

A PUBLICATION
FOR THE FRIENDS OF
MEMORIAL HERMANN

Memorial Hermann Foundation
SUMMER 2024

ADVANCING THE

VISION

To health. TOMORROW'S PROMISE.

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DEAR FRIENDS,



There is no mountain high enough and no opportunity too small to change a future and to improve the health of our community. Memorial Hermann goes above and beyond, bringing transformational concepts to life.

In response to our nationwide nursing shortage, the Foundation received a \$2 million gift to launch the Memorial Hermann Institute for Nursing Excellence, a marvel of forward thinking and creativity that is fueling nurses' career dreams and helping achieve new heights in patient care.

HEAL High School in Aldine ISD is set to open this fall. It is a one-of-a-kind career-technical education partnership that helps high school students jump-start a promising health care career at Memorial Hermann and supports the System's talent pipeline.

This year's spectacular gala events, chaired by the fabulous Hallie Vanderhider, honored Plains All American and its leaders Greg and Melinda Armstrong, Willie and Linda Chiang, and Harry and Jane Pefanis—true pioneers embodying the spirit of community.

The events also raised a record-breaking \$4.8 million to benefit Memorial Hermann and Memorial Hermann Life Flight®.

You are the heart and soul of all that we do. Thank you.

Anne E. Neeson
Executive Vice President & CEO
Memorial Hermann Foundation

On the cover. Fifty employees from across the Memorial Hermann Health System brought the crowd to their feet with a rousing performance of "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" at this year's finale gala. Front and center is Suzi Byrd, a chaplain who works with Code Lilac, a peer support program offering psychological first aid to Memorial Hermann colleagues.

HIGH HOPES FOR HEAL HIGH

With a \$31 million gift from Bloomberg Philanthropies, Memorial Hermann Health System and Aldine Independent School District are embarking on a first-of-its-kind health education initiative.

“These kids will have access to change the trajectory of their lives.”

LaTonya Goffney, PhD,
Aldine ISD Superintendent



Opportunity knocks in a big way with the opening of Health Education and Learning (HEAL) High School on Aldine ISD’s Nimitz campus. This signifies a unique collaboration with promising long-term prospects for students, health care institutions and surrounding communities alike.

HEAL programming allows students to prepare for well-paying health care careers along their choice of five high-demand pathways, including nursing, physical and occupational therapy, medical imaging, pharmacy and non-clinical administration. Graduates of the four-year program earn their high school diplomas and valuable credentials and certifications in their chosen fields, ready to help fuel Memorial Hermann’s talent pipeline and their own local community’s economic growth for generations to come.

This exciting development is part of a \$250 million initiative from Bloomberg Philanthropies to create new models of career and technical education (CTE) high schools in urban and rural communities across the country. Memorial Hermann was one of only 10 health systems chosen to participate in this novel approach to enhance the health care workforce and change lives.

Aldine ISD serves a 92% at-risk population.

When Memorial Hermann heard about the opportunity, leadership set about choosing an academic partner. Aldine ISD, with an innovation hub already in place was a natural choice.

Memorial Hermann Foundation was the catalyst for the teams from Memorial Hermann and Aldine ISD coming together to craft a winning proposal. They presented a health care-focused high school curriculum that would expose students to real-life learning experiences at

Memorial Hermann facilities and provide simulated skills training in a mock hospital on the HEAL school campus, in addition to workshops, guest lectures and mentorships. Bloomberg Philanthropies’ generous \$31 million investment supports personnel, classroom and lab renovations, and other work-based learning requirements to get the innovative CTE pilot program off the ground quickly.

HEAL High School will educate and train 760 students per year at capacity.

“We’re all about collaboration and partnership to address issues of providing equitable access to health care,” says David L. Callender, MD, president and CEO of Memorial Hermann Health System. “This will help prepare students who are interested in a very rewarding career.”

Opening Aug. 12, 2024, HEAL High School will be phased in across four academic years. By 2028, the school is expected to be at capacity, serving 760 students each year.

“We want to give our students the opportunity to make a career out of something they’re passionate about,” says Gabriela Sierra, executive director of transformation at Aldine ISD. “Parents are very excited about this, especially our partnership with Memorial Hermann.”

Memorial Hermann teams are equally thrilled and eager to help get the program off to a great start. Staff from across the system attended every recruitment event to demonstrate the career pathways and encourage students to enroll. They will also serve as student mentors.

