



**Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City:  
Serving Our Community for More than 140 Years**

**2023 Report to the Diocesan Convention**

From

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Chief Executive Officer, Saint Luke's Central Region

Throughout 2023, we have lived our mission of caring for the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of all who come to us, always with skill and genuine kindness, and in an industry changing more rapidly than ever before.

On May 31, Saint Luke's and BJC HealthCare announced plans to join together to accelerate our shared mission to provide exceptional patient care within the region—now and into the future. We are working toward a definitive agreement, which we expect to reach this year.

Day in and day out, we continue to do what we do best—give our best to every patient—and as always, it's an honor when our patients and peers recognize the impact of our team.

For 2023–2024, *U.S. News & World Report* lists Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute at No. 47 in the nation for Cardiology, Heart, & Vascular Surgery, again ranking our program among the top 50 programs in the nation and at No. 1 in Kansas City. Additionally, Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City is recognized as high performing in the specialty areas of Gastroenterology & GI Surgery and Neurology & Neurosurgery, and as high performing in 10 common adult procedures and conditions.

Our heart transplant program performed its 1,000<sup>th</sup> transplant, a milestone fewer than 25 programs nationally have achieved. Recently, one of the earliest patients to receive a heart transplant at Saint Luke's shared their gratitude after they turned to us when they needed a second transplant decades later. They shared how struck they were by the professionalism, talent, and compassion of our Saint Luke's team, signing their note of gratitude with a two-digit number from their first transplant, and another in the upper 900s: "You have all given me great memories. I'm excited to move forward and am looking forward to life with this new gift." As always, we're grateful for the selfless gift of life from each donor.

Heart Transplant was the fund-a-need focus at this year's inaugural Heartland Gala on Oct. 21, bringing to life a vision of Yvonne Miller, Saint Luke's Foundation CEO and Chief

Development Officer, and the entire Foundation team, to celebrate the excellence of Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, its outstanding care team, and our patients.

This year, the innovative Hospital In Your Home program launched at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City. This program has exceeded expectations and is now available to qualifying patients at all four Kansas City metro area hospitals, providing hospital-level care in the comfort of their own homes.

Saint Luke's Health System became one of only 42 health systems nationwide selected to take part in a pioneering, practice-changing initiative through the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). The ultimate goal of the Health Systems Implementation Initiative is to cut the estimated 17-year lag it takes to adopt high-impact clinical advances into everyday practice so patients benefit sooner.

On Aug. 25, Mikhail Kosiborod, MD, cardiologist and Saint Luke's Vice President of Research, presented findings of the STEP-HFpEF Trial, for which he is lead investigator, at the European Society of Cardiology Congress, the world's largest cardiology conference. The potentially practice-changing findings, which received national and international media coverage, show that semaglutide, a medication initially developed for the management of Type 2 diabetes and obesity, proved to be effective in treating patients with heart failure with preserved ejection fraction, currently the most common type of heart failure, for which few effective therapies have been available.

And as always, our care for all, regardless of a patient's ability to pay, sets us apart. Our charity care includes providing treatment for patients who are uninsured and unable to pay for their care; patients whose insurance doesn't cover their bills; and patients facing catastrophic illness or injury or serious financial hardship. In 2021, the most recent year for which final numbers are available, Saint Luke's provided \$37 million in charity care—including \$20.3 million at Saint Luke's Hospital.

## Important News

*Announced in a press release on May 31, 2023*

### **BJC HealthCare and Saint Luke's Health System Sign Letter of Intent to Form Integrated Missouri-based Health System**

ST. LOUIS and KANSAS CITY, Mo., May 31, 2023 – BJC HealthCare of St. Louis (“BJC”) and Saint Luke's Health System of Kansas City (“Saint Luke's”) today announced they have signed a non-binding letter of intent to form an integrated, academic, Missouri-based health system capable of expanding health care access to high-quality patient care for more than six million residents in Missouri and beyond. The letter of intent was unanimously approved by both health systems' Boards of Directors.

BJC and Saint Luke's will form a patient-centric integrated health care system advancing emerging and innovative models of care. Together, they will enhance the quality, access to, and affordability of patient care, while improving health and reducing health disparities in the communities they serve.

With approximately \$10 billion in revenue, the organizations are coming together to advance their vision of becoming the premier Midwest destination for patient care, clinical research and medical education and the region's most exceptional place to work and practice medicine. The health systems, which operate the top three hospitals in Missouri according to *U.S. News & World Report*, serve distinct geographic markets.

“Together with Saint Luke's, we have an exciting opportunity to reinforce our commitment to providing extraordinary care to Missourians and our neighboring communities,” said BJC HealthCare President and Chief Executive Officer Richard Liekweg. “Amid the rapidly changing health care landscape, this is the right time to build on our established relationship with Saint Luke's. With an even stronger financial foundation, we will further invest in our teams, advance the use of technologies and data to support our providers and caregivers, and improve the health of our communities. These are opportunities that we can better achieve together. I am confident that BJC and Saint Luke's together will be even better positioned to extend our legacy of clinical discovery and deliver medical breakthroughs well into the future.”

“Both Saint Luke's and BJC have well-established reputations for delivering exceptional care and elevating the health of the people we serve,” said Saint Luke's Health System President and Chief Executive Officer Melinda L. Estes, MD. “Our integrated health system, with complementary expertise and team of world-class physicians and caregivers, will set a new national standard for medical education and research. Through our decade-long relationship as a member of the BJC Collaborative, we've established mutual trust and respect, so the opportunity to come together as a single integrated system that can accelerate innovation to better serve patients is a logical next step. Together, we will advance our shared mission to continue improving the health of our patients.”

As envisioned, the integrated health system is poised to deliver significant benefits, including:

*To patients:* Expanded access to additional services and providers led by a nationally renowned patient-first health care system with increased capacity to invest in medical advancement and technological innovation.

*To physicians, providers, and all team members:* A commitment to expanding the region's most exceptional place to work and practice medicine, by investing in the tools, training, and technologies needed to attract and retain the best and brightest in health care.

*To academic and clinical researchers:* An opportunity to advance medical breakthroughs by expanding access to clinical trials and accelerating innovation in patient care by building on each organization's established strengths and affiliations in research, education, and clinical care excellence.

*To local communities:* A commitment to preserve equitable access to health care services, and address health care disparities while honoring the roles of both organizations as civic and economic leaders, with expectations of contributing more than \$1 billion in annual community benefit.

The organizations are working toward reaching a definitive agreement in the coming months. Closing, which is subject to regulatory review and the receipt of customary approvals, is expected to occur by the end of 2023.

Upon closing, the integrated health system will continue to serve BJC and Saint Luke's distinct markets, maintain their existing brands, and operate from dual headquarters—one in St. Louis serving eastern Missouri and southern Illinois, and one in Kansas City serving western Missouri and portions of Kansas.

The integrated health system's Leadership Team and Board of Directors will include representation from both BJC and Saint Luke's. Richard Liekweg, President and CEO of BJC, will serve as CEO of the integrated health system, with the initial Board Chair of the integrated system coming from Saint Luke's.

#### **Becker's Hospital Review: 'A Forward-looking Transaction': BJC, Saint Luke's CEOs on Merging Two Strong Entities**

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On the day of the announcement, Melinda L. Estes, MD, Saint Luke's Health System President and CEO, shared more with Medical Staff and employees on the reasons behind this decision for these two financially strong organizations with exceptional clinical reputations to come together and what to expect in the months ahead. In her video message, Dr. Estes also shared additional information about her plans following 2023.

"As for me, it had initially been my intention to retire at the end of 2021, but with the pandemic in full swing, I was committed to seeing our team, our patients, and our communities through those challenging months.

Fortunately, we see the most acute impact easing, and with today's news, I am also announcing my retirement, which will take effect at the end of the year. Please be assured that my upcoming retirement is not a result of today's news nor its timing.

I truly believe this agreement is the culmination of everything Saint Luke's has achieved over the past decade. Of all the hard work. All the tough decisions. All the accolades and growth. Of your tireless commitment to our patients. And though I won't be leading the new integrated system, I will remain a steadfast supporter of Saint Luke's and its mission, always. And I will be your greatest champion through the growth that lies ahead and the countless stories of the life-changing care you'll continue to deliver on a daily basis.

It's been the honor of a lifetime to serve as President and CEO of Saint Luke's Health System. I'm grateful to each and every one of you for the privilege of leading this exceptional organization these past 12 years."

## Volunteer Assistance

Saint Luke's volunteers bring smiles, comfort, and assistance to patients, visitors, and staff. Due to the pandemic, some on-site services were suspended and were later gradually resumed as COVID-19-related hospitalizations decreased.

The return of patient visitors—including eucharistic ministers, NICU Cuddlers, and general patient visitors—has been a joy across many areas of the hospital. In 2022, Saint Luke's Hospital had 1,088 general patient visits and benefitted from the presence of NICU Cuddlers and eucharistic ministers four to five days a week.

### 2022 volunteer contributions

Saint Luke's Hospital volunteers are a valuable and important resource. They are selfless and eager to help, giving their time freely, with a focus on enhancing the experience for patients, visitors, and staff. Their services provide a positive economic contribution by supporting multiple departments:

- 10,956 total volunteer hours
- \$383,279 savings to the hospital
- 194 total volunteers\*
- 31 new volunteers\*
- 111 student observers\*

Other services and savings to the hospital:

- 1,742 Ambassador escorts\*
- 18,090 Information Desk contacts\*
- 12,739 projects/clerical/mailings
- 105,819 surgery towels—fold and package
- 5,728 miscellaneous items—department requests
- 11,644 hand-crafted items
- 17,151 packets/folders assembled
- 7,266 infant caps—cut, sewn, folded
- 842 patient or hospital errands and flower deliveries
- 217 laminating projects

*\*Programs were suspended through June 2021 due to COVID-19 and have had a gradual return over the past 15 months*

Saint Luke's offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities, from greeting visitors at the front doors to helping patients and families during their visit. Eligible community members interested in volunteering at a Saint Luke's location may learn more by visiting [saintlukeskc.org/volunteer-saint-lukes](https://saintlukeskc.org/volunteer-saint-lukes).

## Spiritual Wellness

### • Clinical Pastoral Education Program Celebrates 50 Years

In November, Saint Luke's Clinical Pastoral Education program celebrates its 50th anniversary. Since it began in 1973, it has graduated 500 students. A celebration will take place at Grace and Trinity Cathedral and will include a lifetime achievement award for one of its earliest graduates who continues to volunteer for Saint Luke's Health System through our hospice and Hospice House.

As a faith-based Health System, Saint Luke's understands that spiritual wellness plays a vital role in caring for patients, and as a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of West Missouri, practices a holistic care model that addresses patients' physical, mental, and spiritual needs.

Saint Luke's Clinical Pastoral Education allows laity, theological students, and clergy to serve alongside an interdisciplinary team of professionals who care for patients and families in crisis. Throughout its 50 years, the Clinical Pastoral Education program at Saint Luke's has been educating pastoral students to serve as chaplains and helping students discover their professional identity and capacity for effective pastoral relationships.

The CPE program accepts students from all religious traditions, denominations, cultures, and nationalities to prepare them to serve as chaplains, facilitating whole-person health and healing. More than the absence of illness, a healthy person is one who has discovered meaning and purpose in life and understands the importance of the mind-body-spirit balance.

- **Honoring Those who Give Hope**

Throughout Saint Luke's, we deeply value spirituality, integrity, and compassion. These qualities truly define the winners of our annual Hope Award, their hearts and actions, and their commitment to the Saint Luke's mission. In October 2022—during Saint Luke's Week—Spiritual Wellness announced the 23 Hope Award winners from across Saint Luke's Health System, each nominated by their peers.

In 2022, Saint Luke's recognized:

**Saint Luke's Central Region:** Frankie Buckley-Lewis, Marshaun Butler, Nicole Ellsworth, Andre Harper, Wanda Jones, Stephen King, Amber Maggard, Pat Parton, Ashton Phillips, Jeannie Thurston

**Saint Luke's Critical Access Region:** Cynthia Beavers, Allison Keck

**Saint Luke's North Region:** Tammy Braley, Yair Limon

**Saint Luke's South and East Region:** Alicia Arreguin, Malorie Carder, Melissa Jeffers, Megan Lingenfelter, Maria Luseesa, Sara Mabin, Amanda McCaulley

**Saint Luke's System Offices:** Christina Hoffman, Christine Toliver

Preparations are underway to celebrate the 2023 Hope Awards this October, once again recognizing Saint Luke's team members—clinical and non-clinical staff nominated by their colleagues—for bringing these essential qualities to life every day for patients, visitors, and one another. Congratulations to the 2022 honorees and those who will be celebrated in 2023. Each exemplifies the qualities that help make Saint Luke's the strong, compassionate, kind, and caring organization we are, and we are grateful for each of them.

- **Saint Luke's Week Celebrates All Faiths**

On the church calendar, Oct. 18 is Saint Luke's Day. During this week each year, we celebrate Saint Luke's Week to honor the namesake of the Health System and our 140-year history of caring for our community with unparalleled compassion and kindness.

## Awards and Recognition

- **Saint Luke's Recognized on U.S. News & World Report's 2023 – 2024 Best Hospitals List**  
*U.S. News & World Report* announced its 2023 – 2024 Best Hospital rankings on Aug. 1. Congratulations to **Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute**, which is listed among the top 50 programs in the nation for **Cardiology, Heart & Vascular Surgery**. The program is consistently ranked in the top 50 nationally, and is ranked at No. 1 in Kansas City.

With nearly 100 board-certified heart experts in cardiology, cardiovascular surgery, and critical care anesthesia, Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute provides a comprehensive range of treatment options for advanced heart failure including transplantation, soon to be one of only 23 U.S. programs to perform 1,000 heart transplants, as well as mechanical circulatory support, interventional cardiology, cardiac imaging, preventive cardiology, and electrophysiology. Saint Luke's heart experts use leading-edge research to advance cardiovascular medicine while continuously striving to improve outcomes and patients' quality of life. In addition, Saint Luke's launched the nation's first Women's Heart Center, the region's leading Valve Center of Excellence, and offers the only comprehensive, multidisciplinary Vascular Center and Cardiometabolic Center in the Kansas City metro area.

