



Beaufort  
Memorial



# TRANSFORMING *Tomorrow*

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2024





A Letter from the CEO



# Embracing Growth. Taking Action.

Over the last year, the Lowcountry has seen its fair share of rapid growth. That growth means that the region needs more: more high-quality medical providers, more workforce development opportunities and more access to lifesaving, innovative, patient-first care.

In 2024, Beaufort Memorial has shown its commitment to delivering more.

As the region's sole community hospital system, Beaufort Memorial plays an integral role in shaping the healthcare landscape of Beaufort County and beyond. A growing and changing region has growing and changing needs, and we're taking action to transform the way residents – patients – in the Lowcountry receive care.

It has been a year of strategic, smart growth: we cut the ribbon on the Beaufort Memorial Career Development Center, which houses the ever-growing and evolving People Achieving Their Highest (PATH) program and acts as a satellite location for the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) Nursing Program.

We're continuing to invest in our employees, offering creative solutions to tackle widespread challenges like affordable, reliable childcare and workforce housing – two projects that saw exciting milestones this year with the relocation of the Learning Center to the hospital's main campus in Beaufort

and our partnership with the Town of Bluffton and Beaufort County for an affordable housing project that is months away from breaking ground in the southern part of the county.

The needs of this diverse area continue to evolve, and the addition of a board-certified, fellowship-trained plastic surgeon has allowed us to expand reconstructive care options at Beaufort Memorial for breast cancer survivors – and implement cutting-edge technology.

Throughout the Lowcountry, Beaufort Memorial is taking action, with multiple construction projects that, when complete, will expand critical healthcare access into locations that are convenient for ALL of our patients. We are continuing to forge exciting partnerships, transforming the way healthcare is delivered in this region.

Our investment in this community and our skilled, dedicated workforce show that when it comes to transforming tomorrow, we're taking the lead.

Russell Baxley, MHA  
President & CEO, Beaufort Memorial

For Beaufort Memorial, 2024 was intentional expansion and a year of laying the groundwork for a healthier, more accessible future in the Lowcountry.

# Community Value

With a rapidly evolving region and skyrocketing healthcare needs in the Lowcountry, there has never been a more crucial time for a hospital system to be community centered.

## What does it mean to be a community hospital system?

Beaufort Memorial is plugged into the needs of Beaufort County and the surrounding areas, keeping our finger on the pulse of the health obstacles our population is facing and their barriers to care.

To be a community hospital system, we must face those barriers to care head-on, and we provided \$41.3 million in community benefit services in 2024 to help do just that.

"When we say, 'community hospital,' we mean it," said Beaufort Memorial President and CEO Russell Baxley. "These services, be it addiction medicine or charity care, are important for the community and how we thrive. Expanding access to care means expanding access for everyone, and Beaufort Memorial is leading the way in the Lowcountry."

On the following pages, you will see stories of how our commitment to community, patient care, and serving the needs of the Lowcountry is altering the healthcare landscape in real-time. These stories tell of celebration, recovery, support and lives that have been changed by Beaufort Memorial's commitment, showing that a small, independent community hospital system really can transform tomorrow.

Health Screenings Offered on our MOBILE WELLNESS UNIT .....	\$154,542
Pharmaceutical Assistance through BEAUFORT MEMORIAL FOUNDATION .....	\$17,137
Addiction Medicine Services through BEAUFORT MEMORIAL FOUNDATION .....	\$100,000
Charity Care & Bad Debt ADDITIONAL UNCOMPENSATED CARE .....	\$36,872,442
Services for Patients of GOOD NEIGHBOR MEDICAL CLINIC .....	\$872,936
Services for Patients of ACCESSHEALTH OF THE LOWCOUNTRY .....	\$3,231,454
Services for Patients of VOLUNTEERS IN MEDICINE .....	\$4,623
Greater Bluffton-Jasper County	
Services for Patients of VOLUNTEERS IN MEDICINE .....	\$66,958
Hilton Head Island	
	\$41,320,092

\$41.3M

To see a more detailed breakdown of these services, partnerships and charity care, see pages 22 and 23.







Grace, pictured at her retirement party in Illinois before moving to the Lowcountry.

# Graceful Movement

**Retired nurse's revision spine surgery made traveling, walking, dancing possible again.**

*If* at first you don't succeed, try, try again. That mindset is usually reserved for riding a bike or interviewing for a job.

In Grace Sorrentino's case, it could apply to her journey with leg and foot pain, which resulted in two lower spine surgeries to get her back to her normal, active life.

Grace, a 72-year-old retired cardiac ICU nurse from a large hospital in Springfield, Ill., is no stranger to the medical profession and the potential for high-quality care to impact the lives of patients.

After nearly 45 years in the field, she retired in 2018.

"I loved every minute of it," she said.

## Steps toward surgery

Following her retirement, Grace started experiencing leg and foot pain that twisted its way into affecting her daily life.

The pain eventually got so bad that she could only walk 20 feet before having to sit down to relieve the pressure.

After seeking care in her former hometown, she checked the boxes for all the conservative measures, including physical therapy and shots to reduce her pain, and she was ultimately scheduled for surgery on her lower spine.

Her Illinois surgeon performed L4-L5 fusion surgery to stabilize her spine – the fusing of the L4 and L5 vertebrae located in the

lower, "lumbar" spine, which is a procedure that can provide relief for conditions like spinal stenosis, disc degeneration and herniated discs.

Grace thought she was out of the woods. Her pain had subsided, and she and her husband Dave prepared to make the nearly 900-mile move from Springfield to the Lowcountry, a region that held lots of fond memories from past vacations on Hilton Head Island.

## Second verse, same as the first

Not long after their move to Sun City, Grace's pain started again. She tried to minimize it initially.

"I thought, 'OK, it's better than it was, at least I'm walking,'" she said.

But the stubborn leg and foot pain, pain that she thought had been addressed by her surgery back in Illinois, stuck around.

"It got worse, and worse, and worse," she admitted, "to the point where I'd get 10 feet, and I'd have to sit."

Simple activities, such as grocery shopping with her husband, became excruciating as her pain persisted.

"I'd literally stop in the middle of the aisle and bend over like I was touching my toes," she recalled. "I'm sure people thought the only things I bought were on the bottom shelf of the grocery store!"

She wasn't sleeping at night, couldn't roll over in bed or sit up without her back freezing up.

## Enough was enough

Grace followed the same process when seeking care in the Lowcountry as she did in the Midwest, exhausting all conservative measures before turning, once again, to surgery. After her primary care provider recommended Dr. Andrew Castro, board-certified orthopedic spine surgeon at Beaufort Memorial, Grace decided to talk to him about her options.

"He spent so much time talking to me about it and answering my questions," Grace said.



Andrew Castro, M.D.

She wasn't jazzed about the prospect of a second surgery to correct the first procedure – but if she wanted to be able to walk without experiencing debilitating leg and foot pain, Dr. Castro told her, she didn't have much choice.

"She's a perpetual motion machine," Dr. Castro said. "Her nature is super active. She was kind of down when she came to

see me because she couldn't do the things she wanted."

## Round 2

In October 2023, Grace underwent a revision spine surgery performed by Dr. Castro to not only fix the original L4-L5 lumbar fusion done in her 2018 procedure, but fuse the L3 and L4 vertebrae as well.

"The procedure itself, I was quite wowed by it," she said.

"I really, really had a good experience. I thank my lucky stars every day; I'm afraid I would have ended up in a wheelchair." Grace said that overall her experience with Beaufort Memorial, especially Dr. Castro and his nursing staff was "fantastic."

"I'm a retired nurse, and people in the medical profession, we're tough on other medical facilities. We have a certain standard of care that we're looking for," she said. "I can't say enough about the care I got at Beaufort Memorial."

