



PULASKI COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

News

August 2025

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When you think professional, ethical, quality healthcare,
think physicians of Pulaski County Medical Society.

UAMS Graduates 1,186 Health Professionals

In May The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) recently held commencement ceremonies to confer degrees and certificates to 1,186 students in its five colleges and graduate school.

UAMS awarded a total of 1,207 degrees or certificates: 168 to students in the College of Medicine, 183 in the College of Nursing, 643 in the College of Health Professions, 85 in the College of Pharmacy, 78 in the Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health and 50 in the UAMS Graduate School. Twenty students earned multiple degrees or certificates.

Degrees and certificates conferred at this year's commencement ceremonies included doctor of philosophy; doctor of medicine; doctor of pharmacy; doctor of nursing practice; master of nursing science; bachelor of science in nursing; doctor of public health; master of public health; master of health administration; master of science in health care data analytics; postbaccalaureate certificate in public health; and a variety of allied health disciplines, including doctor of audiology, doctor of physical therapy, master of physician assistant studies, master of science and bachelor of science.

Baptist Health College Little Rock Unveils Institution's First Mascot, 'Bo' The Lion, with Birthday Party

Baptist Health College Little Rock (BHCLR) unveiled a mascot for the first time in the institution's history earlier today, July 11. The celebration included a birthday party and special appearances from other familiar mascots.

Creating "Bo" the Baptist Health College Little Rock Lion was a year-long endeavor, largely spearheaded by the late Dr. Joel Hicks, former president of BHCLR.

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Communication Breakdown, The Rest of the Story

Jeff Williams, JD, Senior Claims Attorney, SVMIC

CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH

ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT THE CARDIOLOGIST

Dr. Cario maintained throughout the suit that he should have been contacted sooner than he was. Not surprisingly, this was one of Plaintiff's theories as well. He testified in his deposition that he should have been called when the first echocardiogram (EKG) reflected signs of cardiac distress. Mrs. Cutler was also experiencing chest pain, low blood pressure and other symptoms on Sunday evening, yet another reason to call the cardiologist.

When the hospital staff tried to contact him, he could not be reached. The multiple attempts to contact Dr. Cario were as follows:

1. by pager
2. by a secure messaging system maintained by the hospital
3. by a call service at his office
4. by his cell phone.

The first three methods of communication did not result in a response from Dr. Cario. Ultimately, a nurse was able to contact Dr. Cario by calling his cell phone number.

There were several issues with the attempts to contact Dr. Cario. First, Dr. Cario no longer used his pager. In fact, he believed the number was disconnected. Nonetheless, the pager number was listed in the hospital system as a preferred way to contact Dr. Cario. Next, when the nurse called Dr. Cario's answering service on Sunday night, the service responded that it did not know how to contact Dr. Cario and suggested that the nurse call Dr. Cario's office (on the weekend). When the nurse sent a message through the secure messaging system, Dr. Cario was unaware that he had received the message.

THE TAKEAWAYS

- In cases where communication among providers is in question, call logs, digital messages (text messages, secure messages, text messages, and emails) are all trackable. The physician should expect that the messages will be requested and scrutinized in the discovery phase of litigation. *Whether the messages are responded to will be evident.* Keep in mind, while the content of the message was not in question in this case, be cautious not to make comments that will be used against you in the future. Communicate as if each message will be scrutinized. Keep it professional.
- For providers working in hospitals, an office setting, or other medical facilities that will need to contact you on an emergent basis, be sure your up-to-date contact information is on file at the facility. Check it periodically.
- While medical care can be communicated over the phone or by various messaging services, if it is possible to physically see a patient that has a critically acute condition, consider doing so.
- Be proactive, not passive in your communications. Practitioners should not hesitate to pick up the phone and call the specialist involved in the patient's care.

THE CASE AGAINST THE HOSPITALIST

A concerning allegation against Dr. Patel was that he never saw the patient at bedside, even though he was at the hospital the entire weekend. This was despite Mrs. Cutler's deteriorating condition, and her request to be seen. While not physically seeing the patient was defensible from a standard of care perspective, it was anticipated that Plaintiff's counsel would bring this to the jury's attention at trial. The optics were concerning. In addition to not seeing the patient, the EKG results that went unrecognized as critical were problematic for the defense. The proof developed through Plaintiff's medical experts suggested that if Dr. Patel or a nurse had contacted Dr. Cario earlier, the outcome would have been different. Plaintiff's expert hospitalist laid out a timeline in his deposition which strongly implied that if Dr. Patel had intervened earlier, Mrs. Cutler would have had a greater chance of surviving. As expected, Plaintiff's experts were highly critical of Dr. Patel for not seeing the patient at bedside and never communicating with Dr. Cario.