"We take tremendous pride in being recognized again as providing the most comprehensive cardiovascular care in Kansas City," said Matthew Deedy, MD, Co-Medical Director of Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute. "Being continuously ranked among the top 50 heart programs in the nation is a significant honor and speaks to the skill, dedication, and commitment to excellence we strive to deliver every day for our patients."

Additionally, **Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City is recognized as high performing in two specialty areas: Gastroenterology & GI Surgery and Neurology & Neurosurgery.**

It is also recognized as **high performing in the following Common Adult Procedures and Conditions:**

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm repair
- Aortic valve surgery
- Colon cancer surgery
- Diabetes
- Heart attack
- Heart bypass surgery
- Heart failure
- Leukemia, lymphoma, and myeloma
- Stroke
- Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR)

**Saint Luke's Hospital** is ranked No. 3 in Missouri and No. 2 in the Kansas City metro area.

**Saint Luke's Hospital** and **Saint Luke's East Hospital** were both recognized among the Best Hospitals in northwestern Missouri, and **Saint Luke's East** ranks No. 4 in the Kansas City metro.

**Additional Metro Recognition for High Performing in Common Adult Procedures and Conditions**

**Saint Luke's East Hospital:**

- Colon cancer surgery
- Diabetes
- Heart attack
- Heart failure
- Knee replacement
- Prostate cancer surgery
- Stroke

**Saint Luke's South Hospital:**

- Heart attack
- Heart failure
- Hip replacement
- Knee replacement
- Stroke

**Saint Luke's North Hospital:**

- Heart attack

"It is such an honor to again be recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as providing some of the best care in the nation," said Julie Quirin, Saint Luke's Health System Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President. "The past several years have been an incredibly challenging time in health care. To continue to be recognized for our ability to provide care at the highest level is a testament to the intense commitment and dedication of our Saint Luke's physicians, nurses, and our entire team of Health System professionals."

The *U.S. News* Best Hospitals methodologies for most areas of care are based largely or entirely on objective measures such as risk-adjusted survival and readmission rates, volume, patient experience, patient safety, and quality of nursing, among other care-related indicators.

- **Saint Luke's East Hospital Recognized for Second Consecutive Year as High Performing in Maternity Care**

Earlier in 2023, Saint Luke's East Hospital earned a High Performing recognition by *U.S. News &*



*World Report* in Maternity Care (Uncomplicated Pregnancy) for the second year in a row. This is the second time *U.S. News & World Report* has published a Best Hospitals for Maternity, and hospitals must excel on multiple quality metrics to be recognized among the best. This designation is the highest award a hospital can earn for maternity care and places Saint Luke's East Hospital in the Top 10% of hospitals nationally for excellent maternity care.

- **Saint Luke's Health System Entities Earn Get With the Guidelines® Awards**

Get with the Guidelines® recognition from the American Heart Association honors hospitals for their work and achievements in improving patient outcomes in cardiovascular and stroke focus areas. Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City has been recognized with the highest award—the Gold Plus—for its Heart Failure Program for an eighth consecutive year and for its Comprehensive Stroke Center.

The awards shine a light on hospitals that are providing the latest scientifically based treatments with adherence to industry guidelines in patient care. Congratulations to the following Saint Luke's locations on this meaningful recognition.

### **Heart**

#### **Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City**

- Gold Plus Heart Failure (Get with the Guidelines)
- Gold Achievement Award (NSTEMI)

#### **Saint Luke's South Hospital**

- Gold Achievement Award (NSTEMI)

#### **Saint Luke's North Hospital**

- Silver Receiving Achievement Award (STEMI)
- Gold Achievement Award (NSTEMI)

#### **Saint Luke's East Hospital**

- Gold Achievement Award (NSTEMI)

*STEMI stands for ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction, which is the term cardiologists use to describe a classic heart attack. NSTEMI stands for non-ST segment elevation myocardial infarction and is a type of heart attack less damaging to the heart.*

### **Stroke**

#### **Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City**

##### **Gold Plus**

- Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus
- Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll

#### **Saint Luke's East Hospital**

##### **Gold Plus**

- Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite
- Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll

## **Saint Luke's North Hospital**

### **Gold Plus**

- Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll

## **Saint Luke's South Hospital**

### **Gold Plus**

- Target: Stroke Honor Roll
- Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll

Hedrick Medical Center and Wright Memorial Hospital both received Get With The Guidelines®-Stroke Rural Bronze recognition.

- ***Newsweek* Names Saint Luke's One of America's Greatest Workplaces for Diversity 2023**

Saint Luke's Health System was recognized as one of America's Greatest Workplaces for Diversity 2023 by *Newsweek* and its partner, market data research firm Plant-A Insights Group. Saint Luke's is one of 1,000 organizations representing nearly three dozen industries nationally to receive this recognition. The list recognizes companies for their performance in numerous areas, including diversity, empowerment of women, veterans and job starters, and the LGBTQIA+ community. This is the first time *Newsweek* has published this list, and it includes "the 1,000 companies that employees say really respect and value different kinds of people," said Nancy Cooper, *Newsweek* Global Editor in Chief, introducing the list. The extensive evaluation process started with questions for HR professionals to best understand employee engagement drivers, and included recommendations from employees of places where they work or that they're familiar with as a workplace, resulting in more than 350,000 reviews of companies with 1,000+ employees.

"Receiving this national recognition demonstrates that we're doing the important work, day in and day out, to foster a culture where everyone—staff, patients, and visitors—feels welcome, included, and respected, and has a sense of belonging," said Nikki Beard, Saint Luke's Director of Strategic Diversity Initiatives. "The fact that employees who work here or who are familiar with us as a Health System helped us earn our place on this list is especially meaningful. This speaks to not only the thought we put into our diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging efforts, but the actions we take to ensure that everyone who comes to us is treated with dignity and respect."

- **Melinda L. Estes, MD, Named Co-Recipient of 2023 Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award**

Melinda L. Estes, MD, Saint Luke's Health System President and CEO, was named a 2023 co-recipient of the prestigious Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award through the National Center for Healthcare Leadership. Dr. Estes and co-recipient Jim Skogsbergh, CEO of Advocate Health, were selected for this national recognition in honor of their tireless commitment and influential contributions to improving the health of their communities and beyond through their leadership excellence.

"Dr. Estes, since joining Saint Luke's in 2011, has fostered an innovative and transformative culture, bridging the organization's rich history of compassionate care with advancements in equitable care, technology, workforce diversity, and clinical excellence," said David Ertel, Chief Financial Officer at Vizient and one of the nominators of Dr. Estes for the award. "Her efforts, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, have focused on addressing disparities in care, both

in the Kansas City metro area and surrounding rural communities, while also promoting a fair and inclusive workplace for all Saint Luke's team members."

- **Melinda L. Estes, MD, Receives Prestigious *Becker's Hospital Review* Recognition**

Melinda L. Estes, MD, Saint Luke's Health System President and CEO, received several noteworthy recognitions in *Becker's Hospital Review* in 2023.

Dr. Estes is one of 177 individuals to be recognized on *Becker's* "Women Hospital Presidents and CEOs to Know," making her part of an elite group of women leading hospitals and health systems across the country. The recognition was awarded to leaders who "are responsible for growing their hospitals, fostering positive workforce cultures, expanding services and facilities, increasing provider and patient satisfaction levels, and more."

Dr. Estes was recognized as one of *Becker's* "Great Healthcare Leaders to Know" for 2023, which highlights honorees for leading their organizations forward in a continuously evolving health care industry, and for their achievements in access, inclusivity, and innovation.

"The leaders recognized are using innovative digital technology, novel care delivery approaches, and creative care solutions to shape the future of health care."

Dr. Estes was also named a 2023 Physician Leader to Know by *Becker's*. The 145 physician leaders on this list bring deep clinical experience and knowledge to their leadership roles, with extensive first-hand understanding and expertise within the health care setting and industry.

- **A Lasting Impact on Medicine: Saint Luke's Celebrates Endowed Chairs and Benefactors**

Saint Luke's celebrated the legacy, impact, contributions, and commitment of its Endowed Chairs and their benefactors on Aug. 23. The Endowed Chairs and Professorships are created by generous patrons unwavering in their commitment to Saint Luke's mission. They give in the hope that their gifts will make a genuine impact on the lives and health of future generations. These esteemed positions are filled by dedicated, committed, and exemplary professionals whose passion for and commitment to serving and helping others through the practice of medicine are critical to Saint Luke's mission.

#### **Welcoming new members**

The reception formally welcomed several members who have been named to this prestigious group within the past year.

#### **Endowed Chairs:**

- Carlos A. Bagley, MD, Edward T. Matheny, Jr./Missouri Endowed Chair in Neuroscience
- Wendell K. Clarkston, MD, Arthur W. Robinson, MD/Missouri Endowed Chair in Internal Medicine
- John Russell Davis, MD, Frank L. and Evangeline A. Thompson Endowed Chair in Cardiovascular Surgery and Transplantation

#### **Endowed Professorship:**

- L. Andrew Benedict, MD, Dr. Wallace and Edna Greene Professorship in Surgery

#### **Celebrating all Endowed Chairs**

The reception honored all Endowed Chairs and their benefactors for their commitment and contributions.

- John H. Helzberg, MD, Marion H. Bloch Endowed Chair in Gastroenterology and Medicine
- Peter S. Holt, MD, Maxwell G. Berry, MD, Endowed Chair in Primary Care and Geriatrics
- Mikhail N. Kosiborod, MD, Ben McCallister, MD, Endowed Chair in Cardiovascular Research
- Anthony Magalski, MD, Arvin Gottlieb Endowed Chair in Advanced Heart Failure and Cardiac Transplant
- Timothy J. Pluard, MD, Paul G. Koontz Jr., MD/Missouri Endowed Chair in Breast Disease
- Brian M. Ramza, MD, Frank L. and Evangeline A. Thompson Endowed Chair in Electrophysiology Research
- John A. Spertus, MD, Daniel J. Lauer, MD/Missouri Endowed Chair in Metabolism and Vascular Research
- Tracy L. Stevens, MD, Julia Irene Kauffman Endowed Chair in Women's Cardiovascular Health
- John Wang, MD, PhD, Westport Anesthesia Services/Missouri Endowed Chair in Anesthesiology Research

“This is really a 360-degree celebration,” said Melinda L. Estes, MD, Saint Luke’s Health System President and CEO, speaking at the event. “One where we look back at the Saint Luke’s leaders who’ve helped shape us into the world-class institution we are. We look beside us, at the colleagues who are now asking bold questions, innovating groundbreaking solutions, and pushing care forward. And we look ahead to what comes next. Because at Saint Luke’s, we don’t stand still. We don’t rest on the great work done in the past. Instead, we move to the *next* question that needs to be asked. The *next* puzzle that needs to be solved. The *next* solution, not just to be ‘found,’ but rather developed, tested, refined, and perfected. That’s the power of our Saint Luke’s mission when it meets the passion of our clinical and research experts, and when it’s supported by our generous benefactors. Wrapped together in kindness and compassion, this is how Saint Luke’s makes a lasting impact... and everyone here plays an essential role.”

- **Michael Nassif, MD, Named Among *Ingram's* 2023 'Heroes in Healthcare'**  
Michael Nassif, MD, cardiologist and Medical Director of Saint Luke’s innovative Hospital In Your Home program, received the “Professional Service” recognition in *Ingram's Magazine's* 2023 Heroes in Healthcare list for his contributions to Saint Luke's successful launch of Hospital In Your Home. The program delivers hospital-level care to patients in the comfort of their own homes—and has exceeded expectations since its launch in July 2022. It is now offered at all Saint Luke’s Kansas City metro area hospitals.
- **Three Saint Luke’s Leaders Recognized Among *Ingram's* 250**  
Melinda L. Estes, MD, Saint Luke’s Health System President and CEO; Julie Quirin, FACHE, Saint Luke’s Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President; and Jani Johnson, RN, MSN, Saint Luke’s Central Region CEO, were recognized among *Ingram's Magazine's* 250 most influential and powerful business leaders in the Greater Kansas City Region for 2022—and again in 2023.
- ***Missouri Lawyers Media* Honors Jan Murray, JD, with In-House Counsel Award**  
Jan Murray, JD, Saint Luke’s Health System Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer and

Secretary, received a 2022 In-House Counsel Award from *Missouri Lawyers Media*, a prestigious statewide recognition of excellence in law. This decades-long tradition was expanded in recent years to honor the state's top in-house lawyers.

"... Honorees are in-house counsel at all levels who, among other things, navigate complicated contract negotiations, represent their companies in high-stakes litigation, and defend some of an organization's most important assets," *Missouri Lawyers Media* reports.

- **Jeremy Bechtold Named Senior Member of American Society for Health Care Engineering**

Jeremy Bechtold, SASHE, Vice President, Facilities and Construction, was named a Senior Member of the American Society for Health Care Engineering (ASHE). ASHE, a professional membership group of the American Hospital Association with more than 12,000 members, is the largest association dedicated to optimizing the health care built environment—the buildings and facilities we use to care for and serve our patients around the clock. This honor recognizes Jeremy's work to advance the profession and commitment to innovation and sustainability in design and management of health care facilities.

- **Jennifer Sonsiadek, MSN-FN, BSN, RN, SANE-A, Receives Prestigious Forensic Nursing Award**

At a surprise celebration at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City in late July, the International Association of Forensic Nurses announced that Jennifer Sonsiadek, MSN-FN, BSN, RN, SANE-A, Saint Luke's Program Manager for Forensics, had received the Virginia A. Lynch Pioneer Award, the most prestigious award in forensic nursing, in honor of her exceptional contributions to this field that focuses on providing skilled, compassionate care for patients following many types of trauma and abuse, including sexual assault.

