

UNDER THE

Rainbow

BATSON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



Friends of
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Friends Celebrates 25 Years

PSST!!! KIDS... Color this cover then share a photo on Facebook or Instagram (and tag us)

10

From 0-840 Months

14

Expanding Our Horizon

20

Right to the Heart

Dear Friends-

Thanks again for picking up another issue of "Under the Rainbow" and reading about the wonderful work going on at Children's of Mississippi and Batson Children's Hospital.

In this issue we highlight growth in many ways - apropos for a spring edition. We showcase our rapidly growing network of physicians, covering the state to provide quick and ready access to many services for all Mississippi children. We reveal some cutting-edge research on nutrition that will help premature babies grow stronger and healthier. There is also the story of a young patient who can celebrate this new season unencumbered thanks to a groundbreaking heart procedure. Then we pay tribute to Friends of Children's Hospital and its 25 years of steadfast commitment to helping Children's of Mississippi and Batson Children's Hospital grow.

We at the University of Mississippi Medical Center find ourselves in a new season of growth. In March, Dr. LouAnn Woodward succeeded Dr. James E. Keeton as the next vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine. Dr. Keeton, a pediatric urologist, has helped Children's, University of Mississippi Medical Center, and many of our patients over the years. We are grateful to Dr. Keeton for his service to the children of the state and we are excited about continuing that mission with Dr. Woodward at the helm.

After all, our mission is "to touch the life of every child in Mississippi so that they can reach their full potential". That's something worth growing.

With gratitude,

Dr. Frederick "Rick" Barr,
Suzan B. Thames Professor
and Chair of Pediatrics

Guy Giesecke,
Chief Executive Officer,
Children's of Mississippi



Dr. Rick Barr



Guy Giesecke



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The Gift of Friendship

Friends of Children's Hospital celebrates 25 years of giving.



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From 0-840 Months

Breast milk paves the way to a healthier Mississippi.



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Expanding Our Horizon

Children's opens specialty clinics across the state.



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Right to the Heart

Rare procedure minimizes heart surgery recovery time.



**Chancellor,
University of Mississippi**
Dan Jones, M.D.

**Vice Chancellor for Health
Affairs and Dean, School
of Medicine**
LouAnn Woodward, M.D.

**Suzan B. Thames Professor
and Chair of Pediatrics**
Frederick E. "Rick" Barr, M.D., M.Sc.

**Chief Executive Officer,
Children's of Mississippi**
Guy Giesecke

Editor
Jennifer Hospodor

Senior Editor
Bruce Coleman

Writers
Jennifer Hospodor
Dustin Barnes
Ruth Cummins

Photographers
Jay Ferchaud

Designer
Stephanie Seymour

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Send story ideas and photos to jhospodor@umc.edu or mail to:

Jennifer Hospodor
Division of Public Affairs
University of Mississippi Medical Center
2500 North State Street
Jackson, MS 39216-4505

On the cover: Color the cover, take a photo, share on social media and don't forget to tag us!



happy birthday to you... happy birthday to you...

THE GIFT OF Friendship

Friends of Children's Hospital Celebrates 25 Years of Giving

written by **Jennifer Hospodor**

When Dr. Owen “Bev” Evans found out he would become chairman of the pediatrics department at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, he negotiated for just three things – the department’s first computer, its first printer to go with it and permission to create a Friends of Children’s Hospital fundraising group.

The computer and printer are long gone. But Friends of Children’s Hospital just celebrated its 25th birthday.

Sara Ray, chairman of the Friends board, said the board members who have served over the years are what made this milestone possible. As a community leader, Ray has worked with many charitable organizations. But, she says, this board of directors is truly unique.

“We really are a working board, because we have so few employees,” she said. “Friends would not have become the organization it is today without the strength of the board members. They are hands-on and involved in every aspect of the organization. And, most importantly, the interests of

the patients and families of Batson Children’s Hospital are the guiding force behind their efforts and decisions.”

The idea for Friends hatched during Evans’ time as assistant professor of pediatrics at Vanderbilt School of Medicine. Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital, where Evans was a pediatric neurologist, reaped the benefits of an active Friends group that supported many programs at the time he said, including his own salary.

But salary support wasn’t what Evans wanted from these Friends. At the top of his wish list was a new children’s hospital.

The existing building, completed in 1968, was not family friendly, with only one shower on each floor, two patient rooms sharing a single toilet with no locks on the doors, and windows between adjacent rooms. In short, the building lacked adequate space and privacy.

Dr. Owen B. Evans, chair emeritus of pediatrics, **Suzan Thames**, center, honorary chairman of the Friends board and **Sara Ray**, Friends board chair, visit with patients, from left, **Mary Morgan Koskovich**, **Braylen Roberts** and **Molly Schade**.

happy birthday dear friends, happy birthday to you

So Evans told Dr. Norman C. Nelson, then vice chancellor for health affairs, that he wanted to build a new children's hospital. Creating Friends of Children's Hospital was the first step in that direction.

"There's not a single children's hospital in this country that can support itself without community help," Evans said. "Children cost more to take care of in a hospital. When you are in the hospital, you'll read a book or watch TV and eat your meal and put the tray over there. A child doesn't do that. Food's on the floor, someone has to change them, they don't want to get their blood drawn. It takes a lot more people."

Nelson agreed to build four floors of a new children's hospital if fundraising could fund the fifth. Evans got to work and his first order of business was recruiting Suzan Thames to be president of the Friends' board.

Thames, who worked as an audiologist, was also a member of the Junior League of Jackson. In the latter role, she had played a major role in fundraising and planning the Mississippi Children's Cancer Clinic. At the time, it was the largest signature fundraising project that any Junior League in the country had ever completed.

Evans believed Thames' enthusiasm and connections would be crucial to getting Friends going. As it turned out, Evans' timing was not that great and initially, Thames was reluctant.

"It was the night we broke ground on the cancer clinic when he asked me. We had worked so hard raising the money," said Thames.

She was exhausted, but lucky for Evans, she couldn't refuse.

When one of Thames' daughters was young, she suffered from debilitating headaches and no one could figure out



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1. Volunteers encourage bidding on a piece of original artwork during a live auction at the 2005 Enchanted Evening.

2. Children's Miracle Network Champion **Aubree Jordan**, foreground right, announces the 2007 MiracleHome winner while **Elizabeth Tatum**, foreground left, assists her.

3. **Suzan Thames**, former Friends board chair, and **Dr. Owen B. Evans**, chair emeritus of pediatrics, attend a St. Paddy's Ball at Hal & Mal's.

4. Friends board members, from left, **Lynn Kriss** and **Brenda Smith** attend a Friends annual meeting with **Evans** and **Thames**.

5. **Evans** and Friends board member **Dr. Bob Abney** get ready to play in The Children's Hospital Pro Am.

6. The Batson Christmas tree glows during a recent Light-A-Light ceremony.

7. **Pat Fordice**, former honorary chair of Friends, and former Batson patient, **Brant Jones** flip the switch to light the 2005 Batson Christmas tree.

what was wrong. They finally landed in Evans' exam room, where he diagnosed her with a rare condition and treated her immediately.

"I would've agreed to jump off the roof of the Children's Hospital," Thames said. "I knew I had to help this special hospital and these special children and their families in any way that I could."

She called him the next day to accept.



When Friends was created, there were a few community-support groups that were fundraising for the hospital piecemeal. Evans' goal was to "get the friends together."

"We didn't want to be competing about fundraising. We wanted everyone to be aware of what everyone else was doing."

In the spring of 1989, representatives from those groups and many others in the Jackson area were invited to a meeting in the old nursing auditorium on the Medical Center's campus. Evans pitched his idea for Friends and recalls it being well-received.

Later that fall, 33 people attended Friends' first general membership meeting, held at Thames' house. She remembers being "bowed over" that so many people showed up.

The treasurer's report from that meeting listed cash on hand from membership dues, gifts and interest as \$3,025.

That money was spent launching Friends' first major fundraising initiative in December 1989, Light-A-Light. Donors honor someone by "lighting-a-light" on Batson's Christmas tree for \$10 or lighting an Eternal Light on the Eternal Light tree for \$250. It became an annual event and is the longest-running project for Friends.



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8. Friends board member **Donna Windsor** opens the door for **David Butler**, winner of the 2011 MiracleHome, presented by Trustmark National Bank, while **Linda Allen** formerly of WJTV waits for an interview.

9. For one of Friends' first fundraisers, the Holiday Card project committee picks out patient artwork to be used on the cards. Committee members, from left, **Brenda Smith, Roxanne Hilsman, Lisa Jameson, Thames, Libby Kendall, Windsor, Carmel Lopez-Lampton** and **Kris Rhodes** mull over the decision.

10. **Eli Manning** hugs Friends board chair **Sara Ray** during the 2008 An Evening with the Mannings event.

11. Former Batson patient **Dan Kitchens, Dr. D. Jeanette Pullen**, professor emeritus of pediatric hematology-oncology, **Thames, Evans** and **Dr. Dan Jones**, University of Mississippi chancellor, attend a luncheon celebrating an endowed chair in **Pullen's** name to which Friends donated \$100,000.

12. Board member **Jackie Petrus, Thames, Ray** and **Windsor** celebrate the funding of the Suzan B. Thames Professor and Chair of Pediatrics to which Friends donated \$500,000.

13. **Joe F. Sanderson, Jr.**, CEO and board chair of Sanderson Farms, stands next to the trophy given at the annual Sanderson Farms Championship. The PGA tournament generated more than \$1.1 million for Friends in 2014.

As its first year drew to a close, Friends had more than two hundred members and a \$44,000 budget. They designated \$3,000 to start a new children's hospital building fund.

At this point, building a new hospital was still a distant goal. Most of the money Friends raised was spent making the hospital more child and family friendly - coffee for each patient floor, decorating the lobby for the holidays and supporting the new Child Life program.

"We were all about helping the children and their families. We were not yet into construction. We knew long-range that would be a goal, but these children desperately needed so much assistance," Thames said. "It was a desperate need for children who were sick to have a play environment, for their mothers to be able to get a cup of coffee, for their fathers to be able to make a phone call."

Serving as an important link between the hospital and the public, Friends spent the next few years building a support base - simultaneously raising money for and increasing awareness towards the hospital.

"The more people got involved, the more people that joined our board, the more people who saw the potential and what this could be, the more people wanted to become involved in it," Thames said.

