team will be busy with projects such as planning expansions in the emergency room and retail pharmacy services.

“It can be a lot of work on a daily basis, but it’s incredibly rewarding,” she said. “Serving my patients and fellow employees has been more than a job for me, it’s a career of love.”

“My husband, who is a psychologist, marvels all the time about how much I love my job. He reminds me — even though I don’t need reminding — that so many people don’t love their jobs. It’s incredible to have a job that’s more than a job.”

— Marla Whitaker, PharmD, director of pharmacy at Saint Joseph Hospital, Saint Joseph East and Saint Joseph Jessamine

Touching Souls at Every Turn

Nurse educator Beth Gamble exemplifies humankindness wherever she goes — inside and outside the hospital.

As the RN residency coordinator for CHI Saint Joseph Health, Beth Gamble, PhD, MSN, RN, feels she has the best of both worlds: nursing and mentoring.

“I will always be a nurse at heart,” Gamble said. “I get to really bring that passion forward, as well as working with my other passion, which is helping students and new graduates be successful.”

Gamble also extends her service beyond the hospital doors with her volunteer and church service to the community.

“Jesus calls us to love our neighbor, whether that neighbor is in a hospital bed, across the street or in a drug diversion program,” she said.

A Spiritual Approach to Work

In Gamble’s day job, she provides support to new nurses during their first year in the profession.

“Studies show that new nursing school graduates who do not receive good support in that first year are less likely to remain in the nursing profession,” Gamble said. “We provide support, encouragement and additional education for them.”

She also encourages nurses to share their blessings with others. They develop a theme for the year using Bible verses, and assemble blessing bags filled with candy to share with others.

“Residents are encouraged to give them to other staff members, who are a blessing to our organization,” Gamble said.

Embedded In the Community

When she’s not at CHI Saint Joseph Health, Gamble volunteers with several community organizations, including A Running Start, a nonprofit that works with men recovering from addiction who are staying at The Hope Center. The group encourages the men to train for a 5K run to develop a new, healthier habit, and she and other volunteers run with the men three nights a week for 12 weeks.

“It really builds a community. It builds relationships,” Gamble said. “At the end of those 12 weeks, it culminates in all of us going out together and running a local 5K or a four-mile race. We have some men who have now been sober for years but continue to come back and run to support others.”

Gamble is also deeply involved with local impact work at Centenary United Methodist Church, and she serves on the board of Step-by-Step, a nonprofit that works with young, single mothers.

When she’s not working or volunteering, Gamble and her husband enjoy spending time with their two schnoodle (schnauzer and poodle mix) dogs.

“We are called to serve others to show the love of God. I truly consider my service at CHI Saint Joseph Health as a ministry.”

— Beth Gamble, PhD, MSN, RN, nurse residency coordinator at CHI Saint Joseph Health



How We Serve



Supporting Nursing: In May, CHI Saint Joseph Health announced plans to invest \$2.5 million in tuition assistance and program support of the Kentucky State University School of Nursing over the next five years. The alliance will include direct job placement for nurses at CHI Saint Joseph Health upon completion of the KSU nursing program. Pictured are Anthony Houston, Ed.D., FACHE, chief executive officer of CHI Saint Joseph Health, and former KSU acting president Clara Ross Stamps, Ed.D.



STEM Goes Red: CHI Saint Joseph Health is proud to sponsor STEM events for students interested in health care careers.



Violence Prevention: The Violence Prevention Program at Saint Joseph London organized community volunteer readers who visited schools in Laurel and Knox counties to raise awareness about Child Abuse Awareness Month. The readers visited 14 schools delivering information to more than 5,000 children and surprising them with a visit from the Easter Bunny. Pictured are students from Lay Elementary in Knox County.



Health Care Week: CHI Saint Joseph Health celebrated Nurses Week and Hospital Week in May. Pictured is a team from Saint Joseph Hospital enjoying the activities.



Heart Walk: Our heart care team participated in the annual American Heart Association Heart Walk at Keeneland in May.



Chris Rogers saw a dramatic improvement in his quality of life after weight loss surgery. Read Chris' story on our blog at CHISaintJosephHealth.org.

Celebrating Two Decades of Weight Loss Surgery

The Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Saint Joseph East has come a long way in 20 years.

On April 19, 2002, surgeons performed the first bariatric surgery at the Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Saint Joseph East. Since then, they've helped more than 8,500 people lose weight and improve their health.

Bariatric Surgery Today

In recent years, improvements in surgical techniques have led to more successful weight loss procedures with shorter recoveries. As a result, more people considered clinically obese have been able to take control of their health and improve their quality of life.

"Most weight loss surgery stories aren't about the number of pounds lost," said Karen M. Hillenmeyer, PA-C, director of bariatric surgery at Saint Joseph East. "They're about patients coming off insulin and regaining normal cardiac function."

A part of the Center for Weight Loss Surgery since day one, Hillenmeyer has witnessed many success stories and looks forward to the stories that are yet to be told.