- **Jamie Allen Recognized as 2023 Women's Justice Award Corporate Honoree by Missouri Lawyers Media**

Jamie Allen, Vice President and General Counsel for Saint Luke's Central Region, was recognized as a 2023 Women's Justice Award Corporate Honoree by *Missouri Lawyers Media* for demonstrating leadership, integrity, service, sacrifice, and accomplishment in improving the quality of justice and exemplifying the highest ideals of the legal profession.

- **Tylaine Solomon Receives 2023 Black Achievers in Business and Industry Award**

Tylaine Solomon, MSN, RN, CMSRN, Saint Luke's East Hospital Medical-Surgical Nurse Manager, was selected for the 2023 Black Achievers in Business and Industry Award from the Black Achievers Society of Greater Kansas City. The award recognizes Tylaine for providing strong and compassionate leadership, her commitment to outstanding patient care, and her work to improve the health of her community.

- **Four Saint Luke's Hospitals Receive 5-Star Ratings from CMS**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) created the Overall Hospital Quality Star Rating Program to help consumers, their families, and caregivers compare hospitals more easily. Altogether, 483 hospitals nationwide were listed in a *Becker's Hospital Review* article of hospitals with five stars. In the Kansas City metro area, Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, Saint Luke's East Hospital, and Saint Luke's South Hospital were listed. Hedrick Medical Center in Chillicothe, Missouri, was one of only two critical access hospitals out of a total of 35 in Missouri to receive a five-star rating from CMS. The Overall Hospital Quality Star Rating summarizes data from existing measures on CMS's Care Compare website for each hospital to allow users to easily compare hospitals. Patients and caregivers can also compare hospitals' performance for many common conditions.

- **Wright Memorial Hospital Awarded Multiple Designations for Stroke and Heart Attack**

Wright Memorial earned The Joint Commission's Acute Heart Attack Ready Certification and The Joint Commission's Acute Stroke Ready Certification, following a rigorous, on-site review. During the visit, reviewers from The Joint Commission evaluated compliance with related certification standards. The Joint Commission standards are developed in consultation with health care experts and providers, measurement experts, and patients. The reviewers also conducted on-site observations and interviews.

Additionally, for efforts to optimize stroke care and eliminate rural health care outcome disparities, Wright Memorial Hospital received the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke Rural Recognition Bronze award. The award recognizes hospitals for their efforts toward acute stroke care excellence demonstrated by composite score compliance to guideline-directed care for intravenous thrombolytic therapy, timely hospital inter-facility transfer, dysphagia screening, symptom timeline and deficit assessment documentation, emergency medical services communication, brain imaging, and stroke expert consultation.

With the recent certifications from The Joint Commission, Wright Memorial was designated by the State of Missouri as a Level III Stroke Center and a Level III STEMI Center. The Time Critical Diagnosis (TCD) system, which implements the stroke and STEMI levels of hospital designation across the state, was created in 2013 through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. It's a statewide emergency medical care response system aimed at providing faster response and quality care when a time-critical emergency happens. The goal is to create consistent, statewide rules and regulations to help emergency and hospital personnel ensure patients are transported and treated by the most appropriate facility for their conditions.

- **Nikki Beard Celebrated as LIFT HER UP Honoree**

Nikki Beard, Director of Strategic Diversity Initiatives, was honored during Women's History Month as a woman who is making a difference in Kansas City and beyond through her work, her commitment to community, and her spirit of supporting and encouraging other women. Nikki was among 27 LIFT HER UP honorees for 2023. The LIFT HER UP movement recognizes and celebrates extraordinary women in the community each March in recognition of their work to encourage and support women and girls in business and in their personal lives, making an impact on the world around them.

- **Three Saint Luke's Hospitals Earn Spring 2023 'A' Hospital Safety Grade from the Leapfrog Group**

Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, Saint Luke's East Hospital, and Saint Luke's South Hospital each received an "A" Hospital Safety Grade for Spring 2023 from the Leapfrog Group, a recognition of dedication to patient safety and excellence in patient care. The Leapfrog Group, a nonprofit organization, uses more than 30 national performance measures from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, and other supplemental data sources to assign letter grades to hospitals based on their records of safety and prevention of errors, injuries, accidents, and infections.

- **Michael Weaver, MD, Named 2023 Recipient of Branton/Hall Community Collaborator Award**

Michael Weaver, MD, FACEP, FCC, CDM, was honored with the prestigious Branton/Hall Community Collaborator Award from the Junior League of Kansas City, Missouri (JLKCMO). He was recognized for his commitment, leadership, and positive impact in championing health care equity and clinical diversity in Kansas City and beyond. This award is named in honor of Mary Shaw "Shawsie" Branton and Adele Hall, two of JLKCMO's members and both pillars of the

community who “dedicated their lives to making Kansas City a better, more inclusive, well-cared-for community.”

Dr. Weaver retired in 2021 after a distinguished, decades-long career with Saint Luke's Health System, during which he was a passionate advocate for advancing health equity and creating a diverse and inclusive community. He played leadership and advisory roles in dozens of departments, programs, committees, task forces, and other opportunities to care for and protect the most vulnerable.

- **Mark Woods, PharmD, Honored with ASHP Board of Directors’ Distinguished Leadership Award**

Mark Woods, PharmD, BCPS, FASHP, FKCHP, Clinical Pharmacy Coordinator at Saint Luke’s Hospital of Kansas City, was named a recipient of the 2023 American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Board of Directors’ Distinguished Leadership Award. This award recognizes pharmacists who have made significant contributions to excellence as leaders of pharmacy in both acute and ambulatory care settings.

- **Saint Luke’s Center for Surgical Weight Loss Programs at Saint Luke’s Hospital and Saint Luke’s North Hospital Receive MBSAQIP Accreditation**

The Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP) accredits inpatient and outpatient bariatric surgery centers that have undergone an independent, voluntary, and rigorous peer evaluation in accordance with nationally recognized bariatric surgical standards. This year, Saint Luke’s Center for Surgical Weight Loss programs at both Saint Luke’s Hospital of Kansas City and Saint Luke’s North Hospital earned the prestigious MBSAQIP accreditation.

- **Marshaun Butler Receives 2023 Nefertiti Award**

Marshaun Butler, Saint Luke’s Central Region Chief Operating Officer and previously Vice President and Administrator of Saint Luke’s Crittenton Children’s Center, was awarded a 2023 Nefertiti Award. The Nefertiti Awards and Scholarship Luncheon is presented by The Greater Kansas City Societas Docta, Incorporated (SDI). The Greater Kansas City SDI encourages African-American women to pursue advanced degrees. The award honors women of distinction for their contributions in the community and for exhibiting characteristics of Queen Nefertiti.

- **Saint Luke’s East Hospital Achieves Center of Excellence in Specialized Prostate Treatment Recognition for a Second Year**

Saint Luke’s East Hospital achieved accreditation as a Center of Excellence in Specialized Prostate Treatment (COESPT) by Surgical Review Corporation (SRC) for a second consecutive year. This accreditation recognizes Saint Luke’s East Hospital’s commitment to a high standard of delivering quality patient care and safety. In 2021, Saint Luke’s East Hospital was the first facility worldwide to achieve the COESPT recognition.

“It’s an honor to be the first hospital to achieve this recognition in both the Kansas City metro and worldwide,” said Bobby Olm-Shipman, Saint Luke’s South and East Region CEO. “We could not be prouder of our urologic services team for their exceptional patient care. Patient safety is our priority, and this accomplishment highlights our ongoing commitment and effort to deliver the best care before, during, and after surgery, reducing the time spent at the hospital in recovery and providing the best overall surgical experience.”

- **Saint Luke’s North Hospital Achieves Baby-Friendly Designation**

Saint Luke’s North Hospital is proud to be designated a “Baby-Friendly” Hospital by Baby-

Friendly USA, Incorporated. Launched as a global program in 1991 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) encourages the broad-scale implementation of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding and the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes. Saint Luke's North Hospital is one of only a handful of hospitals in Missouri to achieve this designation. The BFHI assists hospitals by giving mothers the information, confidence, and skills necessary to initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies successfully. Achieving the Baby-Friendly designation takes years of work, transforming policies, culture, and workflow to ensure that mothers and babies receive the highest standards of infant feeding care in the first days of the child's life.

- **Melinda L. Estes, MD, Recognized by the Missouri Hospital Association for Distinguished Service**

Melinda L. Estes, MD, President and CEO of Saint Luke's Health System, was honored with the Missouri Hospital Association's Distinguished Service Award for her state and national leadership. The award, the association's highest honor, was presented during the Missouri Hospital Association's 100th Annual Convention.

- **Anderson County Hospital's Family Care Center Receives 2022 Press Ganey Award**

Anderson County Hospital's Family Care Center was named a 2022 Human Experience (HX) Guardian of Excellence Award® winner by Press Ganey, the global leader in health care experience solutions and services. The award honors ACH Family Care Center as a top-performing health care organization achieving the 95th percentile or above for performance in patient experience.

## Education and Learning

- **HFpEF Trial – Obesity Medication Proves Effective in Treating Patients with Heart Failure**

*Presented by the lead author Mikhail Kosiborod, MD; Vice President, Research; Co-Director, Haverly Cardiometabolic Center of Excellence; Executive Director, Cardiometabolic Center Alliance; Ben McAllister, MD, Endowed Chair; and Professor of Medicine, University of Missouri–Kansas City*

Dr. Kosiborod presented the main results of STEP-HFpEF trial during the opening late breaking clinical trial session at the European Society of Cardiology Congress (ESC Congress)—the world's largest cardiology conference—on Aug. 25 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The results have been published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* at the time of the presentation.

“To our knowledge, this is the first trial of its kind to specifically target obesity as a treatment strategy in patients with heart failure,” Dr. Kosiborod said. “These findings will likely have a significant impact on clinical practice, especially since there are so few effective therapies for this patient group. Furthermore, the results of STEP-HFpEF should change the nature of the conversation about the role of obesity in heart failure from a coexisting condition to a root cause and a target for intervention.”

STEP-HFpEF was a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial conducted at 96 sites in 13 countries across Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. The trial recruited 529 patients with symptomatic heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF) and obesity,



with the goal of evaluating the effects of semaglutide, a potent GLP1 receptor agonist, versus placebo on heart failure-related outcomes and weight loss. Results showed that treatment with semaglutide led to large improvements in heart failure-related symptoms and physical function, reduced inflammation, and resulted in greater weight loss compared with placebo.

In the days following Dr. Kosiborod's presentation, this work was featured in dozens of national and international publications.

- **Andrew Sauer, MD, Presents IMPLEMENT-HF Insights on Global Stage at ESC Congress**  
Andrew Sauer, MD, heart failure cardiologist with Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, presented insights from IMPLEMENT-HF in August 2023 at the ESC Congress in Amsterdam.

With a goal of increasing healthy time at home for all patients with heart failure—and a national aspirational goal of decreasing all-cause mortality by 5%—IMPLEMENT-HF is a multi-region initiative focused on improving guidance-directed medical therapy (GDMT) for patients with heart failure with reduced ejection fraction, achieving precise heart failure management, and improving outcomes. Dr. Sauer shared that IMPLEMENT-HF demonstrated improved uptake of GDMT at discharge for hospitalized patients from 14% to 49% in two years.

The initiative is sponsored by the American Heart Association, involves seven metropolitan regions, and was co-championed locally by Bethany Austin, MD, Timothy Fendler, MD, and John Spertus, MD, MPH. Kansas City was selected regionally to participate in IMPLEMENT-HF thanks to the work of Dr. Spertus and Stacy Farr, PhD, Director of CV Outcomes Research, with Healthcare Institute for Innovations in Quality at the University of Missouri–Kansas City.

"This work in Kansas City to improve treatment is a role model for how hospitals can collaborate to improve care for our entire community," Dr. Spertus said.

- **Saint Luke's Health System Selected for PCORI Health Systems Implementation Initiative (HSII)**  
Saint Luke's Health System is one of only 42 health systems nationwide selected to take part in a pioneering, practice-changing initiative through the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). The ultimate goal of PCORI's new Health Systems Implementation Initiative (HSII) is to cut the estimated 17-year lag that it takes to adopt high-impact clinical care advances into everyday practice. The projects we'll implement through our multi-year participation have the potential to impact many clinical locations and areas of care across the Health System.

"To be selected for this highly competitive initiative is a prestigious honor and speaks to Saint Luke's steadfast belief in the value of innovation, our strong track record of successfully implementing advances in care, and the quality and excellence we deliver at the bedside every day," said Mikhail Kosiborod, MD, cardiologist and Saint Luke's Vice President of Research. "This opportunity allows us—within our own organization and in collaboration with other exceptional clinical and research programs—to impact patient care and outcomes more quickly using evidence-based approaches that we know improve care."

Other HSII participants include academic medical centers, community-based, safety net, and public health care delivery systems, as well as a medical center within the Veterans Health Administration.

“Being part of this initiative allows us to be on the cutting edge of care transformation,” said John Spertus, MD, MPH, cardiologist and Clinical Director of Health Outcomes Research. “The commitment, creativity, and engagement of our entire workforce is essential to driving our success in the projects we’ll implement through HSII, always with a goal of improving the quality, value, and equity of health care in our region and beyond.”

Our participation in HSII and the projects we’ll implement tie into our Destination 2025 strategic plan, with opportunities to improve access and patient experience, differentiate clinical care, deliver value, accelerate digital adoption, and advance health equity. Saint Luke’s PCORI HSII initiative will be led by William Gilbirds, II, MD, Chief Medical Officer for Saint Luke’s Care, and Shana Horseman, Program Director of Saint Luke’s Care, who will together oversee the process of selecting specific implementation projects that Saint Luke’s will adopt.

- **U. S. News & World Report: Asian-Americans Less Likely to Survive Cardiac Arrest Despite Equal CPR Efforts**

Asian adults in the United States who suffer cardiac arrest are less likely to survive than white adults, despite similar rates of receiving bystander CPR, a new study finds.

"Receiving bystander CPR is usually a very strong predictor of survival after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, therefore, it is not entirely clear what may be driving the lower survival rate among Asian adults," said Paul Chan, MD, the study's senior author and cardiologist at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute.

