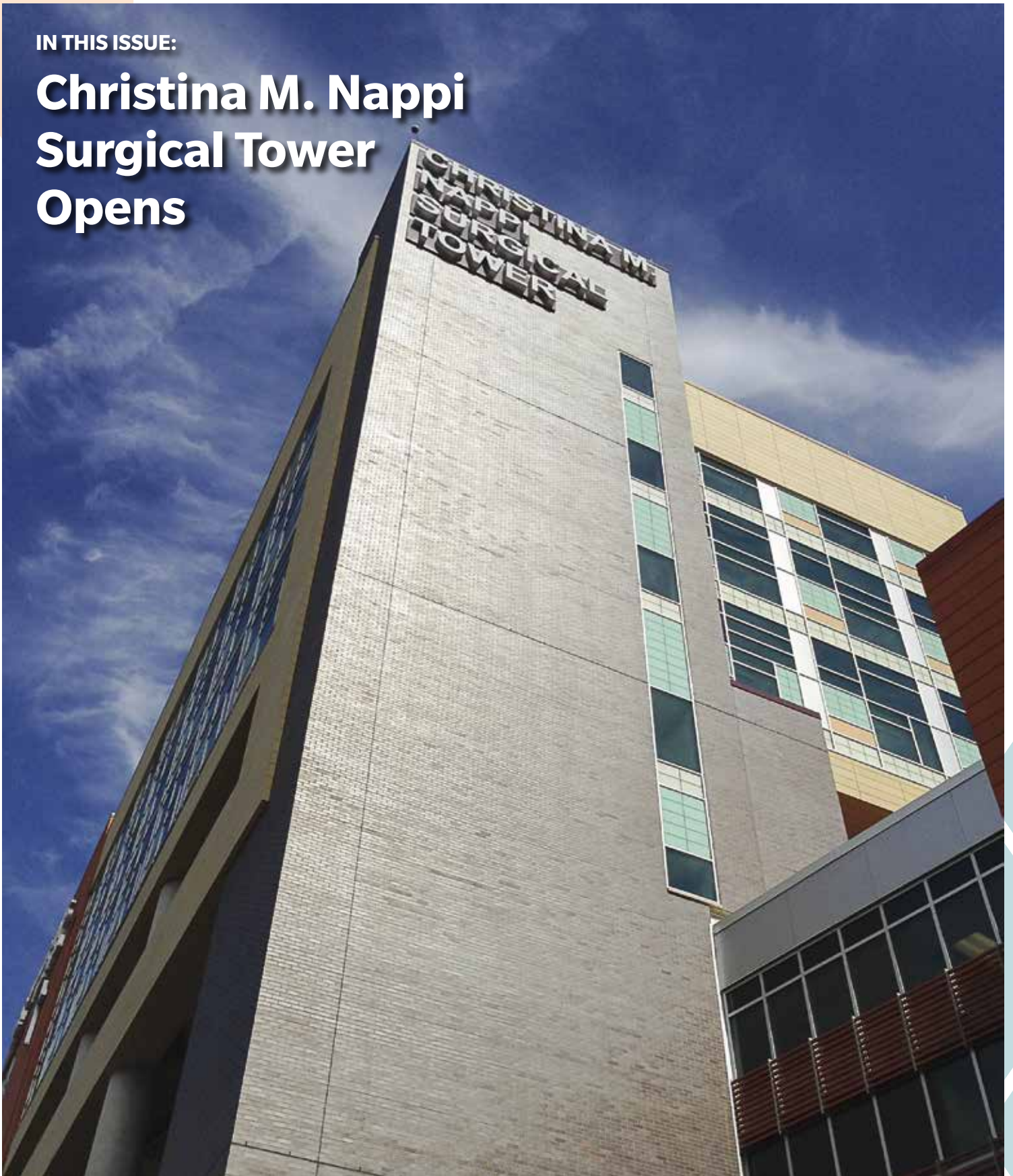


ST. JOSEPH'S CARING CONNECTION

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Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower Opens



A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE



Kathryn H. Ruscitto

This past year was a whirlwind for St. Joseph's, as we suspected it would be. In January, we celebrated our status as a Magnet hospital, a designation reserved for those hospitals demonstrating the best in nursing excellence and care. In May, we launched our new electronic health record system, SJLinked, with a new patient portal, MyStJoseph's, for patients to more fully participate in their care. And, most recently, we opened our new surgical tower, which contains the latest and greatest in care innovation.

All these accomplishments would not be possible without a collective, continued focus on what's most important – the patients and families. Everything we do at St. Joseph's we do for them. From ensuring we have highly-trained staff caring for patients to supporting the technology needed to building the right facilities, we are making sure that those who seek care at St. Joseph's do so knowing they will have the highest quality care and best experience possible.

As you read the stories in this issue, you will see many examples of how St. Joseph's puts the patient and family first. It's our mission and promise to our community.

Kathryn H. Ruscitto
President and CEO



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St. Joseph's ceremonially opened its new Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower Sept. 4. From left to right are Linda Ervin, Onondaga County legislator and Democratic floor leader; State Senator David Valesky; Sam Nappi; Christina M. Nappi; Marilyn Galimi, St. Joseph's project director; Kathryn Ruscitto, St. Joseph's president and chief executive officer; Richard Waldman, MD, St. Joseph's medical staff president; Jeremy Thurston, Hayner Hoyt; Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney; Congressman Dan Maffei; Kenneth Adams, president, CEO and commissioner for Empire State Development; Sr. Mary Obrist, St. Joseph's Board of Trustees member; Howard Zucker, MD, acting commissioner for the New York State Department of Health; and Joseph Scicchitano, St. Joseph's vice president for support services.

Our Mission

We are passionate healers dedicated to honoring the Sacred in our sisters and brothers.

Our Vision

To be world-renowned for passionate patient care and outstanding clinical outcomes.

Our Core Values

In the spirit of good **Stewardship**, we heal by practicing: **Compassion** through our kindness, concern and genuine caring; **Reverence** in honoring the dignity of the human spirit; **Excellence** by expecting the best of ourselves and others; Integrity by being and speaking the truth.



Leadership Changes

AnneMarie Walker-Czyz, EdD, RN, assumed the role of chief operating officer and senior vice president for operations effective June 15. Dr. Czyz assumed these duties in addition to her role as St. Joseph's chief nursing officer. She joined St. Joseph's in 1997. Since 2008, she has served as vice president of clinical services and chief nursing officer, leading a nationally-recognized team of nurses in the day-to-day delivery of compassionate care to patients. Dr. Czyz served as the executive leader of the recent successful implementation of the electronic health record system.

Under Dr. Czyz's guidance, St. Joseph's has been designated as a Magnet Hospital for Excellence in Nursing by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. In addition, the hospital's intensive care units have been recipients of the Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses, placing them among the top ICUs in New York State, as well as the nation.

Prior to Dr. Czyz's current leadership role at St. Joseph's, she served as director of critical care and cardiac services, and has worked as a direct care nurse in cardiac care, a staff educator in cardiac and medical surgical services and a nurse manager. She earned her nursing degree from the St. Joseph's College of Nursing and completed her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the State University of New York Upstate Medical University. She

also holds a Master of Science and Clinical Nurse Specialist degree from Upstate Medical University. Czyz recently successfully defended her dissertation, earning a EdD in Executive Leadership.

In addition, St. Joseph's Board of Trustees has named two new board members, Santo Difino, MD, and Gina Myers, PhD, RN.

Dr. DiFino is board-certified in internal medicine, medical oncology and hematology. He has served as chief of internal medicine at St. Joseph's, and as a clinical associate professor of medicine at Upstate Medical University. In 1982, Dr. Difino co-founded Hematology-Oncology Associates of Central New York. In this practice, he works with a team of clinical researchers who are totally committed to excellence as they seek to provide the highest quality cancer care and clinical research.

Dr. Myers becomes the first lay nurse to be elected to the St. Joseph's Board of Trustees. She received her Doctorate in Nursing from Binghamton University and MS degree in Nursing Administration from SUNY Institute of Technology. Currently Dr. Myers serves as a research consultant for St. Joseph's and is an adjunct professor of nursing at Le Moyne College. Earlier in her career, she worked at St. Joseph's as the director for critical care, cardiac, and emergency services. She is involved in a number of research projects and has published on a variety of nursing topics.



AnneMarie Walker-Czyz, EdD, RN



Santo Difino, MD



Gina Myers, PhD, RN



Christopher Jordan Appointed Director of Quality Resources

Christopher Jordan was appointed director of quality resources, effective May 19. Prior to joining St. Joseph's, Jordan worked at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, D.C. where he started as a critical care registered nurse, becoming a quality improvement specialist, and ultimately the director of quality improvement and infection control.

Jordan has also worked as a critical care nurse at Inova Fairfax Hospital, where he worked in the trauma intensive care unit, as well as Georgetown University Hospital, and Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, Mass.

Jordan holds a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, and was a surgical technician in the United States Army Reserves. He received his Master's degree in health services administration from George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services, his Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from Georgetown University School of Nursing and Health Studies, and his bachelor of science in biology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Mass.

St. Joseph's Primary Care Center—West Nationally Recognized

St. Joseph's Primary Care Center—West, Pediatric Services received Level 3 recognition from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Patient-Centered Medical Home 2011 (PCMH-2011) program for using evidence-based, patient-centered processes that focus on highly coordinated care and long-term participative relationships.

UP•TO•DATE *continued*

Cardiac Surgery Team Ranked Among Top in Nation

Consumer Reports has ranked St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center among the highest in the United States when it comes to heart surgery. The rating for heart bypass surgery and aortic valve replacement surgery, plus the two combined, puts St. Joseph's in a very elite class – which includes only 15 hospitals out of more than 400 nationwide.

The national ranking adds to several other recognitions St. Joseph's has received for its cardiac care services, including HealthGrades 100 Best Hospitals for Coronary Intervention™, Top 10 percent in the nation for coronary interventional procedures, and the Society of Chest Pain Center and Society for Thoracic Surgeons (three out of three star rated). In addition, St. Joseph's cardiac care program is the area's only nationally certified Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, has been selected as the only hospital in Central New York to provide Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR), and is the only hospital in CNY offering PPM and ICD lead management including lead extractions.

St. Joseph's is fully accredited for cardiac catheterization by Accreditation for



St. Joseph's cardiac surgery team has been ranked in the top 15 in the country, according to a leading consumer ratings magazine. The surgeons include (from left to right) Ahmed Nazem, MD; Charles Lutz, MD; Mehdi Marvasti, MD; G. Randall Green, MD; and Zhandong Zhou, MD.

Cardiovascular Excellence (ACE), the first hospital in New York and the second in the United States to accomplish accreditation in all three cardiovascular quality disciplines with the ACE: diagnostic cath, PCI and carotid artery stenting.

Other Awards/Recognitions

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL HEALTH CENTER was named a 2014 Most Wired hospital according to the 16th annual Health Care's Most Wired Survey, conducted by Hospitals & Health Networks. On the list for the past five years, St. Joseph's is the only hospital in Central New York ever to be named to the list.



ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL HEALTH CENTER was named to the 2014 edition of "100 Great Community Hospitals," a list based on community hospitals' accolades, quality and service to their communities, by Becker's Hospital Review.

THE SYRACUSE FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS presented the Anna Williams Oberlander Memorial Achievement Cup to the Auxiliary of St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, Inc. The Cup is presented annually to the member club whose civic contributions in the last year have been most deserving of recognition.

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CRITICAL-CARE NURSES (AACN), Aliso Viejo, Calif., recently conferred a gold-level Beacon Award for Excellence on St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center's Surgical Intensive Care Unit. Units that achieve this three-year, three-level award with gold, silver or bronze designations meet national criteria consistent with Magnet Recognition, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the National Quality Healthcare Award.



Members of St. Joseph's Surgical Intensive Care Unit team

Vascular Surgery Team Cited for High Quality

St. Joseph's vascular surgery team can be considered the unsung heroes when it comes to surgical quality. Year over year the team has been highly rated for its high quality and excellent outcomes.

Vascular surgery refers to any surgical procedure that focuses on the circulatory system, with the exception of the heart, itself, and the brain. Surgeons work on the major blood vessels, such as abdominal aortic aneurysms, salvage limbs, and they treat peripheral vascular disorders. Their patients tend to be very sick with poor overall health, making them even more susceptible to complications. Despite that, the team continues to excel.

Performance measures, recently released by the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (NSQIP), show the team has "exemplary" outcomes when it comes to the number of readmissions as a result of a surgical procedure. "Exemplary" status is reserved for those in the top 10 percent. The team also had very high marks for the low complication rates and low incidence of unplanned intubation, or patients who needed unexpected breathing assistance following their surgery.