A Transforming Experience

For the right person, bariatric surgery can be life-changing. That change is easier thanks to surgical innovation. Many surgeries are less invasive than before, and weight loss surgery is no exception.

Surgeons no longer operate through large incisions on every patient but can perform entire procedures through incisions the size of buttonholes. A growing number of surgeries also take place with robotic assistance for increased precision, faster recovery and less scarring. Patients are able to get out of the hospital and back to life faster than ever.

"Our patients often come out of the operating room saying they already feel better," Hillenmeyer said.

When the Center for Weight Loss Surgery opened, patients needed to remain hospitalized for four to five days. Today, most patients can return home within 24 hours. Patients today also stop taking pain medication two days after the procedure, and most return to work within a week.

Thanks to surgical advances, weight loss surgery is very safe. According to the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric

Surgery, weight loss surgery is as safe or safer than gallbladder and knee replacement surgeries.

The Face of Success

After her procedure at the Center for Weight Loss Surgery in 2002, Diane Mastin lost 240 pounds. Over the next 20 years, the Lexington resident kept all but 32 of them off.

Her life-changing result didn't come easily. She had to work at it.

"People need to realize this is not a once-and-done surgery," she said. "You have to be committed for life ... your vitamins, your eating, the whole regimen."

While Mastin's success is due in large part to her own effort and commitment, she said the support she received from the weight loss team was equally important.

The Center for Weight Loss Surgery's experienced multidisciplinary team is focused exclusively on weight loss. The program has a dedicated dietitian, exercise physiologist, nurses, insurance specialists, physician assistant and surgeons who specialize exclusively in the treatment of obesity and related diseases.

Losing Weight, Gaining Life

It's easy to see why patients are grateful. Weight loss surgery does more than improve quality of life. The average patient loses 50% to 75% of their excess weight in the first year, and in time, most overcome Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and sleep apnea.

"We've seen the thrill in patients' eyes when they can finally do something they couldn't for years," Hillenmeyer said. "They run marathons, scuba dive and ride roller coasters. Happy tears are shed every day in our Center."

Visit CHISaintJosephHealth.org/eastweightlossurgery to learn more about advanced bariatric surgery options.



Diane Mastin was one of the first patients to have weight loss surgery at Saint Joseph East. She said she has been able to keep off nearly all of the 240 pounds she initially lost two decades ago.



Anitrea Burks, left, gets instruction from Billi Benson, manager, bariatrics, at the Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Saint Joseph East.

Are You a Candidate?

To qualify for weight loss surgery, you must have a BMI of 40 or higher and be more than 100 pounds overweight, or have a BMI of 35 or higher and one or more obesity-related conditions, such as Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, sleep apnea and osteoarthritis.

Know Your Options

Choosing the right weight loss surgery procedure depends on many factors that you and your surgeon would discuss. The Center for Weight Loss Surgery at Saint Joseph East offers the following options:

- **Gastric bypass.** The surgeon creates a walnut-sized pouch at the top of your stomach and attaches the small intestine to this pouch, bypassing the rest of your stomach. The smaller pouch has less room to hold food, so you feel full more quickly and eat less than you did before surgery. As a result, you consume fewer calories. It also affects how your body absorbs the calories you consume, which aids in weight loss.
- **Sleeve gastrectomy.** In this procedure, the surgeon removes 80% of your stomach, leaving behind a banana-shaped tube. Your smaller stomach holds less, so you eat and drink less and, thus, consume fewer calories. This procedure also impacts production of hunger hormones, so you don't feel as hungry.

Talk with the Center for Weight Loss Surgery team to determine which procedure is right for you.

Watch a free, online weight loss surgery seminar at CHISaintJosephHealth.org/weight-loss-surgery-seminar.



Liz Young and Spaulding, an 8-year-old Samoyed, visit with families and employees as volunteers at Saint Joseph Hospital.

Photo by Amanda Kelly

Volunteering: 'It's just fun to watch a smile come over a person's face'

Hospital volunteers give a lot to our patients, staff and visitors. They give their time, their smiles and their assistance in many different ways.

The volunteer groups at each CHI Saint Joseph Health facility operate the gift shops and use the proceeds to improve the hospital and their communities. The Saint Joseph Mount Sterling volunteers, for instance, have donated proceeds from the gift shop to help purchase Giraffe OmniBeds for the nursery, matching funding from the WHAS Crusade for Children. The Saint Joseph London volunteers annually award scholarships to students in the community and committed \$50,000 to the planned new neonatal intensive care unit. Those are just some of the ways our volunteers give back. But volunteers will tell you they also receive something in return.

Pet Therapy

Saint Joseph Hospital volunteer Liz Young is often accompanied by a dashing companion — his name is Spaulding, an 8-year-old

Samoyed who visits with families and employees and knows how to work a crowd.

Through Love on a Leash or Therapy Dogs Inc., Saint Joseph Hospital volunteers can certify their dogs as pet therapy animals and visit in the waiting areas and with employees at the hospital. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Spaulding was introduced at Saint Joseph Hospital, the second therapy dog Young brought to the hospital.