- **TCTMD: Aging, Angina, and Invasive Medicine: Some Nuance from ISCHEMIA**

Older adults represent the fastest-growing population of patients in the United States, and stable ischemic heart disease is extremely common in this group. Older patients enrolled in the ISCHEMIA trial saw their angina symptoms improve with an invasive strategy as compared with more conservative management, but unlike younger patients in the trial, they did not report the same improvements in overall health status, according to a new analysis. As with the overall trial, older patients did not have any improvement in hard clinical outcomes with an invasive approach, Dan Nguyen, MD, a medical post graduate with Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, and colleagues report in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

- **Saint Luke’s Celebrates Research Day 2023**

Saint Luke’s Annual Research Day on May 16 showcased research and quality improvement presentations selected from a pool of more than three dozen entries. A special congratulations to this year’s finalists, winners, and runners up.

**Nursing (all five presenters showcased):**

- Mindfulness-Based Recovery from Stroke – Erin Tompkins, MSN, APRN-BC; Heather Noble, PhD; Lori Gray, PhD
- COVID-19 Cases Requiring Neurology Consultation: Review of Death Status – Kelly Bush, MSN, MBA, AGACNP, RN
- Incidence of Strangulation, Choking, and/or Suffocation in Child Abuse Occurring Prior to Admission to an Acute Pediatric Psychiatric Hospital: A Retrospective Mixed Method Prevalence Study – Jen Sonsiadek, MSN-FN, BSN, RN, SANE-A
- After the Great Resignation: Retrospective Review of Quality Indicators Following Care Model Redesign Implementation – Mary Williams, MSN, RN

- Whiteboard Goals: Improving Patient Participation and Satisfaction – Tony Zaya, MEd, BSN, RN, CMSRN, CPN

#### **Pharmacy Residents**

- Major Bleeding with Oral Anticoagulant Therapy in Patients with Isolated Hip Fracture – Colton H Essex, PharmD; Ashley K Holmes, PharmD, BCCCP; Shelby M Shemanski, PharmD, BCCCP; Leo Andrew O Benedict, MD, FACS
- Comparison of Post-operative Opioid Discharge Prescriptions to Michigan Opioid Prescribing Engagement Network Recommendations – Haley Miller, PharmD; Scott Aldridge, PharmD, BCPS; Breanna Clark, PharmD, BCTXP; Jake Michalski, PharmD, BCPS
- Runner Up: Influencing Antibiotic Prescribing for Patients with *Enterobacter cloacae* or *Klebsiella aerogenes* by Use of Templated Comments – Anna Landolt, PharmD; Nick Bennett, PharmD, BCIDP; Laura Aragon, PharmD, BCIDP; Sarah Boyd, MD; Matthew Humphrey; Cindy Essmyer, MD
- Winner: Evaluation of Two-Step *Clostridioides difficile* Testing On Treatment Exposure – Sydney Wilson, PharmD; Nick Bennett, PharmD, BCIDP; Laura Aragon, PharmD, BCIDP; Sarah Boyd, MD

#### **Medical Residents/Fellows:**

- Living in Food Deserts and Major Adverse Limb Events in Patients with Peripheral Artery Disease – Rayan S. El-Zein, DO; Zhuxuan Fu, PhD; Kensey Gosch, MS; Matthew C. Bunte MD, MS
- Diagnostic Performance of NT-proBNP by Weight Class and Heart Failure Phenotype using Real-World Data – Mirza S. Khan, MD, MS; John Spertus, MD, MPH; Lemuel Russell Waitman, PhD
- Runner Up: In-Situ Simulation-Based Booster ACLS Training to Increase the Confidence and Performance of Internal Medicine Residents as Code Blue Leaders – a Quality Improvement Project – Ali Ibrahim, MD; Mariam Haji, MD; Nisha Patel, MD; Moh'd Alghizzawi, MD; Afeerah Malik, MD; Abhay Mishra, MD; Nadia Sultan, MD; Marci Ebberts, MSN; Erin Fuller, MSN; Santana Gunn, MSN; Julie Banderas, PharmD; Paul Chan, MD, MSc; David Wooldridge, MD
- Winner: Health Status Outcomes by Race in Patients Treated with SGLT2 inhibitors – Kashvi Gupta, MD, MPH; John Spertus, MD, MPH; Mary Birmingham PharmD; Kensey Gosch, MS; James L. Januzzi, MD; Ildiko Lingvay, MD, MPH, MSCS; Javed Butler, MD; Mikhail N. Kosiborod, MD; David E. Lanfear, MD, MS
- **Transcatheter Arterialization of Deep Veins in Chronic Limb-Threatening Ischemia**  
Approximately 20% of patients with chronic limb-threatening ischemia have no revascularization options, leading to above-ankle amputation. Transcatheter arterialization of the deep veins is a percutaneous approach that creates an artery-to-vein connection for delivery of oxygenated blood by means of the venous system to the ischemic foot to prevent amputation. Matthew Bunte, MD, Co-Medical Director of Saint Luke's Vascular Program, co-authored a publication that appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on March 30, 2023. PROMISE II is a trial of 105 patients with limb-threatening peripheral artery disease (PAD) who underwent deep-vein arterialization, a percutaneous procedure creating a vein-to-artery connection to deliver flow to the at-risk ischemic foot via a transcatheter approach. The work showed promising findings

when it comes to preventing the need for above-ankle amputation in patients where conventional treatments aren't possible.

- **Valvular Heart Disease and Structural Intervention 2023 Update Book**

Saint Luke's recently published its Valvular Heart Disease and Structural Intervention book, which highlights the extensive experience, research, innovation, and multidisciplinary approach to patient care available at Saint Luke's. Adnan Chhatrwalla, MD, and David Skolnick, MD, served as content experts for the creation of this year's book.

- **Saint Luke's Experts Share Impact of Research at American College of Cardiology Scientific Session**

Saint Luke's delivered an impressive 36 presentations at the American College of Cardiology Scientific Session, including a prestigious featured clinical research presentation. Saint Luke's joined tens of thousands of researchers and cardiologists in meeting virtually and in person in New Orleans to be part of this influential conference offering "practice-changing research and cutting-edge education."

**Featured Clinical Research Presentation**

At the 2023 American College of Cardiology Scientific Session, John A. Spertus, MD, MPH, Director, Outcomes Research, and the Daniel J. Lauer, Missouri Endowed Chair, was invited to deliver the Featured Clinical Research Presentation—"International Comparisons of Health Status Outcomes in Patients Undergoing Initial Invasive Versus Conservative Management for Chronic Coronary Disease: Insights from the ISCHEMIA Trial"

- **CV Research Leaves an Impression at 2022 AHA Scientific Sessions**

Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute (SLMAHI) showcased its latest research results and achievements at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions in Chicago Nov. 5 – 7. With 23 researchers and clinicians giving a combined 40 presentations on a variety of topics, this was once again a strong showing on the national stage for the SLMAHI team. Anezi Uzendu, MD, cardiovascular research fellow at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, received a Young Investigator Award, recognized for his contributions in co-authoring a recent study on bystander CPR in Black and Hispanic communities.

- **American Heart Association: Food Insecurity Linked to Increased Risks for People with Peripheral Artery Disease**

Living in a community where there is minimal access to nutritious foods – often called a "food desert" – may increase the risk of heart attack, stroke, or early death for people living with peripheral artery disease (PAD), according to preliminary research presented at the Association's Scientific Sessions 2022.

The meeting was held in person in Chicago and virtually Nov. 5–7, 2022. Researchers reviewed data from 2015 to 2021 for people with PAD who had been treated in Saint Luke's Health System and compared treatments and outcomes of people living in a food desert to those living in a community with access to healthy and affordable foods. Food access was determined by criteria from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Access Research Atlas.

"While guideline-directed care for PAD reduces complications, the influence of social determinants of health like living in a food desert on receiving optimal care has not been previously explored," said lead study author Rayan S. El-Zein, DO, a researcher at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute at the University of Missouri–Kansas City.

- **Dan Nguyen, MD, Receives Young Investigator Award**

Dan Nguyen, MD, Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, received the Young Investigator Award in Quality and Value from AcademyHealth. This prestigious award recognizes valuable work to advance the quality and value of U.S. health care as well as promise as a young investigator. His YIA abstract submission, "Developing a Patient Decision Aid for Chronic Coronary Disease Based on Individual Data from the ISCHEMIA Trial," was rated top quality by Quality and Value Interest Group (QVIG) viewers.

- **Black and Hispanic Adults Less Likely than White Adults to Receive 'Potentially Lifesaving' Bystander CPR During Cardiac Arrest, Study Finds**

Black and Hispanic adults who go into cardiac arrest in public are less likely to receive CPR from anyone standing by before a medical team arrives, a new study finds. Overall, the relative likelihood of getting bystander CPR at home was 26% lower for Black and Hispanic individuals than for White individuals, and the likelihood of bystander CPR for cardiac arrests in public was 37% lower for Black and Hispanic individuals than for White individuals, according to the study, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

"These results were important to understand and likely emblematic of other larger social issues that affect health care and treatment," Paul Chan, MD, the study's senior author and cardiologist at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute.

- ***World Journal of Hepatology*: Saint Luke's Research Finds Increase in Alcoholic Liver Disease Hospitalizations for Women During Pandemic**

Recognizing the widespread personal, economic, and social impact of COVID-19, Saint Luke's researchers set out to learn more about hospitalizations for alcoholic liver disease (ALD) before and during the pandemic. They discovered a surprising increase in ALD admissions for women—especially women younger than 50.

Multiple studies have indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in greater psychosocial and financial stresses on women compared to men. ALD plays a substantial role in the need for liver transplantation and has traditionally been considered a disease most likely to impact middle-aged to older men.

John Campbell, MD; John H. Helzberg, MD; Vinay Jahagirdar, MD; Kevin F Kennedy, Senior Biostatistician; and Adel Muhanna, MD, were all part of the Saint Luke's team whose research was featured in 2023 in *World of Hepatology*.

"Throughout the pandemic, Dr. Helzberg and our team have been concerned about the adverse effects that may have been experienced by our Kansas City patient population," said Dr. Campbell, a third-year GI Fellow and future Saint Luke's Physician Group physician. "Early observations at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City suggested an increased number of admissions for ALD during the pandemic. Our study confirmed this, but with a surprising increase of 33% in our population of women under the age of 50."

"During the pandemic, it was mostly women who bore the added burden of caring for children and supervising virtual learning at home, in addition to continued work and job responsibilities. These stresses may be implicated to induce increased alcohol consumption," Dr. Helzberg said. "Multiple studies have shown that women are at greater risk of ALD progressing to cirrhosis compared to men. This is likely because they have significantly less gastric alcohol

dehydrogenase, which metabolizes alcohol, so they can have proportionately more alcohol delivered to the liver when drinking the same amount of alcohol.”

- **Physician Faculty Promotions at UMKC School of Medicine**

Ten Saint Luke's physicians received faculty promotions at the University of Missouri–Kansas City School of Medicine in 2022:

- Bethany Austin, MD, Professor
- Matthew Bunte, MD, Associate Professor
- Lee Cummings, MD, Associate Professor
- Anna Grodzinsky, MD, Associate Professor
- John Lee, MD, Clinical Associate Professor
- Rola Mahmoud, MD, Associate Professor
- Michael Nassif, MD, Associate Professor
- Valerie Rader, MD, Associate Professor
- Mohammed Saghir, MD, Associate Professor
- Alan Wimmer, MD, Professor

- **Tuition Discount Opportunities for Saint Luke's Health System Employees and Dependents Through Affiliation with Rockhurst University**

One of Saint Luke's Health System's core values is Learning and Innovation, and we encourage employees to take advantage of opportunities to further their education and grow in their careers. Through our affiliation with Rockhurst University, Saint Luke's employees and their dependents have access to tuition discounts on certain certificate and degree programs.

## **Milestones**

- **Saint Luke's Celebrates 1,000 Heart Transplants**

Of the 6,129 hospitals in America, only 143 perform heart transplants. On Oct. 5, 2023, the team at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute became part of an elite group as one of only 23 advanced institutions that have each performed 1,000 or more heart transplants. For almost 40 years, the Heart Institute has been the region's leader in heart transplantation.

This milestone reflects the dedication, commitment, and personal investment of many, including the entire transplant surgical team, heart failure specialists, anesthesiologists, nurses, transplant coordinators, and the many clinical and non-clinical team members who are part of a patient's care.

Jessica Heimes, DO, Surgical Director, Cardiac Transplantation; Andrew Kao, MD, Medical Director; and Taiyeb Khumri, MD, Associate Medical Director, Cardiac Transplantation; along with the talented teams of today and the past 38 years, have achieved this milestone with visionary, strategic, and patient-centered leadership and a commitment to excellence.

Longtime Surgical Director Michael Borkon, MD, who retired in 2021, performed nearly a third of the program's transplants—350 in total—between July 1987 and June 2021.

The program has also benefited from the deep engagement of its transplant coordinators, many who have been with the program for decades, and who will stay connected with the care and progress of the program's patients for life.

Program highlights include:

- 38 years of continuous heart transplantations
- Named a *Heart Transplant Center of Excellence* by Clinical Sciences Institute (CSI) of Optum
- In the nation's top 15 for total transplant volumes over the past decade
- The 2023-24 *U.S. News & World Report* Best Hospitals ranked Saint Luke's Cardiology, Heart & Vascular Surgery program among the top 50 in the nation
- Transplanted patients come primarily from a six-state area (Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Nebraska) but have come from as far as South Dakota and Michigan

The program also offers excellence in patient outcomes:

- Three-year survival rate is 36% better than national average
- Our median time to transplant is one month; the national median time is four months
- Patient survival is 54% higher on Saint Luke's waitlist compared to what is expected

Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute's very first heart transplant was performed on June 7, 1985. The patient was Sam Harrison from Grandview, Missouri. Cardiologist Ben McCallister, MD, said he was excited and thrilled to see Sam transformed by the new heart. Two nurses who helped care for Sam are still with Saint Luke's Health System—Beth Lee, Director of Patient Care Services, and Marcia McCoy, Program Director of Muriel I. Kauffman Women's Heart Center.