While each defendant was able to disclose medical experts supportive of their positions, the case had weak points that Plaintiff's counsel could exploit at trial. The reality was Mrs. Cutler suffered from a condition that was treatable if medical intervention had occurred earlier. Further, it became clear there was going to be finger pointing between the hospital, Dr. Patel, and Dr. Cario related to the various communication issues. Most cases only get better for the plaintiff when defendants blame each other. The decision was eventually made to settle and avoid the substantial risk of an adverse verdict if the case was tried.

Baptist Health College Little Rock Unveils Institution's First Mascot, 'Bo' The Lion, with Birthday Party

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"We are honored to continue his vision and legacy," said Troy Wells, president and CEO of Baptist Health. "Dr. Hicks recognized the importance of student engagement and sought to introduce the first mascot in the college's 104-year history."

Dr. Hicks invited students, faculty, staff, alumni and other members of the Baptist Health community to contribute their ideas, knowing a mascot would leave a meaningful legacy for generations to come.

Bo, short for Boaz, symbolizes the strength, protectiveness, and integrity of BHCLR students, drawing inspiration from the biblical story of Ruth. Like Boaz, who led with compassion, confidence and strength, students are poised to become selfless leaders in the workforce, driving positive change. Bo embodies the courage students demonstrate as they pursue their dreams.

BHCLR's mascot will be seen at student events like welcome day, the first day of class, family night and student appreciation days as well as during recruiting events.



Guests of Bo's birthday party enjoyed birthday cake, Dippin' Dots, commemorative keepsakes as well as photos with Bo. The Little Rock Zoo, Pop's Kettle Corn and Kingdom Treats were also on site.

Since 1921, Baptist Health College Little Rock has shaped the health of Arkansans by educating and mentoring health care professionals with excellence and Christian compassion. With nine programs of study, including two nursing programs and seven allied health programs, graduates demonstrate entry-level competency in their fields, exemplify professionalism and personify the Baptist Health values.

For more information about Baptist Health College Little Rock, visit bhclr.edu.

CARTI Becomes First in State to Offer Contrast-Enhanced Mammography

Diagnostic Tool Now Available at Breast Centers in Little Rock and El Dorado

In May, Women in Arkansas received local access to contrast-enhanced mammography (CEM). The Breast Center at CARTI recently became the first in the state to offer the diagnostic screening tool to qualifying patients at its flagship Little Rock campus and El Dorado location.

"The Breast Center at CARTI is committed to ensuring no woman goes without access to care, including lifesaving screenings like 3D mammography," said Stephen Routon, M.D., breast imaging specialist. "As the first in Arkansas to offer contrast-enhanced mammography, we will continue to set the bar for empowering and equipping women with the leading-edge tools they need to take control of their breast health."

CEM is a diagnostic imaging tool used to evaluate suspicious findings from a conventional mammogram and assess potential breast cancer spread. CEM may also serve as a breast MRI alternative for qualifying patients. In addition to CEM, The Breast Center at CARTI provides 3D mammography and supplemental screenings, such as whole breast ultrasound for patients with dense breast tissue.

Women of average risk should begin their annual mammograms at age 40. At age 25, all women should receive a risk assessment from their primary care provider to determine whether earlier, more frequent or additional screenings may be beneficial. Those interested in scheduling a 3D screening mammogram may call 501-537-MAMO.

CHI St. Vincent Infirmary Ranked No. 1 in Central Arkansas by U.S. News and World Report for Cardiology, Heart and Vascular Surgery

[CHI St. Vincent](#), a leading regional health network serving Central and Southwest Arkansas, announces that CHI St. Vincent Infirmary has ranked No. 1 in Central Arkansas for Cardiology, Heart and Vascular Surgery in U.S. News & World Report's 2025-2026 [Best Hospitals](#) list.

In addition, CHI St. Vincent Infirmary, [CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs](#) and [CHI St. Vincent North](#) were all listed in U.S. News and World Report as High Performing in multiple categories. The distinction of High Performing is the highest honor a hospital can earn as part of U.S. News' Best Hospitals Procedures & Conditions ratings.

CHI St. Vincent Infirmary was named High Performing in seven categories: Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Repair, Aortic Valve Surgery, Colon Cancer Surgery, Heart Bypass Surgery, Pacemaker Implantation, Spinal Fusion and Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement. CHI St. Vincent North was named High Performing in the categories of Acute Kidney Failure and Heart Failure. CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs was named High Performing in COPD and Diabetes.