When plans for a new children's hospital came into focus in 1994, Friends was able to pledge \$175,000 - a sum that took them 5 years to raise and a far cry from the \$3,000 they had started the building fund with. The rest of the \$1.2 million needed to complete the 5th floor of the Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children came from the Children's Miracle Network and other groups raising money at the time.



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1. Part of Friends' early outreach efforts included hosting a booth in the annual Red Beans & Rice Festival that benefited Batson's Children's Miracle Network program. From left, **Dale Carr**, **Dr. Owen B. Evans**, chair emeritus of pediatrics, and **Dr. Joe Donaldson**, professor emeritus of pediatrics, play chef for the 1989 event.

2. Serving pancakes at the annual Kiwanis Club Pancake Day was another early outreach effort of Friends. From left, Friends board member **Dr. Bob**

Abney, former Friends board chair **Suzan B. Thames**, and Kiwanis Club president **Anthony Grantham**, dish up hot pancakes during the 45th annual event.

3. In 2012, Friends donated the money for a new sign atop Batson Children's Hospital.

4. Patty Peck Honda General Manager **Bob Aubrey**, left, and The Sweet Potato Queen **Jill Conner Browne**, right,

hand over the keys to a new Honda to the 2014 Patty Peck Honda Blue Car Giveaway winner **Cynthia Williams** and her grandson. Proceeds from ticket sales were donated to Friends.

5. As part of the Light-A-Light project, board member **David Spurk** coordinates decorating for the holiday season. This Christmas tree sits in the lobby vestibule to welcome patients and families.

The Batson hospital was the first of many building projects Friends would support.

No sooner had Batson opened its doors in 1997 than Evans started talking about the surgery center, which now comprises the 6th and 7th floors of the hospital.

Driven by successful new signature fundraising events such as the Enchanted Evening Under the Stars gala in 1999 and the MiracleHome Giveaway in 2003, Friends pledged \$1.7 million for the project.

"That's when they really came through," Evans noted. "They realized they could make a difference. There were a lot of lean years, but the board stuck together because people believed it was going to work and it was worthy."

With newfound confidence in their ability, the group gained momentum quickly.

About the time the surgical suite opened in 2004, Sara Ray, current chairman of the board, joined Friends.

A former cardiac surgery nurse, Ray had been active in several community organizations, but quickly found her niche on the Friends board.

In her first year, she became president-elect and the following year, president. She has never looked back.

She and her husband Bill, president and CEO of BankPlus, were the impetus behind a July 2004 "Christmas in July" visit from football legends Archie and Eli Manning to Batson. That visit morphed into a five-year commitment to the hugely successful, "An Evening with the Mannings presented by BankPlus." The event raised \$3 million to fund Friends' next building project - construction of the Eli Manning Children's Clinics, completed in 2009.



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6. Friends board members, from left, **Bruce Leach, Leigh Reeves, Paul Loyacano** and **Jackie Petrus** accept the 2012 SouthGroup Insurance Services Make a Difference 5K proceeds from SouthGroup representatives, from left, **Angie Barr, Cyndi Tullos, Jimmy Newquist** and **Ronnie Tubertini**.

7. During the 2007 Trustmark Golf Tournament, team members, from left, pro **Jay Jordan, Alan Leach, Bob Burke, Richard Hixon, Dr. John R. Jackson,** and **Abney** pose for a quick keepsake photo at one of the greens.

8. In 2009, **Eli Manning** cuts the ribbon for the Eli Manning Children's Clinics - funded completely by Friends - with help from Batson patients, from left, **Cameron Smyly, Aubree Jordan** and **Taylor Gibson**.

9. **Dr. Blair E. Batson**, front, UMMC's first chair of pediatrics, enjoys the 2012 BankPlus Presents Enchanted Evening with, from left, Friends board member **Cathy Havens**, Friends board chair **Sara Ray, Evans**, Friends board member **Leigh Reeves, Dr. James E. Keeton**, former vice chancellor for health affairs and **Dr. Rick Barr**, chair of pediatrics.

10. Proceeds from the 2014 Zippity Doo Dah Weekend helped Friends purchase a new van for Batson's palliative care patients. **Jill Conner Browne**, left and Braveheart screenwriter **Randall Wallace**, second from left, along with Queens Classmates members present the van to **Ray**, right.

11. Friends donated money to help upgrade the television and entertainment systems in patient rooms. The new system, Sonifi, offers not only basic television, but also games, movies and patient education as well.

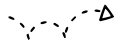
Once the clinics were completed, Friends quickly moved on to another project, the renovation and expansion of the children's emergency room, committing another \$1.7 million.

But before that project began, Thames, who had shepherded Friends for the last 20 years as chairman of the board, decided it was time to step down.

She knew Ray was the one person who could successfully take the reins.

"I had her over to my house one day with this big notebook in my hands and I said, 'Sara, I've got to leave this in the most capable hands I can even imagine.' And she looked at me and said, 'I don't think I need it right this minute.'"

Ray shadowed Thames for two years before taking over as chairman in 2010. Ray never did get the notebook to guide her, but Thames laughed that she just calls instead.



The momentum that began with that \$1.7 million pledge for the surgical suite in 2004 has put Friends' donations in the \$15 million range in just the last ten years.

Ray, Evans and Thames.



"They've created a snowball effect, attracting others to the cause of helping children... Suzan Thames and Sara Ray are people you don't say 'no' to, because they're so passionate about the Children's Hospital. That's what I call inspirational leadership."

– Dr. Jimmy **KEETON**



“They’ve created a snowball effect, attracting others to the cause of helping children,” said Dr. James E. Keeton, former UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs, who also worked with Friends in his role as a pediatric urologist.

“Suzan Thames and Sara Ray are people you don’t say ‘no’ to, because they’re so passionate about the Children’s Hospital. That’s what I call inspirational leadership.”

Rob Armour, who serves as current president of the board, said Friends’ success in spite of an economic recession is because “helping sick children is an undeniably important cause that people gravitate towards.”

“I think it has to do with the culture in our state,” he said. “Regardless of our economic status, Mississippians consistently lead the nation in charitable giving. And we are very thankful for all of this because the number of children being treated at



“Regardless of our economic status, Mississippians consistently lead the nation in charitable giving”

– Rob ARMOUR

Batson has grown tremendously in the last few years.”

And with growing patient volumes came a growing list of needs. While building projects are always on the horizon, Friends has managed to help with many smaller needs as well. They’ve helped fund four endowed pediatric chairs, an entertainment system for patient rooms, reading programs for the school-aged patients, the Child Life program, patient needs accounts and dozens of smaller programs and projects that keep them squarely within their original mission of making the hospital as child and family friendly as it can be.

“I always tell people we’re the gravy,” Ray said. “It’s about enhancing the lives of the children and their families when they’re here in this hospital going through something I can’t even imagine. It’s about putting a smile on their faces.”

For more information about Friends, visit their website www.foch.org



Friends Logo:

Friends originated the signature sunshine, rainbow and kite logo that now represents Batson Children’s Hospital and Children’s of Mississippi. In the middle of a search for a logo, Thames sketched the sunshine, rainbow and kite on a piece of scrap paper. A UMMC graphic designer cleaned it up and Friends began using it. The artwork would become so synonymous with children’s hospital that leadership adopted it several years later as part of the official Batson/Children’s logo.



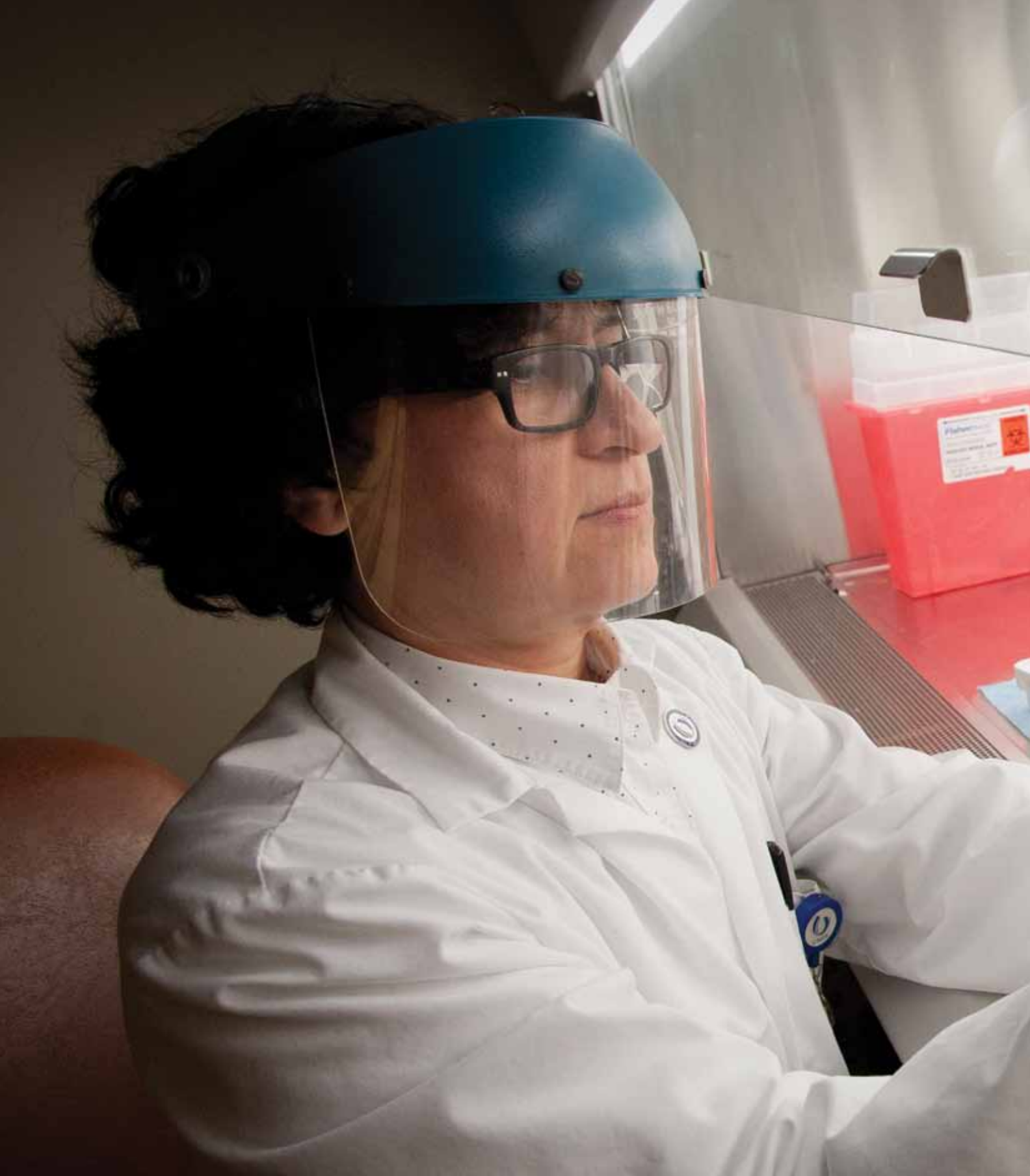
BankPlus CheckCard:

First issued in 2011, BankPlus customers hold well over 11,000 active Friends of Children’s Hospital Visa CheckCards. The card carries a \$12 fee per year, which BankPlus donates entirely to Friends. BankPlus then matches the fees for the first 4,000 cards each year and donates an additional five cents each time a card is used – on average about 200,000 swipes each month. Since its inception, the program raised more than \$600,000 for Friends to help Batson Children’s Hospital.