Overall the NSQIP data shows the team is in the top 20 percent of all vascular surgery teams in the country. St. Joseph's vascular surgery team provides excellent care, right here in Central New York.



St. Joseph's vascular surgeons include (from left to right) Muhammad Khan, MD, Robert Carlin, MD, J. Timothy Riley, MD, Syed Zaman, MD, Lawrence Semel, MD, and Mark McGurrin, MD.

St. Joseph's Highly Rated for Surgical Quality

ST. JOSEPH'S EXCELLED IN TWO OTHER AREAS, according to the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (NSQIP); gynecology and orthopedics also earned "exemplary" status.

In gynecology, only a handful of hospitals in the nation had better outcomes than St. Joseph's when it comes to the prevention of surgical site infections and patients who need to return to the operating room.

The orthopedic surgery team was ranked in the top 10 percent in the country for low incidence of urinary tract infections and surgical site infections.

St. Joseph's Cardiac Team Sets New Door-To-Wire Record

Jeff Wittig and his wife, Carol, have been married for 25 years. On July 1, they celebrated their anniversary with a paddleboarding excursion on Cazenovia Lake. It was a hot, humid day with considerable wind and they didn't venture far from the shore. That turned out to be a blessing because shortly after they set out, Jeff knew something was terribly wrong. He felt a tremendous amount of pressure in his chest and that was not normal for him. Jeff knew he needed help right away.

Thanks to the quick work of the Cazenovia Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Jeff was on his way to St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center. He had suffered a heart attack and the paramedics knew that time would be muscle. That's why they immediately employed the LifeNet system to transmit Jeff's EKG to St. Joseph's Emergency Department while en route to the hospital. This technology saves valuable minutes when it comes to a heart attack. In fact, Dr. Ronald Caputo, interventional cardiologist at St. Joseph's, was able to view that EKG right on his iPhone and knew he had to meet Jeff and the crew immediately on their arrival.

Jeff's blocked artery was opened in a record nine minutes from when he arrived at St. Joseph's. This time, known as "door to wire," is the fastest ever at St. Joseph's. Nationwide, the benchmark time is 90 minutes. St. Joseph's strives for 60 minutes but typically averages 38 minutes. According to Dr. Caputo, if you are having a heart attack, you need to call 911 immediately. That is the best way to make sure you get the help you need as fast as you can get it.

Thanks to Jeff's quick thinking, he's now back at work and living life. In fact, he and his wife are trying again this weekend to celebrate their milestone. Here's to 25 more years!

For more information about heart attack symptoms, visit www.sjhsyr.org/cardiac.



Jeff and Carol Wittig

A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE

Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower— Innovation, Collaboration and Personal Care

Step into the new Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower and you will immediately be enveloped in a wash of light streaming in through the windows. As you wander through the spacious hallways, you will notice a sense of calm and quiet. These environmental changes are only the start of the transformation in care the tower provides.

“We spent countless hours over the past several years designing our hopes and dreams for the tower that would offer the highest quality, patient-centered care,” said AnneMarie Czyz, RN, EdD, chief operating officer and chief nursing officer for St. Joseph’s. “Everything we did was focused on how to ensure caregivers had more time at the bedside to provide the best outcomes and care experience possible for the patient.”

Those hours of meaningful conversation resulted in a new space that Dr. Czyz said nearly 100 percent incorporates every hope and dream the multidisciplinary team had for the tower.

“This tower is the result of many minds working together to make sure St. Joseph’s is the best of the best, second to none, and nationally-recognized for high quality, safe patient care.”

—ANNEMARIE CZYZ, RN, EdD, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND CHIEF NURSING OFFICER

“We were laser-focused on every detail,” she said. “Our nurses said, for example, that they wanted to move the wall plugs up higher so they wouldn’t have to bend over as much and wouldn’t damage the plugs as a result. This seemingly small detail has a huge impact on their satisfaction and our efficiency.”

Dr. Czyz added that as the team discussed new design concepts and items that would help transform St. Joseph’s care at the bedside, they were tested through other renovations happening throughout the hospital, including the new private mother-baby rooms, and the fourth floor nursing units.

“We were fortunate to have opportunities to pilot our ideas in existing facilities updates to see how they would work in practice,” she said. “So those who have had a baby in our hospital have experienced what the patients in the new tower will experience.”

Marilyn Galimi, director of facilities agreed. “We spent lots of time visiting other institutions to see what worked and didn’t work for them.”

Galimi said they visited more than a dozen other hospitals from across the country from Sloan-Kettering to Henry Ford to local hospitals. Those visits helped inform the design of the new surgical tower and helped the design team come up with the best approach for St. Joseph’s.

“At the end of the day, it came down to what is best for the patient and family,” said Galimi. “What would make the patient and family experience the best it can be? And we had support from the top down to create that exceptional experience.”

According to Dr. Czyz, there was a high level of engagement in the planning process, starting with the Board of Trustees and chief executive officer, which supported the project and held the team accountable for making sure it netted the best results for the patients, the families and those doing the work.

“Even when challenges arose, our Board and leaders never wavered in their support of our quest to ensure the best care for our community,” said Dr. Czyz. “This tower is the result of many minds working together to make sure St. Joseph’s is the best of the best, second to none, and nationally-recognized for high quality, safe patient care.”

Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower at a Glance

St. Joseph's Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower is full of innovations in health care, from transformative patient and family care to technology to "green" design. Below are some highlights from the new space.

Innovative Solution Allows More Time at the Bedside

Nurses walk several miles a day as they care for patients and families. They walk to and from the patient rooms, down the hall to the various nursing stations and around the floor to access equipment and supplies needed to care for the patients. In fact, one estimate clocks the distance at a whopping five miles a day! A new "pass-through server" reduces approximately 50 percent of the steps per day. The server is really a cabinet full of equipment and supplies that can be accessed right from the patient's room. It also has a door on the hallway side for ease in restocking. The server helps caregivers quickly and efficiently gain access to needed supplies without having to leave the patient's room, maximizing the time spent with the patient.



Mark Chrzanowski, RN, manager of St. Joseph's Surgical Intensive Care Unit, demonstrates the pass-through cabinet. The cabinet allows nurses easy access to supplies without having to travel through the unit. Some of the shelves are equipped with secure access to keep medications safe.



Employee Donor Wall Recognizes Employee Gifts

Making history through the strength and level of their contributions, employees throughout the St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center system supported the hospital's recent facility expansion in ways that go beyond their professional commitment to providing "A Higher Level of Care."

In appreciation for their dedication and generosity, the Development Office for the Hospital worked with a local company to design the donor wall featured above. This

recognition piece is St. Joseph's way of saying "thank you" to employee donors who together pledged nearly \$880,000 to name the new Surgical Waiting Room in honor of Sister Mary Obrist's selfless service to St. Joseph's. Quick to remove herself from the spotlight, Sr. Mary insists that "there are so many other people who could have been acknowledged. I am honored to represent all of the Sisters who have served at St. Joseph's since the hospital was founded – all of those women whose

names are recognized in the main hospital lobby near St. Marianne Cope's sculpture."

Contributions to the Generations of Compassion ♦ Healing ♦ Innovation Capital Campaign at St. Joseph's help enhance health care now and for future generations.

For employees who would like more information, or for those who wish to make or renew a pledge to the Generations of Compassion ♦ Healing ♦ Innovation Capital Campaign, we invite you to contact St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation at 315-703-2137 or Foundation@sjhsyr.org. Gifts to the employee campaign are still being accepted and can be made over a two to four year period. With a minimum \$416 pledge, an employee can have his or her name listed on the donor wall. Payroll deduction is a convenient way to make a gift over several years. Please ask how easy it is to sign up.

To those employees who have helped make the new Surgical Waiting Room a reality, once again: Thank you!

A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE



Patient-Centered Care Requires New Mobility

St. Joseph's listened to the dozens of caregivers who wanted more mobility in the patient room. Instead of a wall-mounted computer workstation, there are "WOWs" or workstations on wheels. They allow caregivers to move freely through the patient's room and help them focus on the patient instead of facing the wall as they document important care information. And gone are the head walls of the past; now, the beds and equipment are mobile so patients can be moved within the room as appropriate, allowing them to look out the window more easily, for example.

The spacious floors in the new Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower include centrally-located caregiver zones with collaborative workspaces.

Private Room Design Maximizes Patient Safety

The Surgical Tower features spacious, private rooms with lots of daylight streaming in from tall windows overlooking Syracuse's North side neighborhood. All the rooms are designed to be identical with everything located in the same place in each room. This design is based on evidence showing that the consistency between rooms can reduce the likelihood of errors. It also maximizes productivity, making it easier for nurses to move from room to room as they care for patients. Research also shows private rooms help create a healing environment. They are quieter and allow for families to more readily spend time with the patients, helping them get better more quickly. Finally, private rooms reduce healthcare infections. Speaking of infection control, there are cabinets strategically located throughout the new floors. No more carts lining the hallways as is normally the case in hospitals.

Designed to Prevent Patient Falls

Falls are the number one unplanned event that happens to patients in the hospital. The average cost of a fall in the hospital today is \$20,000. The Surgical Tower rooms are designed to reduce the incidence of falls by helping patients better move around within the room. For example, the bathrooms, located in each room, are strategically located so patients can see them from their bed. This is on purpose; research shows when people have a line of sight and can see where they are going, they are surer of themselves and less likely to have an accident. There is also a special lift system, running along the ceiling in every room that can help patients move in and out of bed and to the bathroom. Finally, a unique patient observation area has been created in a central area of the floors where patients who need a little extra monitoring can relax or watch television within view of the caregivers, keeping them as safe as possible while they heal.



The private room design maximizes patient safety and comfort while integrating the latest in healthcare technology.

Decentralizing Care

One thing patients and families will notice right away is that the patient care units in the new Surgical Tower no longer have nursing pods throughout the floor. St. Joseph's has seen an evolution in care from one nursing station to several pods to this new model of handling care transitions and communications right in the patient's room. This allows more open communication between caregivers, patients and family members, a hallmark of the relationship-based care approach at St. Joseph's.

Flexible Design Reduces Patient Transfers

Each room is "acuity adaptable," which means caregivers can deliver the equipment they need to care for the patient rather than move the patient to the equipment. Future goals include equipping the rooms with EKG monitoring systems, for example.



Doctors and nurses can work side by side in the workspaces, which include plenty of counter space and private areas to dictate orders and complete documentation.

For more information about the Christina M. Nappi Surgical Tower, including a virtual tour, visit www.sjhsyr.org/surgical-services/surgical-tower

Workspaces Allow for Collaboration

There are quiet, spacious workspaces throughout the new floors where physicians can document/dictate orders and case managers can work with patients and families. Lots of storage and counter space provide ample room for care teams to have access to the tools they need to collaborate with one another.

The Largest “Green” Healthcare Construction Project in the Northeast

The new Surgical Tower extends St. Joseph’s green footprint beyond the Emergency Services Building. The first thing visitors will notice is the daylight streaming in from windows throughout the floors. High efficiency is the name of the game from lighting to motors to windows and a reduction in the water usage. The building materials and finishes include recycled content and there are low or no volatile organic compounds in the paints, carpets and finishes. A storm water retention system is in place and the entire building will be powered by “green” energy.



“Smart” Beds, Devices Mean More Personal Care, Quieter Floors

The new surgical tower employs “smart” technology that makes for a more efficient stay, not to mention a quieter one. The beds can do everything from alert nurses to patients who are at risk to fall to adjusting the lights and turning on the television. And gone are the call bells everyone is used to hearing on nursing floors. In their place is a robust nurse call system that notifies caregivers quickly

and efficiently through cell phones on an internal wireless network. For example, if a patient presses the button to call for a nurse, a notification immediately appears on the nurse’s cell phone and he or she must answer and/or visit the room to turn off the overhead notification light outside the room. This same system can call for security, more help in an emergency and more. The workstations on wheels, laptops on movable carts, are integrated with the vital signs machines so when a caregiver takes a patient’s temperature, blood pressure or oxygen level, those results are automatically uploaded into the patient’s medical record. This greatly reduces the chance of error and is much more efficient for the caregiver. St. Joseph’s approach to technology is a simple and personal one – eliminate manual processes to provide the caregiver with more time at the patient’s bedside.

St. Joseph’s Expansion Continues to Anchor North Side Redevelopment Efforts

As St. Joseph’s continues to invest in its hospital facility, the area around the campus continues to revitalize. Just down and across from the Ralph and Christina Nappi Emergency Services Building, for example, developers are constructing Butternut Commons, a mixed-use building that will house a brand new Kinney Drugs. And the Little Italy corridor sees more and more new businesses investing every day from Dunkin Donuts to new restaurants.