This summer, HEAL students and teachers are invited to attend a special immersion program offering them the same orientation experience that new Memorial Hermann employees receive. As students progress, HEAL program benefits accelerate to including volunteer and employment opportunities, mentorships and stipends.



Aldine ISD Superintendent LaTonya Goffney, PhD, appreciates the potential this collaborative effort represents. “I’m super excited,” she says. “These kids will have access to change the trajectory of their lives.”

Her enthusiasm is well placed. HEAL graduates ready to jump into a health care career have a huge advantage—priority interviewing at Memorial Hermann where the benefits package covers tuition for employees to earn advanced health care degrees. The program also provides postsecondary education partners aligned with each career track.

Students choose from five health care pathways: nursing, physical and occupational therapy, medical imaging, pharmacy and non-clinical medical administration.

Eighth grade student Ariana Guzman can’t wait to get started. “I’m scared,” she says, “but I’m also excited to get real experience toward a career field I’ve always wanted for myself.”

Many parents and teachers react the same way to HEAL’s novel approach to learning: “I wish there had been this opportunity when I was in high school.”

Visit [memorialhermann.org/foundation/heal-high-school](https://www.memorialhermann.org/foundation/heal-high-school) to learn more.



On this picture-perfect evening, garden party guests celebrated the work of Memorial Hermann and Memorial Hermann Life Flight®.

As the song goes, Memorial Hermann Foundation's Dancing in the Moonlight was "a supernatural delight" at McGovern Centennial Gardens in Hermann Park in support of Memorial Hermann and Life Flight. Hundreds of friends and supporters honored couples Melinda and Greg Armstrong, Linda and Willie Chiang, and Jane and Harry Pefanis, representing Plains All American, whose commitment to safety, accountability and innovation

aligns perfectly with Memorial Hermann's values.

Hallie Vanderhider, who chaired the event, gave everyone a night to remember. Evening highlights included a sumptuous Churrascos buffet, lively mixing and mingling, lighted cowboy hats and flowered crowns, music by Infinite Groove and of course the "fine and natural sight, everybody's dancin' in the moonlight."



Ashley Gibson, Michael Vanderhider, Hallie Vanderhider, Bobby Dees



Willie Chiang, Linda Chiang, Bill Easter, Barbara Easter, David Callender, Tonya Callender



Elizabeth Stein, Alan Stein, Laura Stein



Donna Lewis, Norman Lewis



Nick Nagurski, Tony Bradfield, Alvin Abraham



Demetra Jones, Frank Jones



From beginning to end, this year's gala finale inspired a rousing sing-along, emotional moments and a record-breaking \$4.8 million in gifts.

The fun never stopped. To get the party started, Memorial Hermann team members, including physicians, Life Flight crew, technicians, chaplains and staff, all in their scrubs, white coats and Memorial Hermann work uniforms, joined the Ernest Walker Community Singers in a rollicking rendition of "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" in keeping with the event's theme. The entire ballroom lit up in a joyous, handclapping, body-swaying musical celebration.

A poignant video helped round out the evening, featuring special moments from Memorial Hermann's wide-ranging contributions

to our community's health and remarks from David L. Callender, MD, event chair Hallie Vanderhider and Anne Neeson. Honorees Melinda and Greg Armstrong, Linda and Willie Chiang, and Jane and Harry Pefanis of Plains All American expressed their appreciation for being recognized for their generous contributions and community service.

Just when it seemed there could be nothing more wonderful to say or do, two anonymous supporters contributed unexpected gifts of \$500,000 and \$200,000. What a night!

Photo: Willie & Linda Chiang, Bobby Dees & Hallie Vanderhider, Melinda & Greg Armstrong, Jane & Harry Pefanis



Jerry Simon, Lisa Simon, Nina Hendee, Suzie Johnson, Edd Hendee, Anne Neeson



Sam Golden, Valerie Golden



Tom Flanagan, Susan Sarofim



Elizabeth Galtney, Will Galtney



Beverly Postl, Jim Postl, Judy Miller



Keith Mosing, Alice Mosing, Elizabeth Petersen, Gary Petersen



Philamena Baird, Arthur Baird



Rob Pierce, Amy Pierce



David Callender, Tonya Callender, Kristina Somerville, Paul Somerville



Fady Armanious, Bill Baldwin



Bobby Dees, Hallie Vanderhider



Doug Herron, Winell Herron



Dee Methvin, Stacy Methvin, Maggie Sheridan, Greg Sheridan



David Callender, Harry Pefanis, Greg Armstrong, Willie Chiang, Steve Trauber



Zhanna Golodryga, Vitaly Golodryga



Karen Garcia, Roland Garcia



John Graf, Maureen Graf, Matt Khourie, Carolyn Khourie



Cherif Mbodji, Melissa Juneau, Aaron Bludorn, Blake Tartt



Alicia Smith, Margaret Alkek Williams, Hallie Vanderhider

PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS

As part of an exciting, multifaceted initiative, the new Memorial Hermann Institute for Nursing Excellence is shaping the future of health care in Houston.