License Plates:

In 2005, the Mississippi Tax Commission issued a specialty car tag for Friends. The tag costs \$31 above the normal cost of a regular car tag, with \$24 going to Friends. Since that time, more than 4,000 tags have been purchased. In 2010 money from University of Alabama specialty tags and in 2013 Louisiana State University specialty tags on vehicles registered in Mississippi also began coming to Friends. All told, car tags are a significant source of support, bringing in more than \$1 million to date for Friends.



Dr. Norma Ojeda

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN NEONATOLOGY



FROM 0-840 MONTHS

Breast milk paves the way to a healthier Mississippi

written by **Dustin Barnes**



It is a well-known fact Mississippians struggle with all manner of health problems. New and long-standing efforts at the University of Mississippi Medical Center are going back to the basics and confronting the problems with one of the best weapons we have - breast milk.

“The whole newborn division is trying to promote, educate and support mothers to initiate breast feeding and continue at least up to six months,” said Dr. Norma Ojeda, associate professor in neonatology. “If they can reach up to 12 months, even better.”

Ojeda’s latest research adds to the mounting medical evidence that the best thing for a baby is mother’s milk.

In a state with the highest rate of low birth weight and premature babies, the benefits of breastfeeding are crucial to a newborn’s future development, said Ojeda. She has been looking at events that occur before and after birth that impact a child’s long-term development.

“My focus was to study all the mechanisms associated with low birth weight and premature babies and all the morbidities and mortalities associated with these newborns,” said Ojeda. “What are the outcomes of low birth weight on the child’s later health, nutritional health or even behavioral health?”

Ojeda began with an experimental model where she induced low birth weights in newborn rats by reducing the blood flow to the animal fetuses, effectively limiting the nutrients they received in the womb and ensuring they were born smaller. “This is mimicking what happens with women who have preeclampsia or high blood pressure during pregnancy who then deliver smaller babies,” explained Ojeda.

What she found read like a list of the state’s most pressing health issues.

“Those newborn rats were more prone to develop hypertension,” she said. “They had some vascular dysfunction and their blood vessels didn’t work properly. Additionally, they were more prone to become obese and have more fat deposits in the abdominal area.”

Ojeda then turned her attention to finding a way to help human newborns – especially those with low birth weights – get a better start. She turned to the best source of nutrition for a baby – breast milk.

“It’s easier. It’s cheaper. And it’s the best nutrients for babies,” said Ojeda. “Studies show that with full-term pregnancies, the breast milk is richer in nutrients, but I wanted to check that in our population.”

Ojeda looked at a protein called leptin in both African-American and Caucasian women’s breast milk. She said research already exists that shows differences in milk composition among women of different races.

She found that mothers who delivered premature babies had lower levels of leptin in their milk. This is important because premature babies are already at risk for health problems and leptin can have positive effects on a baby’s development.

“This leptin is a protein that will impact the intestinal tract of the baby,” she said. “It will act as a growth hormone and induce maturation of the gastrointestinal tract, so it will make the baby more able to digest food.”

“Also leptin increases the neuro-development of the baby. Also it can influence how smart they will be later on. There are studies that show children who were breastfed have better academic achievement 10 years later compared to those children who were not.”

The positive impacts of the protein further highlight the advantages full-term babies who nurse receive later in life. For premature babies, the milk still has a positive impact, but more must be done to ensure they are receiving leptin-rich breast milk in order to reap the full benefits of breastfeeding.

Moreover, human milk contains friendly microorganisms called “microbiomes” that will colonize the newborn’s digestive system, affecting how food will be processed during digestion, said Ojeda.

“It has been shown that children who receive those types of microbiomes develop a healthier gastrointestinal system for absorption and that they also affect how they manage food, so they will absorb just what the body needs and eliminate what the body doesn’t need so they won’t store extra fat in their bodies,” she said.

Comparing two people of the same gender and age, Ojeda said one might be able to eat a donut and gain a pound, while the other could eat the same donut and lose weight. “Why is it that this happens?” she asked. “It could be the effect of this microbiome that a newborn would get when nursing.”

Even if the full list of long-term positive effects of breast milk hasn’t been written just yet, Ojeda said research already shows babies who are breastfed are less likely to get sick, have lower levels of stress and are less prone to develop hyperactive and attention deficit disorders in childhood.

Getting that message out is the job of certified lactation consultants, who support breastfeeding moms and promote



Cheryl Lloyd with **Suprena Reed** and baby **Zy’Naria** of Jackson.

benefits

BY THE NUMBERS...

the benefits of breastfeeding. Cheryl Lloyd, a registered nurse and board-certified lactation consultant at UMMC's Wiser Hospital for Women and Infants, said Mississippi has a way to go to catch up with the national average on mothers who breastfeed.

The Centers for Disease Control 2014 Breastfeeding Report Card listed Mississippi in the bottom five states for mothers who breastfeed exclusively at three months (28.8 percent) and at six months (10.1 percent).

The state is in last place in the nation when it comes to mother's who continue breastfeeding with other food until 12 months (10 percent), the recommendation for maximizing the benefits of breast milk for the child.

Simply informing mothers about the benefits of breastfeeding may help turn around the state's ranking.

"One of the biggest sellers for breastfeeding is that it helps moms lose weight," said Lloyd. "When you ask a lot of moms what really made them decide, they'll tell you they felt they could lose their baby weight because of the breastfeeding."

When it comes to the benefits for the baby, Lloyd said she always starts from the head and works down.

"We know that breastfed babies have fewer ear infections. We know there are special fats in breast milk that help with retinal development and help with brain development. We know they have less allergies, less asthma, less respiratory problems.

"Then we're down to the stomach," she said. "Breastfed babies have less gastrointestinal problems, easier digestion. It's very seldom that a baby who is breastfeeding gets constipated, because the milk is so easy to digest. We do know that when a baby is exclusively breastfed, even just the first few days of life, the colostrum that the first milk mom has coats the intestinal tract and sets that baby's tract up to be different and healthier for the rest of that baby's life."

There are also benefits for the mother who breastfeeds, said Lloyd, including some protection against breast, ovarian and uterine cancer before menopause. Post-menopause, these mothers have fewer hip fractures because breastfeeding gives the woman a better bone density and mass, a preventive measure against osteoporosis.

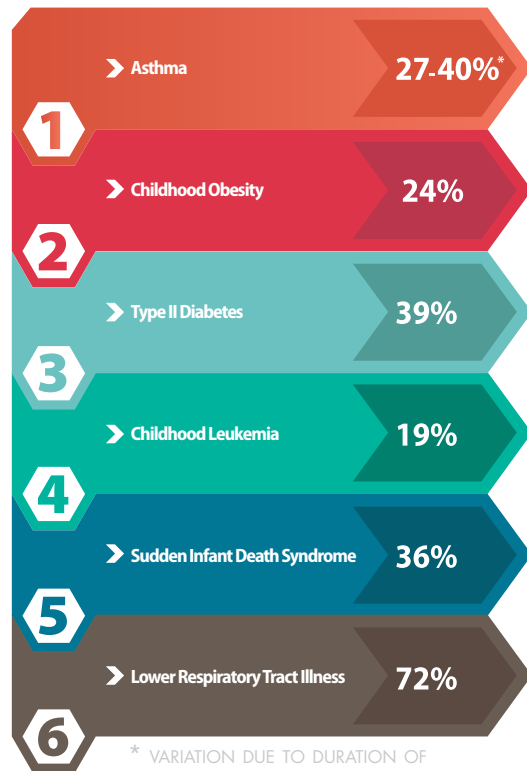
While the act can prove frustrating, lactation specialists like Lloyd educate mothers on how to successfully breastfeed.

"Breastfeeding is the first step toward affordable health care," said Lloyd. "If a baby is started off with breastfeeding, they have less risk of obesity. We know they can have lower risk of high blood pressure later in life. There's less risk of diabetes - Type I and Type II.

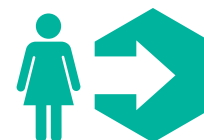
"It's a tumble down effect. It's one of those things that people don't understand - this base layer, if you can just get a baby breastfeeding well, you are making a huge impact on their lifetime.

"That's where we need to start," Lloyd said. "If we can convince moms to at least give it a try, then we are at least two steps forward." 🌈

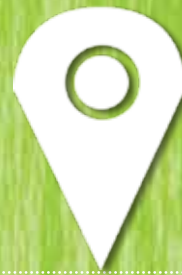
HEALTH RISK REDUCTION DUE TO BREASTFEEDING



At UMMC,
60% of mothers
breastfeed



100% of breastfeeding
mothers were given support
information at discharge



EXPANDING OUR HORIZON

written by **Ruth Cummins**



Dr. Rick Barr, the Suzan B. Thames Professor and Chair of Pediatrics, speaks during the January dedication of UMMC's new children's specialty clinic in Tupelo, a partnership with North Mississippi Medical Center.

Delivering world-class care close to home is the goal of Children's of Mississippi, both in Jackson and at specialty clinics in Grenada, Tupelo, Hattiesburg and on the Gulf Coast.

From left, **Dr. Carlyle Zimmerman**, assistant professor of pediatrics in the Department of Pediatrics' Division of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation, sees patients at the clinic in Grenada.