And, as for Dr. Castro, she "sings his praises" every chance she gets.

"Grace is a bit of a dynamo," laughed Dr. Castro. "She was a great patient because she'll do what you say. She wants to get better."

He added that usual recovery time has patients walking a mile a day at four weeks post-op, and Grace was right on track and did a "super job."

## Back on her feet, pronto

With her recovery complete and her pain-free movement restored, Grace has been able to get back to enjoying her retirement: she does yoga once a week, a dance exercise class, walks three miles every morning with her husband, golfs to her heart's content and even picked up a part-time job a few days a week at Beaufort Drug Company's lunch counter.

A travel opportunity arose in October 2024 – Grace and her husband were a part of a large group of family and friends that got to experience "la dolce vita" on a Mediterranean cruise that took them to destinations in Italy (think Rome, Naples, Sicily and Venice), plus Greece and Croatia.

That trip involved lots of walking and being on her feet – and, 12 months after spine surgery at Beaufort Memorial, Grace was sightseeing with the best of them.

"Before my surgery, I could barely walk, and here was a trip where we'd be walking on cobblestone," she laughed. "We walked all over Rome – in Italy, wherever you go, it's uphill one way and uphill the other!"

Without her care at Beaufort Memorial, Grace said she could never have dreamed of traveling or being on her feet – or doing any of the things she loves that make up her lifestyle here in the Lowcountry.

**"Before the surgery, I couldn't walk 10 feet. Now, there's not much I don't do...honestly, I gave Dr. Castro a hug. I told him, 'I know you don't want to hear this' – because he's so humble – 'but you gave me my life back.'"**

– Grace Sorrentino



On a Mediterranean cruise in October, Grace and Dave Sorrentino went sightseeing and spent lots of time on their feet while walking cobblestone streets in Italy, Greece and Croatia.



# Stronger Together

**A breast cancer survivor from Varnville, Lashana Greene overcame transportation and financial struggles with the help of a dedicated care team.**

*It* takes a lot of strength to navigate a breast cancer diagnosis. Strength is something Varnville's Lashana Greene has in spades.

The 51-year-old tapped into that strength in July, when she was diagnosed with breast cancer and began her treatment journey.

Lashana said that from the very beginning, her next steps following her diagnosis were clear. When a patient is diagnosed with cancer and beginning their treatment journey with Beaufort Memorial, they receive an informational packet, a "guide," which includes everything from contact information for surgeons and cancer team members to diet and nutrition help to a step-by-step description of what to expect during radiation and chemotherapy.

"The team at Beaufort Memorial was very, very helpful. They gave me my packet, they told me the dos and don'ts, and they told me that if I go ahead and have surgery to make sure I'm able to continue with the radiation and treatment right after with no gap," Lashana explained. "It made me feel very open and confident. I rely on God for a whole lot, but they made me feel comfortable."

She began her radiation treatments, driving to and from her Varnville home to the Keyserling Cancer Center in Beaufort every day – no small distance.

Then, early on in receiving treatment, a huge obstacle reared its head for Lashana: her vehicle caught fire, taking away transportation that was necessary to get her to her appointments.

"I guess the treatment was going too well for me; a wrench needed to be thrown in there," Lashana laughed. "I said, 'OK, God, I'll leave it in your hands.'"



Lashana Greene, pictured with the bell she rang in November after completing treatment for her breast cancer.

She went from having reliable daily transportation to her radiation appointments to having no way to get to Beaufort to receive her treatment.

"It was a battle," she admitted. "I had to really talk myself through it. When something like this happens, you have to take a deep breath. You have to keep a strong mind."

She was committed to keeping her mental toughness, no matter what kind of wrench altered her plans. She missed a few months of treatment while navigating her transportation difficulties, and she made the courageous decision to ask for support.

"I wasn't giving up," she said. "I wasn't scared to ask for help. I let everyone know that I was in the middle of treatment, and I wanted to come back."

**She shared her challenges with her Beaufort Memorial oncology navigation team, and she got the help she had prayed for.**



Kianna Brown, LMSW

Lashana's care team put their heads together, said oncology social worker Kianna Brown, LMSW.

The American Cancer Society offers lodging assistance for patients undergoing cancer treatment to stay in hotels during their treatment, and they collaborated with a hotel less than two miles from the New River Cancer Center in Okatie. The program covered up to 12 days of lodging – and Lashana had just shy of 12 days left of treatment.

"It was as though the stars aligned!" Brown said. "I told her that I had made some calls and finally found a resource to help her complete her treatment journey. She was so excited!"

Lashana got to work, making connections with the organizations Brown shared with her. She did her research, made calls and applied for assistance.

"I told them about my financial and my vehicle situation," Lashana said. "I asked them for help, and they responded. It was wonderful."

Lashana was able to continue her treatment in Okatie, staying for 12 days at the Extended Stay America Hotel and receiving help from the American Cancer Society's Lodging Assistance Program. Thanks to a grant awarded to the Beaufort Memorial Foundation, she was able to use gas and grocery cards from the American Cancer Society and Share Our Suzy to help compensate her loved

ones that gave her rides to and from the hotel, as well as assistance with groceries during her hotel stay.

The radiation team coordinated with the Beaufort Memorial transportation team and Foundation-purchased transport vans to bring Lashana to and from the hotel to receive treatment daily, free of charge.

"She was able to complete her treatment, thanks to her eligibility paired with the availability of this beautiful combination of resources," Brown said.

Lashana's hard work – and the hard work of the navigation and transportation teams – paid off.

"I left it all in God's hands," she said. "I applied for everything they gave me. I've got kids, grandkids. I've got a lot to live for, and I wasn't giving up that easy."

Lashana rang the bell, cancer-free, on Nov. 11, letting her care team know how much their help meant to her.

"I let them know, I love them," she said. "I love them, honest to God, I do. I couldn't have done it without them."

The mom and grandmother is active in the Cancer Buddy program at her church in Varnville, sharing her story when she can and emphasizing the passion and commitment of the Beaufort Memorial oncology team to others facing their survivor journey.

"I say to them, if you go to Beaufort Memorial, there is help for you there," she said. "The people there are so good, and they work with you."

## On The Move

**IN FY24  
the transportation  
team provided:**

**1,178 RIDES**

..... TOTALING .....

**13,331 MILES**

..... ACROSS .....

**26 ZIP CODES**



Transportation Team: Daryl Alexander and Dean Adams





▲  
Drs. Heidi Harrington  
and Tara Grahovac

# Elevating Care

**The Beaufort Memorial Breast Care & Surgery program stepped into a new era this year with the addition of a board-certified plastic surgeon and her background in reconstruction.**

Beaufort Memorial saw the emergence of a new dynamic duo this year: board-certified plastic surgeon **Heidi Harrington, M.D.**, has joined forces with **Tara Grahovac, M.D., FACS**, a board-certified and fellowship-trained breast oncology surgeon, to offer breast reconstruction for mastectomy patients right here in Beaufort County—a procedure that, prior to Dr. Harrington's arrival, required patients to travel to Charleston and MUSC for care.

The partnership between the two surgeons means that a patient's mastectomy and the subsequent reconstruction can now be performed in a single "direct-to-implant" surgery. Instead of a patient traveling to Charleston for care—and back to Charleston for follow-up appointments—it can all be done here in Beaufort County.

"To elevate the care of patients with breast cancer in this area—to commit and do it well—means having a duo, a team of surgeons that includes reconstructive support," said Dr. Grahovac. "It's much more convenient to do it here, but we wanted quality and convenience. Bringing Dr. Harrington here was a part of that."

**"You just do better and heal better in your community, surrounded by people who know you and understand you and support you."**

– Dr. Heidi Harrington

Not only are patients able to have the procedure completed closer to home and among their own support system, but the procedure itself allows for reconstruction at the time of the mastectomy, in one single direct-to-implant procedure.