Saint Luke's is grateful for every member of its team who is part of each patient's care, to each patient and their family and friend, and to the generous and selfless gifts from each donor and their loved ones.

- **Saint Luke's Announces North and Critical Access Region Consolidation**

Saint Luke's has worked intentionally to operate as an aligned Health System where patients, staff, and visitors can expect a consistent, high-quality Saint Luke's experience at all of our locations. Recognizing the opportunity that exists to further integrate our Critical Access Region hospitals and clinics into the existing structure for our Kansas City metro hospitals, we have consolidated our North and Critical Access Regions into a single region.

Darren Bass, DPT, FACHE, has been named CEO of *Saint Luke's North and Critical Access Region*. Prior to joining the Health System as CEO of Saint Luke's North Region in April, Darren served as Vice President of Clinical Services at CoxHealth in Springfield, Missouri, and has also served in executive leadership positions at Cox Monett Hospital.

"Darren's proven experience as an executive leader in both large-hospital and Critical-Access settings makes him an ideal fit for this position and to lead our efforts to enhance efficiencies, share best practices, and further streamline and align our operations," said Julie Quirin, FACHE, Saint Luke's Health System Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President.

Catherine Hamilton, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Chief Nursing Officer for the Critical Access Region, has agreed to serve as interim Administrator for Hedrick Medical Center and Wright Memorial Hospital, our Critical Access Hospitals in Missouri, in addition to her current responsibilities. Jeremy Armstrong, FACHE, will continue to serve as Administrator for Allen County Regional Hospital and Anderson County Hospital, our Critical Access Hospitals in Kansas. Saint Luke's remains deeply committed to its Critical Access Region and to continuing to care for the communities it serves in Chillicothe and Trenton in Missouri and Garnett and Iola in Kansas.

- **Saint Luke's Announces New Hybrid Model to Preserve Maternity Care in North Central Missouri**

On June 30, 2023, Saint Luke's Health System implemented a new hybrid obstetrical model to preserve high-quality maternity care in North Central Missouri.

Hedrick Medical Center (HMC) continues to provide nearly all pre- and post-natal care for patients at its Hedrick OB/GYN Associates Clinic, led by Medical Director and OB-GYN Ankur Agrawal, MD. Mothers deliver at Saint Luke's North Hospital—Barry Road, where Dr. Agrawal has joined the labor and delivery rotation. Gynecologic procedures continue to be offered at Hedrick Medical Center.

Dr. Agrawal, an OB-GYN with Hedrick Medical Center, has been serving Chillicothe, Trenton, and the surrounding 10 counties since 2017.

"Since moving to the area six years ago, I have grown to care deeply for this community and for my patients," Dr. Agrawal said. "My top priority—and the priority of Saint Luke's—is to provide safe, compassionate, quality care for the women of North Central Missouri. I look forward to continuing to serve in this new capacity."

When the model took effect, inpatient maternity services closed and routine deliveries ceased at Hedrick Medical Center. The approximately 15 labor and delivery nurses and ancillary staff affected were all eligible and encouraged to apply for alternate positions at Hedrick Medical Center, Wright Memorial Hospital, or within Saint Luke's Health System.

A nationwide shortage of OB-GYNs has created a highly competitive market for qualified specialists, making it extremely difficult to attract OB-GYNs to rural areas such as Chillicothe, despite dedicated, multi-year recruitment efforts. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) projects a shortage of 22,000 OB-GYNs by 2050.

This new approach is designed to prioritize and protect maternity care in North Central Missouri and prevent the increase of "maternity deserts" emerging across the state. A maternity desert is part of an alarming trend seen nationally in rural areas and other regions without OB-GYN care. Today, 47% of Missouri counties have no access to obstetric care of any kind, including many of the counties around Hedrick Medical Center. Saint Luke's has met with Missouri lawmakers and state health officials to bring awareness to this worsening health crisis and to bring about meaningful action.

"We've been working diligently to find a solution to this intractable problem because Saint Luke's Health System and Hedrick Medical Center are deeply dedicated to our patients and families in North Central Missouri," said Julie Quirin, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice



President of Saint Luke's Health System. "With this approach, area moms and moms-to-be will receive 95% of their maternity care close to home with a physician and team they know and trust."

Located 90 miles southwest of Chillicothe, Saint Luke's North's maternity program, which includes a Level II NICU, is recognized by Blue Cross Blue Shield as a Blue Distinction Center and by the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services as a Show Me 5 maternity hospital. It is also designated a Baby-Friendly hospital for its commitment to breastfeeding.

Read the full March of Dimes report on the growing issue of maternity care deserts across the United States: <https://marchofdimes.org/maternity-care-deserts-report>

- **Saint Luke's Primary Care Sees Significant Growth**

**Introducing Perryman Primary Care—Plaza**

Throughout a distinguished career that spanned more than four decades at Saint Luke's, Chris Perryman, MD, was a true doctor's doctor, who always had the best interest of our patients and our team at heart. Following Dr. Perryman's unexpected passing in July 2022, clinic staff and Dr. Perryman's family gathered in October to honor the physician, leader, and friend and officially rename Saint Luke's Primary Care—Plaza, the clinic that meant so much to Dr. Perryman and where he cared for his patients, to Saint Luke's Perryman Primary Care—Plaza Clinic.

**Welcoming new physicians and APPs**

Knowing the importance of Primary Care to patients' overall health, Saint Luke's was pleased to share that 2023 has been a busy one for Saint Luke's Primary Care, with the addition of more than a dozen new physicians and APPs across the Kansas City metro area.

At Perryman Primary Care—Plaza, physicians who have newly joined the practice include:

- Chanteal Findling, DO
- Anna Giocondo, MD
- Peter Holt, MD
- Anthony Jackson, MD
- Jetinder Marjara, MD
- Molly Schapker, RN, APRN
- Kaylee Shrauger, MD

**Perryman – Plaza Walk-In Clinic**

In March 2023, the clinic introduced its Perryman—Plaza Walk-In Clinic, an opportunity for current and new patients to get care for conditions such as flu, sore throat, and common skin rashes, as well as to receive vaccinations. Current patients are encouraged to call the clinic before walking in because they may be able to see their Primary Care physician or advanced

practice provider. Perryman—Plaza Walk-In Clinic saw more than 80 patients in its first week of operation.

- **Crittenton Children's Center Named a 2023 United Way of Greater Kansas City Impact 100 Organization**

Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City Crittenton Children's Center was named a United Way of Greater Kansas City 2023 Impact 100 organization. This is the second year the United Way has chosen 100 organizations it believes are addressing the most vital health and human services needs in our community to receive unrestricted funding from United Way to further their missions—and Crittenton has made the list both years.

- **New Kansas City Area Program Looks to Stem an Interest in Health Care for High Schoolers**

KMBC covered Saint Luke's partnership with Summit Technology Academy to train a group of high school seniors to become nursing assistants at Saint Luke's East Hospital in the summer of 2023. The report featured Alexis Walker, a nursing assistant who completed the program, and Kristin Carlson, DNP, RN, OCN, CMSRN, Director of System Education at Saint Luke's, about how these students are making an impact.

- **Saint Luke's Introduces Ambulatory Infusion Clinics**

Saint Luke's expanded infusion services through two ambulatory infusion clinics at Saint Luke's Multispecialty Clinics at Blue Springs and Mission Farms. These clinics provide infusion and injectable medications in a relaxing, caring environment with private suites that feature comfortable recliners and iPads loaded with games and other entertainment options.

Oncology patients and patients with higher acuity conditions continue receiving outpatient treatments at Saint Luke's Hospital Infusion Centers at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, Saint Luke's East Hospital, Saint Luke's North Hospital, Saint Luke's South Hospital, and Liberty Hospital.

- **Saint Luke's Heart Conditions in Pregnancy Program Welcomes More Than 2,000 Healthy Babies**

In the past, many women born with a heart condition were told they would not be able to give birth to children safely. In 2015, Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute launched the Saint Luke's Heart Conditions in Pregnancy Program, which follows a multidisciplinary approach to help women with cardiovascular conditions through pregnancy. This specialized clinic has now helped more than 2,000 patients become mothers.

"This unique and much valued program has changed so many lives through the multidisciplinary care for OB patients with cardiovascular conditions. This approach is what cardiovascular and obstetrical governing societies have agreed is best practice," said Anna Grodzinsky, MD, Saint Luke's Cardiologist. "This incredible milestone was only achievable thanks to support from the Muriel I. Kauffman Women's Heart Center, Saint Luke's Cardiovascular Consultants' leadership, Saint Luke's Hospital Maternal-Fetal Medicine Program, and our exceptional coordinator, Darcy White, RN."

- **Saint Luke's East Hospital Breaks Ground on Ambulatory Surgery Center Addition**

Saint Luke's East Hospital is expanding, adding 62,000 square feet to the hospital campus in Lee's Summit. This significant expansion will provide space for new, on-campus clinics for ear,

nose, and throat and women's health and new locations for Rockhill Orthopaedic Specialists, general surgery, plastic surgery, pulmonology, and more.

"This expansion will have a real impact on everyone in this community," said Keith Asel, President of the Saint Luke's East Hospital Board, during the groundbreaking event that took place on April 12, 2023. "No matter where a Saint Luke's patient is in their health journey, we will be there for them every step of the way, and this latest addition we're celebrating today will give our patients even more options that are close to home."

- **Troost Urgent Care is Now Troost Convenient Care**

On March 1, 2023, Troost Urgent Care transitioned to a Saint Luke's Convenient Care clinic, providing physicals, vaccinations, and treatment for minor illnesses with no appointment necessary for patients 18 months and older.

- **Saint Luke's Introduces 2023 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Task Force**

In partnership with the Exeter Group, Saint Luke's announced the newly established Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Task Force, a robust and diverse group of staff from across departments, entities, and disciplines, together charged with developing action plans and supporting and enhancing DEIB education and resources across the Health System. DEIB is at the forefront of what we do each and every day as we care for our communities and one another. It's essential that members of the Saint Luke's team have a voice in our strategic approach and plans for DEIB.

- **Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City Celebrates 100 Years at 44th and Wornall**

2023 marked a century of serving our community at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City's current site. The first 41 years in Saint Luke's history saw the hospital in four different buildings as it adapted to the growing need to care for more patients. Hundreds turned out in the cold to witness the groundbreaking for the new hospital overlooking Mill Creek Parkway on Dec. 19, 1920. On March 1, 1923, each of the 18 patients at the previous hospital site were taken to the new, expansive, modern hospital location at 44<sup>th</sup> and Wornall Road in an ambulance, accompanied by a nursing student. An additional 22 patients were admitted that day. Six surgeries took place, and two babies were born. Saint Luke's is grateful to all who have contributed to the rich history of the hospital through generations.

In 2022, Saint Luke's marked 140 years of serving the needs of our community. An Archive table at Saint Luke's Hospital featured highlights from throughout Saint Luke's 140-year history, celebrating its tireless work to provide care with excellence and compassion to the communities we serve.

- **Saint Luke's Medical Laboratory Science Program Celebrates 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Founded in 1933, Saint Luke's Medical Laboratory Science Program was among the first medical technology programs in the country, and it is proud of the educational tradition of innovation and excellence it provides. The program prepares students to test patient samples and provide accurate and reliable test results that are vital to the success of medical practices. Medical laboratory students in the 11-month program have access to the latest molecular tests, technologies, and resources. The program exposes students to the most current scientific methods and clinical information to prepare them for a successful career.

- **Saint Luke's Hospice House Marks 10 Years of Caring for the Community**

In 2023, Saint Luke's Hospice House recognized its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of caring for the community. Saint Luke's Hospice House is a free-standing facility that offers hospice care for patients who

may require more symptom management than can be provided at home or who may prefer to spend their final days in another safe, loving location. The beautiful 22,500-square-foot building features 12 large private suites to accommodate patients and their loved ones; an indoor chapel and an open-air outdoor chapel; a community room with a piano; and much more, including grief support to help patients and families.

- **Saint Luke's Consolidates Obstetrical Services in South and East Region**

In December 2022, obstetrical services for Saint Luke's South Hospital in Overland Park, Kansas, and Saint Luke's East Hospital in Lee's Summit, Missouri, were consolidated. All deliveries for both hospitals now take place at Saint Luke's East Hospital.

Though deliveries take place at Saint Luke's East, Saint Luke's Women's Health South patients are still be seen at the clinic at Saint Luke's South for all prenatal, postnatal, and women's health visits.

- **Saint Luke's Streamlines Community Hospital Services in Kansas**

Saint Luke's closed two Saint Luke's South Community Hospital locations—in Olathe and Shawnee—in December 2022 as part of a strategic plan to focus resources on higher-volume locations and continue to provide fast access to high-quality emergency care where there is the greatest patient demand. All impacted employees had opportunities to stay with Saint Luke's.

Saint Luke's Community Hospital locations that remain open include:

- Leawood: 13200 State Line Road
- The Legends in Kansas City, Kansas: 10544 Parallel Parkway
- Roeland Park: 4720 Johnson Drive

- **Saint Luke's Offers Variety of Options for Same-Day Care**

Video Visits On-Demand and walk-in opportunities through Convenient Care and Primary Care Walk-In Clinics are available for any combination of cold and flu, sinus pain, sore throat, and cough symptoms. Urgent Care Clinics are available seven days a week to care for non-life-threatening emergencies. Saint Luke's Emergency Departments are open 24/7 for emergencies. Patients can learn more at [saintlukeskc.org/samedaycare](https://saintlukeskc.org/samedaycare).

- **Saint Luke's Offers New Nursing Assistant Training Program**

Saint Luke's Health System has developed a full-time, six-week, paid training program to equip entry-level nursing assistants with the knowledge and skills they need for the job. Nursing assistants are invaluable to the patient experience, and also help free nursing staff to focus on patient care responsibilities.