Dr. John Purvis, associate professor of pediatric orthopedics and medical co-director of pediatric ambulatory services, sees patients at the clinic in Biloxi.

Dr. Salwa Gendi, assistant professor of pediatric cardiology, sees patients at the clinic in Tupelo.





If your elementary schooler is knock-kneed, or your toddler's gait seems strange, just how concerned should you be - and is it worth driving for hours to consult a specialist?

For children living in or near Grenada, there's no need to seek that care far from home. A University of Mississippi Medical Center pediatrician trained in children's orthopedics can treat them at the children's specialty clinic located within UMMC Grenada, formerly known as Grenada Lakes Medical Center.

"There are no other pediatric orthopedic fellowship trained physicians in that part of the state," said Dr. Catie Carlyle Zimmerman, an assistant professor of pediatrics in the Department of Pediatrics' Division of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation. "Many of these families can't afford to drive to Jackson. They don't have transportation, or they might miss a day of work."

Delivering world-class care to the state's children and making it easier to access services close to home is the mission of Children's of Mississippi, a part of UMMC that encompasses all pediatric services available at UMMC and at specialty clinics in Grenada, Tupelo, Hattiesburg and on the Gulf Coast.

Children's of Mississippi staffs the clinics either full time, with pediatric specialists living in that community; or part time, with specialists commuting from Batson Children's Hospital to staff clinics certain days of the month. They operate in partnership with their local medical community to fill gaps in available specialty care.

Zimmerman can see about a dozen patients during her day-long clinic at UMMC Grenada held the second Thursday of the month. Patients come not just from that city, but from as far away as Greenwood in the Delta to Oxford in north Mississippi.

"Unique services is what Children's of Mississippi can offer in these communities," said Dr. John Purvis, associate professor of pediatric orthopedics and medical co-director of pediatric



ambulatory services, who is overseeing development of the outreach clinics. "Many of the specialties offered by Children's aren't available any other place in the state."

And, patients seen in the clinics can be referred to Batson Children's Hospital for surgeries or other complex care not available in their own communities.

The Gulf Coast clinic's patients include 6-year-old Levi Washington, son of Modesta Carroll and Michael Washington. Carroll drives about 30 minutes from her home in Jackson County's Vanclave to the Children's Gulf Coast clinic in the Cedar Lake neighborhood of Biloxi.

Levi was born with an extremely rare chromosome abnormality and copes with physical and mental impairments, including cerebral palsy, seizures and scoliosis. "At one time, we were told he'd never smile or hold up his head, and he does," Carroll said. Purvis and multiple UMMC pediatric specialists treat Levi for his gastrointestinal, neurological, genetic, orthopedic and rehabilitation challenges.

"We travel for Levi's care. We've gone to Ochsner's in New Orleans, but we are trying to move toward just Mississippi doctors," Carroll said.

Levi's in-state care now includes visits to pediatric gastroenterologist Dr. Michael Nowicki at the Batson Specialty Clinic. Carroll took Levi out of state for pediatric neurological care before their current specialist, Dr. Mark Lee, began practicing with Singing River Health System in Ocean Springs. Lee is also on staff at UMMC.

"It's nice to have care for all of his needs in one location," Carroll said. "We're moving in that direction. More areas of

... IS IT WORTH DRIVING FOR HOURS TO CONSULT A SPECIALIST?



THIS IS THE QUESTION THAT WE ARE TRYING TO ELIMINATE FROM THE EQUATION FOR MISSISSIPPIANS WHO DO NOT HAVE IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO PEDIATRIC SPECIALISTS.



Accompanied by his mom, **Modesta Carroll**, **Levi Washington** of Vancleave visits with **Dr. John Purvis** at UMMC's children's specialty clinic in Biloxi. **Levi** copes with physical and mental impairments stemming from an extremely rare chromosome abnormality.

specialization at the Biloxi clinic would be wonderful.”

A new arrangement is specialty clinic pediatricians living in the communities they serve, rather than commuting from Jackson. That’s the model at the five-day-a-week clinic in Tupelo staffed by pediatric endocrinologist Dr. Jessica Sparks Lilley and pediatric cardiologist Dr. Salwa Gendi. UMMC pediatric hospitalist Dr. Jana Sperka cares for children in the pediatrics unit at North Mississippi Medical Center.

“Another UMMC cardiologist and hospitalist will start there in July, and we’d like to hire a neurologist,” said Dr. Rick Barr, the Suzan B. Thames Professor and Chair of Pediatrics. “It’s all focused on putting specialists there, as opposed to rotating them from the Medical Center.”

As word spreads about the Tupelo clinic, Gendi said, patient numbers will increase. “People are very receptive,” she said. “When patients have surgeries in Jackson, they don’t need to follow up that far away. They follow up with us here.

“Patients, doctors, everyone – they are glad that we are offering pediatric specialties here,” she said. “They say, ‘Oh! At last!’ ”

Tupelo mom Tricia Edmonson said one of her twin sons, 12-year-old Drew, was rushed to the NMMC emergency

room in June 2014. His family was surprised by his diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes. When they arrived, “there she was,” Edmonson said of Lilley. “I had no idea we had a pediatric endocrinologist. I was so thrilled.”

Drew was airlifted to LeBonheur Children’s Hospital in Memphis, but Lilley advised the family throughout Drew’s ICU stay there, Edmonson said. His follow-up care began immediately at the Tupelo clinic, including instruction on how to use a pump and other treatment requirements. “Because they are there, we don’t have to drive to Jackson,” Edmonson said. “A lot of the children of our friends are seen at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Driving all that way would be a real burden on our family.”

In October 2014, Drew’s twin Cooper also was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. “She was very good with contacting their schools about their needs,” Edmonson said of Lilley. “It was so good to have her close by.”

The main driver for establishing the four clinics, the first in Hattiesburg in 2012 and the most recent early this year in Tupelo, was the reformulation of the Children’s of Mississippi mission, which is to improve the health of all children by providing world-class care, Barr said.

“We can’t do that from Jackson, so we knew we needed to go out into the state, particularly in the



north and on the Gulf Coast,” Barr said. “We also realized we couldn’t just go set up shop, so we spent a lot of time talking to pediatricians and the health-care community and asked them how we could add value to what they were already doing.”

The idea for outreach clinics also was borne in part from UMMC’s longstanding relationship with the state Department of Health. Its clinics across Mississippi “were frequently staffed by UMMC physicians and other physicians throughout the state,” Purvis said.

Conversations began about three years ago with the Hattiesburg medical community. “We polled pediatricians there about specialties they needed in their community to improve access and the level of care,” Purvis said. At that time, he said, few pediatric specialists practiced in Hattiesburg.

“We did our research on the front end, and our Hattiesburg clinic was the first to open in 2012,” Purvis said. “We have limited it to particular medical specialties at their request,” he said of the local health-care community.

Children’s likewise studied needs on the Gulf Coast before collaborating with Memorial Hospital to open the Biloxi clinic in early 2013, and possibly in the future, to provide full-time pediatric hospitalist coverage at Memorial.

Plans call for expanding all of the clinic staffs – and in Hattiesburg and on the Gulf Coast, leasing full time clinic space. “We’d like to hire more hospitalists, and we’d love to put specialists in those communities,” Barr said.

Barr said local health-care providers in cities with UMMC pediatric specialty clinics have been supportive of patients being referred to Batson for higher-level care. “We work very well together,” he said. “There’s not a lot of competition in Mississippi for high-end procedures. People know we’re trying to ensure the care is much more efficient.”

Some parents simply don’t know they can stay in the state for world-class care, Purvis said. “Once the parent knows Batson is an option, they want to stay in Mississippi,” he said.

“Any type complex intervention requires a whole health-care team, and that’s best done in Jackson,” Barr said. “But, the follow-up care can be done at their clinic at home.”

As the clinic operations grow, Barr said, “we’re starting to see growth at Batson due to that.” And even if patients flowing in from around the state challenges Batson’s clinic and inpatient capacity, Barr said, that’s a good thing.

“If we are really fulfilling our mission of improving the health of every child in Mississippi, we’re going to be stretched,” he said. 🌈

SPECIALTIES IN THE GRENADA AREA:

- Orthopedics
- General pediatrics/ primary care

SPECIALTIES IN THE BILOXI AREA:

- Hematology-oncology
- Orthopedics
- Child developmental/behavioral disorders

SPECIALTIES IN THE HATTIESBURG AREA:

- Gastroenterology
- Hematology-oncology
- Endocrinology
- Cardiology

SPECIALTIES IN THE TUPELO AREA:

- Endocrinology
- Cardiology



Julie Sparks, nurse coordinator at Children’s of Mississippi’s new Tupelo specialty clinic, leads a tour during the clinic’s January 21, 2015, opening and ribbon-cutting. It joins other pediatric specialty clinics across the state, including a Gulf Coast clinic that’s a partnership with Memorial Hospital.

A GROWING PROBLEM

New clinic fighting childhood obesity in Mississippi

Written by Dustin Barnes



A new program out of the University of Mississippi Medical Center is targeting one of the most troubling issues facing Mississippi kids – obesity.

Wellness & Weight is a multidisciplinary program specifically designed to take an intensive approach toward fighting obesity among children.

The health epidemic that already has placed Mississippi on the map for its impact on the adult population poses

a threat to the state's younger residents because of the future implications for poor health, said Dr. Sophie Lanciers, assistant professor of pediatric gastroenterology.

“Most of the country is between 30-40 percent when it comes to overweight and obese children, and we have some Jackson-area schools that are reporting up to a 70-percent rate of overweight and obese students.



“...WE’RE ... SEEING THEM REGULARLY,
...WE HAVE A PSYCHOLOGIST, A
DIETITIAN, AND WE’RE GOING TO
HAVE AN EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST FOR
EVERY VISIT...WE’RE EVEN GOING TO
HAVE A SPECIFIC PROGRAM WITH A
DIET ADAPTED TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL
NEEDS AND SEE THEM EVERY WEEK...”

“The children (in the program) already have either pre-diabetes or hypertension, which are associated problems that you can have with obesity even in children as young as 6 years old,” said Lanciers. “There was not a program like this before, and it’s basically the best way to attack the problem - to have a team seeing them regularly.”