“Our expansion projects have served as a catalyst for the North side revitalization and we are proud to lead the way,” said Kathryn Ruscitto, president and chief executive officer of St. Joseph’s. “We care deeply about the communities in which we serve and feel it’s our duty to contribute to their well being not only from a medical standpoint but also from a community health standpoint.”

According to Hayner Hoyt Corporation, the lead contractor, this ripple effect of this latest construction project on the Central New York economy is \$98 million, according to general multipliers used in the construction industry. Add that to the economic impact of St. Joseph’s and the benefit grows exponentially.

“This kind of activity illustrates that a large, growing local employer can have a profound impact on the community,” said Ruscitto.

New York State agreed. The Central New York Regional Economic Development Council identified the Phase 2B expansion as a priority project and in 2011, St. Joseph’s was awarded \$2.5 million in Regional Economic Development Council funding.

St. Joseph’s also has received an inducement of \$177 million for tax exempt bonding from the Onondaga Civic Development Corporation, a local development corporation recently formed by Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney. The Corporation has the authority to assist not-for-profit organizations that undertake economic development projects by the Onondaga County Legislature. The remainder of the investment will come from hospital reserves, as well as St. Joseph’s Hospital Foundation’s Generations capital campaign. The tower itself cost \$63 million, and was completed on time, on budget.

King and King Architects designed the new surgical tower; contractor is The Hayner Hoyt Corporation/KBE Building Corporation.

A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE

We're expanding so we can serve you better! St. Joseph's Physicians is pleased to welcome 16 new providers across our family of practices. Each provider has been carefully selected based on his or her experience, commitment to the caring mission of St. Joseph's Health and passion for ensuring quality health care for patients.

St. Joseph's Physicians Family Medicine

The cornerstone of our practice, St. Joseph's Physicians Family Medicine is dedicated to providing the continuity of care our patients have come to expect and to playing a central role in their life-long health and wellness. We have always viewed the delivery of quality, accessible health care to be our mission. To deliver on this promise, our integrated approach links the physician with a network of services to ensure that our patients receive the highest quality of medical care—all under one practice.

Please welcome the following new providers to our practice:



Alex Felipski, DO, recently completed his residency in family medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center where he served as chief resident. He received a Doctor of

Osteopathy from the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine in Westbury, N.Y. and completed his undergraduate work at Syracuse University. Dr. Felipski's professional areas of interest include sports medicine, osteopathic manipulation and obstetrics.

He is currently seeing patients at the Heritage Group offices in Cazenovia. To schedule an appointment, please call 655-8171.

Nadine Khouzam, MD, joins St. Joseph's Physicians Family Medicine after completing her residency in family medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center where she served as chief resident. Dr. Khouzam earned her medical degree from Lebanese University – Faculty of Medical Sciences in Beirut, Lebanon. She completed a residency in pediatric medicine there, as well. In addition to English, Dr. Khouzam is a native speaker of Arabic and is fluent in French.

She will be seeing patients at our Family Medicine offices in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, please call 637-7878.



Brian Kline, MD earned his medical degree from SUNY Upstate Medical University and completed his family medicine residency at St. Joseph's Hospital

Health Center in the family medicine program. Dr. Kline is also a licensed Emergency Medical Technician and has served the Greater Baldwinsville Ambulance Corps since 2003. While in medical school, Dr. Kline served in the Rural Medical Education Program in Oswego.

Dr. Kline is currently seeing patients at St. Joseph's Family Medicine - The Heritage Group in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, please call 663-0059.



Vanessa Lalley, DO, joins St. Joseph's Physicians Family Medicine after completing a Fellowship in Sports Medicine and serving as an associate professor in the College of Medicine

at Nova Southeastern University. Dr. Lalley is currently a team physician for student athletes at Syracuse University and is on the faculty for medical residents in the family medicine program at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center. In addition to family medicine, her special interests include non-surgical sports medicine.

Dr. Lalley is currently seeing patients at St. Joseph's Family Medicine - The Heritage Group in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, call 663-0059.



Vijaya Seepana, MD, is a graduate of SUNY Upstate Medical University and completed her residency in family medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center. Her special medical inter-

ests include family medicine, outpatient medicine and women's health. She completed her medical education at Rangaraya Medical College in Kakinada, India, and her residency in family medicine at Glen Cove Hospital in Glen Cove, N.Y. In addition to English, she is fluent in Telugu and Hindi.

Dr. Seepana is currently seeing patients at our Family Medicine offices in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, please call 637-7878.



Jackie Barkley, RPA-C, joins St. Joseph's Physicians Family Medicine from Massena Memorial Hospital's Louisville Family Health Center where she provided

family care services to the local community. Prior to that role, she held roles in the Emergency Medicine department at Crouse Hospital and in a surgical setting at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center. She received her Master's in Physician Assistant studies from Le Moyne College and a Bachelor of Science degree from Penn State University.

Barkley is currently seeing patients at our Liverpool Family Medicine offices. To schedule an appointment, please call 452-2828.



Donna Devine, RN, MS-FNP, brings clinical experience in both inpatient and outpatient settings to our practice. Devine recently completed the Master of Science-

Family Nurse Practitioner program at SUNY Upstate Medical University. Prior to that, she was a nurse and nurse manager at the Cardiovascular Group of Syracuse and completed clinical NP service with Ithaca Family Medical Associates. She is an Oncology Certified Nurse with experience in Oncology Chemotherapy.

Devine is currently seeing patients at our Liverpool Family Medicine offices. To schedule an appointment, please call 452-2828.



Lisa Isabell, RN, MS-FNP, has more than 20 years of experience in nursing and recently completed the Master of Science as a Family Nurse Practitioner program

at SUNY Upstate Medical University. Her professional experience includes serving as both a charge and bedside nurse in a medical-surgical unit at Upstate University Hospital. She has also been a nurse for St. Joseph's Home Care Agency and in a primary care setting.

Isabell is currently seeing patients at our Family Medicine offices in Liverpool. To schedule an appointment, please call 452-2828.



Sarah Leo, FNP, completed the Family Nurse Practitioner program at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse and is a graduate of St. Joseph's College of Nursing. Prior to joining St. Joseph's Physicians, she worked as a Registered Nurse in the emergency department at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center. She also has nursing experience gained while working for Upstate University Hospital.

Leo is currently seeing patients at our at Family Medicine offices in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, please call 637-7878.



Mackenzie Neal, PA, completed her Physician Assistant program at Rochester Institute of Technology with a concentration in psychology. Her clinical rotations included patient care in all aspects of family medicine, as well as dermatology, general surgery, geriatrics, pediatrics and psychiatry.

Neal is currently seeing patients at Family Medicine offices in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, 637-7878.

St. Joseph's Physicians Surgical Services

St. Joseph's Physicians Surgical Services offers comprehensive surgical care for ambulatory, elective and critically ill patients. For more than 25 years, St. Joseph's Physicians Surgical Services (formerly Upstate Surgical Group) has provided patients with excellence in both inpatient and outpatient surgical procedures. As the premier general surgery group at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, it has expertise in all areas of surgery.

Please welcome the following new providers to our practice:



Lisa A. Cico, MSN, ANP-C, focuses on breast, endocrine and plastic surgery care. Prior to joining St. Joseph's, she served as co-coordinator of SUNY Upstate Medical

University's multi-disciplinary Breast Cancer Program providing surgical, radiation and medical oncology for breast cancer patients. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing and Master of Science in Nursing/Nurse Practitioner SUNY Upstate Medical University. Cico has served on the Executive Board of the New York State Nurse Practitioner Association in multiple capacities, and helps develop their annual conference day.

Cico is currently seeing patients at St. Joseph's Physicians Surgical Services in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, call 744-1557.



Kara Kort, MD, is an accomplished surgeon and professor with deep expertise in surgical treatment of breast and endocrine disease. Previously, she was a member of Upstate Medical University's

surgical practice and served as the division chief and medical director of the Patricia J. Numann Breast and Endocrine Surgery Center.

Dr. Kort's practice focuses on providing surgical treatment for diseases of the breast, thyroid and parathyroid including cancer evaluation and treatment planning. She also provides general surgery services.

A native of Massapequa, N.Y., she completed both her Doctor of Medicine degree and residency in general surgery at SUNY Health Science Center in Syracuse. She is an associate professor of surgery at Upstate Medical University and was the 2011 Humanitarian Award recipient for the Carol M. Baldwin Research Fund of Central New York.

Dr. Kort is currently seeing patients at St. Joseph's Physicians Surgical Services in Fayetteville. To schedule an appointment, please call 744-1557.



Dr. Travis Webb provides general surgery services to St. Joseph's Physicians Surgical Services patients. He has a special interest in hernia surgery and abdominal wall reconstruction.

He earned a Medical Degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and an undergraduate degree

from the State University of New York at Albany. He completed his residency at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Penn. He is a member of the American College of Surgeons and the American Medical Association.

Dr. Webb is currently seeing patients at St. Joseph's Physicians Surgical Services in Liverpool. To schedule an appointment, please call 634-3399.



Nicole Mattes, RPA, completed the Family Nurse Practitioner program at SUNY Upstate Medical University and a graduate of Le Moyne College, where she completed the

Physician Assistant program. Prior to joining St. Joseph's Physicians, she worked as a general surgery physician assistant at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center where she provided pre- and post-operative care to surgical patients. DaVinci-trained, she serves as first assistant in general, thoracic, urologic, bariatric, colorectal and gynecologic surgeries.

St. Joseph's Physicians Urgent Care

We understand that our patients don't always get sick during normal business hours. Sometimes their conditions can't wait until morning, yet they don't warrant a visit to the emergency room. That's where St. Joseph's Physicians Urgent Care fits in. It's health care, when you need it! Open every day of the year, including holidays, our team of medical professionals sees over 60,000 patients a year from across the Central New York area and is ready to handle most illnesses or injuries.

Please welcome the following providers to our practice:

Scott Allen, MD, earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Arkansas for Medical Science and completed his residency in family medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center. He is a member of the American Academy of Family physicians Dr. Allen is currently seeing patients at our Liverpool facility.

Brandon Crandall, FNP-C is a Family Nurse Practitioner who joins St. Joseph's Physicians Urgent Care in Liverpool after serving at InSource Urgent Care in Auburn, N.Y. He completed his academic training at SUNY Upstate Medical University and Crouse School of Nursing. Crandall is a Certified Medical Examiner and a member of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners.

A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE

NEWS FROM
ST. JOSEPH'S
PROGRAMS OF EXCELLENCE



New Employee Breastfeeding Room

A new employee breastfeeding room officially opened Aug. 12 at the hospital. The spacious area provides a relaxing, private place for mothers to pump breastmilk for their children. A "Baby Friendly" hospital, as designated by the World Health Organization, St. Joseph's continues to lead the way in supporting breastfeeding for all mothers. The new room is an extension of that mission.



ST. JOSEPH'S LINK PROGRAM WITHIN behavioral health services served free lunches to East Syracuse residents without power as a result of a severe storm that hit the area July 8. The employees had served more than 100 free lunches at the Upton St. location.

Angels on Earth

Sometimes all a patient needs is an understanding smile, a sympathetic touch or a listening ear. It helps if those things can come from someone who's been there. That's the idea behind a new program of the Center for Orthopedic and Spine Care at St. Joseph's, the Center Angels. Volunteers who have had orthopedic/spine surgeries of their own pay it forward to support those who will experience it for themselves.

"We're dedicated to making patients as comfortable as possible during what can be a very stressful time," said Colleen Lupia, RN. "When patients arrive and are settled on the unit after surgery the Center Angels are there to offer non-medical assistance to the patients and their families throughout their stay."

Lupia said the Angels do everything from support and/or accompany the patients to and from the Physical Therapy Gym, to encourage patients to watch education videos, to share their own story from their surgery.

Ron Frey was the original Center Angel. He's had several orthopedic procedures at St. Joseph's and knows firsthand how stressful the experience can be.



Ron Frey, Center Angel

"The rewards of giving far exceed anything else," he said. "When you can give something to somebody and see that you have alleviated something of a problem and make them feel better. That's what makes life worthwhile."

HOW TO BECOME AN ANGEL

If you are interested in becoming a Center Angel, contact St. Joseph's Volunteer Office at 448-5185. All volunteers complete a volunteer application and interview, as well as attend several training sessions before joining the Orthopedic and Spine Services team. All Center Angel volunteers must be in good physical health with the strength to push a wheel chair.

TAVR Offers Hope to Patients with Aortic Stenosis

For years, patients with severe aortic stenosis—the narrowing and stiffening of the heart’s aortic valve, which allows blood to flow to the rest of the body—had only one treatment option: open heart surgery. But for patients who are considered high-risk due to age or additional illnesses, such an invasive procedure can be too dangerous. Without alternative treatment options, such patients often had no choice but to suffer from painful conditions resulting in fatal consequences such as respiratory and kidney failure. Fortunately, the doctors at St. Joseph’s Hospital Health Center have given these patients hope by treating them with transcatheter aortic valve replacement, or TAVR.

