



2023

The
American Hospital
Association
Foster G. McGaw
Prize Honorees



About the Foster G. McGaw Prize

The prestigious Foster G. McGaw Prize recognizes diverse health delivery organizations throughout the United States that demonstrate a passion for community health and an exceptional commitment to developing innovative partnerships and collaboratives that improve the health and well-being of their communities. The 2023 Foster G. McGaw Prize winner and finalists demonstrate that health delivery organizations working with community partners can be the cornerstone of a healthier America.

The Foster G. McGaw Prize is generously sponsored by the Baxter International Foundation and administered by the American Hospital Association. This year, the winner received \$100,000 and each finalist received \$10,000. The award winner and finalists were recognized in April at the AHA Annual Membership Meeting. For more information about the prize, visit <https://aha.org/fostermcgaw>.

APPLY NOW FOR THE 2024 PRIZE

The 2024 Foster G. McGaw Prize application is available at <https://aha.org/fostermcgaw>. Applications are due May 17, 2023. Email fostermcgaw@aha.org with questions. ●



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Writer: Julius Karash | **Senior Editor:** Suzanna Hoppszallern | **Copy Editor:** Susan Edge-Gumbel | **Designer:** Chuck Lazar | **Cover Photographer:** John Starkey.
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Memorial Hermann Health System Houston

Listening to residents to learn what they need

When residents who live near Clark Park in Houston said they were afraid to visit the park, leaders of Memorial Hermann Health System listened.

“They told us the park is not safe,” said David L. Callender, M.D., president and CEO. “They said they didn’t have a safe place to go for a walk, to exercise, to take their children to play.”

The lack of park utilization was of great concern to Memorial Hermann leaders. The rising rate of obesity is the single biggest health threat to the Greater Houston area. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 34% of the adults are overweight, increasing the risk of dying from cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, liver disease and kidney disease.

In response, the health system spearheaded the StepHEALTHY Walking Club at Clark Park to promote physical activity and social cohesiveness. The program has given community residents a safe place to walk, and participants refer to themselves as an “army of support” for each other. The widely recognized Walk with a Doc program, with several locations nationwide including Houston, features a physician who walks and talks with residents, providing health education and inspiration.

There is dancing as well. Dance with a Doc features a

psychiatrist who leads a Zumba class and speaks to participants about mental health. Other offerings include: a small job retraining program called StepHEALTHY Connects, which recruits and supports residents to become certified professional group fitness instructors; Walk to Clark Park, which has increased access to the park from two schools with new concrete and sidewalk art reflecting the community’s culture; and Soccer for Success, an after-school program that helps kids stay physically active while developing critical life skills.

With increased police presence and interactive programming, park usage increased by 22.4% at Clark Park. Of the 331 students who participated in Soccer for Success pre-pandemic, 75% maintained or improved their body mass index.

“We had a clinical problem in this community,” said Carol Paret, the system’s recently retired senior vice president and chief community health officer. “Neighborhood parents told us not to approach the problem from a clinical perspective. They said there was nothing for their kids to do in the park. We rehabbed it and created programs. We created a partnership with that community, where they truly own that programming.”

Another Memorial Hermann program built on communication is the Nurse Health Line. Since 2014, individuals

have called the complimentary, bilingual hotline to discuss their health concerns, receive recommendations on the appropriate setting for care, and connect to appropriate resources and community programs.

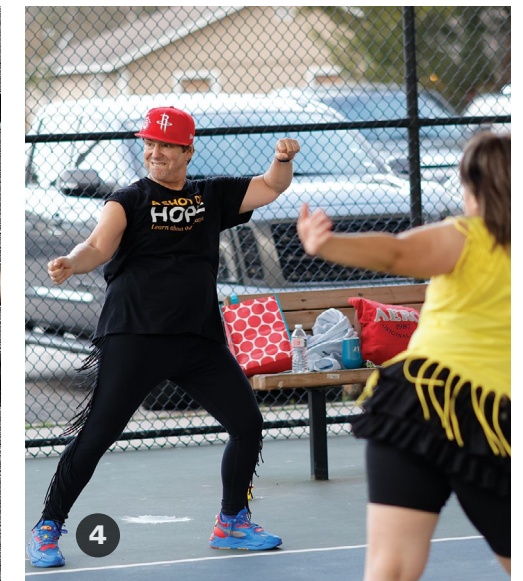
The Nurse Health Line played a critical emergency response role amid the devastation of Hurricane Harvey in 2017. The knowledge gained from that experience, combined with a nimble corporate culture, enabled the system to create a Nurse Triage COVID-19 hotline that took more than 27,600 calls.