Traditionally, at the time of a mastectomy, Dr. Harrington explained, a patient would have a "tissue expander" placed under their pectoralis muscle (the thick, fan-shaped muscle lying underneath a woman's breast tissue). When the surgery is complete, the patient would then return for a second surgery to have the expander removed and the implant placed.

Dr. Harrington's reconstruction process, however, is "prepectoral," meaning that the reconstruction is all done above the pectoralis muscle, reducing discomfort—and of course, eliminating the need for two separate surgeries under general anesthesia.

While convenient, this also offers mental benefits, too, Dr. Harrington said. "Studies have for a long time shown that patients do better when they are able to have their breast

reconstruction done at the same time as the mastectomy," she said. "From a psychological standpoint, from a self-identity standpoint, we just see better overall outcomes for patients that don't have to go through a phase where they feel 'disfigured' or 'not whole.'"

The partnership between the surgeons allows patients to not only have the best quality care possible, but to have the care available close to home, too.

"Beaufort Memorial is committed to expanding its services to fit the needs of a growing region," said Beaufort Memorial President and CEO Russell Baxley. "This exciting partnership shows our dedication to providing specialty care to our patients at the highest level possible."

The addition of Dr. Harrington to the Beaufort Memorial team is a major stride in the expansion of specialized care in Beaufort County, offering patients innovative, high-quality care right here at home.

"I'm excited she's here," said Dr. Grahovac. "It leads to the best outcomes for patients when you're a team. We're constantly in communication, strategizing approaches together. When you have a multidisciplinary surgical team, that's always going to translate into the best outcomes for patients, both oncologically and cosmetically."

Being diagnosed with breast cancer is life-changing, and when a patient isn't able to seek care in their own community, among their own friends, family and support system, it can be a burden on them.

"This has been the perfect place to come to as far as the need for what I do," Dr. Harrington reflected. "You just do better and heal better in your community, surrounded by people who know you and understand you and support you. I'm excited to be able to bring what I do here, because it feels like it was needed."



**"To elevate the care of patients with breast cancer in this area—to commit and do it well—means having a duo, a team of surgeons that includes reconstructive support."**

– Dr. Tara Grahovac

## SPY-PHI: Innovative steps forward in imaging

With new procedures offered at Beaufort Memorial comes the opportunity for technological advancement in the operating room and innovative solutions to further aid patient outcomes.

Mastectomies are "traumatic" to the breast skin, Dr. Harrington said, and a major challenge as a reconstructive surgeon is deciding whether a patient's skin is healthy enough to proceed directly to an implant.

"Previously, we really just used our clinical assessment of the tissue," Dr. Harrington said. "It's just not good enough."

That's where SPY-PHI technology comes in, a game changer for direct-to-implant procedures.

The SPY Portable Handheld Imager (SPY-PHI) uses SPY Fluorescence Imaging technology to let surgeons see blood flow during a procedure like a breast reconstruction.

Dr. Harrington performed the first two direct-to-implant procedures using SPY-PHI technology at Beaufort Memorial in early October.

### So, how does it work?

The surgeon injects a safe, fluorescent dye into a patient's IV and then uses the handheld imaging tool to view the dye in the bloodstream. Using the technology and the handheld tool to see the dye in her patient's bloodstream helps Dr. Harrington assess the patient's blood flow, which in turn allows her to make a more confident decision about the health of the skin and proceeding directly to an implant.

"I'm able to do one-stage, direct-to-implant reconstruction with confidence, knowing that the blood supply looked good and what we're doing is safe, and then put the implant above the muscle, too," she said. "We're really achieving a lot of things here."





▲ The Women's Imaging Department took home the **Department of the Year** award.

# Leading BY Example

Beaufort Memorial shone a bright spotlight on its hard workers and dedicated leaders as a part of National Hospital Week with its third annual Bemmy Awards ceremony in May.

These awards honor employees who have gone above and beyond their job duties over the past year, and who truly exemplify Beaufort Memorial's mission and core values.

"The Bemmy Awards ceremony is a unique opportunity to highlight the amazing work that our employees do," said Beaufort Memorial President and CEO Russell Baxley. "Healthcare is a difficult occupation, but we withstand the hardships that come our way because we choose to be in healthcare to serve people. It's breathtaking how much effort our people put into caring for our patients. So, taking the time to honor and thank them is essential."

Among the top awards this year was the **Vaux Clinical Employee of the Year**, an award named in memory of Ruthven Vaux, a longtime Bluffton resident and former member of the Beaufort Memorial Board of Trustees. The honor was awarded to **Deb Cofer**, a cath lab technician in the Cochrane Heart Center, who was described as "an angel on Earth" and the "backbone of the entire hospital" in her nomination and a leader within the organization, who goes above and beyond not just for her patients, but her coworkers and staff as well.



Emma Beach, CPCT  
**Rookie of the Year**



Deb Cofer  
**Vaux Clinical Employee of the Year**



Yvette-Marie Pellegrino, M.D.  
**Provider of the Year**



Candice Chappell, RN  
**Community Champion of the Year**



Tammy Bauknight, AAPC  
**Innovator of the Year**

The **Department of the Year** award went to the **Women's Imaging Department** – a growing department, following Beaufort Memorial's acquisition of Island Imaging on Hilton Head Island in October 2023. The department served nearly 23,000 patients in 2023 and is active throughout the community, participating in health fairs, events and other volunteer opportunities.

"To tell you that their staff is great or that they work hard would be an understatement," Baxley said. "And not only do they work hard, but they also forge rewarding relationships among each other, with their patients and in their communities."

**Yvette-Marie Pellegrino, M.D.**, a primary care and obesity medicine provider with Lady's Island Internal Medicine, took home **Provider of the Year** at the Bemmys for her compassionate care and strong connection with her patients since her start with Beaufort Memorial in 2018. Baxley read several comments from Dr. Pellegrino's patients, which included descriptive words and phrases like, "awesome," "outstanding," "10/10 every time," "empathetic" and "genuine."

The award for **Community Champion of the Year** went to **Candice Chappell, BSN, RN**, an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) registered nurse. Chappell, who has been an ICU nurse for nearly 30 years, was nominated by her coworkers for her countless hours as preceptor in 2023, her hard work during orientation for new nurses, and her recent organizing of a fundraiser to lift the spirits of a young ICU patient, allowing him to receive an expensive voice system for a tracheostomy. That patient called her an "angel."

**Tammy Bauknight, AAPC, CPCP, CPCO, CPMA**, was recognized as **Innovator of the Year**. Bauknight, coding department director, spearheaded and led the coding pathway in the Beaufort Memorial PATH program – one of the program's newest and most successful tracks.



Carrie McClure, RN  
**Zero Harm Safety Champion**



Denise Lindsey, RN  
**Leader of the Year**

"Healthcare is a difficult occupation, but we withstand the hardships that come our way because we choose to be in healthcare to serve people. It's breathtaking how much effort our people put into caring for our patients. So, taking the time to honor and thank them is essential."

– Russell Baxley

"On top of everything else she is doing, coding for over 100 providers on a day-to-day basis for her team, she also took the time to create an entire course to teach these individuals and make sure they got certified," Baxley said.

The award for **Zero Harm Safety Champion** went to Collins Birthing Center nursery registered nurse **Carrie McClure, BSN, RN**, who caught an error in medication administration to a patient, avoiding potential adverse effects and toxicity.

"In healthcare, we are not perfect. It's a team sport, and we watch each other's backs," Baxley said. "That's what this is about. That's what it takes to be a phenomenal organization and an amazing nurse."

**Emma Beach, CPCT** was honored with the award for **Rookie of the Year** in her position as a patient care technician in the Hospital Orthopedics and Medical/Surgical Unit.