TAVR is a much safer, minimally invasive treatment option for aortic stenosis, leaving the patient’s chest bones in place by inserting a catheter through the femoral artery in the upper leg. Like a stent being placed into an artery, the catheter is used to stretch the blocked valve and deliver a new one. The new valve then expands, pushing away the leaflets

of the diseased valve and taking over to regulate blood flow. The recovery period of this procedure is also faster, typically including a hospital stay of only three to five days.

“TAVR has provided a new and hopeful option to very sick patients with a terminal illness - severe aortic stenosis,” said Interventional Cardiologist Ronald Caputo, MD. “This procedure has allowed many patients to continue to live with a good quality of life. It is one of the most dramatic therapies I have seen introduced in the field of interventional cardiology.”

St. Joseph’s is the first and only hospital in Central New York to provide the TAVR procedure, and has treated nearly 100 patients who otherwise would continue to suffer from a debilitating and ultimately fatal disease. Thanks to TAVR, patients once plagued with constant fatigue and difficulty breathing, faced with life expectancies of only two years, are now able to live completely normal lives.



Zhandong Zhou, MD, cardiac surgeon, Ronald Caputo, MD, interventional cardiologist, and Bill Neugent, RN, surgical technician, perform the 100th transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) procedure. St. Joseph’s is the first and only hospital in Central New York to offer the life-saving treatment.

Magnet Recognition Celebrates St. Joseph's Nurses



She's the nurse who took such good care of me when I was in the hospital. He's the nurse who was so kind to my mother in her final days. She's the nurse who took the time to answer all my questions about the new baby.

Almost everyone in Central New York has encountered a St. Joseph's nurse at some point — and most would agree that each one of them is something special. In

December 2013, "special" was more clearly defined as St. Joseph's achieved Magnet status from the American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program.

WHY DOES MAGNET MATTER?

Magnet recognition is more than just a plaque to hang on the wall. It's a highly-respected acknowledgment from the ANCC, the world's largest and most prestigious nurse credentialing organization, which formally recognizes St. Joseph's for its nursing excellence. It is considered the "gold standard" in nursing care and is given to less than 10 percent of nearly 6,000 hospitals in the U.S. Currently, there are only 22 Magnet hospitals in New York State, and St. Joseph's is the only such designated facility in Central New York.

"I've seen a lot of changes in my 36 years at St. Joseph's. Leadership styles have changed. Needs have changed and the times have changed, but what has remained constant is the commitment to service. The compassion and caring toward our patients has never changed, and patients do notice the difference in the care they receive here."

—BALASUBRAMANIAM SIVAKUMAR, MD

facilities with Magnet designation are associated with higher rates of nurse safety and patient satisfaction; better mortality outcomes from 30-day admissions; and lower rates of readmissions. In addition, Magnet hospitals tend to have a higher level of job satisfaction and a lower turnover rate; better working environments, and more nurses with BSN degrees and specialty certifications — both of which are linked to lower mortality rates in patients.

Awarded for a four-year period, Magnet status focuses on quality measures, patient care and performance outcomes; transformational leadership, structural empowerment, exemplary professional practice, new knowledge, innovation and improvement; and empirical quality results, according to the ANCC. Specific goals of the Magnet Recognition Program include promoting quality in a setting that supports professional practice; identifying excellence in the delivery of nursing services to the patient; and disseminating 'best practices' in nursing service. Research suggests that healthcare

"We are so proud of our entire organization," said AnneMarie W. Czyz, EdD, RN, chief nursing officer and chief operating officer. "From the bedside to the boardroom, we've seen unwavering support for the profession of nursing, and the Magnet designation is evidence that we are in an environment where nursing practice is supported at the highest possible level."

This level of recognition has been a challenging journey, according to Czyz, but it was worth the effort. The hospital was originally designated in 2002 — the fifty-ninth hospital in the country. It was redesignated in 2007 and, most recently, in December, 2013.

"It was the best Christmas gift we could have received," said Gael Gilbert, RN, BSN, MPH, MBA, NE-BC, a member of the Magnet committee.

IT MEANS SOMETHING TO BE A ST. JOSEPH'S NURSE

Nurses at St. Joseph's have since been celebrating the Magnet designation as validation of a unique organizational culture they've always known they've had.

A nurse for 31 years, Cathy Dukat-Wilson, MS, RN, has worked at St. Joseph's for 14 years as a recovery coach and therapist in the PROS (Personalized Recovery Oriented Services) and as a clinical instructor in the College of Nursing's Weekend Program. "From a nursing perspective, Magnet confirms and validates a level of excellence that we





Posing with the Magnet plaque are (left to right) Loretta Quigley, MS, RN, assistant dean of St. Joseph's College of Nursing, AnneMarie Walker-Czyz, RN, EdD, senior vice president of operations/chief operating officer/chief nursing officer, and Mary Jo Vona, RN, BSN, director of nursing talent acquisition and retention.



AnneMarie Walker-Czyz, RN, EdD, senior vice president of operations/chief operating officer/chief nursing officer, pins James Tucker, MD, director of St. Joseph's Family Medicine Residency.

bring to our nursing practice," she said. "I have been incredibly blessed with managers and leaders who have nurtured the gifts God placed in me and allowed me to develop these gifts here at St. Joseph's."

Dukat-Wilson believes that patients notice the difference in the care they receive at St. Joseph's. "There is a certain stigma around those with mental health issues, and many of our patients have had care in many different places around the community," she explained. "They see the difference. They know we have a very unique way to connect with those who are often in some very tense situations. It's so much more than just medical services they receive here. It's compassion and respect. We really live the mission here."

This veteran nurse is committed to infusing this compassion and respect into her student nurses at the College of Nursing by example. "I'm a role model and work to share the mindset of service and collaborative care with my students," she said. "I bring them onto the psychiatric floor and show them the classroom principles in action, the powers of relationship-based care and the power of compassion. I try to use my experience to show them to see hope where no one else does."

Mary Ann Carr, MS, RNC, has worked as a St. Joseph's nurse for 27 years and is a graduate of the College of Nursing. Proud of her career path, she sees Magnet recognition as a reason to celebrate the commitment she and her colleagues have to their patients every day.

"Being a St. Joseph's nurse means something in this community," said Carr, who currently works in cardiac rehabilitation. "What we do here every day is not normal – it's above and beyond. Magnet recognition is a reflection of our hospital's mission and vision. It's something engrained in us through our training and daily interaction with our patients. Nurses don't give themselves enough credit, but Magnet has forced us to toot our own horn, which is never easy."

A RIPPLE EFFECT ACROSS THE ST. JOSEPH'S SYSTEM

While Magnet credentials focus on nursing, this level of recognition has certainly sent a wave of positive energy across the entire St. Joseph's system, as physicians, other health professionals and support services are proud to be part of an environment that offers top-notch nurses and collaborative practice.

"St. Joseph's has an atmosphere of encouraging pride in what we do here," said James Tucker, MD, director of medical education and the family medicine residency program. "Having Magnet designation shows everyone that we are patient-centered and that quality care is always #1."

Tucker believes this has helped attract good quality medical residents to his program. "It's a reflection of the culture here," he said. "We get a lot of positive feedback from potential candidates about the doctor/nurse relationship, and people can see that we foster a collaborative atmosphere that focuses on safety, quality and the empowerment of nurses. That, in turn, reflects well on our commitment to providing the best care possible for our patients."

Other members of the St. Joseph's medical staff agree. "I've seen a lot of changes in my 36 years at St. Joseph's," said Balasubramaniam Sivakumar, MD, surgeon and a past president of the medical staff. "Leadership styles have changed. Needs have changed and the times have changed, but what has remained constant is the commitment to service. The compassion and caring toward our patients has never changed, and patients do notice the difference in the care they receive here."

"The Magnet process harnesses positive energy, which has had a ripple effect throughout the hospital," he added. "After all, 'magnetism' by definition is not something you can see. Magnetism is often not felt until you bring something into the field that can sense that. That's what's happening here. Our nurses, physicians, staff, patients and families sense the positive energy we have here."

A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE

A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR FOR THE FUTURE

While pursuit of Magnet recognition was initiated by the nursing staff, St. Joseph's administration has been in full support of the process, according to Mary Brown, former chief operating officer, who helped lead the pursuit in 2013.

"It's one of the critical success factors for our future. Magnet has given our nurses a true sense of empowerment and the encouragement to take their practice to the next level. I love to see the enthusiasm and level of engagement in our nurses. They are taking the initiative to engage in clinical research in best practices, and they are driving innovation," said Brown. "Magnet has created a much stronger collaboration not only among nursing, but with physicians, other healthcare professionals and every department throughout the hospital. Support services, for example, have a proactive sense of 'what can we do to make the nurses' jobs easier and make things better for the patient' that didn't always exist. This recognition has created a level of excitement here that we haven't seen before."

"It took a lot of work and energy, but it's been well worth it," she added. "We're very proud of this organization. Magnet is, after all, a high bar to meet — but our nurses continue to raise the bar year after year. This has taken the St. Joseph's system to a whole new level."

PATIENTS LOOK FOR MAGNET WHEN SEEKING CARE

Most important, however, are the benefits Magnet recognition brings to the St. Joseph's patient. Czyz knows that patients don't necessarily understand the details related to Magnet credentials, but she is certain that they notice the presence of nursing excellence throughout the network. Patients and families often tell Czyz, "It's just different here," and she takes that as the highest of compliments for her nursing staff.

"These days, patients will seek out a Magnet-designated hospital because they understand that it is an indicator of only the highest standards of care," she explained. "Patients and their families want to have an experience that is consistently high performing. They want nurses who are caring, informed and involved. They want a hospital that supports and empowers nurses to be leaders and go above and beyond expectations. Most importantly, they want the best possible health care. Magnet recognition is proof that we're giving that to them at St. Joseph's."

College Corner

National Licensing Exam Pass Rate 100 Percent for College Graduates

One hundred percent of the 40 graduates of the December 2013 class of St. Joseph's College of Nursing passed the NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses) on their first attempt.

"I am proud to announce that St. Joseph's graduates continue to excel on their licensing exams, scoring far above the state and national means," said Marianne Markowitz, MS, RN, CNE, St. Joseph's College of Nursing vice president and dean. "Our graduates achieved this milestone amid an increase in the national passing standard. Continuous changes in health care and nursing practice call for nurses to have a higher level of knowledge, skills and abilities."

The NCLEX-RN is a standardized exam designed to measure basic competencies needed by a newly licensed, entry-level nurse. First attempt pass rates on the exam are benchmark measurements for evaluating the success of teaching the nursing program.

"Many of our alumni have shared with me that the college's high standards and experienced faculty have helped them realize distinguished careers in the nursing field," added Markowitz. "St. Joseph's College of Nursing provides students with the knowledge, skills and caring behavior needed to excel in the nursing profession. With these skill sets, our outstanding graduates then continue on to demonstrate excellence as registered professional nurses who practice throughout our Central New York community as well as nationally."

Has Your Life Been Touched by a Nurse?

The quality of nursing at St. Joseph's has been recognized as among the best in the nation. You can help ensure that it stays that way by contributing to the nursing programs and infrastructure needs at St. Joseph's College of Nursing. For more information, contact Connie Semel, BS, RN '74, director of development, St. Joseph's College of Nursing. Email Connie.Semel@sjhsyr.org or call 315-448-5303. Gifts may also be made online at www.sjhcon.org/giving-options. If you prefer to use the giving envelope enclosed in this issue of Caring Connection, simply write College of Nursing on your check. Thank you!

New Program Offered at St. Joseph's College of Nursing

St. Joseph's College of Nursing recently launched a new program called the Accelerated Evening/Weekend Option. Students pursuing the Accelerated Evening/Weekend Option will earn an Associate degree in applied science with a major in nursing and will be eligible to take the licensing exam to practice as a registered nurse after 18 months of study. Fifty-six students in this exciting new program began their studies in June 2014. Classes are held every Wednesday evening and every other weekend. In addition, a select cohort of the Accelerated Evening/Weekend Option students with a previous Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts or higher degree in another discipline, including the appropriate prerequisites, will be eligible to earn a Bachelor of Science with a major in nursing by enrollment in the Accelerated Dual Degree partnership offered in conjunction with Le Moyne College. For additional information related to programs offered at St. Joseph's College of Nursing, please visit www.sjhcon.edu.

continued on page 25

EXEMPLARS EXCEED STANDARDS OF CARE

As part of the Magnet survey, St. Joseph's nurses were recognized by the ANCC as exemplars — going over and above the expected standard of care — in a number of areas throughout the network.