Great nurses are vital to a healthy community. Day in and day out, often under difficult circumstances, they provide care and comfort, serve as patient advocates, share new ideas to improve patient experiences and save lives.

Memorial Hermann's 14,000-plus nursing professionals make up more than half of the System's workforce, and their impact is profound. Through their lifesaving skills and compassionate care, they have been instrumental in helping the System achieve national and regional acclaim for safe, quality care.

“The Memorial Hermann Institute for Nursing Excellence is a groundbreaking facility.”

Bryan Sisk, Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Executive,
Memorial Hermann Health System

In recognition of their invaluable contributions and considering today's alarming national nursing shortages, Memorial Hermann is taking bold steps to excite, inspire and support nurses in advancing their careers and transforming care for the patients they serve. Step one was the launch of the Memorial Hermann Institute for Nursing Excellence in 2022, a \$25 million initiative made possible by a \$2 million gift to Memorial Hermann Foundation.



Memorial Hermann Foundation Board members toured the Institute for an up-close and personal look at the innovative classrooms and simulation center spaces.

“The Memorial Hermann Institute for Nursing Excellence is a groundbreaking facility,” says Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Executive Brian Sisk. “Within these walls we are achieving our goals to grow the nursing workforce, reimagine and innovate care at the bedside and excel in our clinical and operational outcomes.”

This is a significant philanthropic investment. Additional philanthropic support received this year has enabled Memorial Hermann to remove barriers to nurses on their career journeys and provide meaningful scholarships as they enhance their certifications and licenses.

The Memorial Hermann Foundation Board toured the facilities on June 7. Caitlin McVey, the Institute's associate vice president, takes great pride in showing off its innovative spaces for education and hands-on training.

“Every space has been thoughtfully designed by nurses for nurses and clinical care teams,” she says. “Perhaps what's most exciting is the simulation center where nurses can test new technologies and workflows.”



In 2024, 10 registered nurses received scholarships to assist them on their career journey to earning a bachelor's degree of science in nursing.

“Every space has been thoughtfully designed by nurses for nurses and clinical care teams.”

Caitlin McVey, Associate Vice President, Memorial Hermann Nursing Institute

Here’s a brief look at the Institute’s impressive progress in meeting its strategic goals so far.

Elevate the nursing profession

The Institute established a systemwide Professional Governance Congress, giving nurses the power to influence key decisions and fostering a collaborative culture of excellence between frontline nurses and their leadership.

To reduce nursing stress, Memorial Hermann is piloting a telenursing program that uses virtual nurses to complete time-consuming administrative tasks, giving bedside nurses more time to focus on meaningful patient interactions.

Accelerate innovation to the bedside

The Institute participates in The Health Management Academy Nursing Catalyst Program, which involves nurse managers from across the country working to identify creative solutions to nursing recruitment, retention and engagement challenges.

Additionally, innovations like standardized tag systems for IV medications and pilot technology to prevent falls are paving the way for safer, more efficient care, using the Institute’s dedicated space for interdisciplinary training to test new systems and technologies before they reach the bedside.

Strengthen the nursing workforce

Removing barriers to education through scholarships and flexible learning options is empowering nurses to pursue their dreams and advance their careers.