The award for **Nonclinical Employee of the Year** went to Food and Nutrition aide **Austin Lanier** for his infectious smile, attention to detail and overall friendliness with both patients and coworkers. He's "one of the biggest rays of sunshine to work at Beaufort Memorial," Baxley said. "He knows most nurses by first name and greets everyone with a smile."

**Leader of the Year** went to **Denise Lindsey, MSN, RN**, director of perioperative services, whose leadership during the hospital's OR renovation has kept everything running smoothly as she guides by example, listens and jumps in to help wherever she's needed.

There were three departments that were honored as **Patient Experience Champions** based on overall patient survey scores: **Lowcountry Medical Group Imaging** (outpatient department category), **Beaufort Memorial Pulmonary Specialists** (Beaufort Memorial Physicians Partners practice category) and the **Beaufort Memorial Emergency Department** (inpatient department category).

Winners for each Bemmy award category in 2024 were selected from over 100 total nominations, as well as "You Shine Through" award recipients throughout the year.

Had an above-and-beyond experience?

Help us recognize our shining stars with a You Shine Through Award nomination at [BeaufortMemorial.org/OurStars](https://BeaufortMemorial.org/OurStars) or scan the QR code.





# Moving Forward Together

In our dedication to improving access to high-quality care throughout the Lowcountry, Beaufort Memorial is committed to smart, strategic growth and expansion.

This year has been characterized by movement: ongoing action on a myriad of expansion projects that show Beaufort Memorial's drive to bring more. More access, more providers, more convenience.

These expansion projects, in various stages of development, are all milestones from the past year along Beaufort Memorial's journey toward transforming tomorrow.

\$ 103 MILLION Investment

**Bluffton Community Hospital ...** The 28-bed, three-story Bluffton Community Hospital on the corner of Bluffton and Buckwalter Parkways will include a full-service emergency room and surgery center, as well as related services that support emergency medical care (imaging, lab, pathology, trauma).



**Next steps:** Site work will start in February 2025, with the groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for May.

Completion: Early 2027

\$ 16.6 MILLION Investment

**Emergency & Urgent Care ...** Beaufort Memorial announced a partnership with MUSC Health to establish a two-in-one emergency room and urgent care facility on the southern end of Hilton Head Island. At this facility, patients who arrive will be evaluated by a board-certified emergency physician and triaged to the appropriate level of care, be it emergency or urgent care.



**Next steps:** Groundbreaking on this facility at 1016 William Hilton Parkway is expected for Summer 2025.

Completion: Winter 2026

\$ 2.5 MILLION Investment

**May River Crossing Primary Care ...** In July, Beaufort Memorial closed on property for a 5,000-square-foot medical office building at the intersection of Okatie Highway and May River Road. This medical office space will house a new primary care practice once construction is completed.

**Next steps:** Construction is planned to begin in late 2025.

Completion: 2027

\$ 24 MILLION Investment

**Surgical Pavilion ...** The renovations to the Surgical Pavilion at Beaufort Memorial Hospital began with a bang in Fall 2023. The multi-stage project moved into its second of five phases in July 2024, and the Surgical Pavilion and Birthing Center hospital entrance reopened in October. This project includes the addition of two state-of-the-art surgical suites to address the growing demand for advanced procedures, expand existing suites to include the latest technologies and the upgrade of pre- and post- operating care areas for a more streamlined patient flow.

**Next steps:** The five-phase project still has a few phases to go before completion. Phase 2 includes building the new OR suite.

Completion: 2027

\$ 12 MILLION Investment

## LiveWell Terrace by BMH

In May 2024, Beaufort Memorial, in partnership with Beaufort County and the Town of Bluffton, announced its plan to address the need for affordable workforce housing and medical office space with the LiveWell Terrace by BMH complex, which will be constructed along Buckwalter Parkway in Bluffton.

The complex will include not only 120 affordable housing units, but a 5,000-square-foot medical office space as well that will house a new Beaufort Memorial primary care practice and physical, speech and occupational therapy services.



**Next steps:** Construction is expected to begin December 2025.

Completion: Winter 2026

\$ 2.2 MILLION Investment

**Angio Suite ...** A generous \$500,000 donation to the Beaufort Memorial Foundation from Charlie Francis in honor of his late wife Becky in May has made it possible to move forward with a state-of-the-art interventional radiology and vascular lab for image-guided diagnostics and therapeutic procedures.



**Next steps:** Construction on the new angiography suite in Beaufort will begin in Spring 2025.

Completion: Late 2025

\$ 1.9 MILLION Investment

**Crisis Stabilization Unit ...** As the year wrapped up, elements fell into place for the addition of a mental health crisis stabilization unit located inside the Pratt Emergency Center. This project is 85% funded through a SC Department of Health and Human Services grant, with the Foundation funding the balance through other grants and private donations. It will include a two-room and two-recliner bay closed unit for patients experiencing a psychiatric emergency.

**Next steps:** Construction will begin in early 2025.

Completion: Late 2025

Done ✓

The last year was a milestone year with the completion of several crucial Beaufort Memorial expansion and workforce development projects.

### Among the projects completed in 2024 were:

**Learning Center ...** The employer-subsidized childcare facility for Beaufort Memorial employees opened its doors at its new location in the fall, on the hospital's main campus in Beaufort. Read more about the lasting impact of affordable, reliable childcare on two Beaufort Memorial employees on page 14.

**Island Imaging Center ...** Beaufort Memorial's imaging facility unveiled its newest addition in October: a brand-new MRI suite bringing advanced imaging technology to Hilton Head Island. Read more on page 19.

**Career Development Center ...** Beaufort Memorial cut the ribbon on the new Career Development Center in July, a 6,340-square-foot facility built in partnership with the University of South Carolina Beaufort, Beaufort County, the City of Beaufort and the Beaufort Memorial Foundation. The facility provides hands-on training and classroom education for current and future health care professionals. Read more about the support and flexibility of the organization's education and PATH program team on page 16.







▲ The Ausec family at Walt Disney World in 2024.

## 'A Gigantic Blessing'

The Beaufort Memorial Learning Center was a 'saving grace' for Ausecs as their family grew by two.

Jesse and Paige Ausec had an untraditional foray into parenthood in 2022.

Within just a few weeks of being approved for a local adoption list, they were presented with a huge choice: welcoming 16-month-old twins to their family. It was a major life decision, they said, and they had just 48 hours to decide.

The couple, originally from Atlanta, both joined Beaufort Memorial's staff in 2012 ("a package deal," Jesse laughed). As a Collins Birthing Center nurse, Paige said she enjoys providing new parents with the tools they need to take home their newborns, and Jesse's role as a primarily pediatric occupational therapist with Beaufort Memorial Healthlink for Children allows him to fill his days with "skillful playing."

In their adoption journey, Jesse and Paige signed up for one, school-aged child (between the ages of five and eight). The opportunity to welcome twins who weren't even two years old was unexpected, and so was the quick turnaround time on one of the biggest decisions in their lives.

### The hunt for childcare

After deciding to take the leap, reliable childcare options surged to the top of their priority list. "We were stressed because the twins weren't school-aged," Jesse said, noting that with their families still living in Georgia, they had limited help when it came to childcare. "We had to go back to work. We didn't know how we were getting back to work."

The Beaufort Memorial Learning Center had been operational since Summer 2020 – the organization's response to pandemic-driven school closures and virtual learning schedules. Partnering with Hobbit Hill Preschools, Beaufort Memorial was able to begin offering reliable, high-quality and affordable childcare for employees at its facility on Lady's Island.

Two years after the facility opened, when the Ausecs were scrambling to find childcare for their rapidly growing family, their coworkers pointed them to the Learning Center. "We'd heard about the Learning Center but didn't know much about it," Paige said.