"The U.S. News and World Report recognition is an honor, affirming the tireless dedication and exceptional skill of our physicians, nurses and entire care teams across the CHI St. Vincent system," said Chad Aduddell, Market President of CHI St. Vincent. "Our recognition as High Performing across multiple specialties reinforces what our patients already know — that they can trust CHI St. Vincent to provide expert, reliable care close to home. We are proud

to continue to deliver the highest-quality of compassionate care to the patients and families we serve each day."

U.S. News' annual Procedures & Conditions ratings are designed to assist patients and their health care providers in making informed decisions about where to receive care for challenging health conditions or elective procedures.

"For more than three decades, U.S. News has been an invaluable guide for patients," said Ben Harder, Managing Editor and Chief of Health Analysis at U.S. News. "Hospitals designated as 'High Performing' by U.S. News demonstrate a consistent ability to provide excellent care for particular medical procedures and conditions, showcasing their specialized expertise as well as dedication to exceptional patient outcomes."

U.S. News evaluated more than 4,400 hospitals across 15 adult specialties and 22 procedures and conditions; only one-third of them earned an award. To determine the Best Hospitals, U.S. News analyzed each hospital's performance based on objective measures such as risk-adjusted mortality rates, preventable complications and level of nursing care. The Best Hospitals [Specialty rankings methodology](#) and [Procedures & Conditions ratings methodology](#) measure patient outcomes using data from over 800 million records of patient care.

For more information on CHI St. Vincent, visit chistvincent.com or U.S. News and World Report's [Best Hospitals](#) list.



Victoria Helton, MD

The Woman's Clinic Welcomes Dr. Victoria Helton

Victoria Helton, MD has joined The Woman's Clinic at 9601 Baptist Health Drive, Suite 1200 in Little Rock. Dr. Helton is an OB/GYN who graduated from the University of Texas San Antonio Health Science Center and completed her residency at UAMS.

For more information on Dr. Helton go to <https://www.arobgyn.com/victoria-helton>.

Baptist Health's Delivery Hospitals Implement Toolkit to Educate Women About Potential Post-Birth Complications

Baptist Health is the first in Arkansas to implement the POST-BIRTH Warning Signs Toolkit, a nationally recognized set of essential resources created by the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN).

It assists nurses and other providers in educating women about the signs and symptoms of potentially life-threatening conditions that can occur after they have given birth.

AWHONN's primary aim in developing the POST-BIRTH Warning Signs Toolkit is to help hospitals and other health care facilities in their efforts to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality rates in the United States. According to the most recent legislative report by the Arkansas Maternal Mortality Review Committee, 55% of pregnancy related deaths occur 7-365 days after delivery. This proactive approach to discharge education can substantially contribute to early intervention and management of postpartum complications, potentially improving health outcomes and reducing the risk of serious health consequences.

Baptist Health offers labor and delivery services at its hospitals in Little Rock, North Little Rock, Fort Smith, Conway, Arkadelphia, Stuttgart and Monticello.

"Baptist Health is leading the charge for improving care for all postpartum women at our health care organization," said Julie Nix, corporate vice president of surgery, women's and children's, and rehabilitation services at Baptist Health. "We're honored to participate in this initiative for improving maternal health care and reducing risks for complications for all mothers."

Baptist Health delivery hospitals offer a family-friendly environment with deluxe suites for labor and delivery. These suites are furnished with a variety of quality amenities to create a comfortable birthing experience for both mom and baby.

For more information about Baptist Health's delivery hospitals, visit [Baptist-Health.com](https://www.baptist-health.com).

CARTI's Fellowship-Trained Medical Oncology Team Grows

Multidisciplinary Cancer Care Provider Welcomes Dr. Neelakanta Dadi

CARTI recently welcomed Neelakanta Dadi, M.D., FACP, MRCP (UK), to its growing team of fellowship-trained medical oncologists. Dr. Dadi will see patients at the CARTI Cancer Centers in Little Rock and El Dorado and treatment facilities in Crossett and Saline County.

"Dr. Dadi is recognized for his medical expertise, which spans clinical practice, research and academia," said Rhonda Gentry, M.D., medical director of medical oncology. "We are thrilled to welcome him to the CARTI team, where we know he will bring compassionate, leading-edge care to meet patients where they are."

Dr. Dadi graduated from the Royal College of Physicians in London with an MRCP (UK). He completed his internship and residency at the University of Utah and his fellowship in hematology and oncology at the Feist-Weiller Cancer Center at Louisiana State University

Health-Shreveport. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Andhra University and an MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery) from Andhra Medical College.