Seeds of Hope

While hospitals can often be a place of hope and recovery, they can also be a place of loss and grief. This is especially true in the St. Joseph's Surgical Intensive Care Unit, where nurses are often a support system for family and friends struggling to come to terms with the loss of a loved one. From this special place of compassion, Susan Baum, RN, coordinates the Seeds of Hope grief support program. Upon visiting a loved one, the family receives a sewn fabric packet with information about bereavement resources and a comforting poem about end of life written by a St. Joseph's SICU nurse. The poem is written on cardstock decorated with forget-me-nots, and patients are invited to paint their handprint on it with the help of the nurses. Families also receive a packet of forget-me-not seeds, which can be watered using "breath of life," a drop of water from the patient's ventilator. When a patient passes away, SICU nurses offer the family the opportunity of staying in touch for the next 13 months, sending cards and words of encouragement throughout the initial grieving process. The process is completely voluntary, but the Seeds of Hope program has been of tremendous benefit to a number of families, as well as the SICU nurses, who are continually faced with the loss of their patients.

Tuition reimbursement

A recent recommendation for nurses in New York State recommends that 80 percent of RNs complete a BSN degree by 2020, and New York State is awaiting legislation of "BSN in 10," a law recommending that all nurses hold a bachelor's degree within 10 years of graduating from an associate degree or diploma program. This has presented a burden to many RNs who began their nursing careers before these initiatives took shape and are now balancing school tuition and time commitments with family and full-time employment. St. Joseph's has created a win-win for its nurses and patient by offering



Susan Baum, RN

tuition reimbursement up front, instead of asking nurse to pay out of pocket before being reimbursed upon completion of their degrees. Alleviating that burden has relieved stress in the nursing staff, allowing them to focus on their work while also earning advanced degrees that give them the skills and education to better care for their patients.

Wedding plans

Denise Hiser-Ruddick, RNC, is an excellent nurse, but she also may have a future as a wedding planner. When a baby boy was born prematurely at St. Joseph's on his parents' intended wedding day, the parents put the ceremony on hold. Disappointed to cancel the wedding but grateful for their new arrival, the couple intended to have a minister marry them at the hospital. Hiser-Ruddick was determined to make the wedding a day to remember, so she made arrangements to move the wedding to the pediatric intensive care nursery, so the couple's son could be a part of the big day. The intensive care nursery nurses and unit secretary sprang into action, decorating the nursery with flowers made from paper towels, printing wedding bells to hang on the walls and creating a makeshift chapel near the infant's isolette. The St. Joseph's kitchen staff even provided a cake decorated with the couple's names. While unconventional, the wedding went off without a hitch, and the couple eventually took home not only their little boy but unique memories of a very special wedding planned by some very special nurses.



Denise Hiser-Ruddick, RNC

Bridging the communication gap

St. Joseph's physicians and caregivers now have a new way of documenting their patients' records. On May 1, the system began using Epic, a software system designed specifically for large healthcare organizations that numerous institutions across the nation are now incorporating.

"The promise is a legible, universally accessible chart that improves patient care," said Cardiologist and Director of Clinical Informatics Dr. Greg Kenien, who is overseeing the physician side of Epic, known at St. Joseph's as SJLinked. "If I didn't believe in it, I wouldn't be out in front of it."

Epic, headquartered in Madison, Wis., offers an integrated suite of healthcare software with applications that support functions related to patient care, including registration and scheduling; clinical systems for doctors, nurses, emergency personnel and other care providers; systems for lab technicians, pharmacists and radiologists; and billing systems for insurers.

"From the patient perspective, there are some significant benefits," said Charles Fennell, vice president for information management and chief information officer. "We're taking a significant step including the patient in their care."

Through the patient portal, a component of the Epic software system, the patient will be able to access key components of their medical record.

"They'll have more control over their medical record, which will then give them more control over their health," Fennell said. "Traditionally, medical records [have been] the domain of the provider. We are shifting that paradigm to the domain of the patient."

"Many patients [have given] us feedback that they've had to repeat their information over and over and over again at every encounter where they've received care. Hopefully that will be greatly reduced, if nonexistent."

—ANNEMARIE CZYZ, EdD, RN, ST. JOSEPH'S CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND CHIEF NURSING OFFICER

Essentially, the patient portal, which is known as MyStJoseph's, gives patients controlled access to the same medical records their doctors use via the internet. Patients will be able to view test results, view upcoming and past appointments, fill out pre-visit questionnaires, schedule appointments, email non-urgent requests or questions, view statements and pay bills online, upload photos, update medications and allergies, refill subscriptions and get visit summaries and reminders.

MyStJoseph's is updated real time, though Fennell assures patients they should not be surprised by any information they retrieve upon opening their account. For example, if a patient is awaiting results from an abnormal mammogram, the protocol remains the same.

"There are certain capabilities in the system that an abnormal result wouldn't just be released to the patient until a physician had the opportunity to call that patient," he said. "They shouldn't be surprised by anything they see when they open up their account in MyStJoseph's."

CHANGES AT EXAMS

Patients may notice changes in the examination room, depending, of course, on the care setting. Clipboards, for example, are becoming a thing of the past. Their replacements will instead be workstations and in some cases, doctors will be utilizing even smaller devices.

"In an acute setting, [the workstation] will be mobile with what we call WOW (workstations on wheels). In some care settings, we'll be having physicians using iPads to look up information," said Fennell.



Dewaki Dhimal, LPN, who works at St. Joseph's Primary Care Center — West location demonstrates use of the MyStJoseph's patient portal to Sandy Abouied, of Syracuse.

Additionally, the days of repeatedly reviewing previous care at every appointment will be reduced.

“Many patients [have given] us feedback that they’ve had to repeat their information over and over and over again at every encounter where they’ve received care,” said AnneMarie Czyz, EdD, RN, St. Joseph’s chief operating officer and chief nursing officer who served as the executive champion over the implementation of the electronic health record system. “Hopefully that will be greatly reduced, if nonexistent.”

Now, she said, the provider should be able to say, “OK, at the last visit, this is what we went through,” versus constant recapping. The advantage will be more time to talk about the patient’s current issues.

PRIVACY CONCERNS ADDRESSED

St. Joseph’s understands the gravity of concerns associated with patient privacy. “The [healthcare] industry governs a lot of the security requirements. We exceed a lot of those security requirements,” said Fennell.

Access into an electronic medical record requires a two-factor authentication, he said, using an ATM card as a way of explanation: “To get money out of your bank requires two things—something you have and something you know. The something you have is your ATM card; the something you know is your PIN number. It requires both of those. So for physicians to gain access remotely outside of your network, they require something they have and something they know. Without both of those, they can’t access the record.”

Accessed records will also be actively monitored to track who is looking at them and why.

“It’s a very, very secure system,” said Program Director Jamie Nicolosi. “There are protocols in place to ensure that the information is safe and secure and not shared with anyone who is not a direct care provider.”

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS ON THE WHOLE

Nationally, implementation of electronic health records is growing at a rapid pace due to the expectations to meet the government’s meaningful use standards (the use of electronic health records and related technology within a healthcare organization) as well as to offer a level of connectivity in patient experience throughout a community of health. It’s become the leading tool of choice in order to bridge the communication gaps historically linked to the industry.

“It’s really a comprehensive health record,” said Czyz about the new system. “It’s a patient chart as well as a physician or provider chart.”

Shared information across episodes of care will now give providers the information they seek on the spot.

“In health care right now, there are so many specialties and subspecialties that it makes it challenging without a robust tool to understand, and it’s difficult for the patient to recall interactions that they’ve had with different providers,” said Czyz. “I think probably the biggest changes are the

amount of information, the integrity of that information and having it at one’s fingertips to be able to form the next stage of care.”

Czyz said she believes strongly in an integrated health record as it streamlines health care provided for patients. “It is the tool to really help us create a patient experience that’s personal and exceptional and [one] that the community can feel connected to instead of feeling like it’s so far from them at times. I think many times patients and families feel like health care is out of their control. I think we’ll be able to build a tool in support and resources, and support our providers where it becomes more personal and more relationship-oriented for them.”

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Douglas G. Smith



David Panasci

Dear Friend of St. Joseph's,

It was not too very long ago that one of our employees suffered a devastating house fire and lost everything. The word went out and, in the matter of a few hours, colleagues, friends and associates had collected bags of clothing, food, a place to stay, transportation and an assortment of items from the drugstore.

The culture of "family" at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center is not something we take lightly. St. Joseph's community of caregivers continually invests in our employees, our patients and their families at every level. There is a strong interconnectedness among the people of Central New York. Generations of employees have given their careers to St. Joseph's, while generations within the same families receive their care at the hospital. We cherish our good health and prosperity together.

When St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation receives letters of gratitude from patients or their families, the mission we believe in and practice is reinforced. We are passionate healers, dedicated to honoring the Sacred in our sisters and brothers. Daily, these words guide us as we connect lives and remain committed to delivering a higher level of care.

Gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations can greatly help us to advance this mission. We encourage donors to consider making tribute gifts—whether in memory of a loved one, or to honor a parent, grandparent, mentor or caregiver. During times of trouble or when facing an individual challenge, we have all had the experience of receiving unsolicited help—sometimes from people we have never even met before. What a blessing, both for the giver and the receiver!

So, thank you to all those who send notes expressing gratitude for the caring and compassion we know are so very important to the healing process. We hope by highlighting, within this magazine, some of the people who have supported our efforts, you will not only be inspired but also know that we are grateful to have you as part of the St. Joseph's family.

Sincerely,

Douglas G. Smith, FAHP
Vice President for Development

David Panasci
Chairman
St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation
Board of Directors



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For more information about the many opportunities that St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Foundation has to fit your giving interests and capabilities, please call Douglas G. Smith, vice president for development, at 315-703-2137; email Douglas.Smith@sjhsyr.org; or visit the Foundation's website at www.sjhsyr.org/foundation. Gifts at any level are appreciated.

SAVE THE DATE

THE 18TH ANNUAL

Holiday Wine Tasting

Presented by
The Auxiliary of St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center
& Harborview Wine & Liquors

November 21, 2014
Holiday Inn, Electronics Parkway - Liverpool, N.Y.
6:30 - 9:30 pm

VIP Party is from 5:30 - 6:30 pm

Proceeds to benefit the Inpatient Physical Therapy
Room in the new Patient Surgical Tower

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Thank you.

Volunteer Pat Scully Leaves More than a Legacy for Helping Others

Walking through St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center with Pat Scully is a bit of an experience. "Hi Pat!" is the familiar refrain.

If it seems as though Scully knows most everyone at St. Joseph's, it is probably because she does. Scully has spent most of her life at the hospital—25 years as an employee and another decade as a full-time volunteer. She also has the hardware to show for it: her hospital badge lanyard is adorned with a multitude of recognition pins. The most recent accolade honors her 22,000 hours of service, more than any other volunteer in the history of the hospital.

"There's no place I'd rather spend my time," she said. "St. Joseph's is my home."

A native of Syracuse, Scully first came to St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center as a very sick five-year-old child. She had suffered a ruptured appendix, resulting in gangrene and peritonitis. Doctors gave her a 50-percent chance of survival. But due to the excellent care she received, Scully recovered. Left with a deep-seeded desire to help care for people, she knew she wanted to work in a hospital some day—but not just any hospital. It had to be St. Joseph's.

"The memories of the kind nurses and doctors always stayed with me," she said.

When she was old enough, Scully fulfilled her dream by training as a nurse's aide and then getting hired at the hospital. That was 1966. Over the next 25 years, she worked in a variety of settings, including 12 years in the operating room, where she was responsible for the surgical instruments, and six years in labor and delivery. "I loved going to work. Every day was different and exciting," she said. "Everyone was so appreciative, from the doctors and nurses to the sisters and the patients."

In 2002, Scully became a St. Joseph's hospital patient once again, when she underwent a total knee replacement. No longer able to stand for long hours at a time, she retired her position as a nurse's aide but she wasn't finished with St. Joseph's.

After her recovery was complete, Scully started a new chapter with the hospital, as a volunteer. As dedicated as any full-time employee, she works Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. every week of the year, eating lunch each day in the cafeteria with her fellow volunteers.

Over the last decade, Scully has worked a variety of assignments including greeting visitors at the lobby welcome desk, delivering flowers, helping patients with paperwork in the emergency room, and directing visitors to their desired locations as they enter the hospital through the Medical Office Center sky bridge. "Whenever we have a special project that needs to be done, we can count on Pat to help out," said Mary Hagan, volunteer services coordinator. "She is very dedicated to St. Joseph's and very well known throughout the hospital."