The Ausec family's need was immediate.

"We didn't have nine months to prepare," Jesse said. "We went to work that Wednesday not having kids, and on Friday morning, we had them. It was wild."

The couple reached out to Learning Center Director Miss Tammi, who scheduled a meet-and-greet with the Ausecs right away. She and the team wasted no time making a spot for the twins immediately. "She knew this hard situation we had, and she knew we were on a crunched timeline," Jesse said. "It was a lot of stress and a lot of unknowns. They were really a gigantic blessing."

### Convenience and care

Paige said that she and Jesse probably called 15 or more childcare centers in their search for affordable, reliable options. Childcare is a key factor as far as recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce, no matter the industry. During the pandemic, the need for reliable childcare was thrust into the limelight as COVID-19 forced schools and daycare centers to close their doors. Working parents at Beaufort Memorial and throughout the Lowcountry and beyond were faced with what appeared to be an insurmountable challenge.

Beaufort Memorial moved swiftly to meet the needs of its employees, and the Learning Center opened its doors in an existing facility at Celadon Square on Lady's Island. This fall – four years later – the Center cut the ribbon on its new location in Beaufort, right on the hospital's main campus.

That new location is even more convenient for the Ausecs, just steps away from where they both work. The security element also puts Paige and Jesse both at ease. "It's just nice to know that you're right there at the hospital," Paige said.

"If anything goes wrong, you can quickly get to your kid or get your kid into the ER – and, all the pediatrician practices are practically across the street."

Not to mention, the twins, now three, love it. They've made friends, they develop new skills daily and they rave about their teachers at the Learning Center (which they call "school"). "It's one thing when the teachers say they like your kids," Paige chuckled. "But it's like the cherry on top when your kids come home loving the teachers."

### A family environment

The twins, whose names are being withheld for privacy purposes, were made official as a part of the Ausec family in November.

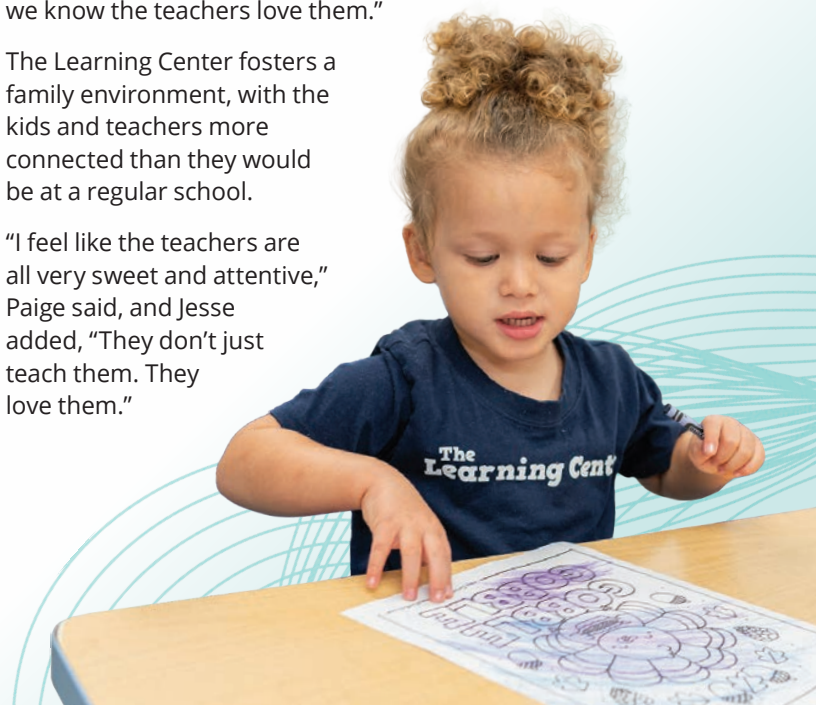
The Center has played such an integral role in the last several years that Miss Tammi even attended the twins' adoption hearing. Paige and Jesse also emphasized their gratitude to their directors, Megan Mack, OTR/L, MSHA, FACHE, and Tiffany Washington, RN, BSN, for allowing them scheduling flexibility throughout the family's adoption journey.

The Center's teachers, the couple said, are all amazing. The twins began in the facility's baby room as 16-month-olds, and every teacher they've encountered since has made an impact.

"They've been there since the very beginning," Jesse said. "We don't have to worry during the day; we know the teachers love them."

The Learning Center fosters a family environment, with the kids and teachers more connected than they would be at a regular school.

"I feel like the teachers are all very sweet and attentive," Paige said, and Jesse added, "They don't just teach them. They love them."



## Unexpected challenges, innovative solutions

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Beaufort Memorial teamed up with Hobbit Hill Preschools to develop a childcare program, and the Beaufort Memorial Learning Center opened its doors in September 2020.

The Center, fully licensed and then located in an existing facility on Lady's Island, offered Beaufort Memorial employees an affordable and reliable option for childcare during a time when school closures and virtual learning were the new normal.

In March 2024, with \$600,000 in support from the Beaufort Memorial Foundation, the organization broke ground on a new facility located on its main campus. Construction wrapped up over the summer and the program moved into its new home at 15 Verdier Bluff.

This employer-subsidized childcare model is common in urban healthcare systems, but Beaufort Memorial is committed to bringing that level of workforce support to the Lowcountry.

"When the pandemic hit, everyone went home except for hospital and healthcare workers. We all came to work – and then some," said Russell Baxley, Beaufort Memorial president and CEO. "We talk a lot about how access in Beaufort is tough for healthcare, but it's probably even tougher for childcare. This is a great step in addressing that issue."





# Top OF THE Class

▲ **PATH Program Educators:**  
Nurse liaison Katie Howell, clinical instructor Cathy Chandler, director of education and workforce development Joy Solomon, clinical instructor Mary Anne McNamee and clinical instructor Melissa Bramblett.

**Skilled, passionate educators team up to support the growing PATH program.**

When a cohort of students finishes its track in the Beaufort Memorial PATH (People Achieving Their Highest) program, it's an exciting milestone and a huge cause for celebration: applause, hugs, awards – even cake to commemorate the occasion.

That milestone isn't just monumental for each individual graduate, but for the program as a whole, which draws on the knowledge and passion of a flexible team behind the scenes.

Healthcare is a hard industry. The PATH program, born out of the COVID-19 pandemic's exacerbation of existing staffing shortages in the industry, was Beaufort Memorial's long-term solution for relieving some of that stress.

It wasn't just the nursing staff that was affected, but support staff, too: phlebotomists, EKG technicians, medical assistants and more.

"When we don't have that level of support staff, the responsibility falls on the nurse," said Joy Solomon, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, Director of Education & Workforce Development at Beaufort Memorial. "Those duties are still owed to the patient. So, how do we make that happen?"

It was a team effort from the very beginning, Joy said, and has remained that way.

At Beaufort Memorial, a team of skilled, passionate educators comes together to move the PATH program forward and provide a stout support system for the students who have taken the leap to go back to school.

Students may beam during their cohort's graduation – but this team behind the scenes is just as excited.

## Investing in the workforce

The PATH program offers a variety of internal pathways at Beaufort Memorial, as well as assists employees pursuing nursing or other healthcare careers through an accredited university program.

Beaufort Memorial employees are eligible to apply to the program after 90 days of employment, and receive access to career counseling, financial wellness resources and in-house training, as well as scholarship opportunities covering tuition, childcare and "gap" funding, plus flexible scheduling to allow them to accommodate classes while continuing to work.

**"The PATH program is building the caliber of Beaufort Memorial employees. When you build the caliber of employees, it's an intervention that is going to improve the quality of care, improve patient outcomes and experience. To me, that is the true value of the program."**

– Mary Anne McNamee, RN

PATH clinical instructor Mary Anne McNamee, MA, RN, MedSurg-BC, NPD-BC, said that Beaufort Memorial's dedication to investing in its employees was what drew her to the organization, which she joined in 2023.