Dr. Dadi is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in hematology and oncology and is a fellow of the American College of Physicians. He is a member of the American Medical Association, American Society of Clinical Oncology and American Society of Hematology.



Dr. Neelakanta Dadi

CHI St. Vincent Hospitals Recognized Among Nation's Top Performers for Treatment of Heart Attack Patients

American College of Cardiology Honors Sustained, High-Level Quality of Care

CHI St. Vincent, a leading regional health network serving Central and Southwest Arkansas, announces that the [American College of Cardiology](#) has awarded CHI St. Vincent Infirmiry and CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs the [2025 Chest Pain – MI Registry Performance Achievement Award](#). CHI St. Vincent Infirmiry received the Platinum Award, and CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs received the Silver Award. The prestigious Platinum recognition places CHI St. Vincent Infirmiry among an elite group of only 323 hospitals honored nationwide for delivering exemplary cardiovascular care.

The award recognizes CHI St. Vincent's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for heart attack patients, signifying it has reached an aggressive goal of treating these patients to standard levels of care as outlined by the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association clinical guidelines and recommendations.

To receive the Chest Pain – MI Registry Performance Achievement Award, both CHI St. Vincent Infirmiry and CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs demonstrated sustained achievement in the Chest Pain – MI Registry for two consecutive years (2023 and 2024) and performed at the highest level for specific performance measures. Full participation in the registry engages hospitals in a robust quality improvement process using data to drive improvements in adherence to guideline recommendations and overall quality of care provided to heart attack patients.

"It is an honor to award CHI St. Vincent Infirmiry and CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs with the Platinum and Silver Performance Awards for their valuable national leadership and dedication to meeting comprehensive

performance measures in patient care," said Michael C. Kontos, MD, FACC, chair of the NCDR Chest Pain – MI Registry Steering Subcommittee, and cardiologist at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center. "The receipt of this award indicates the commitment of both hospitals to providing top-quality, guideline-driven care for heart attack patients. Their success ensures patients are receiving the highest quality cardiovascular care."

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that over 800,000 Americans suffer a heart attack each year. A heart attack occurs when a blood clot in a coronary artery partially or completely blocks blood flow to the heart muscle. Treatment guidelines include administering aspirin upon arrival and discharge, timely restoration of blood flow to the blocked artery, smoking cessation counseling and cardiac rehabilitation, among others.

"This recognition reflects the unwavering dedication of our teams at CHI St. Vincent Infirmiry and CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs," CHI St. Vincent Market President Chad Aduddell said. "It is a powerful reminder that behind every statistic is a life saved — and we remain committed to providing world-class, compassionate care for every patient who walks through our doors."

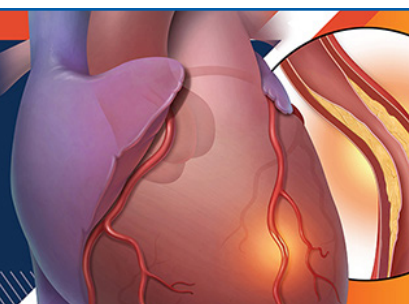
Chest Pain – MI Registry empowers healthcare provider teams to treat heart attack patients according to the most current, science-based guidelines. It establishes a national standard for understanding and improving the quality, safety and outcomes of care provided for patients with coronary artery disease, specifically high-risk heart attack patients.

For more information on CHI St. Vincent, visit chistvincent.com.



AMERICAN
COLLEGE of
CARDIOLOGY®

CHEST PAIN — MI
REGISTRY™



Baptist Health Recertified as Great Place To Work®

Baptist Health is proud to be Certified™ by Great Place To Work®. The prestigious award is based entirely on what current employees say about their experience working at Arkansas' most comprehensive health care organization. This year, 74% of employees said that Baptist Health is a Great Place To Work – 17 points higher than the average U.S. company.

"We are thrilled to be recertified by Great Place To Work," said Baptist Health President and CEO Troy Wells. "This achievement highlights the remarkable commitment of our team and reaffirms Baptist Health's dedication to our employees. Moreover, this recognition reflects our ongoing pledge to deliver high-quality care to the communities we serve."

Great Place To Work® is the global authority on workplace culture, employee experience, and the leadership behaviors proven to deliver market-leading revenue, employee retention and increased innovation.

"Great Place To Work Certification is a highly coveted achievement that requires consistent and intentional dedication to the overall employee experience,"



says Sarah Lewis-Kulin, the Vice President of Global Recognition at Great Place To Work. She emphasizes that Certification is the sole official recognition earned by the real-time feedback of employees regarding their company culture. "By successfully earning this recognition, it is evident that Baptist Health stands out as one of the top companies to work for, providing a great workplace environment for its employees."