A \$100,000 gift from the Madison Charitable Foundation jump-started the program, which operates out of Batson Specialty Clinic and a newly opened clinic at University Physicians-Grants Ferry. Plans for another clinic to open at the Jackson Medical Mall Thad Cochran Center also are in the works.

Foundation board member James “Joc” Carpenter believes children’s health begins with healthy habits. He saw the new program as an innovative way to teach these children behaviors that create well-being.

To that end, Lanciers leads a team of clinicians working with children who have tried unsuccessfully to lose weight.

Before joining UMMC in August 2014, she worked as a pediatrician and pediatric gastroenterologist at Centre Hospitalier Emile Mayrich in Luxembourg after holding pediatric fellowships and residencies at various academic medical centers. Those include Wyler Children’s Hospital at the University of Chicago, the University Hospital Antwerp in Belgium and St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

At UMMC, the program she directs essentially offers a higher level of intervention for kids who have already been treated by a primary physician or dietitian.

“What we’re doing is seeing them regularly, up to every month,” Lanciers said. “We have a psychologist, a dietitian, and we’re going to have an exercise physiologist for every visit. And this is basically what

has been proven to work for weight loss.

“We’re even going to have a specific program with a diet adapted to their individual needs and see them every week, just to help them lose weight,” she added.

The first stop each child makes after meeting Lanciers is to the program’s psychologist, Dr. Crystal Lim, who came to the Medical Center in July 2014 from the University of Florida’s Department of Clinical and Health Psychology.

“We see some kids with emotional and behavioral concerns who are dealing with being overweight,” said Lim, assistant professor of psychiatry. “These are children that are dealing with bullying, depression and anxiety. We’re utilizing behavioral strategies to help address those things.”

Lim said children with emotional and behavioral problems tend to engage in unhealthy eating behaviors. And psychology’s role is to help give these children - and their families - the necessary tools needed to initiate a lifestyle change.

“Our psychologist is specialized in doing family therapy,” said Lanciers. “So it’s always emphasized that this is not something the child has to do by themselves. Usually, there are one or two members in the family who themselves are overweight, so we want to have group meetings and family therapy to address these issues.”

The physical activity component comes into play with the new clinic which has an exercise facility, said Lanciers.

Even when young patients reach their goals, Lanciers said it’s crucial to follow up on their successes.

“They still will be coming in every six months because maintenance of lifestyle changes is crucial and they still need to be monitored. If they need additional support, they can come more often.” 🌈



Abigail Morgan, 2, with her grandmother, **Kathy Burton**, was able to play, enjoy books and watch movies just two days after surgery to close a hole between the collecting chambers of her heart and to repair her mitral valve. Abigail had the procedure on a Monday and got to go home that Thursday.



RIGHT TO THE HEART

Rare procedure minimizes cardiac surgery recovery time

written by **Ruth Cummins**

Abigail Morgan's mama and daddy knew early on she'd need heart surgery to repair life-threatening defects.

But when the 2-year-old was wheeled into surgery Nov. 10 at Batson Children's Hospital, what would normally be a terrifying experience for Michelle and Seth Morgan was much less traumatic. That's because their only child's chest would not be cut open, standard procedure for closing a hole between the collecting chambers (atria) in a child's heart and repairing her mitral valve.

Instead, Dr. Ali Dodge-Khatami with Children's Heart Center used an approach that has been performed in only a handful of centers internationally, gaining access to her heart by making an incision underneath her right arm to close the hole with a patch and repair her leaking mitral valve.

"What we do inside the heart is exactly the same thing as we do through the front, where 99

percent of surgeons do it," said Dodge-Khatami, professor of surgery in the division of pediatric and congenital heart surgery.

The difference?

Not only will Abigail avoid a long scar running down her chest, but her recovery time will be much quicker. "It's covered almost entirely by the right arm," Dodge-Khatami said of the surgical scar. "No one can tell the child has had open heart surgery."

After the surgery, Abigail's parents said, they were in awe when first allowed to see her – and more amazed as the day continued.

"We expected her to have a breathing tube in. We expected lots of tubes," Michelle Morgan said. "But when she was wheeled into the ICU, there was no breathing tube. There was color in her face. We didn't expect her to be alert."



Nurse practitioner **Keli Ballard** listens to the heart of 2-year-old **Abigail Morgan** of Biloxi during a checkup exactly one week after the toddler underwent an innovative and rare surgery to repair a "hole" in her heart and a leaking mitral valve. The surgery by **Dr. Ali Dodge-Khamati** has been performed at only a handful of medical centers internationally.

"In two hours, she was watching Frozen," her mom said, referring to the blockbuster Disney movie.

Credit that quick turnaround in part to the fact that "we didn't have to cut through her breast bone, but instead went between two ribs," Dodge-Khatami said. "The kids can be spontaneously breathing much more quickly. This child came off the ventilator in the operating room and was sitting up in bed the day of the surgery and sipping water."

"This beautiful little girl doesn't have to have a scar on her chest for life," said Dr. Jorge Salazar, professor of surgery and chief of cardiothoracic surgery, who co-directs the Children's Heart Center with Dr. Mary Taylor.

"Dr. Dodge-Khatami played a major role in bringing this procedure to the attention of the international community," Salazar said. "It's very cutting-edge for pediatric heart surgery worldwide, and we don't compromise on the quality of the repair."

A talkative and precocious little girl with blonde pigtails, Abigail had surgery Monday. She left the ICU for a regular room the next day and immediately began letting her parents know that she'd rather be running around than stuck in a bed. She went home that Thursday morning.

"Never did I think we'd be having heart surgery on a Monday and be home before the weekend," Michelle Morgan said. "Part of the reason I haven't felt so nervous and anxious is because she's in such good health. She easily went into her nurse's arms to go back to surgery. I felt like she was in such good hands."

Said Seth Morgan, an airman first class at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi until the family was transferred with the military to Virginia early this year: "It's good to have the extra two or three days of being able to recover more quickly."

Even though Dodge-Khatami approached Abigail's heart through an incision under her right arm, "the risks involved are absolutely the same, being very low," he said.

Michelle and Seth Morgan didn't hesitate.

If Abigail hadn't had the 2- to 3-hour surgery "before she was a teen, she would have gone into heart failure," Dodge-Khatami said. "Her heart would have dilated and failed, and she would have been a transplant candidate. So, we try to do this during infancy or definitely before the child is school-aged. Once we've done the surgery, they can go on to live a completely normal life."

Dodge-Khatami said he learned the rare procedure in Zurich in his native Switzerland, where he served as a staff pediatric cardiovascular surgeon at University Children's Hospital from 2003-08. He came to UMMC in 2013; before that, he was professor of cardiovascular surgery, chief of pediatric cardiac surgery and head of the congenital heart program at the University of Hamburg School of Medicine in Hamburg, Germany.

"I'm not the first one to do the surgery, but probably no other center in the United States does these procedures from the side," Dodge-Khatami said. "My ex-chief in Zurich pioneered expanding the indications for performing more complex open heart repairs from the side, something I picked up in Switzerland 10 years ago.

"You can't do every single surgery from the side. You have to select which ones are possible from the side, and which are not," Dodge-Khatami said. But with the same type surgery, he said, "we can also do

"Never did I think we'd be having heart surgery on a Monday and be home before the weekend...

Part of the reason I haven't felt so nervous and anxious is because she's in such good health."

- Michelle Morgan, Abigail's mother



"We're pushing the envelope here in a very safe way to provide better care." – Dr. Jorge Salazar

more complex repairs, such as working on valves and closing holes between two ventricles."

Although the surgery performed is innovative, Abigail's heart defects are very common, Dodge-Khatami and Salazar said. "We're pushing the envelope here in a very safe way to provide better care," Salazar said. "She had two problems, and we were able to fix both in the same operation, in a minimally invasive way that had the least impact on her, both physically and emotionally."

Expect more referrals leading to more procedures at the Children's Heart Center once word gets out to the national and international pediatric heart communities, the doctors say. Abigail's surgery was the second performed by Dodge-Khatami at Batson, with a third just days later.

Today, Abigail is doing wonderfully at her new home in Virginia, where she built her first snowman in mid-February.

"Since two to three weeks after the surgery, you would never have known she had it," Michelle Morgan said. "She has been steadily gaining weight, which she had not been doing the 10 months leading up to the

surgery. I've noticed that her scar has faded a bit, and it doesn't stand out much at all."

Abigail is a happy little girl, her mom says. "Right now, one of her favorite things to do is run and run and run," Michelle Morgan said. "She will find a track around the house, or just a path she likes, and runs the same path over and over again. She loves to cook, both in the kitchen with me and in her play kitchen, and she has recently discovered and loves to play hide and seek."

As the family visited with relatives over Christmas, Michelle Morgan said, "it came up more than once just how well she did, and so much better than even the best-case scenario I had thought of going into this."

Abigail talks of the doctors and nurses at Batson, saying "they fix my heart," her mom said.

"We will always be amazed and thankful at how well this whole experience has gone, and for our healthy, beautiful little girl." 🌈



As mom **Michelle Morgan** of Biloxi watches, 2-year-old **Abigail Morgan** gives her heart surgeon, **Dr. Ali Dodge-Khatami**, a high five just three days after he repaired a "hole" in her heart and her leaking mitral valve in an innovative procedure performed at only a few medical centers internationally.



Hospital expansion to transform children's health care in Mississippi

Children's of Mississippi is planning a building project that includes extensive renovations to Batson Children's Hospital and an expansive new facility next door.

"This will be a transformational project for pediatric health care in Mississippi," said Dr. Rick Barr, Suzan B. Thames Professor and Chair of Pediatrics.

Specifics for the space are still being worked out, but administrators say the building will make room for growing patient volumes and open up pediatric-dedicated space for imaging that Batson, completed in 1997, is lacking.

Guy Giesecke, CEO of Children's of Mississippi, said the hospital and statewide network of clinics that make up Children's of Mississippi have seen consistent growth in each of the last five years.

"As a result, we are seeing challenges with space in areas such as surgery, our neonatal intensive care unit, clinics and other space," Giesecke said. "Also, as we expand our clinics and physicians into the northern and southern regions of Mississippi, it is vital that we have the facilities available to accommodate the thousands of children across the state being referred for treatment that can't be provided in their hometown."

The initial stage of the expansion will cost upwards of \$150 million. Funding will come from

a combination of donated funds, clinical revenue bonds and state support. The Medical Center has asked state legislators for \$30 million and \$6 million of that was approved in this year's session.