Whatever her assignment, Scully aims to emulate the compassion that she feels sets St. Joseph's apart. "People here aren't just doing their jobs, they genuinely care about you," she said. "I can't imagine there is a finer hospital anywhere."

It's evident from the way people respond to her, that the feeling is mutual, whether it is former co-workers, fellow volunteers, hospital visitors or patients.

"One woman baked me a pie for helping her," said Scully with a smile. "I couldn't even remember what I did."

But Scully's devotion to St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center extends beyond her physical service. She has established a planned gift, leaving her estate to the hospital foundation when she dies. When asked why she decided to leave St. Joseph's in her will, Scully explained that she wants to support the organization that has given her so much and hopes her actions may motivate others to do the same.

"This place means a great deal to me. The people here really are my family," she said.

Scully's father died at a young age. Her work as a nurse's aide helped support her mother, who she cared for until she required a nursing home. Scully then sold the family home and now shares an apartment with her cat, Mitten. She credits her work at the hospital with helping her get through trying times, as well as the counsel and support of her longtime St. Joseph's internist, Dr. Robert Friedman, and Sister Myra Richards, former volunteer coordinator at the hospital.

"St. Joseph's has been my life," said Scully. "I love being with people. I love helping people. I can't imagine a better place to spend every day."



Patricia A. Scully is shown here in St. Joseph's main lobby, standing in front of a St. Valentine's memory tree. As a way of memorializing or honoring loved ones, friends and family members, the Auxiliary of St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center sold ornaments for display on these beautiful trees.

CNY Infusion Services is Proud to Support St. Joseph's

The success of CNY Infusion is reminiscent of David and Goliath, the classic underdog tale that transcended its biblical origins to become a symbol for unlikely victory.

The 20-year-old company is the only locally owned business offering home infusion services to residents of the Central New York region, competing against numerous national chains.

"Syracuse has small-town values. We want to be able to answer to one another for the services we provide," said April Stone, RN, the company's CEO and founder. "We know who we can depend on and we stick with those relationships. And I've worked hard to build those relationships by being responsive and providing the highest standard of services set by the industry."

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed. Stone is recipient of the 2005 Syracuse Women in Business Award, the 2006 Syracuse University WISE Ann Michel Distinguished Entrepreneur Award, and the 2009 Woman of the Year in Home Health Care awarded by the National Association of Professional and Executive Women.

In the 1980s when infusion services emerged as a subspecialty of the home health care marketplace, Stone was an intensive care nurse. Because of her extensive IV experience, she was approached by a national home health care company to perform home infusion visits. "I did not know anything about home infusion but I am always intrigued by something new," she recalled.

Stone liked the work and was hired full time, quickly developing a following of patients and physicians. But the marketplace was volatile. The company she worked for was bought out by another, and then another. "I knew there had to be a better way to provide continuity of care to patients so their services were not affected by all these corporate changes," she said.

In 1994, Stone started her own home infusion company, Empire Infusion. Five years later she developed a partnership with Franciscan Management Services and rebranded as CNY Infusion. The company has a licensed nursing agency and infusion pharmacy that provides individualized, high-tech infusion treatment and intravenous medications to patients who have been discharged from area hospitals in the comfort and safety of their own homes throughout a 14-county swath of Central New York. Treatments include long-term intravenous antibiotics, Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN), intravenous immune globulin (IVIG) therapy, and some multi-day chemotherapies, among others. In collaboration with local physicians, CNY Infusion has established advanced programs for TPN and IVIG with their ACT and LIFE Programs to enhance the outcomes for patients receiving these very complex therapies.



April Stone, CEO, Central New York Infusion Services, LLC



Materials Manager, Ray Hall, has a key role at CNY Infusion, managing the agency purchasing, inventory, and equipment, as well as coordinating deliveries of the medications and supplies to patient homes.

"... when you consider the 15 years of sponsorships they have provided for the Golf Classic, foursomes for CNY Infusion have played nearly 500 holes of golf, all in support of enhanced care for St. Joseph's patients. What a remarkable legacy!"

—DOUG SMITH, ST. JOSEPH'S VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

The company is unique in that it is run by clinicians rather than "business executives"—both Stone and chief operating officer Renée Sadowski are Registered Nurses. "We are very patient-focused and very patient-outcome driven," said Sadowski.

Indeed, all medications are prepared by CNY Infusion's in-house pharmacy and administered by a team of registered local nurses who have undergone specialized training and certification in infusion and infectious disease. "They are exceptionally trained," said Stone. "This is not a standard in the industry but a standard we have imposed



Stephanie Ciszewski (left), LPN, intake and Cara Jean (right), RN, CRNI, BSN, clinical operations manager are members of a well-coordinated team that help ensure the safe, appropriate, and effective use of intravenous medications in the home through the use of aseptically compounded medications; proactive individualized care plans; monitoring, detecting, and managing potential complications—including those related to equipment; and patient and family education.

for ourselves because we want to provide the highest level of service possible.”

The company imposes high standards in other ways as well, namely giving back to the community. Stone serves on the Go Red for Women Executive Leadership Team of the American Heart Association and the

Golisano Children’s Hospital Advisory Board. She has also been extremely generous through CNY Infusion supporting many community organizations, including the American Cancer Society, the CNY CASA program (Court Appointed Special Advocates for Abused and Neglected Children), the Rescue Mission, Big Brother Big Sister CNY, the Food Bank of CNY, the Salvation Army, Golisano Children’s Hospital, the new Syracuse Pediatric Oncology Center and Francis House. “I was born in Syracuse, raised my family in Syracuse, and it is important for me to support local business and charities,” said Stone.

But the principal beneficiaries of Stone’s generosity have been St. Joseph’s Hospital Health Center and Foundation. CNY Infusion’s financial support of St. Joseph’s began in 1999, when the company became a Presenting Sponsor for St. Joseph’s Annual Gala. In that same year, the company also supported the hospital’s Golf Classic. This is a tradition that has continued every year since.

“April has been an outstanding friend to St. Joseph’s Hospital Foundation, a friendship that, in no small part, is important to the success of the Foundation’s annual events,” shared Doug Smith, St. Joseph’s vice president for development. “As a Presenting Sponsor for the past 15 years, she and Central New York Infusion have travelled around the world with St. Joseph’s, from the Caribbean in 2000—the Gala’s theme for that year—to Ireland, San Francisco, Salzburg and most recently India, to name a few. In fact, when you consider the 15 years of sponsorships they have provided for the Golf Classic, foursomes

for CNY Infusion have played nearly 500 holes of golf, all in support of enhanced care for St. Joseph’s patients. What a remarkable legacy!”

CNY Infusion’s most tangible gift is a \$300,000 pledge to the hospital’s Generations capital campaign to name the garden view corridor in the expanded hospital facility. This two-level passageway wraps around the outside of the emergency services building, linking it to the new North Tower. The corridor will feature scenic art displays, something Stone, an avid art collector, has taken a hands-on role in helping with.

“They asked if I was interested in choosing art for the corridor and I am excited to be part of this project,” she said. “Art has a way of making people feel better. If we can ease someone’s burden or pain through the art on display, I am happy to play a part in that.”

While Stone attributes her continued support of St. Joseph’s to the aligned visions and goals of the hospital and CNY Infusion—integrity, pursuit of excellence, and community support—she also feels a very personal connection. “St. Joseph’s fills an important need in the community but it has also filled important needs within my own family: both my parents received end-of-life care at St. Joseph’s and my grandchildren were born there,” she said. “I have been so blessed in my life. I feel that if I can contribute to an organization like St. Joseph’s, they can use it to accomplish a far greater purpose than I could individually.”

To learn more about CNY Infusion and their programs, go to CNYInfusion.com.



Left: pictured from left to right are Special Gala guest, Miss America 2014 Nina Davuluri, her mother and Gala Co-Chair Mrs. Sheela Davuluri, Meena Davuluri and Kathryn Ruscitto, St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center president and chief executive officer.

Above: L to R – Foundation Board president, David H. Panasci, Janice L. Panasci and Monsignor Ronald C. Bill.

2014 Gala: Passage to India

St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation's 23rd annual gala – Passage to India was held this past May 30, at the Turning Stone Resort and Casino. Filled with zeal, enthusiasm and 870 attendees, the Gala was a colorful, festive tribute to Indian culture. This year's event included a very special guest, Miss America 2014, Nina Davuluri.

The annual black tie optional dinner dance netted more than \$350,000 in support of the new Pre-Induction/Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) at St. Joseph's. A very special thank you to Central New York Infusion Services, LLC, as the Gala's presenting sponsor once again! The

evening featured dining and dancing to the live music of Atlas. Thank you to our gala co-chairs, Dr. Chaudhury and Mrs. Sheela Davuluri, Mr. Edward and Mrs. Marie Grabowski and Dr. Richard Waldman and Ms. Elaine Mielcarski, CNM.

"We are particularly excited that this year's Gala's net proceeds will support the PACU in the new patient tower, which opened in September. Thanks to our co-chairs' enthusiasm and Miss America's appearance," Doug Smith, vice president for development noted back in May, "we have achieved record dollars and one of the best attended events in our history."

Since its inception in 1992, St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation's Gala Dinner Dance has raised more than \$4.5 million to benefit hospital programs, including cardiac services, medical imaging, the college of nursing, operating rooms, dialysis services and the neonatal intensive care unit. Proceeds from the gala play an important part in St. Joseph's ability to provide a higher level of care to our Central New York community. Please save the date for next year's gala – to be held May 29, 2015.

St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation visits Florida

Earlier this year, friends of St. Joseph's Hospital joined President and CEO, Kathryn Ruscitto, along with other St. Joseph's leaders at a reception in Fort Myers, Fla., at the Fiddlesticks Country Club. The event provided everybody a great opportunity to network and reconnect, as well as receive an update on the tremendous progress the hospital has made over the last several years. Special thanks to Dr. Alan Foster for hosting the event and Dr. Alan Simons for his presentation on Cardiology in the 21st Century.

This year's Florida event was such a hit that plans are in progress for two networking receptions to be held in 2015!



L to R - Peter Muserlian, Thomas Bader, and Joseph Convertino, Sr.

L to R - Saskia Zawadzki, John Zawadzki, Mo Tabaie, MD, Lowell Seifter, Esq, Alan Simons, MD, and Debra Simons



College Corner *(continued from page 16)*

St. Joseph's College of Nursing Held Commencement Ceremony May 18

St. Joseph's College of Nursing held its 114th annual graduation ceremony on May 18, at the SRC Arena in Syracuse. The associate degree in applied science with a major in nursing was conferred on 82 students, 72 students having completed the school's Weekday Option and 10 having completed the Weekend Option. Students participating in St. Joseph's Dual Degree Partnership (DDPN) with Le Moyne College received their associate degree in nursing from St. Joseph's College of Nursing and will continue their studies at Le Moyne, obtaining a Bachelor's degree with a major in nursing following one more academic year of study.

The commencement speaker was Dr. Barbara Zittel, an international nursing consultant and past Executive Secretary to the State Board of Nursing in New York State for 11 years.

Dr. Zittel, drawing from her own professional experience, gave the graduates her five recommendations for being the best professional registered nurses possible.

1. Learn from your patients. Remember they are at a vulnerable time but are people with rich life experiences and dreams.
2. Be in the moment. Live now; don't place life on hold, live each moment as if it is the last one and cherish it for what it is – a gift.
3. Know the rules and abide by them. Understand that your RN license is a privilege, not a right, and that privilege can be removed. Know the rules and abide by them, but take risks to challenge bad ones. Question nursing practice and the health care that we provide.
4. Be open to surprises. Nursing is a profession that grants you the privilege to be present at the most intimate times of people's lives: birth, death and the "in-betweens." Be open to the unexpected and to being astonished and amazed as you enter into these sacred spaces.
5. Grow toward perfection. My degree and your degree is not a document to demonstrate that we know it all. It is a document that permits us to admit to ourselves how much we still have to learn.

Prior to commencement, on May 16 the graduates attended a brunch in their honor along with members of administration, faculty, staff. Awards and scholarships were presented to recipients by donors who support the awards and scholarships.

Year to date, 65.5% of the graduates have chosen to practice within the St. Joseph's network, and of those who did not remain; they are working in the community or pursuing a Bachelor's degree.

Weekend 2013 Nursing Students Graduate

On Jan. 26, an awards brunch and graduation ceremony was held for the Weekend Option 2013 graduates at the Doubletree Hotel in East Syracuse, N.Y. This event marked the first time the College held a separate commencement ceremony for weekend graduates. An Associate degree in applied science with a major in nursing was conferred on 40 graduates, who also received the college pin. The commencement speaker was recently retired assistant dean for Weekend Option, Lois Needham, MS, RN.