"It's a wonderful part of the ministry," Young said. "With Mister [Young's first therapy dog], we saw some jaw-dropping things. He would visit with patients whose blood pressure would come down [in real time]. We visited with a stroke patient who hadn't spoken in a week, and he began to speak. There's a reason dog is God spelled backward."

Now that volunteers have returned to in-person duties at the hospital, Spaulding is meeting lots of new employees and visitors. Young said



Ann King started making Buddy Bears to comfort a young boy crying in the surgery area.
 Photos by Mary Branham

Spaulding is a conversation starter and unifier for guests. “You have families waiting, bored, tired and on their phones, but when Spaulding comes in, everyone turns their attention to him,” Young said. “You see smiles, people turn to each other and share stories about their dogs. You see calm and happiness where many were nervous or anxious because their family is in the hospital.”

Young said she felt called to pet therapy years ago when she was waiting with a friend who was going through chemotherapy, recalling how she wished they had their dogs there to comfort them. A few weeks later, she pursued pet therapy certification for Mister.

“It’s a great way to volunteer and help others,” Young said. “The smiles Spaulding brings are amazing.”

Buddy Bears

Ann King, 81, the volunteer coordinator at Flaget Memorial Hospital, recalls seeing a young boy crying in the surgery area. She knew he needed comfort, so she gave him a teddy bear.

“He just lit up,” said King, who’s been making the bears with other volunteers for nearly a decade. She calls them Buddy Bears because the gifted bear is the patient’s buddy to take with them.

“I started it because I sewed a lot, and I had made this little bear,” she said. “I was looking for something at the hospital for kids in surgery.”

The project has grown from there. Volunteers deliver the bears to the emergency room to provide comfort for children who come in. Then she saw another natural fit.

“I thought little bears would be good for the nursery,” King said.

Now the team of volunteers gives 500 to 600 bears each year to patients at Flaget. Every baby born at the hospital receives one.

When she started, King was doing it all — the sewing and the stuffing. Then she found a committee of volunteers who could help with the stuffing and, later, another seamstress to help craft the bears.

Volunteering — and the bears — are her way of giving back.

“It’s just fun to watch a smile come across a person’s face,” she said.

The bears leave a lasting impression. Andrea Wilkerson of Cox’s Creek shared this message on Flaget’s Facebook page: “My son had an ER visit to Flaget Memorial Hospital when he was 2 years old (he’s 4 now) and we still have his bear he received!! It’s the smallest gesture that made a huge impact on him!”

Angela Stowe-Mattingly of Bardstown wrote, “My son received a teddy bear from Flaget as a toddler when he was terribly sick. That

bear was the most special thing in his life for almost a decade. I’ll never forget the comfort that soft cuddly toy gave to my son.”

To learn more about how you can be a volunteer, visit CHISaintJosephHealth.org/waystoHELP.

Save the Date — Yes, Mamm! 5K returns

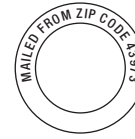
The Saint Joseph Hospital Foundation will bring together and celebrate cancer survivors during its upcoming Yes, Mamm! Yes, Cerv! 5K race in Nicholasville. The event starts at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 15, at the RJ Corman racecourse.

Support from the race provides free mammography and cervical cancer screenings, diagnostic testing, and program support to underinsured and uninsured patients across Kentucky. Every dollar raised will support Yes, Mamm! Yes, Cerv! programs statewide.

Planned Giving

There are several ways you can make a planned gift to the CHI Saint Joseph Health Foundations. Talk with a financial adviser to learn about the benefits of:

- Naming the Foundation of your choice in your will or trust
- Gifting your retirement funds at death
- Donating appreciated stock or mutual funds
- Giving real estate
- Naming the Foundation of your choice as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy
- Gifting annuities
- Setting up a charitable remainder trust
- Recommending a charitable gift from your donor advised fund
- Developing a charitable lead trust that pays income to the Foundation of your choice for a term determined by you



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Hello Humankindness

Humankindness is the one word for the connection we share, the healing power in each of us.

Flaget Memorial Hospital

“Our beautiful hospital here [in Bardstown] is the best. Flaget Memorial Hospital took such great care of us. The doctors, nurses and everyone there were all awesome. They truly care about their patients and the caregivers.”

Saint Joseph East

“When I think of what the nursing profession should look like, I think of [Becky] ... the living example of the art of nursing! She lives CHI Saint Joseph Health’s mission, vision and values every single day.”

Continuing Care Hospital

“Nurses have a million things to do every day and Seth took time out of a busy day to make sure he held up his promise to fix the pants [for a patient]. I find this very much to be an example of humankindness.”

Saint Joseph Mount Sterling

“Calisa has gone out of her way to befriend [a long-term] patient. She has taken time to sit and talk with her, paint her nails, bring her desserts that she knows she likes, and advocate for her needs. This patient has appreciated the compassion shown her by Calisa.”