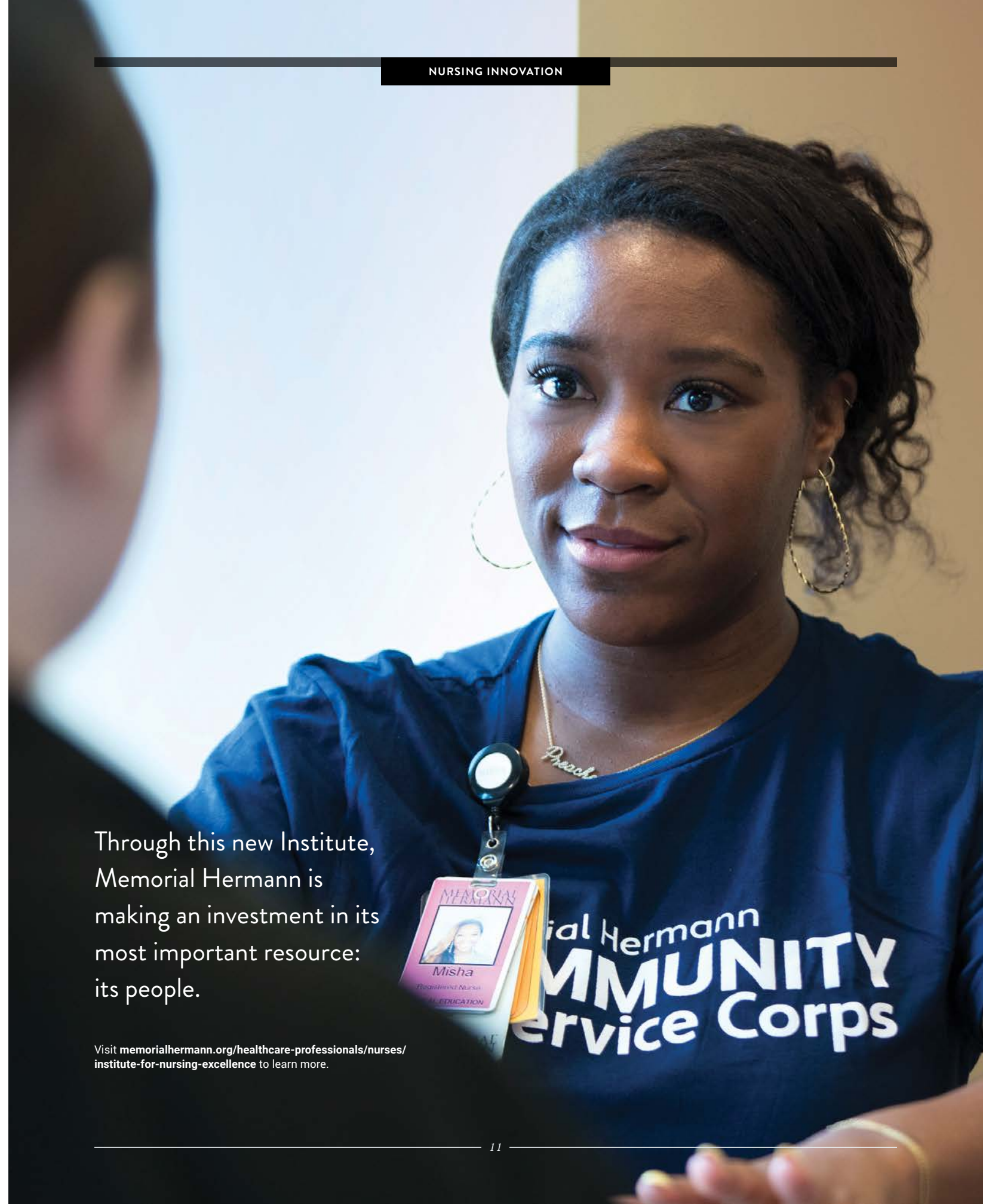
The System is also working to ease requirements for entry jobs, increase pay for student nurses and make it easier for nurses to return to school through the Learn Well Program, which supports tuition, books and other fees.

Excel in clinical and operational outcomes

The Institute has established a supportive infrastructure to better understand and nurture the nursing workforce. By leveraging data-driven dashboards and analytics, the Institute can monitor progress and identify areas for improvement in real time while helping the System motivate nurses, grow skills and talent, and cultivate advanced health solutions.

The best is yet to come

Ultimately, the 44,000-plus square foot Institute aims to create a pioneering environment that will attract and retain top talent, transform care at the bedside and ensure nursing excellence for generations to come.



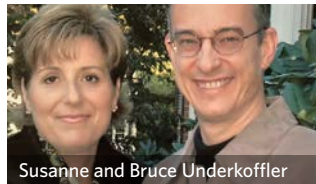
Through this new Institute, Memorial Hermann is making an investment in its most important resource: its people.

Visit [memorialhermann.org/healthcare-professionals/nurses/institute-for-nursing-excellence](https://www.memorialhermann.org/healthcare-professionals/nurses/institute-for-nursing-excellence) to learn more.

Forever Grateful

When Bruce Underkoffler lost his battle with brain cancer, his family found a way to say thank you for the care and compassion he received.