Working with HDR Architects of Dallas, Texas, Children's of Mississippi officials expect construction to begin within a year and a half and to be completed inside of four years.

Current plans for the project include a new neonatal intensive care unit. Batson operates the only Level IV NICU in the state for babies requiring the most specialized care. With 100 beds, the unit stays at or near capacity, so the new space will house more beds, and existing beds will be renovated.

Services for the Children's Heart Center also will be brought together under one roof. The center's existing services are scattered across the UMMC campus and the space is insufficient for the program's swift and dramatic growth.

The new space will include 24 inpatient beds, two operating rooms, a cardiovascular intensive care unit and catheterization labs for heart patients.

Additional pediatric clinics also are proposed for the project, as is an imaging and radiology unit dedicated to pediatric patients.

Part of the Children's expansion project is a new children's facility adjacent to Batson Children's Hospital. Batson will also undergo renovations as part of the project.



Currently, pediatric patients receive CT scans, MRIs and nuclear medicine scans in the same area as adult patients. Barr believes a separate, child-friendly unit is a must for the future because imaging and radiology for children is vastly different than for adults.

"Those differences include not only creating a child- and parent-friendly and welcoming environment, but also a possible increased use of sedation for kids and different imaging techniques to minimize the amount of radiation used," Barr said. "That is especially important in kids who are rapidly growing and developing."

Finally, the Children's Hospital addition would feature a new multistory lobby that would provide a welcoming space for children and families, as well as an array of support services to make their stay as comfortable as possible.

"Mississippi strives to take care of its own, and Batson Children's Hospital is a statewide resource that provides care at the level of any regional children's hospital nationwide," said Giesecke. "We're constantly working to develop services that meet the needs of our patients and we are here for all of Mississippi's children."

BankPlus CheckCard raises \$627,195 for Friends of Children's Hospital

It's a story of the "little check card that could," according to BankPlus President and CEO Bill Ray.

Ray was referring to the BankPlus Friends of Children's Hospital CheckCard, first issued in November 2011. He and other representatives from BankPlus, including football legend Eli Manning, gathered in the lobby of Batson Children's Hospital in March to present \$627,195 raised from the check card since its inception.

The card carries a \$12 fee per year, which is donated entirely to Friends. BankPlus then matches the fees for the first 4,000 cards each year and donates an additional five cents each time a card is used. The 11,000 active cards average about 200,000 swipes each month.

"You might think those are small amounts, but that's the power of so many people working together," Ray said. "We're so thankful to our customers."

Ray said the CheckCard is expected to raise about \$25,000 to \$30,000 a month and continue to grow.

Manning and his father Archie have been spokespersons for BankPlus for many years. The Mannings, particularly Eli, have been champions of the children's hospital since 2004, when Ray organized Eli's and Archie's first visit to Batson. That visit initiated a five-year commitment to the Friends event, "An Evening with the Mannings presented by BankPlus," that raised \$3 million to fund construction of the Eli Manning Children's Clinics at the Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children.

A father to three young daughters, Eli Manning said he enjoys seeing and hearing about the hospital's growth. As he always does when at the hospital, he spent some time with patients after the presentation.

"The support that BankPlus and Eli have shown to our



Football great **Eli Manning**, back row second from left, joined BankPlus president and CEO **Bill Ray**, front row second from right, in presenting a \$627,195 donation generated by the Friends of Children's Hospital Check Card. Joining in the presentation are, back row from left, Friends board members **Susan Shands-Jones**, **Bruce Leach** and **Bryan Jones**, **Dr. Rick Barr**, Suzan B. Thames Professor and Chair of Pediatrics, and **Dr. Jimmy Keeton**, distinguished professor and advisor to the vice chancellor. Front row from left, **Rob Armour**, Friends president and BankPlus executive vice-president and chief marketing & business development officer, **Guy Giesecke**, CEO of Children's of Mississippi and **Dr. LouAnn Woodward**, UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean, School of Medicine.

patients and to Friends of Children's Hospital over the years is incredible," said Dr. Rick Barr, the Suzan B. Thames Professor and Chair of Pediatrics. "I don't think any of us dreamed this check card would end up making this kind of an impact and we're so grateful to everyone involved."

Friends' president Rob Armour, who also serves as executive vice president and chief marketing and business development officer for BankPlus, expressed amazement at how the check card program has grown.

"As a member of the BankPlus team, I am proud that we created such a wonderful tool," he said. "As a parent whose children have been cared for at Batson and as the president of Friends of Children's Hospital, I am able to see the difference the contributions are making here every day."

Tournament hits a 'hole in \$1M' for Mississippi's children

Mississippi children's lives, Gov. Phil Bryant says, have "literally been saved" thanks to generous gifts benefiting Batson Children's Hospital from the professional golf tournament now known as the Sanderson Farms Championship.

"Parents come here to see miracles done for their children," Bryant said Jan. 6 at the hospital as officials from Sanderson Farms, the tournament's title sponsor, and Century Club Charities, the host organization, announced a record \$1.1 million gift to Friends of Children's Hospital, a fundraising organization for Batson.

The gift was generated from the 2014 tournament in November at the Country Club of Jackson. It comes as Friends of Children's Hospital is fulfilling its pledge to raise \$2 million to help build a pediatric heart center at Batson. The Children's Heart Center currently occupies space at Batson, but has no bricks-and-mortar home of its own.

More than 1,000 babies and children each year receive life-changing and complex treatment at the Children's Heart Center, but current space allocated for such procedures is but a fraction of what's needed. Ditto for staff, patient beds and imaging equipment needed to diagnose and treat congenital

heart defects, which affect nearly one out of every 100 babies born.

The continued support of the championship and Century Club Charities is bringing the Heart Center closer to the much-needed expansion that could include 20-24 additional beds, new operating rooms and an all-new specialized imaging center.

Century Club Charities last year presented \$500,000 in tournament proceeds to Friends - an amount more than doubled by this year's \$1,102,700 donation.

"We are pleased to have a part in the evolution of the Children's Heart Center, and are excited to see what the future holds for this hospital," said Joe F. Sanderson Jr., Sanderson Farms' CEO and board chairman. "The primary reason this tournament exists is to raise money for Friends of Children's Hospital, who in turn helps make Mississippi's only children's hospital a health-care destination."

Since the Children's Heart Center's creation in 2010, its team has operated on approximately 2,000 patients. Other procedures, including heart catheterizations and echocardiograms, bring the number treated to more than 5,000 babies and children.

Watch the video at youtube.com/batsonhospital, search channel for "Sanderson"

Sharing in the presentation of a \$1.1 million check (from left) **Steve Jent**, tournament director of the Sanderson Farms Championship golf tournament; **Johnny Lang**, president of tournament host Century Club Charities, former UMMC Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs and School of Medicine Dean **Dr. James Keeton**; **Gov. Phil Bryant**; Friends board chair **Sara Ray**; Jackson Mayor **Tony Yarber**; Sanderson Farms CEO **Joe F. Sanderson, Jr.**; and Friends president **Rob Armour**.



Children's selects top nursing officer

Michelle Welander, a longtime nurse and leader at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, was named chief nursing and clinical services officer of Batson Children's Hospital and its statewide network of clinics, Children's of Mississippi, on Oct. 13.

She succeeds Terri Gillespie, who was named the Medical Center's chief nursing executive officer and chief nursing officer of the adult hospitals.

"I'm excited to continue moving the children's hospital forward and expanding on the foundation Terri has created for our health-care team," Welander said.

Welander joined the Medical Center as a staff nurse after earning her B.S.N. at the Mississippi University for Women School of Nursing in Columbus.

She said she began her career in pediatric nursing "with a passion to make a difference in the lives of children and their families." That passion was rooted in her experiences with the nurses who took care of her family during her mother's battle with breast cancer.

During the past 20 years, she has steadily worked her way up to her most recent position as director of children's heart services and clinical director of children's critical care. During that time, she also earned her M.S.N. in nursing and hospital administration *summa cum laude* and her D.N.P., both at the UMMC School of Nursing.

Guy Giesecke, Children's of Mississippi chief executive officer, said Welander's leadership has been a major reason for Children's of Mississippi's success during the last several years.

"She's led some major initiatives and improvements for the children's hospital and she's done an outstanding job," he said. "She cares deeply about the development of her team and her leaders, who have all progressed very well with great attitudes.

"As a leader, she is able to instill those qualities in her team."



Michelle Welander



Perioperative services eclipses decade of service at BCH

Batson Perioperative Services marked its 10-year anniversary Nov. 4, with a celebration on the surgical unit.

Individuals who have been part of the periop team since the opening of Batson Children's Hospital's sixth and seventh floors in November 2004 received special recognition.

Dr. Edwin Harmon, second from right, professor of pediatric urology, and **Vicki Rhymes**, center, shift supervisor, cut the 10th anniversary cake while, from left, **Shannon Furrer**, RN, **Angela Smith**, surgical tech and **Ashley Taylor**, RN, look on.

Physician, family discuss near-drowning victim's remarkable recovery



Cameras flashed and video rolled as Helena White entered a conference room at Batson Children's Hospital Jan. 9.

The 5-year-old shyly looked to her mother, Chasity, as she walked further into the room to give local media their first view at her remarkable recovery from a near-drowning accident on Dec. 28, 2014.

For almost two weeks, Helena's condition remained atop national newsfeeds as the public watched for signs of improvement from the little girl who had been submerged under cold water in an overturned vehicle for several minutes before being rescued by good Samaritans. Another person who arrived on the scene was familiar with CPR and was able to help Helena regain a pulse.

Dr. Mary Taylor, head of pediatric critical care, was working the night Helena was

From left, **Dr. Mary Taylor**, chief of pediatric critical care, **Chasity**, little **Helena** and **Ray White** discuss Helena's remarkable recovery with the media.

rushed to the hospital. Speaking to the media at the same event Helena attended, Taylor listed the several factors that contributed to what is expected to be a full recovery.

"The first point is she was wearing a seatbelt," said Taylor, noting that the restraints prevented Helena from suffering more injuries that could have affected her recovery. "Secondly, the person who performed CPR on the scene within the first moments of rescuing her from the car, that was critical to her good outcome. It was life-saving."

Helena was then rushed to Batson Children's Hospital, where she was awake and crying, which was a good sign, said Taylor. And once physicians started working on getting the child's breathing back to the levels necessary to sustain a healthy circulation, doctors sedated Helena to help her lungs recover from their injuries.