## Duties beyond PATH

The diverse and motivated team behind the scenes is wearing lots of hats – a whole wardrobe filled to the brim of Beaufort Memorial hats.

"Outside of PATH, we're all constantly moving and shaking," Joy said. The education department consists mainly of master's degreed registered nurses, she added, so teaching clinical skills for the program's internal pathways is within the group's scope of competency. And it's a lot of work.

"This department doesn't just oversee PATH, but the education for all units. We all pitch in based on what our background entails, and we also manage the education for the current staff," explained clinical instructor Melissa Bramblett, MSN, RN, who began as an educator in August following her graduation with a master's in nursing education.

The education team plays a vital role in every department at the hospital, as well as new nurse orientation. These educators have a teaching role, course facilitation responsibilities, test reviews, skills labs, coaching, clinical rotations, and the list goes on.

The PATH program's internal pathway has seen 79 graduates in the first eight cohorts, and the program's pass rate is a staggering 97%, which is 20% higher than the National Healthcareer Association's national average. Students are clearly working hard, and so is the team behind them.

## The real reward

Coming back to school isn't an easy decision, something Melissa said she understood from personal experience.

"These students, they have families. They have full-time work," she said. "I know how hard it is to get through it as an adult with all of the other responsibilities in life, so it's exciting to see them accomplish something they're excited about."

Seeing the students achieve their goals makes the long hours and the headaches all worth it. It's not just the end goal that is rewarding, though. Simply making the decision to start on the pathway is the first celebration.

"It takes courage to sign on, and when they get into the program itself, it's like confidence, relief and joy on steroids," Joy said. "We feel like we took the test and passed. That's the first layer of 'rewards' – coming to the program."

And, of course, graduation is a huge milestone, and then the certification exam. Being able to celebrate the successes is what it's all about, and it makes everything worth it for the team.

"It's everything to us," Joy added. "That's not just my joy, either – we all have that same passion. Their heart is right there, too."

## Growing and adapting

As educators, Mary Anne said, it has been crucial to adapt to best fit the needs of the workforce, its students, Beaufort Memorial and the community.

"Fifty percent of the education is online, and we are coming in as educators to supplement that education and add to it," she explained. "We're looking at how people learn and trying to devise more strategies to help them master this new information and skills."

The program added an Endoscopy Technician track for its eighth cohort, and there's a budding partnership on the horizon with the Beaufort County School District.

The team is committed to the growth of the program, said nurse liaison Katie Howell, MSN, RN, who works externally for the education department and PATH program to make connections with high school students interested in healthcare careers.

"We have a phenomenal team here. Everyone's a hard worker, a go-getter and eager to help the PATH program grow and assist wherever they can. They're all rooting for every single person in the program and are their biggest fan," she said.

The faces behind the scenes know how tough the industry is, and how much courage, drive and support it takes to move forward in a student's education journey.

"Do it scared – we've got your back," Joy said. "If a student is willing to put forth the effort, we will help walk them to the finish line, and they won't find a greater organization with a better investment in their staff. We have a team of excellent educators who have the expertise, academic preparation and the heart to do it."

In 2024, Beaufort Memorial cut the ribbon on a state-of-the-art Career Development Center in Beaufort, built in partnership with the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB), Beaufort County, the City of Beaufort and the Beaufort Memorial Foundation. The Center is a satellite location for USCB's nursing program and has played a key role in expanding the professional development, education and certification testing for mid-career and aspiring healthcare professionals through the PATH program.





Beaufort Memorial honored 227 employees at their annual Employee Service Awards in October – that’s 227 employees that together boasted a total of over 2,500 years of compassionate dedication to caring for the community.

The honorees included employees celebrating milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 45 years of service at Beaufort Memorial.

“We work in a unique and very difficult industry,” said Beaufort Memorial President and CEO Russell Baxley. “Commitment to this industry shows passion, dedication and perseverance.”

The two employees celebrating the longest tenure with Beaufort Memorial this year were cardiopulmonary assistant Kathleen Jolly and Vice President of Patient Care and Chief Nursing Officer Karen Carroll, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, who both began with the organization 45 years ago.

Labor and delivery nurse Cheryl Savel, RN, and cardiopulmonary rehab nurse Kim Raines, RN, were also honored for long careers with Beaufort Memorial, both ringing in 35 years of service.

In total, the honorees for 2024 shared 2,545 years of service with Beaufort Memorial.

BY THE NUMBERS

2,545 Years OF SERVICE

TOTAL HONOREES CELEBRATED IN 2024 227

95 EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF SERVICE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF SERVICE 67

19 EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF SERVICE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE 23

15 EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE 4

2 EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 45 YEARS OF SERVICE 2

Noble Work



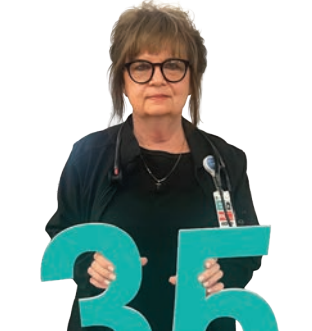
Karen Carroll, DNP, RN, NEA-BC



Kathleen Jolly



Cheryl Savel, RN



Kim Raines, RN

IN Their WORDS

Karen Carroll - 45 Years Vice-President of Patient Care and Chief Nursing Officer

“I think taking care of people, be that directly or indirectly, is noble work and is the best part of healthcare. I am still touched and moved by patients every day.

It has been amazing to see the organization grow over all these years. When I first started, Beaufort Memorial was a secondary choice for healthcare in the county; most people went to Savannah or Charleston. Seeing Beaufort Memorial grow and become a primary choice for healthcare is rewarding and fills me with pride – as I hope it does every Beaufort Memorial employee.”

Kathleen Jolly - 45 Years Cardiopulmonary Assistant

“I love my job because of the people I work with. I raised my kids working here, my grandchild works here. It’s a family affair.

My advice to someone just starting at Beaufort Memorial? Just do your job to the best of your abilities. Take it one day at a time.”

Cheryl Savel - 35 Years Labor and Delivery Nurse

“It’s the best job in town. I see the community, people I went to school with, now having grandbabies, and the people my kids went to school with, they’re having babies. It’s just rewarding.

It’s definitely my family; I’ve spent more than half my life here. I can remember when I was the youngest in the department, and now I’ve been there the longest. I’ve grown up here.”

Kim Raines - 35 Years Cardiopulmonary Rehab Nurse

“Nursing is my passion. After 35 years, I still enjoy coming to work every day and interacting with the patients in Cardiopulmonary Rehab. I learn something every day from the patients and staff, and I appreciate all the friendships I’ve made over the years.

I wouldn’t change anything. I’ve been a witness to a lot of changes here at Beaufort Memorial and it continues to get better with every growth opportunity.”



The new MRI suite at Beaufort Memorial Island Imaging on Hilton Head Island

Island Imaging celebrates the addition of new MRI suite

Beaufort Memorial Island Imaging Center on Hilton Head Island unveiled a new addition to its services at the end of October: a state-of-the-art MRI suite bringing advanced imaging technology to southern Beaufort County.

The facility hosted a ribbon cutting on Oct. 28 with Mayor Alan Perry and members of the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the addition. The suite brings the most advanced imaging technology to the island, offering exceptionally detailed images and faster scan times, while also providing a more comfortable experience for patients.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) non-invasively captures three dimensional images of organs, tissues and the skeletal system to detect and diagnosis diseases and monitor treatments. An MRI scanner uses a large magnet, radio waves and a computer to produce these highly detailed images.