“Being nimble starts with a focus on innovation,” Callender said. “Things are constantly changing, and we always need to consider how we can move forward to be more effective, more efficient and more impactful.”

Innovation also is a key driver behind the Memorial Hermann Health Centers for Schools, which provide a medical home for children who are uninsured or covered by

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. Clark Park vegetable gardens
2. A mobile produce truck
3. Kids having fun at one of the school-based clinic boot camps.
4. Dance with a Doc Zumba class





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David L. Callender, M.D.

President and CEO, Memorial Hermann Health System

“Being nimble starts with a focus on innovation. Things are constantly changing, and we always need to consider how we can move forward to be more effective, more efficient and more impactful.”

Medicaid, and a secondary access point for insured children. The 10 centers host 24,000 visits annually that provide primary medical, dental, mental health and nutritional care.

Ninety-four percent of students seen in the clinics return to their classrooms to continue their school day. Asthma exacerbations and emergency department (ED) visits have been reduced by 95%, and 2.7% of students use an ED versus 10.5% of the general pediatric community. Students who received therapy see improved grade point averages (77.02% to 79.39%), reduced absenteeism (2.6 days to 2.3), and reduced detentions/suspensions (.57 days to .33).

“We all want kids to graduate and move on and contribute as much to society as possible,” Paret said.

With only 12% of Americans considered proficient in health literacy skills according to the Department of Health & Human Services, Memorial Hermann introduced Community Resource Centers (CRCs) on several of their hospital campuses in 2018. Staffed with community health workers and social workers, the goal is to help patients and community members navigate the health and social service systems and, through decision-making and self-management, become more engaged in their own disease prevention.

The CRCs act as one-stop shops where nonprofit and state agencies partner. The first CRC started with three collaborative partners, and the health system now collaborates

with more than 45 organizations. An intake screening tool addresses issues like food insecurity, transportation and health literacy to identify the appropriate partners to support each client.

During a recent 12-month period, 1,044 Harris (County) Health and Medicaid applications were completed and approved, providing access to insurance for families previously uninsured.

Memorial Hermann is a safety net system for Greater Houston’s most vulnerable, especially patients with mental health issues. The health system launched its Mental Health Crisis Clinics (MHCCs) in 2014 after discussions with partners and local stakeholders. Three clinics were located in retail centers with careful signage to minimize the stigma associated with accessing behavioral health.

While COVID-19 has exacerbated mental health needs in the community, the MHCCs eliminate the 90-plus-day wait time to be connected to outpatient behavioral health. Any patient seeking psychiatric urgent care can walk into an MHCC without an appointment and be assessed immediately and cared for by a licensed, bilingual (English and Spanish) mental health team.

The MHCCs serve as many as 3,500 patients of all ages annually, regardless of their ability to pay. Approximately 47% of the patients seen require charity care. Improve-

ments in patient symptoms are assessed during follow-up calls, and approximately 52% of patients report improved symptomology.

“One of the huge issues with mental health right now is trying to get to it,” Paret said. “With these clinics, you can walk in and get the help you need, pretty much immediately, and the connections you need for long-term success.”

Toi Harris, M.D., senior vice president and chief equity, diversity and inclusion officer for Memorial Hermann, said that the system is making targeted interventions to reduce health inequities and lower the cost of care. “We’re leading the way to a more sustainable health delivery model that puts patients and communities at the center of everything we do.” ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

5. David L. Callender, M.D., president and CEO, Memorial Hermann Health System
6. “Rockets at Moody Park” basketball camp with NBA stars from the Houston Rockets
7. Meet and Greet with Children’s Memorial Hermann mascot Topper
8. Holiday Bicycle Ride community event
9. Volunteer organizing shelves in the Memorial Hermann toy store



Cedars-Sinai Medical Center Los Angeles

Taking the initiative on homelessness

The city of Los Angeles has one of the highest rates of homelessness in the nation, as tens of thousands of people find themselves on the streets of the sprawling metropolis.