"At that point, her treatment became managing the side effects of her having nearly drowned," said Taylor. By keeping Helena sedated while on a ventilator, her lungs were able to recover.

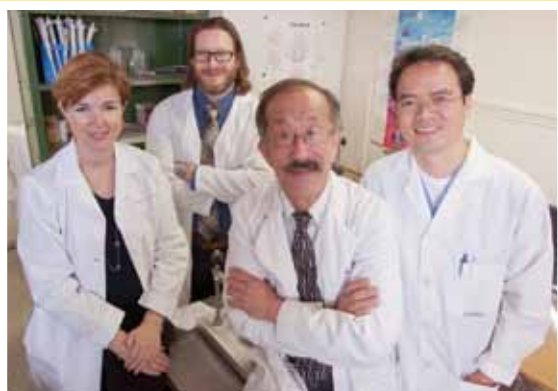
And once the ventilator was removed and the sedatives wore off, everyone was thrilled to see that Helena did not suffer any brain damage from the near-drowning, said Taylor.

"Children are pretty resilient, and they heal a bit quicker than adults do," Taylor said.

As Helena was getting ready to leave the press conference, her mother stroked her daughter's hair and thanked the health-care workers at Children's for their help in getting her daughter back.

"Everyone has been so great," she said. "Helena even said, 'I love my doctors and nurses. They've been so sweet to me.'"

Of all the things she's seen while working in the pediatric field, Taylor said Helena and her happy ending is one that's likely to always stand out.



From left, **Dr. Kimberly Simpson, Dr. Ryan Darling, Dr. Rick Lin and Dr. Yuegen "Jordan" Lu** helped discover behavioral training to rewire the brains of rodents are pictured here.

SPRING 2015



Study hints at potential autism treatment

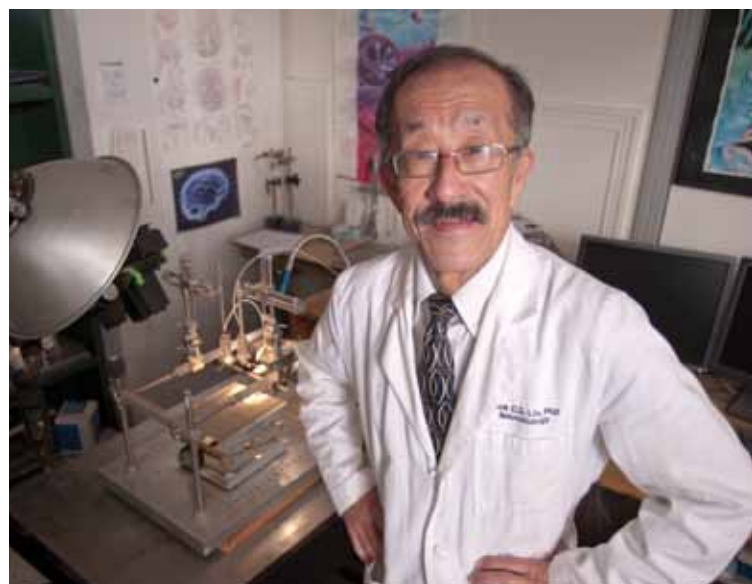
In a study that could one day translate into an effective treatment for patients with autism spectrum disorders, a team of Mississippi and California researchers have shown that a brain can be rewired, said co-author Dr. Rick Lin, UMMC professor of neurobiology and anatomical sciences.

The team's findings were recently published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). For now the results are limited to rodents, but they've proven these animals' brains can be rewired via intense auditory behavioral training, said Lin.

The UMMC researchers, working with University of California in San Francisco researcher Dr. Michael Merzenich, focused on the plasticity of the brain, asking if neurological distortions could be reversed - or overcome - by simple forms of brain training. They discovered a potential reset button.

The discovery immediately drew questions of what the findings could mean for treatment of ASD in humans. However, researchers caution that could be some time away.

"The most amazing part, the reason why this paper is so important and can bring hope to families with autistic children, is this is the first study to ever show on the animal side that the brain can be rewired after intensive auditory training," said Lin. "What might be our future strategy on the human side is that we need to find a very supportive system to enforce these lessons with the kids. But these have to be intense interventions. We have to push much harder."



Dr. Rick Lin, professor of neurobiology and anatomical sciences, co-authored an article showing rodent brains can be rewired to remove autism-like symptoms. The new study could be a breakthrough in how autistic humans may be treated.

Children's pediatrician hosts call-in radio show



Southern Remedy, Mississippi Public Broadcasting's flagship wellness franchise made possible in part by support of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, broadcasts a statewide call-in radio show each weekday from 11 a.m. to noon.

On Thursdays the show deals with health-related issues associated with kids and teens and is hosted by UMMC pediatrician Dr. Jimmy Stewart. Recent show topics include self-esteem in children, childhood obesity, rashes and bumps, and problems associated with dyslexia.

Tune in to your local MPB Radio station Thursdays at 11 a.m. The next show could be a topic of personal interest to you and your family.





Hewlett-Packard retiree **Willie Brown** has been named Volunteer of the Year for his work at Batson Children's Hospital.

Volunteer of the Year puts focus on Batson patients, families

From offering directions to giving a kind word or smile to patients and visitors, volunteers at the Medical Center have long been celebrated for their selfless service to all who enter through the hospitals' doors.

The hundreds of volunteers are a vital part of UMMC and its operations, while patients and families rely on their assistance to navigate the maze of hallways and offices on campus.

In 2014, a volunteer who works at Batson Children's Hospital and at the Winfred L. Wiser Hospital for Women and Infants was recognized for his outstanding service.

Retiree Willie Brown has become a notable fixture along the halls of Batson and Wiser hospitals, said volunteer coordinator Angela Compere.

"Willie is just so pleasant to work with, willing to do whatever," she said, pointing out he arrives every Wednesday at 5 a.m. since he started volunteering more than two years ago.

In addition to working at the desks

of the pediatric ICU and pediatric operating room, Brown also takes it upon himself to keep the floors of the hospitals stocked with snacks.

It's not Brown's first time to be recognized for his work, but the Hewlett-Packard retiree said he's been blessed with a healthy life and volunteering, the most sincere form of customer service, helps keep him grounded.

"My reward is listening to some of these people, talking to them and just witnessing the positive attitude they've got," said Brown.

When families receive hard news, Brown said he remembers his face is one of the first they'll see.

"A lot of times they just need someone to talk to," he said. "A lot of these parents, this is their second home. So anything you can do to get a smile out of them, that's what's worth it."

For volunteer opportunities at Batson, contact coordinator Angela Compere at (601) 815-8277 or email her at acompere@umc.edu.

New pediatric specialists added to Children's faculty

To meet the growing needs of its patients, Children's of Mississippi added the following specialists to its staff recently. For more information about Children's of Mississippi services or to make an appointment, visit www.ummchealth.com/children.

- Gretchen Zimma, M.D.Emergency Medicine and Infectious Disease
- Julia Sherwood, M.D. Child Development
- Renate Savich, M.D.Neonatology
- Khyati Pandya, M.D.Cardiology
- Jana Sperka, M.D. Critical Care and General Pediatrics, Tupelo
- Anju Sukumaran, M.D.Endocrinology
- Praveen Kumar, M.D.Ambulatory Pediatrics, Grenada
- Julie Kaplan, M.D.Genetics
- Oscar Rodriguez, M.D. Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine

Batson Children's Day signals new partnership with Jackson



Children's of Mississippi CEO **Guy Giesecke** (left) accepts a proclamation declaring November 14 as Batson Children's Day from Jackson Mayor **Tony Yarber**, his wife **Rosalind Yarber**, and their daughter, **Toni Michelle**.

Life as they knew it dramatically changed for Jackson parents Tony and Rosalind Yarber when they got a chilling diagnosis: Their baby, Toni Michelle, had ovarian cancer.

But thanks to the care of pediatrician Dr. Gail Megason and her team at Batson Children's Hospital, Toni Michelle today is a healthy 9-year-old.

Her father, a former Jackson City Council member who now serves as mayor, is grateful for the care provided not just to his

child, but to thousands of others who cope with chronic or life-threatening diseases.

Yarber proclaimed Nov. 10, 2014, Batson Children's Day and presented Guy Giesecke, CEO of Batson, with a proclamation honoring faculty and staff for their exemplary care.

"One of the ways to give back . . . is to use this bully pulpit to celebrate and support a hospital that supported my family during a very hard time, and to ensure that every Jacksonian, every Mississippian, understands and knows that," Yarber said before reading the proclamation.

"It is the vision of the city of Jackson to ensure that the influential work of Blair E. Batson is championed and honored throughout our state and nation," the proclamation reads in part, giving tribute to the revered physician and first chairman of UMMC's Department of Pediatrics, for whom the hospital is named.

That document heralds a new day for the hospital and the city, Giesecke said.

"This is the beginning of a new partnership" with Jackson, he said during a news conference to announce the proclamation. "We have a big responsibility as a children's hospital, and we take it very seriously. We've taken on a new mission in the last couple of years to touch and have an impact on every child in Mississippi.

"We want to have an influence on their health and well-being."

After receiving a diagnosis of a teratoma of her ovary, Toni Michelle had surgery and was followed for five years by Megason, professor of pediatric hematology-oncology and director of Children's of Mississippi Cancer Center, and her staff. Toni Michelle is now a student in the Jackson School District's Academic and Performing Arts Complex.

Mayor Yarber with daughter **Toni Michelle**



Watch the video at [youtube.com/batsonhospital](https://www.youtube.com/batsonhospital), search channel for "mayor"

a little Sunshine

Snapshots of visitors and events that brightened the lives of our patients

1

BankPlus brought Sponge Bob in January to spend some time with Batson patients and their families, including 8-year-old **Noah Vick** of Madison.



1

NICU graduate **Samar Perkins**, 3, of Sunflower, plays with a toy airplane at the NICU Reunion in September hosted by the Junior League of Jackson.

2

3

Football great **Eli Manning** meets one of his smallest fans, 6 month old **Caitlyn Hardin** of Mound Bayou.

The 2014 Mississippi Children's Miracle Network Hospitals Champion **Jacob Partlow**, 14, of Jackson throws the switch to light the Batson Children's Hospital Christmas Tree in December.