“When we bought this center a year and a half ago, we promised to expand services to include a brand-new MRI, and that’s what we’ve done,” said Beaufort Memorial President and CEO Russell Baxley. “We are committed to continuing to expand services and access to both specialized and primary care on Hilton Head Island and south of the Broad River.”

Beaufort Memorial acquired Island Imaging on Hilton Head Island in 2023 as part of its efforts to meet the growing demand for quality healthcare in southern Beaufort County. The center offers a comprehensive array of imaging services including X-rays, ultrasounds, CT scans, fluoroscopy, bone densitometry and elastography, as well as breast screening services such as 3D mammography with same-day results.

Beaufort Memorial offers advanced imaging technology for inpatients in Beaufort and outpatients in Beaufort, Hilton Head Island and Okatie.



Beaufort Memorial acquires urology group, expanding network of providers

Beaufort Memorial expanded its growing family of specialty care providers this year with the acquisition of Coastal Carolina Urology Group, the practice of Dr. Louis F. Plzak III and board-certified physician assistants Kristin Callaghan and Nancy Thomas.

The practice, renamed “Beaufort Memorial Urology Specialists,” offers a wide range of urology care, from male to female urinary conditions to kidney and prostate issues.

The addition of physician assistant Matthew Baker in May allowed the practice to expand access in southern Beaufort County and begin seeing patients in Okatie and Beaufort.

The acquisition of the practice and its expansion south of the Broad River increases patient access to the Urology Specialists’ familiar, skilled, compassionate staff.

The practice’s specialists see patients in: Beaufort (1055 Ribaut Road, Suite 10) and Okatie (122 Okatie Center Blvd. North, Suite 300, Okatie Medical Pavilion).



Welcoming New Providers

It was a record year for Beaufort Memorial’s commitment to expanding care in the Lowcountry, with the addition of 16 new providers in a wide range of areas including primary care, pulmonology, women’s health and plastic surgery.

- Shawna Nievierowski, FNP-BC – Pulmonary Specialists (10/23)
- Katie Durden, DNP, PMHNP-BC – Sea Island Psychiatry (12/23)
- John P. Krcmarik, M.D., FCCP – Pulmonary Specialists (1/24)
- Bruce S. Vincent, M.D. – May River Primary Care (1/24)
- James A. Benn, PMHNP-BC – Beaufort Memorial Hospital, Psychiatry (2/24)
- Aubrey Place, M.D. – Surgical Specialists (3/24)
- Matthew Baker, PharmD, PA-C – Urology Specialists (5/24)
- Bailey Stewart Toulson, PA-C – Surgical Specialists (5/24)
- J. Eric Turner, M.D. – Oncology Specialists (6/24)
- Heidi Harrington, M.D. – Plastic Surgery & Aesthetics (7/24)
- Andrew Stevens, M.D. – Pulmonary Specialists (8/24)
- Melissa Mesenburg, DNP, APRN, FNP-C – Obstetrics & Gynecology Specialists (8/24)
- Taylor Turnbull, M.D. – Surgical Specialists (8/24)
- James Varner, MMS, PA-C – Lowcountry Medical Group Primary Care (8/24)
- Curtis Elam, M.D., FACOG – Obstetrics & Gynecology Specialists (9/24)
- Jessica Elkins, PA – Lowcountry Medical Group Specialty Care – Gastroenterology (10/24)





# Worth *Investing In*

▲ Chris Marmo, Jason Graham, and Trisha Marmo celebrate the end of the first semester with the Marmo Scholarship recipients in the PATH Career Development Center.

**Jason Graham has always had a heart for helping others, but it wasn't until a cross-country move, a global pandemic and a profound personal loss that he found his true calling: nursing. Now, halfway through his nursing program, Jason is determined to turn his compassion into action.**

Thanks to the newly established Marmo Family Nursing Scholarship through the Beaufort Memorial Hospital Foundation, he's one step closer to realizing his dream of caring for patients and making a positive impact on their lives.

Prior to the pandemic, Jason was a wellness coach with Beaufort Memorial LifeFit Wellness Center. A career in nursing was always in the back of his mind, but losing both grandparents from COVID-19 and experiencing first-hand how important having a strong nursing workforce is to our community, he decided to take the leap.

"My grandparents passed away within a week of each other," he recalled. "It was that loss that spurred me back into healthcare – that loss and seeing how the healthcare industry was adapting to the situation. It made me want to influence people's health again, make a change in people's lives and their quality of care."

In late 2023, Jason started applying to schools and was accepted into the nursing program at the University of South Carolina Beaufort.

As a non-traditional nursing student returning to school, Jason said his financial aid options at the federal level were limited, which contributed to financial stresses he was experiencing while moving forward with the program.

He approached Christina Beall, the chair of USCB's nursing program, in the spring.

"I let her know I was really trying to find a financial solution," Jason said. "I said, 'you know, I'm having an issue and I don't know if I'll be able to continue with the program.'"

## A new opportunity

Beall handed Jason an application to the brand-new Marmo Family Nursing Scholarship, and he applied immediately.

"I've always loved Beaufort Memorial and their mission, and it's great that the Foundation has this partnership with the Marmo family," he added.

In July, Jason received life-changing news: he was chosen as one of the scholarship's inaugural recipients.

"I was overwhelmed," he said, recalling how he felt when he found out he was a Marmo Family Nursing Scholarship recipient. "To receive such a gift...it's a relief as well, as it instilled the idea that I need to prove myself even more. I need to show that I'm worth investing in."

## Paying it forward

Trisha and Chris Marmo created the scholarship fund in partnership with the Foundation with a goal of supporting five nursing students annually on their education journey, giving back to students, local healthcare and the community as a whole. The Bluffton couple's support is a generous step toward building a strong healthcare labor pool right here in the Lowcountry.

"It sounds cliché," said former nurse and scholarship namesake, Trisha Marmo. "But Chris and I had a successful run, and we're ready to give back. Education was the ticket out of poverty for us both. We hope that with this fund, we can be an example to others of all that can be accomplished through education. We also hope our scholarship recipients will pay it forward themselves one day by providing exceptional healthcare to the community."

The scholarship's relief for some of Jason's financial pressures has been huge, but for him, it goes beyond that. The boost allows him to focus his energy purely on academics, rather than seeking out additional avenues for financial support and dwelling on the burden of repaying increased loans down the line.

"It'll help me internally improve care," he explained. "I won't be constantly burdened with the stress of financial responsibility as much; therefore, I can put more energy into focusing on patient care."

To call Jason a "nature-lover" is an understatement; when he's not dedicating his time to his career in the nursing field, he's tending to his garden, taking in the beauty of Beaufort County and in general looking for ways to positively impact the environment. That desire for positive change applies both to his love of nature and his career in the healthcare industry, supported by the Foundation and the Marmo family scholarship.

Drawn to Beaufort Memorial's nonprofit status and its focus on community health, Jason believes the organization's dedication to innovation is essential for improving patient outcomes and delivering quality healthcare. The Marmo scholarship embodies this spirit, providing crucial support to students like Jason who aspire to make a difference in healthcare.

"I'm incredibly grateful that an opportunity like this is available for the Lowcountry. When looking at scholarships, they're either in cities or they're national or regional. This scholarship, being local, makes it so personal because we need good healthcare in the Lowcountry."

– Jason Graham



## ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship provides recipients up to \$4,000 per semester, and any active college students admitted to an accredited nursing program who are residents of Beaufort, Jasper or Hampton County (or whose nursing program is located in Beaufort, Jasper or Hampton County) are eligible to apply. Applications are accepted May 1-June 30 and notified in July.

## Discover the Powerful Impact of Philanthropy on Healthcare.

To see how the Foundation is transforming healthcare in our community, scan the QR code or visit [BeaufortMemorial.org/Foundation](https://BeaufortMemorial.org/Foundation). Together, we're building a healthier community!