In August 2019, Bruce Underkoffler had a seizure. Emergency responders took him to Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Medical Center where Emergency Center care teams quickly stabilized him.



Susanne and Bruce Underkoffler

“From there, they transferred Bruce to the Neuroscience floor,” Susanne Underkoffler says, “and from that moment on, I saw my husband receive the very best care.”

Within days, the Underkofflers learned the seriousness of Bruce’s condition. He had a grade IV glioblastoma, the most aggressive brain tumor. Patients typically have 12–14 months to live after receiving the diagnosis.

“We were devastated,” Susanne says. “We couldn’t believe it.”

Bruce’s neuro-oncology care team recommended surgery as soon as he was strong enough. They transferred him upstairs to TIRR Memorial Hermann-The Woodlands for rehabilitation. Susanne and their children, Christian and Katie, joined Bruce in meeting George Al Shamy, MD, who would perform the delicate brain surgery. Bruce’s family was struck by the compassion in his eyes as he talked about what they could expect in the coming months.

Bruce’s post-surgery care plan included multiple rounds of radiation and chemotherapy. Bruce and his family stood strong throughout his cancer journey, cherishing every moment.



“I cannot overstate the level of care we received.”

Susanne Underkoffler

Sadly, on Oct. 6, 2020, Bruce passed away.

Susanne applauds the teamwork she saw in action at Memorial Hermann The Woodlands in everyone from the affiliated doctors, surgeons and nurses at the ER and hospital to the teams at TIRR Memorial Hermann and Mischer Neuroscience Center.

“Their teamwork is one of the reasons I want to support this organization,” Susanne says. “I cannot overstate the level of care we received.”

In Bruce’s honor, Susanne and her family formed the Bruce Underkoffler Neuroscience Brain Cancer Fund, which raises contributions for technology and patient care enhancements at Mischer Neuroscience Center at Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Medical Center.

“We appreciate the support of all the generous donors,” Susanne says.

pull the rest of us over the horizon.

Dan S. Wilford Dan Wolterman

Guided by Vision, United in Purpose

Celebrating the legacy of two extraordinary leaders—who served more than a decade each—for their vision, dedication and enduring commitment to Memorial Hermann

MEMORIAL

Honoring Two Visionary Leaders

In May 2024, Memorial Hermann Foundation hosted the unveiling of a commemorative sign honoring past Memorial Hermann Health System CEOs Dan Wilford and Dan Wolterman for their vision, dedication and enduring commitment to community health.

With combined leadership spanning three decades, Dan Wilford (1984–2002) and then Dan Wolterman (2002–2016) led the institution, transforming a system of three community

hospitals into one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in southeast Texas, as it remains to this day.

Longtime friend and Memorial Hermann advocate Walt Mischer inspired us to honor these two outstanding leaders and provided the generous support for the commemorative sign that now prominently hangs in the Cullen Pavilion at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center.



Dan Wolterman, Bill Easter



Bob Croyle, Will Williams, Gus Blackshear



Leila Mischer, Suzie Johnson, Lori Wolterman



Arthur Baird, Philamena Baird



Dan Wilford, Cindi Wilford, Lori Wolterman, Dan Wolterman



Melinda Perrin, Walt Mischer, Leila Mischer

Top photo: Dan Wilford, Dan Wolterman, Walt Mischer, David Callender

Turning Point

After a motorcycle crash, Meissa Neumann overcomes severe brain and pelvic injuries and shares her story with other trauma survivors.



A self-described motorcycle geek, Meissa learned to ride from her dad. She was the first female to earn a mechanic's certificate at Lone Star Community College and later, certifications as a cylinder head and engine block machinist. She always wore head-to-toe safety gear, even in the summer.

Just weeks after her 21st birthday in August 2021, Meissa was riding "Zuko," her new motorcycle, on a country road near Conroe when a car unexpectedly turned in front of her. The crash shattered her body and her world.

A paramedic who happened by just afterward, recognized the signs of a life-threatening brain bleed. He immediately called 911, and the ambulance took Meissa to Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Medical Center, a Level II trauma center.