New York State Selected For Phase II Grant To Continue Academic Progression In Nursing Program

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) announced that New York was selected to receive a \$300,000, two-year grant in Phase II of its Academic Progression in Nursing program (APIN). APIN is advancing state and regional strategies aimed at creating a more highly educated, diverse nursing workforce.

"Le Moyne College and St. Joseph's College of Nursing's pioneering work in the 1+2+1 AD-BS model has set a national standard of excellence

for advancing the education of nurses. We are fortunate to have the continuing leadership of Susan Bastable, EdD, RN, chair and professor of Le Moyne College's Nursing Department and Marianne Markowitz, MS, RN, CNE, vice president/dean of St. Joseph's College of Nursing in this important work," stated Deborah Elliott, RN, MBA, executive director of the Foundation of New York State Nurses and project director of the grant project. Elliott also noted, "Through the dedicated work of the leadership and collaborative partners in APIN Phase I, admissions have increased by 23 percent in one year's time.

Through this program New York is better positioned to graduate a larger number of BS-prepared nurses, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes. This program also significantly strengthens efforts to implement the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommendation that 80 percent of the nursing workforce (RNs) be prepared at the baccalaureate level or higher by 2020.

Nicole Blumin, Appointed Associate Dean of Students



St. Joseph's College of Nursing has appointed Nicole Blumin as Associate Dean of Students for the College. She will be responsible for managing all student services at the college, including admissions, financial aid, disability services and academic student development.

Employed at the college since 1998 as the coordinator for student development, Blumin also has worked in admissions at Syracuse University and Lynn University in Boca Raton, Fla.

A Fayetteville, N.Y. resident, Blumin received her Bachelor of Science degree from Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and her Master of Science degree from the School of Education in Higher Education Student Services.

College of Nursing Governing Board Member Edwin Kelley, Jr.



Giving back to his community is nothing new for Edwin Kelley, Jr. A public finance attorney at Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC, Kelley has been active in the Syracuse community for many years. He serves on the board of directors of the YMCA of Greater Syracuse and is a past president. In addition to his many years of service to the YMCA, for which he received the Syracuse Post-Standard Achievement Award in 2012, Kelley has served on several other organization's boards, including Aurora of CNY, and the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University. Kelley also volunteers at ARISE & Ski to help people with disabilities enjoy skiing, and he participates in the McKinley-Brighton Elementary School reading program. In recent years, Kelley's community has expanded to include Lwala, Kenya, the hometown of the Ochieng family. The Kelley family has helped to ensure that the Ochieng siblings, whose parents died in Lwala, have a bright and secure future. In 2006, with Kelley's sponsorship, Florence Ochieng was able to enroll in St. Joseph's College of Nursing to achieve her lifelong goal of becoming a nurse.

Kelley currently serves as vice chair of the St. Joseph's College of Nursing Governing Board. In addition to his numerous civic activities, he is chair of Bond, Schoeneck & King's business law department and its public finance practice. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, from St. Lawrence University in 1977 and earned both his JD, magna cum laude, from Syracuse University College of Law and his Master of Science in accounting from Syracuse University in 1981. He resides in Jamesville, N.Y. with his wife and family.

New Faces to St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Foundation Board of Directors

LUIS J. CASTRO, MD

St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Foundation welcomes Luis J. Castro, MD, as a new member of the Foundation board, effective December 2013.

Medical Director of St. Joseph's Primary Care Center – West since 1999, Dr. Castro is a family medicine physician who provides quality health care to individuals who live on the Near West side of Syracuse. Considered one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, the Near West side is home to a richly diverse community that includes refugees and immigrants from Africa, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe. The Center also provides care to a majority of the city's 7,800 Hispanic residents. It is estimated that 40 percent of the Center's patients have limited or no English proficiency.

Born in Medellin, Colombia, Dr. Castro understands that culture and language often become barriers to obtaining quality health care. He not only recognizes culturally competent care as a cornerstone of the success the Center has had in reducing the number of infant deaths in Onondaga County, but also as a key component in determining the success of patient outcomes in the primary care setting. To better coordinate overall care, Dr. Castro takes the time to get to know his patients and their families while working to meet their health care needs. Visits are not rushed, patients get the time they need, and trust is formed.

A graduate of St. Joseph's Family Medicine Residency, Dr. Castro attended medical school at SUNY Health Science Center, Syracuse, N.Y. He completed his graduate studies at Hunter College in New York City, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in biology from Princeton University, Princeton, N.J. Recognized for excellence in patient care, Dr. Castro has been included in *The Best Doctors in America* annually 2005 to 2012. Developed by Best Doctors, Inc., the annual survey evaluates the experience and skill sets of physicians by asking other doctors "If you or a loved one needed a doctor in your specialty, to whom would you refer them?"

In 2008, Dr. Castro received the *Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society Volunteer Clinical Faculty Award* which recognizes community physicians who contribute "with distinction to the education and training of clinical students." A recipient of numerous awards, he has been honored with the *Post Standard Newspaper Achievement Award* for his contributions to making Central New York a better place to live and the Pfizer Teaching Award in Family Practice which recognizes outstanding community-based family physicians who take time from their practice to also teach students and/or residents.

HOWARD MCCARTHY

St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Foundation would also like to welcome Howard McCarthy as a new member of the Foundation board, effective January 2014.

Chairman and CEO of Dumac Business Systems, Inc. of East Syracuse, N.Y. since 2009, McCarthy has strategically led the company through substantial growth in its key markets across North America. Founded in 1952, Dumac offers a wide range of products and services designed to improve speed of service and management controls for the Quick Service, Table Service and Supermarket industries.

The company's eighteenth employee, McCarthy began his career with Dumac as a sales person in 1979. Under his leadership, Dumac has experienced a doubling of its employee base to its current 140 employees—a number that continues to grow. Ranked fifth among businesses across the region, Dumac was recognized as one of Central New York's Best Places to Work in 2013. In addition to its local headquarters, Dumac also has sales and service offices in Houston and Indianapolis.

McCarthy served on the Panasonic Dealer Advisory board for North America from 1992-2010. A 1979 graduate of SUNY Broome Community College in Binghamton, N.Y., McCarthy holds an Associate's degree in marketing, management and sales.

A volunteer and supporter of Francis House for the past 10 years, McCarthy and his wife, Janice, will chair the organization's 2014 *No Place Like Home* fundraiser. In 2013, they were co-vice chairpersons for the Francis House event. Francis House provides a home and supportive extended family for people with terminal illnesses with a prognosis of six months or less to live.

McCarthy is an avid runner who has completed several marathons and enjoys playing golf and deep-sea fishing. He and his wife reside in Camillus, N.Y. They have three children and two grandchildren.

A. JOHN MEROLA, MD

St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Foundation is pleased to welcome A. John Merola, MD as a new member of the Foundation board, effective December 2013.

Born and raised in the inner city of Syracuse, Dr. Merola attended North High School before being admitted to Syracuse University. Following in his father's footsteps to become a physician, he received his Doctor of Medicine with honors from the School of Medicine at the University of California, Irvine, Calif., and then completed his residency at University of California, Los Angeles and St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center.

For the past five decades, Dr. Merola has been committed to delivering quality health care to patients. Affiliated with St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center since 1964, Dr. Merola was one of a handful of primary care physicians who planted the seeds of St. Joseph's Family Medicine Residency Program back in 1965. The Residency Program—the first in the Syracuse area—was one of the first five such programs in the United States accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). During his tenure at St. Joseph's, Dr. Merola served as chairman of St. Joseph's department of family medicine for 18 years and was on the team of physicians which was instrumental in starting the St. Joseph's Coronary Surgery Program. He was president of the Medical Staff at St. Mary's Hospital in Syracuse, NY 1973-1974 and at

St. Joseph's Hospital 1985-1986. Since 1973, Dr. Merola has also held appointments at SUNY Health Science Center at Syracuse College of Medicine, Syracuse, N.Y. and SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, N.Y.

In addition to being a respected physician, Dr. Merola is an astute businessman who has always had his pulse on the needs of the community. Bringing health care services to where people lived, he innovatively developed the North Medical Center in Liverpool in the 1970s, later expanding it in 1989 to a five-story complex that was the first in the area to provide an array of outpatient services—from urgent care to surgery—under one roof in the suburbs. In 1998, he followed with the Northeast Medical Center in Fayetteville.

Dr. Merola most recently extended his efforts to connect the community to health care with a \$1 million gift to St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation, which named the bridge that connects St. Joseph's Medical Office Center to the main hospital. He sees the bridge as a symbol of the hundreds of thousands of patients who have sought care at St. Joseph's over the last half century.

In December 2013, Dr. Merola announced that he had retired from practicing medicine. He will continue to oversee his companies AJM Management and Summit Realty. He also remains active in several medical associations and local organizations. Over the course of a distinguished career, he has been the recipient of numerous accolades including a *Community Service Award* from the Onondaga County Medical Society, the *St. Joseph the Worker Award* from St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Foundation (2012 and 1991), the *Bridges To Excellence® Medical Home Recognition* (2012-2015) and the *NCQA Physician Practice Connections-Patient Centered Medical Home* (2015).

GLENN B. AXELROD, MD

Lastly, St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Foundation welcomes Glenn B. Axelrod, MD as a new member of the Foundation board effective, February 25, 2014.

Certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery, Inc., Dr. Axelrod has been an orthopedic surgeon for more than 30 years, specializing in sports medicine, knee replacements and general orthopedics. Dr. Axelrod is a physician at Syracuse Orthopedic Specialists which is comprised of a team of experienced orthopedic physicians and support staff who provide their patients with state-of-the-art medical care.

A 1973 recipient of the *Phi Beta Kappa* Award, he attended the University of Rochester 1969-1973 where he earned a bachelor's degree with high distinction in biology. He then went on to earn a doctor of medicine degree at the University of Rochester School of Medicine in 1977 and was the recipient of the *Alpha Omega Alpha* award that same year.

To help patients and their families in the decision-making process, as they search for physicians and medical facilities, valuable online resources such as Health Grades and Vitals.com collect and share patient satisfaction survey responses. Based on positive patient feedback, alongside other quality measures, Dr. Axelrod was recognized by Vitals.com with a Patients' Choice Award (2010 - 2011). This award reflects the difference a physician has made in the lives of his/her patients. In the same year, he also received Compassionate Doctor Recognition—an honor that is based on a physician's overall and bedside manner scores and bestowed on those who treat their patients with the utmost kindness. Most recently, Dr. Axelrod was nominated by his peers as being among the very best in his area of medical specialty. In recognition, he was honored for making a difference with the Castle Connolly's Top Doctors™ (2012 - 2013).

Dr. Axelrod is a member of many professional societies including, the Onondaga County Medical Society, the New York State Medical Society and the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. A respected physician, Dr. Axelrod is active with local hospitals and attends monthly meetings at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center.



Luis J. Castro, MD



Howard McCarthy



A. John Merola, MD



Glenn B. Axelrod, MD

Recent Grant Awards

We thank the following foundations and agencies for their support of St. Joseph's mission and services:

The **Saint Agatha Foundation** awarded \$50,000 to St. Joseph's to enhance care for women and families who "cannot afford their disease" and have nowhere else to turn. Playing a vital role in the lives of the patients who access it, funding from the Saint Agatha Foundation is used as a "last resort" after all other potential funding sources have been exhausted.

"I want to help those who can't afford their illness."

—LAURIE MEZZALINGUA

An outspoken advocate for breast cancer survivors, Laurie Mezzalingua founded the Saint Agatha Foundation because she felt that those affected by the often debilitating and expensive effects of breast cancer should always have someone in their corner so that they might "stay strong and keep fighting." Her 12-year battle with breast cancer came to an end in 2009.

St. Joseph's Lymphedema Program received a \$31,399 award from **Susan G. Komen for the Cure Central New York Affiliate** for the Lymphedema Education And Prevention from Stage 0 program (LEAP from Stage 0). Now in its ninth year of Komen funding, LEAP from Stage 0 works to prevent, delay and reduce the progression of lymphedema that may occur as a result of breast cancer treatment when it occurs as a result of treatment for breast cancer.

Nancy G. Brinker promised her dying sister, Susan G. Komen, she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever, and in 1982, that promise became Susan G. Komen for the Cure®. The Central New York Affiliate is part of the world's largest and most progressive grassroots network fighting breast cancer. Through events like the Komen CNY Race for the Cure, the Central New York Affiliate has invested more than \$5.5 4.8 million in community breast cancer programs in its 17-county service area.

The **Auer Family Foundation** awarded \$4,876 in support of new equipment for the clinical simulation laboratory at St. Joseph's College of Nursing. A "Noelle" Maternal and Neonatal simulator with "Pedi" Blue Neonate will be purchased through this funding. Noelle is a birthing simulator that allows students to safely practice skills and assessments related to obstetric care prior to, during, and immediately after the birthing process. The Pedi is a simulated newborn child that is designed to enhance students' clinical proficiency involving neonatal care before, during and immediately after birth. Together, these simulation mannequins are the first available to the students at St. Joseph's that are specific to obstetric and neonatal patient populations.