4



4

5

Dallas Jordan, 14, of Pearl shows off her face paint at Batson's annual children's hospital Fall Carnival.

Cedric Dale, 5, of Durant, talks with Santa and Mrs. Claus, a trusty elf and new friend **Col. Dane Powell** of the Mississippi National Guard, during a pre-Christmas visit to Batson.

6

7

Adashia Hudson becomes fast friends with Aden, one of the Express Clydesdales hosted by Express Employment Professionals during their visit to the children's hospital.



Watch the video at [youtube.com/batsonhospital](https://www.youtube.com/batsonhospital) search channel for "clydesdales"



6

Photos for the following pages were taken by Children's Miracle Network Hospitals staff including Andrew Russell, Ruth Thomas, Matt Johnson and Tena McKenzie.



Inspiring
HOPE
Saving
LIVES

The Radio People and the community “Never Give Up” on Batson and make for another successful radiothon.

Children's Miracle Network Coordinator **Ruth Thomas** gives instructions to the DJs.



Warrior Princess **Magnolia Jones** displays her “Never Give Up” card.



Volunteer **Angela Henderson** shows off one of the Mississippi Miracles Radiothon t-shirts.



Dozens of Heritage Properties Blair Bears wait to be delivered to the patients.



DJ **Ryan Johnson** with Q101 out of Meridian talks with **Dr. Brad Ingram**, pediatric neurologist, about his role at Batson.

NEVER give UP

DJs from The Radio People's ten stations across central Mississippi celebrated Batson patients who "Never Give Up" during the 14th Annual Mississippi Miracles Radiothon in March. The 39-hour broadcast raised a record \$456,879 in support from the community. The money funds equipment, research and programs that ensure Batson Children's Hospital will be able to provide the most advanced care to all of Mississippi's children.

Watch the video at youtube.com/batsonhospital, search channel for "Radiothon"

Batson patients and families hold up numbers to reveal the total amount raised.



Miss Mississippi 2014 **Jasmine Murray** speaks about her support of Batson with one of the stations.



LaDarius Spivey takes a break from interviews while Y101 DJ **Charlie** looks on.



Patient **Malia Croom** and her mom **Tiffine** speak about their experiences at Batson.



Four year-old **De'Nahri Middleton** makes his radiothon debut while his mom **Decimbra** listens in.

Inspiring HOPE Saving LIVES

Support from our community is instrumental to our success. These connections with you, our supporters, inspire hope in our hearts and those of our patients and, in turn, save lives.



With a little help from **Mrs. Zelda Cole**, left, and **Mrs. Sheila Smith**, back row right, second through sixth graders at Bovina Elementary School set out to raise \$500 for the Children's Cancer Center and surpassed their goal, presenting a total of \$610 to Batson social worker **LeAnne Howard**, back row second from right.



Back Yard Burgers pledged to donate \$1 for every view of four inspiring videos of Batson patients interacting with local DJs from The Radio People. In just a few short weeks, the videos were seen more than 5,000 times, translating to a \$5,000 donation from Back Yard Burgers. **Dr. Rick Barr**, the Suzan B. Thames Professor and Chair of Pediatrics, accepts the donation from Back Yard Burgers representatives **Rachael Durr** and **Rosemary Winstead**.

Watch the video at youtube.com/batsonhospital, search channel for "burger"



The crew of the Maersk Developer donated proceeds from ticket sales and generous donations during their annual holiday raffle. Representatives, from left, **Tommy Bounds**, **Jimmy Finley**, **Kevin Keith**, **John Hodge** and **James LeBlanc** present the \$14,000 to **Dr. Sajani Tipnis**, front, associate professor of neonatology, and **Guy Giesecke**, right, Children's of Mississippi CEO.



Patrons at four area Stein Mart stores were recently encouraged to “Give a Bear, Show You Care” by purchasing a teddy bear for a donation to the Children’s Cancer Center. Stein Mart managers, from left, **David Mohamed** of Madison, **Luci Anglin** of Jackson, **Lori Johnson** of Flowood, and **Bob Stein** of Greenville delivered 456 teddy bears to Batson.



Dr. Shirley D. Schlessinger, professor of medicine at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, receives the keys to her brand-new MiracleHome from **Scott Shoemaker**, left, builder of the house, and **Sidney Allen**, chair of the MiracleHome project for Friends of Children’s Hospital. Schlessinger’s name was randomly selected among those who had purchased \$100 tickets during the MiracleHome Giveaway to support the Batson Children’s Hospital, televised locally Dec. 6.



The Seth Harris Childhood Cancer Foundation hosted the Bay Springs Medical Clinic All-American Glow Run 5K. Proceeds from the race, fireworks show, and Cowboy Blues Band concert made possible a \$2,000 gift to Batson’s palliative care program. **Dr. Rick Boyte**, center, professor and chief of pediatric palliative medicine, accepts the donation from SHCCF representatives **Emily Evans** and **John Caleb Grenn**, both students in the School of Medicine.

Inspiring HOPE Saving LIVES

Members of the Okatoma Cruisers Car Club, from left, **James Hall**, **Wanda Hall**, **Josh Rutland**, **Linda Rutland** and club president **David Rutland**, donated \$500 raised at a recent car show for Batson Children's Hospital.



Batson patient **Hannah Dunaway** and Children's Miracle Network Coordinator **John Clark Packer**, right, present **Robert Johnson** of Fred's in Pearl with an award for being the top fundraising store during the 2014 Fred's campaign. The store raised more than \$4,000 through Children's Miracle Network Hospitals balloon sales and weekend cookouts at the store.



Two-year-old **John Hewitt** and his parents **Melissa** and **JD** accept a donation from dad's employer Baxter Healthcare Corporation. Baxter employees hosted "jeans day" at the office and donated \$950 to Batson in honor of **John**.



Representatives from the Zoe Rose Foundation present handmade quilts to cover the isolettes in the NICU to **Dr. Sanjani Tipnis**, front row second from the right.



University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy's Student Society of Health-System Pharmacists (SSHP) sponsored a "Date Auction" and sold t-shirts to raise funds for Batson Children's Hospital. SSHP members, from left, **Gabriel Hilojosa**, **Patrick Reed**, **Elizabeth Roland**, **Keloie Cameron**, **Mary Claire Jarrell**, and **Katie Vanbuskirk** present the funds to **Jennifer Stephen**, clinical director of Children's Emergency and Lab Services.

Inspiring
HOPE
Saving
LIVES

The folks of Flowood Outback raised \$5,000 for Batson's Pediatric Neuromuscular Center and Camp Rainbow at their Grand Opening Charity Give Back Event. Outback employees, back row from left, **Steve Grantham** and **Jenny Higginbotham** and front row from right, **Jennifer Miles** and **Jennifer McCullough** present the donation to, front row from left, Batson representatives **Andrew Russell**, **Sarah Elizabeth Elkin**, **Liz Walker** and **LeAnne Howard**.



The Dialogue Institute of Mississippi recently hosted a fundraiser for Batson, inviting guests to try delicious traditional Turkish food and drink and observe a demonstration of the ancient Ebru art form.

Dr. Anderson Collier, center, associate professor of pediatric hematology-oncology, accepts a \$600 donation from **Dr. Jean Farish**, second from left, and Dialogue Institute representatives, from left, **Mahmut Gok**, **Fatih Ozcan**, and **Hatice Gonul**.





Q&A:

NINA WASHINGTON

SPRING 2015



Dr. Nina Washington, assistant professor of pediatrics, is one of only two pediatric rheumatologists at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. A 2007 graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Medicine, she finished her pediatric residency at the University of Chicago's Comer Children's Hospital and a fellowship at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital of Stanford University. In 2013, she returned to Jackson to work in the highly specialized field at Batson Children's Hospital. The ability to give a high level of care to children is something Washington considers a privilege. It's an honor she was on the receiving end of as a child.

1. What is pediatric rheumatology?

I feel like even since I've been doing it, this is an evolving field. Most people would tend to think of it as an autoimmunity-related field, but I think we do a lot more than that. We take care of children with arthritis, with connective tissue diseases such as lupus. We take care of children who have inflammation of their blood vessels like vasculitis, or those who have inflammation in their eyes - uveitis. I would say we're a sub-specialty pediatrician, because the illnesses we tend to treat involve the whole body.

2. How did you get involved in this specific field?

I guess it's pretty divine how I got involved. I initially entered medical school wanting to be an obstetrician/gynecologist. And that didn't work out so well. Then I fell in love with pediatrics. I don't think it's a secret to anyone here that I have lupus, and I spent a lot of time here as a child. The more I learned about my own personal disease, the more the field of rheumatology became more interesting to me. I felt because of the personal experience I had, I would be able to put myself in my patient's position.

3. What's it like to be able to give such a special level of care?

It's a privilege more than anything. I often try to remind myself when the hours are getting long and the consults start piling in, it's a privilege to be able to have received the training that I have and the knowledge I've learned about this field and to be able to use that to make my patients' lives better. It's so rewarding when you have a child who comes in and they're limping. And then three months later, they're not limping any more. It's an honor, I would say.

4. What brought you back to UMMC?

That's a multifaceted question. I'd say primarily the fact I knew I could serve a need here. My colleague, Dr. Linda Ray, was the only pediatric rheumatologist here for over 20 years. So I knew this would be a place where I could be used, where I would be needed and where I could serve a need. Secondary, I was fortunate to receive a Barksdale scholarship when I went to medical school here, which is a full-ride scholarship to UMMC with the return that you come back after you finish all of your formal training and you work in the state of Mississippi for five years. Also my family is here, so that's No. 3.

5. In a state with an abundance of health issues, is there a greater need for your specialty than other places?

The need is everywhere. I don't necessarily think the need is more in Mississippi than other places. I think the need hasn't been serviced as well simply because of the lack of access to a trained pediatric rheumatologist. I think it's more of a need everywhere because these are diseases that occur in children. They need to be taken care of, and we just haven't had the manpower to always take care of them the way we would like to.



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A dragonfly bench, donated in memory of Seth Harris, and a colorful pinwheel welcome guests into the courtyard next to Batson Children's Hospital.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Springhill Suites ArtNight
June 4

Miracle Treat Day
July 30

BankPlus: Enchanted Evening
August 29

Good Neighbor Day
September 10

Trustmark Golf Tournament
September 28

Candlelighters Art Auction
October 1