Fearing the worst

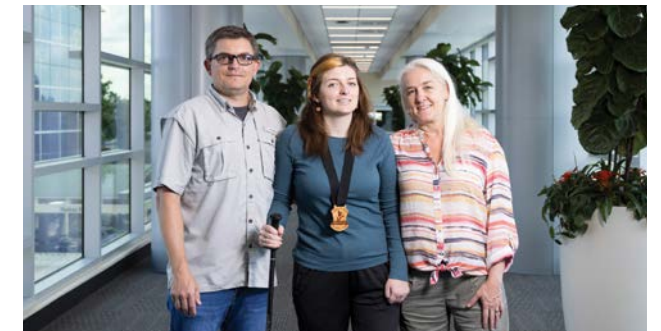
The hospital's trauma medical director, Timothy M. Hodges, MD, quickly confirmed that Meissa had a brain bleed in both lobes along with severe pelvic fractures and lacerations to a lung and leg.

Geoffrey P. Zubay, MD, neurosurgeon and director of surgical operations for Mischer Neuroscience Center at Memorial Hermann The Woodlands Medical Center, performed an emergency craniectomy, removing part of her skull to relieve brain pressure.

Meissa was in a coma for several weeks. "We weren't sure she was going to survive," says Becky Neumann, Meissa's mother. Meissa's injuries required multiple complex pelvic surgeries, including placing internal and external hardware.

She also needed a tracheostomy, a feeding tube, an inferior vena cava (IVC) filter to prevent blood clots traveling to her heart and lungs and a peripherally inserted

central catheter (PICC) to deliver fluids and medications. Despite coming out of her coma, Meissa remained unresponsive.



"We weren't sure she was going to survive."

Becky Neumann, Meissa's mom

Clearing the next obstacles

After five weeks in the hospital, Meissa moved to TIRR Memorial Hermann for the Disorders of Consciousness Program, which treats traumatic brain injuries that affect basic awareness. Noticing her right hand was moving, one of the doctors placed a pen in it. Meissa's scribble read "small iced chai." The road back had begun.

Meissa spent four weeks at TIRR Memorial Hermann before transitioning to at-home speech, occupational, physical and music therapy. She learned to speak again and has made great progress relearning to walk. Instead of a wheelchair, she now uses a walker or cane.

Connecting through recovery

At TIRR Memorial Hermann, Meissa learned about a new Trauma Survivorship Program at Memorial Hermann The Woodlands. She contacted the program's coordinator, Melanie Bradshaw, MSN, RN.

“It’s important for trauma survivors to connect with others who have been in a similar experience to help them feel less alone,” explains Melanie.



Melanie Bradshaw, RN, Meissa Neumann and Becky Neumann

Meissa felt an instant connection with Alexander Baas, another motorcycle crash survivor and survivor support co-facilitator.

“I bought a new motorcycle to work on. One day I grabbed the handlebars and immediately felt like I was

back on Zuko,” says Meissa. “I wanted to cry. I told Alexander, and he had the same emotions after getting back on his bike.”

“We don’t always get what Meissa is feeling,” Becky says. “It’s great for her to connect with others who really understand.”

A special reunion

Meissa reunited with her first responders and care team at a Memorial Hermann Trauma Survivors Day celebration in May 2023. Meissa and Alexander told their stories and tearfully thanked everyone for saving their lives. “They’re the best of the best,” says Meissa.

While she’s not sure she wants to get back on a motorcycle, she hopes that by sharing her story, more drivers will “look and save a life.”

Your gifts to Memorial Hermann Foundation support trauma care and TIRR Memorial Hermann.

**Trauma Survivorship at Memorial Hermann
The Woodlands Medical Center**

Surviving a traumatic injury can be challenging, physically and emotionally. The Trauma Survivorship Program at Memorial Hermann The Woodlands offers a variety of free resources that allow survivors to share their stories and challenges with others who have had similar experiences as they discover powerful skills for coping and navigating life after injury.

Currently, the hospital offers a monthly virtual support group for survivors, the ability to connect with a “peer survivor/mentor” and a wide variety of educational and referral resources. All services are free to anyone who has sustained severe traumatic injury, regardless of where they received their treatment.



“I absolutely love all the care I’ve gotten. They’re the best of the best.”

Meissa Neumann reunited with her first responders and care team at a Memorial Hermann Trauma Survivors Day celebration in May 2023.

When we stand together,
there’s no mountain high enough.

Your generous gifts to Memorial Hermann Foundation support innovative partnerships and educational initiatives, inspire young people to build rewarding careers, fuel the System’s vital talent pipeline, enable 24-hour emotional support to an invaluable workforce, share life-changing resources that break down barriers to healthy living and make it possible to improve the health of our community, now and for generations to come.

The mission is great. Your impact is astonishing.





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