- **Saint Luke's Cancer Institute and Saint Luke's North Hospital Celebrate Expanded Cancer Services in the Northland**

On Oct. 5, 2022, Saint Luke's Cancer Institute and Saint Luke's North Hospital hosted an open house to celebrate expanded cancer services in the Northland. Saint Luke's Cancer Institute opened a new clinic, infusion center, and pharmacy at Saint Luke's North Hospital's Barry Medical Park building. Guests gathered to hear from speakers including Timothy Pluard, MD, Medical Oncology Division Chair, and Sreekanth Donepudi, MD, Hematology/Oncology physician, at the new location.

## People

- **Saint Luke's Central Region Announces Leadership Changes**

Saint Luke's announced several changes in 2022 and 2023 impacting Executive Leadership for Saint Luke's Central Region, which includes Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, Saint Luke's Bishop Spencer Place, Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City Crittenton Children's Center, and Medical Education and Research.

### **Nursing Leadership**

In fall 2022, after thoughtful consideration, Debbie Wilson, RN, MSN, MSA, NEA-BC, retired from her role as Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer for Saint Luke's Central Region, after a 30-year career with Saint Luke's. Debbie's commitment to patient satisfaction, patient outcomes, and nursing satisfaction helped us achieve what only 2% of hospitals in the United States have done—securing four consecutive Magnet designations, awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Saint Luke's was pleased in spring 2023 to announce that Jason Purcell, DNP, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, has been named Chief Nursing Officer for Saint Luke's Central Region, after serving in this role in an interim capacity since November 2022. As CNO, Jason is responsible for leading and overseeing nursing functions across the Central Region, including Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City and Saint Luke's Hospital of Crittenton Children's Center. He sets patient care standards and oversees our efforts to achieve them. Jason has been an integral part of the team at Saint Luke's Hospital that has secured numerous Magnet designations.

### **Operations Leadership**

In May 2023, in recognition of the important and continuously growing and evolving work of our clinical service lines—including cancer, cardiovascular, neuroscience, women's and children's services, and behavioral health—Jane Peck, RN, transitioned to focus full-time on leading these areas as Vice President of Clinical Service Lines as well as assuming operational responsibility for Saint Luke's fast-growing Hospital In Your Home program. As she made this transition, Jane relinquished her responsibilities as Chief Operating Officer of the Central Region.

Saint Luke's was pleased to announce at the same time that Marshaun Butler has been promoted to Chief Operating Officer for Saint Luke's Central Region. In this role, Marshaun, who served since 2021 as Vice President and Administrator at Crittenton Children's Center, is responsible for leading and overseeing operations across the Central Region, including Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City and Crittenton Children's Center.

With Marshaun's transition to her Central Region Chief Operating Officer capacity full time, Julie Mitchell, BSN, RN, assumed additional responsibilities as interim Vice President and Administrator for Crittenton Children's Center, in addition to her current responsibilities as Crittenton's Director of Patient Care Services, to ensure a seamless transition for patients, families, and staff.

### **Human Resources Leadership**

In January 2023, Lacy Lugo, JD, was named Vice President of Human Resources for Saint Luke's Central Region. In this role, Lacy leads and oversees HR functions across the Central Region, including Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, Saint Luke's Hospital Crittenton Children's Center, Saint Luke's Bishop Spencer Place, Volunteer Services, and the Child Care Center.

Saint Luke's is grateful to Donna Kunz for her decades of service to the Health System—and for extending her stay past her planned retirement date to serve as Vice President of HR for the Central Region as Saint Luke's worked to fill this key position.

- **Louis Collier Named CEO of Saint Luke's Bishop Spencer Place**

Louis Collier was named CEO of Saint Luke's Bishop Spencer Place and began serving in this role in August 2023. Louis most recently served as CEO of Assisted 4 Living, Inc. (now Arboreta Healthcare, Inc.), a post-acute health care company in Florida that includes more than 30 skilled nursing facilities and five assisted living facilities. Louis earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from The University of Virginia at Wise.

"Louis is a proven health care executive with more than a decade of experience in post-acute care leadership," said Margaret Donnelly, Vice President of Post Acute Care Services. "We're grateful for the work of our search committee in screening and interviewing candidates for this important position, and we look forward to continuing our work to provide a safe, healthy, and comfortable home for residents and place of healing for patients."

The CEO position came open with the departure in April of Dee Dunn, who decided to pursue a new direction in her career that would provide greater work-life balance and more time to spend with her family. Saint Luke's is grateful to Rupal J. Mistry, LNHA, CDP, for her months as interim CEO of Bishop Spencer Place before Louis was named CEO.

- **Saint Luke's Names Diane Trimble to New Position as Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer**

Quality and excellence in clinical care are among the most critical areas of focus for Saint Luke's as a Health System. As a reflection Saint Luke's steadfast commitment to safe, high-quality patient care, Diane Trimble, MSN, RN-BC, moved in October 2022 from her previous role as Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Executive to Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer. Diane was already heavily involved in driving System-wide quality improvement initiatives—working alongside Chris Perryman, MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, before his passing in July 2022, as well as Emily Falkenrath, Vice President of Quality, Patient Safety, and Regulatory, David Safley, MD, Vice President of Medical Affairs of Quality, and William Gilbirds II, MD, Chief Medical Officer for Saint Luke's Care. In this newly created position, Diane is responsible for establishing and overseeing our System-wide vision, goals, and strategy for quality performance and improvement, and works closely with teams from across the organization to focus on quality initiatives.

- **Susie Krug Named Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Executive**

Susie Krug, MHA, BSN, CENP, accepted the role of Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Executive for Saint Luke's Health System in January 2023, after serving as Chief Nursing Executive in an interim capacity since October 2022. In this role, Susie leads strategy and advancement of nursing practice across the Health System, and brings passion, innovation, and a patient-first approach to this senior leadership role, all qualities that are essential in Saint Luke's efforts to meet the evolving needs of the communities we serve and ensure rewarding careers for our clinical teams.

- **Saint Luke's Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute Names New Medical and Surgical Co-Directors**

Saint Luke's Health System is proud to announce the addition of Carlos A. Bagley, MD, MBA, and Sara Hocker, MD, to serve as surgical and medical co-directors of Saint Luke's Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute.

“Following a robust national search, I am exceptionally pleased to be able to share these key leadership appointments,” said Mike Main, MD, Saint Luke’s Health System Senior Vice President and Saint Luke’s Physician Group CEO. “Dr. Bagley and Dr. Hocker are highly accomplished clinicians, prolific researchers, and respected leaders in the neuroscience community. Their combined leadership and expertise ensure Saint Luke’s Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute patients can be confident they are receiving world-class care right here in Kansas City.”

Dr. Bagley serves as Co-Director of Saint Luke’s Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute; Chief, Department of Neurosurgery; and Co-Chair of Saint Luke’s Physician Group Neurosciences Division. Dr. Bagley will also serve as the Edward T. Matheny, Jr./Missouri Endowed Chair in Neuroscience.

Most recently, Dr. Bagley served as a professor of Neurological Surgery and Executive Vice Chair of the Department of Neurological Surgery at the University of Texas Southwestern School of Medicine in Dallas, Texas, where he also served as president of the Texas Association of Neurological Surgeons. He serves on the editorial review boards of numerous spine and neurosurgery journals including *Global Spine Journal*, *Evidence-Based Spine-Care Journal*, and *Neurosurgery*. He is the author or co-author of more than 200 peer-reviewed medical journal publications. Dr. Bagley completed his undergraduate education in biological sciences at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, and received his Doctor of Medicine from Duke University School of Medicine. He completed a residency in neurological surgery—serving as Chief Resident—and a fellowship in spine surgery at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. He received his Master of Business Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Hocker serves as Co-Director of Saint Luke’s Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute; Chief, Department of Neurology; and Co-Chair of Saint Luke’s Physician Group Neurosciences Division.

Prior to joining Saint Luke’s, Dr. Hocker served most recently as a professor of neurology, chair of the division of neurocritical care and hospital neurology, and hospital practice chair at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Neurology, serves on the editorial board of *Neurocritical Care*, and is a leader in post-graduate medical education and an active clinical researcher with more than 100 peer-reviewed articles in medical journals. Dr. Hocker received her undergraduate degree in cell biology and anatomy from the University of Kansas and her Doctor of Medicine from the University of Kansas School of Medicine. She completed a neurology residency at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine, and a neurocritical care fellowship at Mayo Clinic.

In addition to naming Bagley and Hocker to top leadership positions, Saint Luke’s Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute has also significantly expanded the neuroscience team, including the addition of Megan Baumgardner, DO, memory disorder specialist; Yifei Duan, MD, cerebrovascular surgeon; Samuel Goldlust, MD, neuro-oncologist; and Kristopher Southard, MD, and Nathan Lightfoot, DO, both vascular neurologists.

- **Russ Davis, MD, Named Co-Executive Surgical Director of Saint Luke’s Mid America Heart Institute**

John Russell “Russ” Davis, MD, has been named Co-Executive Surgical Director of Saint Luke’s Mid America Heart Institute, effective immediately. His selection follows a nationwide search over six months, led by a multidisciplinary search committee that included physicians and senior administrators.

In this key role, Dr. Davis works in close collaboration with Matthew Deedy, MD, Co-Executive Medical Director of the Heart Institute and Chair of the Cardiovascular Division for Saint Luke's Physician Group.

Together, Dr. Davis and Dr. Deedy lead Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, developing strategy to support and advance our work across Saint Luke's Cardiology and Heart Surgery program. *U.S. News & World Report* once again listed the Heart Institute among the top 50 programs in the nation for Cardiology, Heart & Vascular Surgery.

Dr. Davis, who specializes in cardiothoracic surgery and heart transplant surgery, has been practicing at Saint Luke's since 2010 and leads Mid America Heart & Lung Surgeons. Dr. Davis earned his medical degree from St. George's University School of Medicine and completed his residency at Mercer University School of Medicine and his fellowship through Saint Luke's Hospital—Medical Education.

"During our national search for the right physician for this critical surgical leadership role, we considered several excellent external candidates, and our search always led us right back to Dr. Davis who, in his interim capacity, was already bringing to fruition exactly what we wanted in this position," said Jani Johnson, RN, MSN, Saint Luke's Central Region CEO. "Perhaps most importantly, he had already gained the respect and support of his team, which is essential in leading a successful, cohesive cardiothoracic surgery program that consistently and compassionately provides the quality of care our patients expect from us."

With this appointment, there are two experienced and engaged physician leaders at the helm of the Heart Institute, each committed to building on a thriving program and ensuring exceptional care for our communities for years to come.

- **Saint Luke's Announces Key Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Perinatal Leadership Roles**

In June 2023, Hung Winn, MD, JD, MBA, began serving as Medical Director of Maternal-Fetal Medicine (MFM) for Saint Luke's Health System. In this role, Dr. Winn is helping to grow this important service line for high-risk pregnancies that require specialized care for mother and baby.

Dr. Winn, a board-certified OB-GYN and Maternal-Fetal Medicine specialist, brings to this role a wealth of clinical and leadership expertise in MFM, most recently at the University of Missouri Health Care, where he served in leadership roles that include chair of the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Women's Health and residency program director for the department. He has also been a tenured professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Missouri—Columbia School of Medicine and has served as the William T. Griffin, MD, and Roberta Ann Griffin Endowed Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology and as David G. Hall Endowed and Tenured Professor.

He has served on the editorial boards of maternal-fetal medicine journals, including *The Journal of Maternal-Fetal Medicine* and *The Journal of Perinatal Medicine* and has authored or co-authored numerous peer-reviewed publications and book chapters. He was the co-editor of the textbook "Clinical Maternal-Fetal Medicine." He is a frequent lecturer at national and international conferences.

Dr. Winn earned his medical degree and completed his OB-GYN residency at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria and completed his MFM fellowship at Yale University School of Medicine. Additionally, Dr. Winn completed a Juris Doctor degree at Saint Louis University School of Law and earned his Master of Business Administration at Saint Louis University Richard A. Chaifetz School of Business.



## **Perinatal Safety**

Recognizing the importance of the weeks immediately before and after birth for mother and baby, Saint Luke's added a new director-level position to oversee our Perinatal Safety Program. Bree Fallon, RN, RNC-OB, C-EFM, joined the Health System May 1 as Director of Saint Luke's Perinatal Safety Program.

- **M. Casey Martinez, MD, Named to Key Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Leadership Roles**

M. Casey Martinez, MD, accepted the role of Chair of the Saint Luke's Physician Group Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PMR), as well as Medical Director of Saint Luke's Rehabilitation Institute and Saint Luke's Health System's Rehabilitation Service Line. Dr. Martinez had served in these roles in an interim capacity since April 2022 and continues his successful leadership of systemwide clinical initiatives for PMR and Rehabilitation, guiding Saint Luke's work to help patients recover and regain strength and function after illness and injury.

- **Robert Amajoyi, MD, Inducted as Inaugural President of the Society of Black Colon & Rectal Surgeons**

The Society of Black Colon & Rectal Surgeons (SBCRS) is a newly launched nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance colorectal health equity in minority populations and underserved communities, and grow the number of Black colorectal surgeons through mentorship, development, and advocacy. Robert Amajoyi, MD, Saint Luke's colorectal surgeon and SBCRS co-founder, was inducted as the inaugural president at the society's first official meeting on May 19, 2023.

- **Encouraging medical careers:** In recognition of Black History Month, the American Society of Colon & Rectal Surgeons (ASCRS) hosted a virtual discussion, "The Scarcity of Black Men in White Coats," co-led by Dr. Amajoyi as Director of the Rectal Cancer Program at Saint Luke's Cancer Institute, on the impact of declining numbers of Black men enrolling in medical school and practicing medicine.
- **Recognition for excellent care:** After a patient had a hemicolectomy, a partial removal of the colon, a family member—who is a regular blood donor—was so thankful for the excellent care his loved one received, he donated blood in Dr. Amajoyi's name in honor of the care, time, and expertise Dr. Amajoyi shared with the patient and family.