According to Great Place To Work research, job seekers are 4.5 times more likely to find a great boss at a Certified great workplace. Additionally, employees at Certified workplaces are 93% more likely to look forward to coming to work, and are twice as likely to be paid fairly, earn a fair share of the company's profits and have a fair chance at promotion.

Baptist Health Rehabilitation Institute Names Director of Hospital Operations



Sam Ward

Sam Ward recently joined Baptist Health Rehabilitation Institute (BHRI) as the new director of hospital operations.

Ward brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record in optimizing hospital processes and enhancing patient care. He has a master's degree in Business Administration

from Salt Lake City-based Western Governors University, a bachelor's degree in Biology from Missouri Southern State University of Joplin and an associate degree in Nursing from Crowder College in Neosho, Missouri.

Ward has been a critical care nurse manager at Baptist Health Medical Center-North Little Rock, and most recently served as an Baptist Health administrative fellow in the health care system's corporate office.

In his new role at BHRI, Ward will support rehabilitation services across system inpatient and outpatient program lines, as well as the occupational health service line.

BHRI is an awarding-winning institute and the largest, most comprehensive rehabilitation hospital in the state with 23 outpatient therapy centers. As the only facility in Arkansas certified in brain injury, spinal cord injury and amputee rehabilitation from the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), BHRI provides the support needed for those who have experienced unexpected, life-altering events to rebuild their lives.

Sandra and Robert Connor Give \$300,000 to Create Distinguished Scholarship in College of Medicine

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) received a \$300,000 gift from Sandra and Robert Connor to create the Sandra and Robert C. Connor Distinguished Endowed Scholarship in the UAMS College of Medicine.

The gift was made in recognition of the impact that UAMS will have on Arkansas. It is also the hope of the Connors that the gift will encourage similar giving toward student scholarships at UAMS.

"I want to sincerely thank Sandra and Robert Connor for their generosity to UAMS and their continued commitment to education in Arkansas — this scholarship will certainly have a significant impact on the College of Medicine as well as advance health care in our state," said C. Lowry Barnes, M.D., UAMS interim chancellor. "This scholarship will also help UAMS attract and retain the best and brightest students, support them in pursuing careers in the areas of greatest need and alleviate their burden of excessive debt."

The scholarship will be awarded each year to a College of Medicine student with preference given to a University of Arkansas at Fayetteville graduate who is a member of the Chi Omega women's fraternal organization. If there is not an eligible student who meets the preferred criteria, the scholarship will be awarded to a student from Arkansas who demonstrates financial need. Selection of the recipient and scholarship amount will be made by the College of Medicine Scholarship Committee, dean of the college and the UAMS provost.

"This is an exciting development in our efforts to generate more scholarships, and the effects will be life-changing for aspiring physicians in the College of Medicine, said Steven Webber, M.D., dean of the College of Medicine and UAMS executive vice chancellor. "Gifts of this magnitude enable substantive scholarships and are an investment in our mission to produce outstanding doctors for Arkansas. We are grateful to the Connors for their partnership."

Sandra Connor earned a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Social Welfare from the University of Arkansas.



She served as co-chair of the University of Arkansas Capital Campaign and is a former president of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts Board of Trustees. She is a former member of the UAMS Board of Advisors and the Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging Advisory Board. She currently serves on the UAMS Board of Advisors.

Robert Connor earned a bachelor's degree in banking and finance from the University of North Texas – Denton. A former member of the Texas National Guard, he also graduated from Officer Candidate School and served in the U.S. Army Reserve until 1971, where he attained the rank of first lieutenant. He attended the Harvard Business School Program for management development and the American Bankers Association-sponsored Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The Connors are also members of the Society of the Double Helix, which recognizes UAMS' most outstanding philanthropists.

"For years, we have been proud to support student scholarships for many levels of education, and now it is our honor to uplift medical students at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences," said Robert Connor. "The need for medical professionals in our state is clear, and we hope that the Sandra and Robert Connor Distinguished Endowed Scholarship will not only create doctors but retain them in Arkansas."

"We also believe that the link between the University of Arkansas and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences is a key line of development for the state's most talented undergraduates transitioning into medical education, so it is important to Arkansas that it be nurtured," added Sandra Connor. "Through my years of involvement with the Chi Omega fraternity, I have witnessed abundant intelligence and great enthusiasm for service within the Fayetteville chapter, and we believe it is appropriate to encourage and incentivize a future in medicine for these young women."