# 2024 Year in Review

### 2024 REVENUE

Total net patient revenue:	\$331.3 M
Other nonoperating revenue:	\$24.4 M
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$355.7 M</b>

### TOTAL UNCOMPENSATED CARE

Charity care and bad debt:	\$36.9 M
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### 2024 EXPENSES

Salaries, wages and benefits:	\$178 M
Supplies, utilities and general items:	\$109.8 M
Depreciation:	\$11 M
Interest:	\$1.4 M

\*Not-yet-audited numbers for fiscal year 2024

<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$343 M</b>
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<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>\$12.7 M</b>
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### BEAUFORT MEMORIAL By the Numbers

ADULT DISCHARGES 9,059

OUTPATIENT REGISTRATIONS 250,793

PHYSICIAN OFFICE VISITS 292,214

SURGERIES 12,355

NEWBORN DELIVERIES 1,110

EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS 45,700



### BEAUFORT MEMORIAL FOUNDATION Grants - FY24

2024 TOTAL SUPPORT: \$2,702,256

CAPITAL SUPPORT \$1,579,892

- Furniture for the McBratney Riverview Terrace
- Aortic Balloon Pump & EKG Machine for Cardiology
- Hemochron ACT Analyzer
- Pupulometer and BIS Monitor for ICU
- Nursing Unit Renovations
- (14) Stretchers
- Bladder Scanner for PCU
- Exam Room Procedure Light for ED
- NuStep and Elliptical for LifeFit Wellness
- Pediatric Rehab Vibration Power Plate
- Breast Stabilization Unit and Ultrasound for Mammo
- Vital Sign Monitor for Infusion
- (4) Ultrasound Systems
- Infant Cardiac Monitoring and Video Intubation Systems
- (2) Endoscopes
- Hana Table for OR
- Daycare Center Construction

GENERAL Operational Support: \$897,228

ADDICTION MEDICINE Operational Support: \$100,000

HEALTHCARE Scholarships: \$108,000

PHARMACEUTICAL Assistance: \$17,137



### On the Go

The Mobile Wellness Unit has provided or been a part of:

86 HEALTH SCREENING EVENTS Serving 1,670 people

1,149 BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS 236 of them abnormal

1,060 BLOOD GLUCOSE SCREENINGS 142 of them abnormal

651 LIPID PANELS 318 of them abnormal

67 CLINICAL BREAST and SKIN EXAMS 7 abnormal

1,002 FLU SHOTS at employer and community events

Scan to learn about how the Mobile Wellness Unit can bring free and low-cost health screenings to your neighborhood, health fair, business, school, church or other event.



### FEEDING Need

Partnering with local agencies' "Meals on Wheels" programs, Beaufort Memorial has provided...

### Sickle Cell CLINIC

Beaufort Memorial's Sickle Cell Clinic has cut crisis-driven ER visits driven by the condition's debilitating pain and organ damage by 65% and has resulted in a decrease of 74% in hospital stays since the program's inception. In 2024, the clinic had 620 patient visits.

### GOOD NEIGHBORS Great Care

Beaufort Memorial supports other community safety net organizations with in-kind services, including:

GOOD NEIGHBOR MEDICAL CLINIC

243 IMAGING PROCEDURES Total value of \$410,567

2,435 LABORATORY TESTS Total value of \$359,230

IN-KIND RENTAL OF 3,025 SQUARE FEET OF CLINIC SPACE Valued at \$88,935

41 OTHER SPECIALTY SURGICAL AND HOSPITAL SERVICES Total value of \$14,204

### ACCESSHEALTH OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

809 PRIMARY CARE VISITS Total value of \$371,080

2,554 SPECIALTY CARE VISITS Total value of \$1,646,168

278 IMAGING PROCEDURES Total value of \$519,114

1,430 LABORATORY TESTS Total value of \$204,305

390 SURGICAL PROCEDURES Total value of \$309,412

657 OTHER HOSPITAL SERVICES Total value of \$181,374

VOLUNTEERS IN MEDICINE (Greater Bluffton Jasper County and Hilton Head Island) IMAGING PROCEDURES ... Total value of \$71,581

250 MEALS

PER WEEK FOR THOSE IN NEED

TOTALING \$225,000 in donated food since October 2020.



# THE GIFT OF Time and Talents

## HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS

**180** VOLUNTEERS FROM  
THE COMMUNITY  
PROVIDING **2,883** HOURS OF SERVICE IN 2024

**60** STAFF VOLUNTEERS in the newly  
established **No One Dies Alone** program, which  
ensures patients without local friends/family  
have a beside companion around the clock



## FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- **Alex Dorobantu** (*Board Chair*)  
Resident of Beaufort – **6 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Anthony (Tony) W. Britton** (*Treasurer*) – Resident of Beaufort  
**9 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Rebecca Sprecher** (*Board Vice Chair*) – Resident of St. Helena  
**5 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Geneva Baxley** (*Secretary*) – Resident of Beaufort – **5 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Daniel Barton** – Resident of Hilton Head Island – **9 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Martin Coyne** – Resident of Bluffton – **3 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **David C. House** – Resident of Okatie – **2 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Katie Huebel** – Resident of Beaufort – **5 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Bob Scutta** – Resident of Beaufort – **4 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Mary Lohr** – Resident of Beaufort – **2 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **John Hoffman** – Resident of Okatie – **3 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Mark Piegza** – Resident of Hilton Head – **1 YEAR OF SERVICE**
- **Katie Phifer** – Resident of Beaufort – **1 YEAR OF SERVICE**
- **Larry Pitts** – Resident of Bluffton – **3 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **John Welling** – Resident of Okatie – **1 YEAR OF SERVICE**
- **Steve Wexler** – Resident of St. Helena – **1 YEAR OF SERVICE**
- **Shelia Wilson** – Resident of Lady's Island – **1 YEAR OF SERVICE**
- **Carolyn M. Banner, Ph. D.** (*Hospital Board Representative*)
- **Bill Himmelsbach** (*Hospital Board Representative*)

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER HOURS: **200**

## HOSPITAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- **Bill Himmelsbach** (*Board Chair*) – Resident of Okatie  
**11 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Jane Kokinakakis, D.O.** (*Board Vice Chair*) – Resident of Seabrook  
**4 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Vernita F. Dore** (*Board Secretary*) – Resident of Beaufort  
**4 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Carolyn M. Banner, Ph. D.** (*Legislative and Community Outreach  
Committee Chair*) – Resident of Lady's Island – **3 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Eric Billig, M.D.** (*Quality Improvement Committee Chair*) – Resident  
of Beaufort – **6 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **Tommy Harmon, Jr.** (*Finance Committee Chair*) – Resident of Okatie  
**1 YEAR OF SERVICE**
- **William F. Jessee, M.D., FACMPE** (*Compliance Committee Chair*)  
Resident of Beaufort – **3 YEARS OF SERVICE**
- **E. Richardson LaBruce** (*Governance Committee Chair*) – Resident  
of Bluffton – **5 YEARS OF SERVICE**

### Ex-Officio Board Members

- **Alex Dorobantu** (*Foundation Chair*)
- **Douglas J. Folzenlogen, M.D.** (*Chief of Staff*)
- **Anna Maria "Tab" Tabernick** (*Beaufort County Council Vice Chair*)
- **Joseph Passiment** (*Beaufort County Council Chairman*)

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER HOURS: **1,170**

We had 844 You Shine Through Nominations for fiscal year 2024. To learn more about Beaufort Memorial employee excellence, see **page 10**. In 2024, Beaufort Memorial recognized over 220 employees celebrating a total of 2,545 years of service to the organization. For more details about employees celebrating milestone years of service to Beaufort Memorial, see **page 18**.