- **Saint Luke's Welcomes Darren Bass as CEO of Saint Luke's North Region**

Darren Bass, DPT, FACHE, joined Saint Luke's in April 2023 as CEO of Saint Luke's North Region, taking the place of Adele Ducharme, MSN, MBA, FACHE, who retired in the spring after a distinguished career serving our community for more than a decade. Darren is a proven health care executive who comes to Saint Luke's from CoxHealth in Springfield, Missouri, where he served as Vice President of Clinical Services. In August, with the consolidation of Saint Luke's North and Critical Access Regions, Darren was named CEO of Saint Luke's new North and Critical Access Region.

- **Ingrid Larson Named CNO of Saint Luke's East Hospital**

Ingrid Larson, DNP, MSN, MBA, RN, APRN, CPNP, NEA-BC, joined Saint Luke's in April 2023 as CNO of Saint Luke's East Hospital. Ingrid came to Saint Luke's from Children's Mercy, where she most recently served as Vice President of Kansas Operations and Associate Chief Nursing Officer, as well as spending time in clinic providing care as a pediatric nurse practitioner. Ingrid is responsible for all nursing functions and setting patient care standards at Saint Luke's East.

- **Damara Harper Named CFO of Saint Luke's Physician Group**

Damara Harper, CPA, joined Saint Luke's in May 2023 as Chief Financial Officer of Saint Luke's Physician Group. Damara brings to this role more than 15 years of experience in health care

financial leadership in the Kansas City area. Damara joined Saint Luke's as Julie Murphy, CPA, retired from this position in May.

- **David Maddox Promoted to Chief Technology Officer**

David Maddox, MBA, CISA, CISSP, PMP, is now serving as Chief Technology Officer for Saint Luke's Health System. In this role, David is responsible for developing the Health System's strategy for using technological resources, ensuring technologies are used efficiently and securely, and evaluating and implementing new systems and infrastructure.

"David joined Saint Luke's in April 2019 and has been instrumental in advancing our Information Security (IS) program during this rapidly evolving period in which technology and health care are more interconnected than ever," said Debe Gash, Saint Luke's Health System Senior Vice President and Chief Digital Officer.

- **Ravi Monga Joins Saint Luke's as Chief Information Security Officer**

Ravi Monga, MBA, CISSP, CISM, CRISC, HCISPP, joined Saint Luke's Health System in March 2023 as Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) to lead and oversee our expansive System-wide efforts to protect the security of Saint Luke's digital infrastructure and data, an effort that continues to increase in complexity and importance to our patients, staff, and organization. Ravi brings more than 25 years of technology experience—including 15 years in health care and cybersecurity—to Saint Luke's.

- **Tammy Leslie Promoted to Vice President, Total Rewards**

Tammy Leslie has been promoted to Vice President of Total Rewards and, in this expanded role, will continue to lead and oversee strategy for the Health System's benefits and retirement plans, leave management, HRIS, HR Compliance/Immigration, and compensation—all important components in ensuring Saint Luke's stands out as a competitive employer. Tammy brings more than 30 years of HR expertise and experience to her role and has served as Director of Total Rewards for Saint Luke's Health System since 2010, leading the HR Shared Services teams and programs that support the physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial wellness of Saint Luke's 12,500 employees.

- **Jamie Luark Expands Areas of Responsibility to Include Saint Luke's Employee Assistance Program**

Jamie Luark, DNP, RN, CENP, Vice President of Educational Services, took on expanded responsibilities in 2023 with oversight of Saint Luke's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which provides a wide variety of services for employees and family members. In addition to the EAP, Jamie is responsible for System Education, Nursing Research, IT Training, and Organizational Development and Talent Management, departments that help to support, educate, and increase competency and skills for Saint Luke's employees. The EAP focuses on supporting employees as they do their jobs, helping Saint Luke's take excellent care of its patients.

- **Jeremy Armstrong, FACHE, Joins Saint Luke's as Administrator of Anderson County Hospital and Allen County Regional Hospital**

Jeremy joined Saint Luke's in September 2022 to lead and oversee day-to-day operations at Anderson County Hospital and Allen County Regional Hospital, Saint Luke's two Kansas Critical Access Hospitals. He works closely with on-site leadership at both hospitals and with Critical Access Region leadership to develop and execute strategy to care for the communities' health care needs, in alignment with best practices within the region as well as the Health System.

- **Eli Thompson Joins Saint Luke's as Director of Security**

Elijah "Eli" Thompson has joined Saint Luke's Health System as Director of Security, responsible

for leading and overseeing the Security function systemwide, focusing on Saint Luke's ongoing commitment to providing safe and secure environments for patients, staff, and visitors.

- **Benetta Jackson Promoted to Director of Employee Relations**

Benetta Jackson has been promoted to Director of Employee Relations and will continue to partner with executives, managers, and employees systemwide to resolve employment issues as they arise, including the facilitation of the Interactive Dialogue Process with employees.

- **Courtney Klahn Named Director of Nutrition Services for Saint Luke's Health System**

Courtney Klahn joined Saint Luke's in 2020 and was instrumental in coordinating hundreds of Saint Luke's employee appreciation events. Courtney took on this new leadership role—which is essential in providing safe, high-quality food service for patients and staff—upon the retirement of John McReynolds, who had worked in food services at Saint Luke's for 15 years, during which time he led the opening of several entity dining areas and expanded the Jo 'n Go concept.

## **Commitment to Care**

- **Saint Luke's Plans for Inaugural Heartland Gala**

On Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023, The Heartland Gala took place at Loews Kansas City Hotel. This benefit honored the exceptional cardiovascular care at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, the nation's first free-standing heart hospital. To launch this gala this year is especially meaningful, because this is also the year the heart program performed its milestone 1,000<sup>th</sup> heart transplant, a milestone fewer than 25 programs in the nation have achieved. Yvonne Miller, CEO of Saint Luke's Foundation and Chief Development Officer, and the entire Foundation team recognized a need and an opportunity to come together to celebrate the caliber and impact of Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, the outstanding care team, and the patients served by this program.

- **Final Chapter of Books & Boutiques Celebrates 15 Years of Support for Saint Luke's South Hospital**

On May 1, Saint Luke's hosted the final chapter of Books & Boutiques, with this year's event offering guests a gourmet lunch, a presentation by *New York Times*-bestselling author Fiona Davis, a signed copy of Davis' latest novel, "The Magnolia Palace," and an opportunity to shop from local boutiques. For 15 years, Books & Boutiques brought together leaders, volunteers, boutiques, authors, and sponsors to support Saint Luke's South Hospital. Its concluding event this year raised more than \$85,000, with more than \$2 million raised over the event's 15 years, a testament to the generosity and commitment of donors, supporters, and the community.

- **Saint Luke's Proud to be Official Medical Provider of the KC Current and Increase Health Awareness Throughout Community**

Saint Luke's is proud to be the Official Medical Provider of the Kansas City Current, Kansas City's popular professional women's soccer team. Through this platform and partnership, Saint Luke's and the KC Current have raised awareness of leading health concerns—including heart disease and cancer—among fans, staff, and community members.

**KC Kicks Cancer:** In September, the KC Kicks Cancer match brought awareness to the importance of cancer screening and prevention throughout the game and kicked off Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. Before the game, Saint Luke's Cancer Institute provided cancer screening education and gave away 1,500 wavy foam noodles to help

fans cheer on the Current during the game. Saint Luke's offered a fun photo opportunity and station to make an "I Kick Cancer For..." poster. Wanda Campbell, a patient who has stage IV ovarian cancer, was featured for the ceremonial first kick alongside Lorna Brudie, DO, gynecologic oncologist, shining a spotlight on the impactful work Saint Luke's Cancer Institute does for the community. Carrie Lavin, Director, Oncology Service Line, presented a check to Gilda's Club, the community champion of the match, and Kim Day, Manager of the Breast Centers at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City and Saint Luke's East Hospital, was recognized as the Hometown Hero. Leading up to the match, KC Current players Cece Kizer, Kate Del Fava, and Michelle Cooper visited patients receiving treatment at the infusion center at Saint Luke's Hospital.

**Heart Health Awareness:** Saint Luke's presented the Heart Health Awareness match in June. Before the match, Saint Luke's Muriel I. Kauffman Women's Heart Center offered free blood pressure checks to fans, as well as clear stadium bags and an opportunity to enter a drawing for the chance to win heart-healthy baskets. Saint Luke's also offered CPR training and a heart-themed photo opportunity. Tracy L. Stevens, MD, Medical Director of the Women's Heart Center, helped present a \$5,000 check to The Black Archives of Mid-America, community champion of the match, on behalf of the KC Current and Saint Luke's. In addition, Valerie Rader, MD, cardiologist, joined a Saint Luke's patient on the field for the ceremonial first kick. Cassie Miller, KC Current goalkeeper, visited Saint Luke's Hospital to share her firsthand perspective on congenital heart disease and offer support and gratitude to patients and staff. Saint Luke's and the KC Current also hosted a Heart Health Party at Ruby Jean's Juicery the week of the game, welcoming community members and students from Operation Breakthrough to learn about heart health while enjoying smoothies, fun face tattoos, yard games, and entertainment by a DJ.

**Celebrating doctors and teamwork:** In March, members of the KC Current and a few members of Saint Luke's own all-star team of physicians sat down to talk about the importance of teamwork in celebration of Doctors' Day.

- **Saint Luke's Welcomes Visitors to 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Plaza Art Fair**  
Saint Luke's was proud to be presenting sponsor of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Plaza Art Fair Sept. 22 – 24, with this year's Saint Luke's main tent featuring a bright, sunflower-focused theme of "Let your health shine." The Art Fair combines art, music, food, family, friends, and fun into a single event. The 2023 Plaza Art Fair was Saint Luke's eighth year as presenting sponsor. The family-friendly art fair covers the Plaza area and features many artists and restaurant booths. It's an opportunity to support the arts, connect with the community, and visit with fair-goers.
- **Plaza 10K Benefits Saint Luke's Home Care & Hospice**  
The Plaza 10K is the largest 10K in Kansas and Missouri. Saint Luke's Home Care & Hospice was honored to be the beneficiary of the Plaza 10K again in 2023. The 13<sup>th</sup> annual Plaza 10K on Sept. 10 drew hundreds of participants—including more than 200 Saint Luke's employees—to the Country Club Plaza. This year's event raised \$26,000 in support of Saint Luke's Home Care & Hospice, and in total, the Plaza 10K has raised more than \$170,000 in the past seven years.
- **Jackie Johnson's Commitment to Her Patients Prompts New Bus Route**  
When Jackie Johnson, RN, NP-C, CDCES, asked patients what was keeping them from their office visits at Saint Luke's Endocrinology Specialists—Plaza, the answer was almost always

transportation. Determined to help, Jackie engaged Saint Luke's Government and Community Relations team. The result is an updated bus route that went live this summer—including new, closer bus stops on Broadway Boulevard—all designed to make the Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City campus more accessible to patients and staff.

A significant percentage of Jackie's patients have diabetes, often with complications, and many struggle to walk without assistance. For patients who rely on public transportation, it proved physically taxing to get off a bus and then climb up the steep hill on W. 43rd Street to reach the office. Patients often arrived out of breath and with elevated blood pressure and low blood sugar from the exertion.

Tim Van Zandt, Saint Luke's Vice President of Government and Community Relations, and Jake Vance, Program Manager, Government and Community Relations, approached the Kansas City Area Transit Authority (KCATA) with Jackie's concerns to identify potential solutions. Saint Luke's and KCATA worked together to reroute RideKC route 47 to include stops on Broadway Boulevard rather than taking Mill Creek Parkway, cutting out the hill and increasing access.

"It almost made me cry," Jackie said of seeing this solution take shape. "The health and well-being of our patients mean so much to us, and this was an example of community partners collaborating to ensure these valued members of our community have access to the resources they need to take the best possible care of their health."

- **Saint Luke's Hospital Hosts NICU Reunion to Remember**

Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City hosted the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) reunion in June, in person, for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. Doctors and nurses were reunited with many NICU graduates, and families connected, took part in fun activities, and expressed lifelong gratitude for the care they received in the NICU.

- **Saint Luke's Celebrates MVPs—Nominated by Co-Workers—with Once-in-a-Lifetime NFL Draft Main Stage Tour**

Saint Luke's is proud of our 140-year history as a civic leader and our tradition of sponsoring activities—such as the NFL Draft—that grow our region and support a strong, thriving community. By shining a bright light on Kansas City, these events make it easier to recruit talent to the market and allow us to recognize and celebrate our team's contributions in unique ways.

Members of the Saint Luke's team submitted nearly 800 nominations for co-workers who are "MVPs" in their role, making them eligible to be considered for an NFL Draft Stage Tour hosted by Saint Luke's Health System President and CEO Melinda L. Estes, MD. The nominations told heartwarming stories of the talent, commitment, and spirit of members of the Saint Luke's team.

Each of the seven winners received multiple nominations, summarized below:

**Carl Bendure, RN I**

*Registered Nurse*

Saint Luke's Physician Group

*Carl has served his patients and fellow nurses for more than 40 years, always caring, listening, and helping with a positive attitude that lifts the spirits of everyone around him. He's always quick to help a co-worker and loves to pass on the knowledge he has gained through the years.*

**Casey Blackburn**

*Security Sergeant*

Saint Luke's North Hospital

*Casey is a real-life superhero. He uses his experience, relaxed nature, and likable personality to keep patients, visitors, and staff safe, even in the most difficult situations. Casey often sits with patients in the Emergency Department, providing a calming presence for those who need additional support.*

**Dion Gatson, MA**

*Medical Assistant*

Saint Luke's East Hospital

*Dion has made it his mission to make infusion patients feel welcome and comfortable during some of their most difficult days. He remembers each patient's favorite drink and snack and has them waiting by the chair when the patient arrives.*

**Kristin Macek, OTR**

*Occupational Therapist*

Saint Luke's South Hospital

*Not only is Kristin an excellent occupational therapist, but she is also committed to making future generations of therapists the best they can be. She is an exceptional mentor who guides new hires and students using her deep knowledge and experience, always with a side of humor.*

**Sheli Shockley**

*Data Quality Specialist*

Saint Luke's System Offices

*Sheli is not only great at her job, but she makes everyone around her better. She is always available to answer questions, take on extra work, or make her co-workers laugh. Sheli also works to better her community. Her charity BBQ events raise money for local scholarships and families in need.*

**Terrance (TJ) Suber**

*Laundry Associate*

Hedrick Medical Center

*TJ is the ultimate team player. He wears many hats, and they all fit him well. Patients often request him to provide housekeeping services because his personality and smile are infectious. Working alongside TJ makes his co-workers' days brighter.*

**Megan Yates**

*Foster Care Case Manager*

Crittenton Children's Center

*Working in foster care is full of challenges, but Megan puts her whole heart into doing the very best for every child and family. She is committed to doing the right thing, even when it's difficult. Megan's capacity to care also extends to her co-workers, making her a wonderful teammate.*

- **Celebrating Diversity**

As part of our deep commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, Saint Luke's is proud to provide opportunities for education, discussion, and celebration within our organization and in our community. Throughout the year, we have celebrated Black History Month, Women's History Month, Jewish American Heritage Month, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Pride Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Native American Heritage Month (also known as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month). Our celebration of diversity includes sharing inspiring stories featuring our employees on our social media platforms throughout the year. A monthly calendar shared internally provides information on major holidays and observances that might touch the lives of our patients and team. Saint Luke's employees also have opportunities to attend virtual sessions on "Cultural Humility: Why It's Important in the Workplace" as we all work to provide a welcoming place for all.