"The Auer Family Foundation feels these learning aids will prove to be excellent tools in the obstetric simulation education experience and that this grant will pay dividends for years to come for not only the students at St. Joseph's College of Nursing, but also for the community it serves."

The Auer Family Foundation was founded in 1993 by Edmund R. Auer and Mary (Peg) M. Auer. They felt it was important to support causes that gave back to the community. An important component of the Foundation's primary mission is to encourage charitable volunteerism by Peg and Ed's 10 children, their spouses and 25 grandchildren. St. Joseph's College of Nursing is Peg Auer's alma mater and the Auer children believe that supporting their mother's nursing school is a way to honor their parents' memory and that it serves as a tribute to all they did for their children, grandchildren and the lives of the many they touched during their lifetimes. "Caring for others is the greatest way we can honor the memory of Peg and Ed Auer."

—AUER FAMILY FOUNDATION

St. Joseph's Maternal Child Health Center—now known as St. Joseph's Primary Care Center-West (PCC-West) Pediatrics—recently received a "sustainability" book shipment from the **Reach Out and Read** National program. PCC-West is one of nearly 5,000 medical providers that partners with the Reach Out and Read to promote early literacy and school readiness to young children and their families. At check-ups, pediatricians give each child a new book of their own to take home. Also in support of child and family literacy, St. Joseph's Family Medicine Center received a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from Target Corporation (NYSE:TGT). Beyond providing for the usual health care needs of patients, the Family Medicine Center promotes literacy by distributing storybooks to pediatric patients between the ages of 6 months and 5 years. This gift from the Target Corporation is helping both children and parents discover the joys and importance of reading.

"Reading makes a world of difference in learning. That's why we award grants to schools, libraries and non-profit organizations that support programs like after-school reading events and weekend book clubs."

—TARGET CORPORATION

Auxiliary of St. Joseph's Hospital Supports New Patient Surgical Tower

Proceeds from the **St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Auxiliary's 17th Annual Holiday Wine Tasting** benefitted St. Joseph's *Generations of Compassion ♦ Healing ♦ Innovation Capital Campaign*. Held at the Holiday Inn at Electronics Parkway, Liverpool this past November, the event supported excellence in patient care by raising funds that will be used to name one of the patient/family consultation rooms in the hospital's new patient surgical tower which will open in September 2014.

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Roy Johnson, service technician for Franciscan Lifeline, installs a medical alert unit in a patient's home.

Home Safe with HomeSafe

"I cried."

That's how Vicki Dupre describes her reaction to her mother's new HomeSafe Wireless Alert System.

"I'm a nurse and I cried when the technician went into the bathroom and shut the door to test the unit," she explained. "The person at the response center could hear him, even though I barely could. That blew me away."

Dupre's mother, Margaret, slid out of the bed one night and that prompted the family to take additional safety measures. Margaret is attached to her cell phone, but that wasn't enough to make her children feel secure. So, they installed Franciscan Lifeline's HomeSafe Wireless unit.

"It gives us such peace of mind," Dupre said. "I'm so impressed to know that, with the push of a button, she can get help. She doesn't need to yell into it and it doesn't get set off accidentally."

Franciscan Lifeline added HomeSafe to its product line because of the increasing number of people without traditional home phone lines.

"HomeSafe Wireless allows us to provide the value of Lifeline service to those customers who no longer have a landline," said Beverly Lawton, executive director of Franciscan Lifeline. "We're pleased to have a solution that allows us to extend our safety and security to all individuals, regardless of what they use for telephone service. With HomeSafe Wireless, we're even able to offer our AutoAlert which provides proven fall detection and automatic response."

It's common for adult children to purchase a medical alert system for their parents. Dupre said the sense of security is worth it.

"If I'm not here, someone is at least aware of my mom," she said. "My goal is to keep my mother in that apartment for the rest of her life. I don't want to move her to a nursing home. HomeSafe will help allow me to do that."

Subscribers can choose from a variety of help buttons based on their needs. Call Franciscan Lifeline at (315) 492-8175 for information.

Franciscan Companies and Kinney Drugs Launch Online Home Health Store

High quality medical equipment and supplies are now available at one convenient location – the Online Home Health Store through the Franciscan Companies and Kinney Drugs websites. Franciscan and Kinney Drugs have a long tradition of improving patients' comfort and quality of life. They are committed to providing the very best home medical and respiratory equipment. The user-friendly website allows patients to shop by product or health condition such as arthritis, COPD, asthma and diabetes. Whether patients need oxygen concentrators, walkers, power scooters or lift chairs, the Online Home Health Store has them covered. Patients can take comfort knowing that the products they need will be delivered right to their doorstep.

Visit www.FranciscanCompanies.com or www.KinneyDrugs.com to shop today!

Healthier You

Patients with pulmonary problems can now be treated on a walk-in basis at the Healthy You Wellness Center in Syracuse. Pulmonary Health Physicians, PC, Kinney Drugs, and Franciscan Companies, an affiliate of St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, teamed up to open the center in February. It's located inside the Kinney Drug Store at 104 Lafayette Road, just off Brighton Avenue.

Healthy You Wellness Center is the first of its kind in New York State. Patients with a sudden onset of a pulmonary problem or who need follow-up after being discharged from the hospital no longer need to wait for a doctor's appointment or go to the emergency room.

"Healthy You allows patients timely, convenient access to pulmonary health professionals who assist and support them, offer education, and manage their respiratory condition to improve or maintain their quality of life and help to decrease or eliminate the burdens of their disease," said Dr. Thomas Aiello, pulmonologist with Pulmonary Health Physicians, PC.



Nurse practitioners from Pulmonary Health PC treat patients at the Healthy You Wellness Center.

Staffed by specialists from Pulmonary Health Physicians, PC, the Healthy You Wellness Center focuses on patient care for respiratory disease management. Services include assessment, treatment and management for chronic conditions such as COPD, emphysema, bronchitis and asthma, as well as additional preventive health services such as the common cough and cold, flu, allergies and sinus infections.

"Access to convenient and affordable health care is a growing concern for the communities that we serve. We expect this problem to only worsen as millions of more

Talk one-on-one with an RN – FREE

Franciscan's Joseph Nicoletti, RN, RRT, presents free informational sessions every Wednesday at 3:30p.m. at the Healthy You Wellness Center at Kinney Drugs, located at 104 Lafayette Road, Syracuse. Topics include medication management, preparing for winter and coping with allergies. This is the public's chance to speak one-on-one with an experienced medical professional about a variety of issues – no appointment needed! See you there.

patients gain medical coverage under the Affordable Care Act without a corresponding increase of medical providers available to treat them," said Mike Duteau, vice president of business development and strategic relations for Kinney Drugs. "The Healthy You Wellness Center at Kinney Drugs is a collaborative effort designed to address the need for greater access to affordable health services in the Syracuse market, bridging the gaps in care coordination among healthcare providers and ultimately resulting in improved patient health outcomes."

As part of this initiative, Franciscan stocks respiratory/pulmonary-related medical equipment and supplies in the store including nebulizers, CPAP equipment and other popular items. In addition, Franciscan respiratory therapists and nurses conduct educational seminars and screenings on-site, with a focus on disease prevention and education. The goal is to advance patients knowledge on topics such as flu prevention, smoking cessation and proper use of prescription inhalers.

"We are excited to offer this multi-disciplinary approach to healthcare with nurse practitioners, pharmacists, respiratory therapists, and physician pulmonologists," said Frank L. Smith Jr., president and CEO of Franciscan Companies. "Together, we are advancing patient care in the community with convenient access to an advanced level of care. We want patients to live home and live well, and Healthy You accomplishes that."

Healthy You is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 4:30 to 8 p.m. Plans are in the works to expand the hours. Call (315) 492-0248 for more information.

Leader in Home Ventilation

A ventilator helps patients breathe when they're not able to on their own. Franciscan Companies is currently treating nearly 50 home ventilator patients, more than another home care agency or hospital in the region. From infants to adults, Franciscan sees to their every need to ensure they're living the best lives possible.

These patients need specialized attention because their lungs are not functioning properly. Many are in respiratory failure or ventilator failure which occurs when the patient has a low level of oxygen in the blood, even while getting oxygen therapy and/or when the level of carbon dioxide rises too much in the blood. Their respiratory failure may be due specific disease states or possible external physical trauma. Most patients are connected to the ventilator

through a tracheostomy tube that is placed in their windpipe. They require the attention of registered respiratory therapists to ensure the equipment is functioning at optimum levels.

"We have it down to a science; we really do," says Joseph Nicoletti, RRT, RN, executive director of clinical programs. "This type of service is very much needed in Syracuse and Central New York. There is no long-term ventilation rehabilitation center in our area, so we work our hardest to improve their lives. We keep them living at home, where they want to be."

And, now, they have more mobility than ever. The latest equipment is smaller and more portable than the bulky ventilators of the past. This allows many of Franciscan's vent patients the freedom to go places, attend school and enjoy life.

For more information on home ventilation assistance, contact Franciscan Health Support at (315) 458-3200.



Nurse practitioners from Pulmonary Health PC treat patients at the Healthy You Wellness Center.

Franciscan Health Support is now offering non-invasive ventilation. This can be considered a step between a CPAP machine and permanent tubal ventilation and is perfect for many people suffering from advanced COPD. If you or someone you love may be a candidate for non-invasive ventilation, contact Franciscan Health Support at (315) 458-3200.

Charity Provides Help at Home

Embracing Age, an organization that provides people with the services they need to remain living at home, has been granted 501(c)(3) status, making it a not-for-profit organization. This designation allows Embracing Age to better serve Central New York senior citizens and their families.

"Embracing Age supports and empowers those we serve to live independent and enriched lives," said Susan Clancy-Magley, executive director of Embracing Age. "We hear, very often, from family members when they are overwhelmed and need help. Embracing Age has so many resources, we quickly solve their problems."

It's the everyday tasks that can become burdensome to an older person: housekeeping, meal preparation, errands, laundry and home maintenance. Loved ones are often tasked with "checking on" mom or dad, to make sure all these things are done. It's easy for the people in this sandwich generation, as it's called, to become overwhelmed. They are piling a number of responsibilities onto their own impressive to-do lists.

That's where Embracing Age steps in. Staff members provide all those daily necessities – meal preparation, light housekeeping, laundry and the like while coordinating and managing any and all personal and home management needs. A pre-screened list of local professionals can be trusted to perform home maintenance and repair projects. Plus, with Embracing Age's affiliation to Franciscan Companies and St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, home health aides, Lifeline Medical Alert and a medication dispensing service are available.

"Embracing Age's services evolve over time to meet whatever support is needed through the aging process," said Clancy-Magley. "We eliminate the stress of not knowing where to turn for services, assistance and companionship."

Embracing Age is located in DeWitt and can be reached at (315) 877-3779 or at www.EmbracingAge.org.

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Cell Phone Donation for Troops

Franciscan and St. Joseph's Hospital Certified Home Healthcare Agency (CHHA) joined together to donate more than 500 cell phones to State Senator John DeFrancisco's annual cell phone drive for troops. The phones are recycled into talk time for soldiers. This donation is the largest to date and will provide up to 1,000 hours of talk time. Pictured left to right are: Dan Carelli, executive director of operations at Franciscan, Frank L. Smith, Jr., president and CEO of Franciscan Companies and vice president of corporate development at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, State Senator John A. DeFrancisco, Jeff Wentworth, executive director of purchasing and inventory management at Franciscan; and Pat Johnson, administrative assistant for St. Joseph's CHHA.

FREE CPAP TUBING FOR SOLDIERS

Franciscan Companies is helping soldiers from Fort Drum's 10th Mountain Division sleep better at night. Many are undergoing sleep studies at the Carthage Area Hospital Sleep

Center. Following their diagnosis, Mountain Lakes Health Support employees set the soldiers up with CPAP equipment, including tubing. Once deployed, however, the soldiers are having difficulty cleaning their CPAP tubing. There is an increased risk of infection because of the conditions.

Insurance only covers a certain amount of equipment so Franciscan Companies secured back-up tubing from Philips Respironics to provide to the soldiers – free of charge.

"Respironics donated enough tubing for 100 people to use," said Tim Scanlon, RRT, executive vice president of Franciscan. "That means 100 soldiers will be able to keep their CPAP equipment in the best shape possible. Most importantly, they will sleep better at night."

Mountain Lakes Health Support staff members are giving the soldiers the back-up equipment before they deploy, and are working out the shipping details now to send the tubing to the Middle East.