- **Caring with Pride**

Throughout June, banners across Saint Luke's locations provided a visible sign of support of our LGBTQ+ patients and staff, and entities planned additional events to share more about and celebrate LGBTQ+ Pride Month and the "LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality Leader" designation all eligible campuses received through the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) in 2022. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of online courses through the Human Rights Campaign Foundation to enhance the care we provide to the LGBTQ+ community.

- **Saint Luke's is Proud to be Premier Partner of Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts**

**Future Stages:** Saint Luke's joined the community on June 11 to celebrate talented young performers from across the region at the 2023 Future Stages Festival. Future Stages provides an opportunity for hundreds of youth performers to shine on the Kauffman Center stages, featuring a wide range of performance styles. Saint Luke's is proud to support the arts. This year's event celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Future Stages.

**Yoga at the Kauffman Center:** Saint Luke's presented four opportunities throughout 2023 for community members to take part in a yoga session and hear from Saint Luke's professionals on a different health topic for each well-attended session in the series.

**Mother's Day Concert:** In celebration of the community, Saint Luke's presented a free Mother's Day pipe organ concert featuring Jan Kraybill, musical leader, international concert organist, pianist, harpsichordist, educator, and organ conservator for the Kauffman Center. Tickets to the free event at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts were open to the community, with a goal of providing free access to this important community asset to all.

- **Saint Luke's Proud to be Part of SevenDays Movement**

With kindness and compassion at our core, Saint Luke's Health System was proud to again participate in SevenDays®: Make a Ripple, Change the World—seven days focused on spreading kindness. The 2023 events took place over seven days during April, with opportunities for

employees to take part in kind acts throughout the entire month. Employees were invited to participate in this community-wide initiative that aims to transform hate and tragedy into a kinder world through small acts of kindness every day.

- **Social Impact Day Provides Opportunity to Make an Impact on Community in Yet Another Way**  
Recognizing the meaning our workforce finds in helping others and contributing to their community, nearly all Saint Luke's employees have a Social Impact Day each year, a floating holiday to use as they wish to help make the world a better place in any way they choose, either on their own or as part of a group.
  - In 2022, Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City's Leadership Group volunteered for HappyBottoms—where they counted, cinched, packaged, and labeled more than 14,800 diapers in two hours for families in need. Finding the experience incredibly rewarding, Jani Johnson, RN, MSN, CEO of Saint Luke's Central Region, challenged other teams to volunteer jointly to make an impact.
  - Sherri Holland, Lead Mammography Technologist at Saint Luke's North Hospital, combined her Social Impact Day with the rest of her weekend to hold a big packing party where she and friends assembled more than 300 gift boxes for children through Operation Christmas Child, a division of the international relief organization Samaritan's Purse.
  - Two members of the Anderson County Hospital EMS team, Troy Armstrong, EMS Director, and Alyssa Esson, Paramedic, used their Social Impact Day to volunteer and provide services with the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency's Disaster Medical Assistance Team during the February 2023 Chiefs Victory Parade in downtown Kansas City, Missouri.
- **Another Successful Adopt-An-Angel for Saint Luke's Hospital Crittenton Children's Center**  
Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City Crittenton Children's Center's annual Adopt-an-Angel Holiday Program distributed gifts to 515 children in foster care, residential, home-based and hospital programs thanks to the support and generosity of hundreds of donors and volunteers, including many members of the Saint Luke's team. More than 250 groups and individuals donated gifts and stocking stuffers and made general donations, in total providing more than 5,000 individual gifts and hundreds of general donations and stocking stuffers to help make the holiday season—which can be very difficult for children and teens who are facing challenging circumstances—a little brighter. Crittenton's team is grateful for the generosity of the community and the ongoing support of the volunteers who purchased gifts, made stockings, sponsored holiday events, wrapped presents, and assisted in other ways.
- **Big News for Saint Luke's Littlest Patients and Friends**  
Saint Luke's has had several opportunities to celebrate and support growing families over the past year, and these efforts to create and capture special moments for patients and staff often catch the eye of both local and national media. These efforts often reflect collaboration among the March of Dimes, Maternity Staff, NICU staff, Marketing, Media Relations, and volunteers to bring smiles and special memories for families across the region.

**Women's World Cup:** You're never too young to be a fan of soccer or the KC Current. Saint Luke's celebrated the start of the Women's World Cup by recruiting some new, little soccer recruits in the nursery at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, with hand-made soccer accessories and cuteness that's hard to beat. The story scored coverage from KCTV and KMBC.



**Baby NFL Draft:** Saint Luke's couldn't have been more excited to welcome the 2023 NFL Rookie Draft Class—just in time to coincide with the NFL Draft in Kansas City. Loaded with cuteness, these babies are ready to eat, sleep, and coo their way into your heart—and into stories that were featured on several local channels.

**Saint Luke's East Baby Boom:** In 2022, 15 nurses and one doctor within maternity at Saint Luke's East Hospital were pregnant at the same time. In 2023, the whole crew—now with little ones in tow—gathered for the sweetest photo opp, and caught the attention of ABC World News Tonight.

**NICU Pep Rally:** Babies in the NICU at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City had a pep rally ahead of the Big Game in February, providing families a fun way to join the momentum in Kansas City and the region and create a special memory during a time that can be incredibly challenging.

**Santa Visits Saint Luke's Hospital NICU:** The holidays can be a particularly challenging time for families in the NICU. They celebrate every milestone and look at each day as a gift. With planning, creativity, and empathy from NICU staff, the March of Dimes, longtime Saint Luke's employee Anthony Cook, and volunteer photographers, this visit by a special jolly guest always brings much-needed magic to families in the NICU, with opportunities for families to have their little ones dressed and “gifts” for keepsake photos they'll always cherish.

**Trick or Treat:** First Halloweens are a special time for many families, and NICU staff and March of Dimes volunteers make sure the babies in the NICU at Saint Luke's Hospital get to take part in the fun, with adorable costumes and keepsake photos.

## Technology and Innovation

- **Debe Gash, Saint Luke's Senior Vice President and Chief Digital Officer Celebrated for Contributions to the Future of Health Care**

Debe Gash, FACHE, CHCIO, FHIMSS, CPME, CPHIMS, Saint Luke's Senior Vice President and Chief Digital Officer, recently received the prestigious 2023 ORBIE Leadership Award through KansasCityCIO. Through an independent peer-review process, the ORBIE Awards honor chief information officers who have a proven track record of successful technology leadership, who have made significant contributions to the Kansas City technology and business community, and who have inspired others through their personal, professional, and civic contributions. Saint Luke's is proud of our 140+ years of innovation in caring for our community, and more than ever, technology and innovation are at the heart of what we do and how we do it. Debe has led our systemwide efforts during a time of exponential change, including sweeping expansion in use and adoption of available platforms and telehealth. Saint Luke's Health System is grateful to Debe for her forward-thinking vision—focused on patients and caregivers—that incorporates the best of technology into the compassionate care we provide.

Debe was also named in the 2023 *Becker's Healthcare* list of Chief Digital Officers to Know for her contributions in leading digital initiatives and solutions across the Health System, including the new and innovative Hospital In Your Home program. She has been featured at national conferences as one of the most accomplished Chief Digital Officers in health care. Debe is helping to shape the future of health care, and Saint Luke's is grateful for her dedication and leadership.

- **Hospital In Your Home Program Now Offered at All Kansas City Metro Area Hospitals**

Saint Luke's innovative Hospital In Your Home program is now available at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City, Saint Luke's East Hospital, Saint Luke's North Hospital in Missouri, and in August 2023, the program went live at Saint Luke's South Hospital in Overland Park—making the program available to eligible patients who live in Kansas.

This innovative hybrid care model provides state-of-the-art virtual technology and in-person, hospital-level care to patients in the comfort of their own homes. It originally launched in July 2022 and is now offered at Saint Luke's four metro campuses. Saint Luke's is the only health system in the region offering this care model. Since its inception, the program has treated more than 500 patients and has earned high patient satisfaction scores. Patients, especially those with chronic conditions, have expressed gratitude for being able to avoid an inpatient hospital stay and still receive expert care.

"Hospital In Your Home's rapid expansion to all of Saint Luke's metro campuses is a testament to the excellent quality outcomes and patient satisfaction we have seen thus far," said Michael Nassif, MD, cardiologist and Medical Director of Saint Luke's Hospital In Your Home. "Now, patients in both Missouri and Kansas can benefit from this innovative model. These patients are less likely to acquire an infection, require skilled nursing or rehab after discharge, and be re-admitted to the hospital."

Patients with conditions such as congestive heart failure, pneumonia, gastroenteritis, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease are often candidates for the Hospital in Your Home program. A 24/7 Medical Command Center—comprised of Saint Luke's physicians, nurses, advanced practice providers, and technology support specialists—monitor patients in their homes, answer questions, provide virtual check-ups, and initiate any necessary emergency responses around the clock. To bring this technology and care model to patients, Saint Luke's partnered with Medically Home, one of the nation's most experienced virtual health care companies. Medically Home has worked with Mayo Clinic and Kaiser Permanente to bring a similar care option to their patients.

"Health care technology is advancing rapidly, bringing exciting new opportunities to improve care for our patients," said Debe Gash, Saint Luke's Health System Senior Vice President and Chief Digital Officer. "Hospital In Your Home allows us to bring an innovative care option to patients that would have been impossible to imagine only a few years ago. By leveraging the latest and most advanced digital tools and technologies, we are able to provide patients with real-time monitoring and immediate access to their highly skilled care team while remaining where they feel the most comfortable, in their own home."

- **New Robots—Moxi 1 and Moxi 2—Now at Work at Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City**

On Aug. 23, 2023, Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City celebrated the much-anticipated deployment of its new robots—Moxi 1 and Moxi 2—which combined complete nearly 100 tasks a day, allowing clinical staff about 30% more time to focus on patient care. The Moxi robots are programmed to pick up and deliver supplies within select departments.

"I'm grateful to the many teams involved in the go-live of this technology that will increase the amount of time our clinical staff can focus on the patient care that drew them to health care in the first place," said Jason Purcell, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, Chief Nursing Officer for Saint Luke's Central

Region. “This incorporates digital innovation into our day-to-day work in a way that is visible and meaningful to our hardworking team and that truly benefits our patients.”

- **Digital Arrival has Successful Pilot at Saint Luke’s Primary Care–Southridge, Expands to Saint Luke’s Primary Care–Lee’s Summit**

Saint Luke’s Primary Care–Southridge launched an all-digital check-in experience for patients on July 25, 2023. With already high numbers of patients who have mySaintLuke’s portal accounts and who use eCheck-In, the Southridge clinic was a natural fit to pilot this more automated, streamlined digital arrival process. The ultimate goal is to provide a faster, more convenient process for patients and staff across Saint Luke’s Physician Group clinics.

- Patients are encouraged to save time by completing eCheck-In ahead of their appointment using their mySaintLuke’s patient portal. When they arrive, they can simply click “I’m here” in their portal and will be called when their exam room is ready. They can fill out forms and make copays during eCheck-In.
- If patients don’t have a mySaintLuke’s account, a staff member will help them sign up for an account and go through the eCheck-In process when they arrive.
- Those who don’t have a mobile device or mySaintLuke’s account will be able to use a new digital arrival kiosk when they arrive to check in and let their care team know they’re ready.

The new process combines technology with the warm, helpful presence of staff to create an efficient and welcoming arrival experience for each patient. The digital arrival experience was expanded on Sept. 25 to Saint Luke’s Primary Care–Lee’s Summit.

- **Paperless Billing Launches for mySaintLuke's Patient Portal Accounts**

Individuals with mySaintLuke’s patient portal accounts are now automatically enrolled in paperless billing, meaning billing statements are delivered through the mySaintLuke’s portal, not by mail. Users are notified when a new statement is ready for review, according to their communication preferences in mySaintLuke’s. Monthly statements are viewable within mySaintLuke’s under the Billing Summary menu.

- **Patients in Inpatient Hospital Settings Have Instant Access to Information About Hospital Stay**

While in the hospital, patients can access timely information about their stay using their mySaintLuke’s patient portal on their phone, tablet, or laptop. They can simply log in to their account to see names of their care team, their schedule of planned activities including X-rays or physical therapy, results of labs and tests performed during their stay, medications ordered during their stay as well as those they take at home, and education materials on topics relevant to their care. If patients have allowed proxy access to their mySaintLuke’s account, the proxy will also be able to see the information about the patient’s hospital stay.

- **Saint Luke’s Introduces Blink—an Employee Chat Super App**

In 2023, Saint Luke’s launched Blink, an essential Saint Luke’s employee chat app. Blink provides employees easy access to swap shifts, chat with team members, link to Smart Square and other essential work apps, and get System and entity news.