To address this growing issue, Cedars-Sinai in 2019 launched its homelessness and housing initiative. It aims to increase the capacity of community organizations to promote healthy environments for people of all ages. The goals include supporting boarding and care systems; helping young people transition out of homelessness by providing expanded housing options, vocational training and education; and developing a countywide road map to support older adults facing homelessness.

The initiative identifies local community-based organizations serving those who are experiencing homelessness and invests in building their capacity to better support and address the systemic causes of homelessness. Cedars-Sinai grantmaking efforts have included a \$5 million seed grant issued to UniHealth Foundation for a collaborative funding initiative, “A Pathway to Health and Home.” The initiative makes investments in projects that increase collaboration between housing and health care systems, embed clinical services in supportive housing sites and improve care transitions, with a focus on older adults experiencing homelessness.

The homelessness and housing initiative dovetails with

Cedars-Sinai’s foundational principles. “Our mission statement clearly states that the mission of our institution is to improve the health of the community we serve,” said Thomas M. Priselac, president and CEO.

Cedars-Sinai treats an average of 663 patients experiencing homelessness each month, 82% of whom exhibit behavioral health issues. Navigators work directly with homeless patients to meet their needs, while partnering with community-based organizations to ensure that individuals are connected to sources of support such as recuperative care, housing navigation, medical follow-up, transportation, mental health services and substance-use treatment.

Of 7,956 homeless patient encounters in 2021, 3,023 — or 38% — were connected to community resources.

Cedars-Sinai also supports children’s health, mental health and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs).

COACH (Community Outreach Assistance for Children’s Health) for Kids, a comprehensive, multifaceted “care and connect” program, equips children and their families with services and transitional care, giving them the power and tools to achieve ongoing health and well-being.

The Healthy Habits program deploys health educators who partner with 28 schools and community sites in Koreatown and Mid City Los Angeles to deliver educational and physical activity programs designed to reduce the

prevalence of obesity and increase physical and emotional well-being in underserved communities.

Share & Care places a team of licensed mental health practitioners in 31 schools, providing mental health and early intervention programs for students, parents and educators who have been affected by traumatic events and stressors.

Cedars-Sinai’s Community Clinic Initiative focuses on building the capacity and strengthening the leadership, quality and effectiveness of FQHCs that provide care to 1.7 million patients in Los Angeles County.

“We no longer simply educate people about health risks,” said Jonathan Schreiber, vice president for community engagement. “Our job is help build their capacity to utilize services that are available in their community, to overcome challenges they may have with regard to social determinants of health.” ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. The COACH for Kids program equips children and their families with tools for a healthy lifestyle.
2. President and CEO Thomas M. Priselac
3. In 2019, Cedars-Sinai launched its homelessness and housing initiative.
4. Vision screening at a COACH for Kids pop-up



GBMC HealthCare System Baltimore, Md.

Partnering to expand access to behavioral health and other services

G BMC, the only community-owned health care system in Baltimore (Md.) County, realized about a dozen years ago that it needed to widen its focus beyond the walls of its hospital.

"We became students of the social determinants of health," said John B. Chessare, M.D., president and CEO. "We saw that we needed to go outside our offices and help people with things like transportation and food."

Those goals are producing results in programs such as GBMC's Oncology Support Services. Since the program began in 1987, 50,000 rides to treatment have been provided to patients who lack reliable transportation or cannot drive because of their symptoms.

"Transportation can be a very expensive piece of cancer care that a lot of people don't think about," said Brandon Costantino, oncology support services manager. "The average cancer patient must make frequent visits for scans, blood tests and chemotherapy. Getting a ride makes them more compliant with their treatment course."

Catherine Y. Hamel, Gilchrist president and executive vice president of continuing care at GBMC HealthCare, said GBMC has been increasing access to care in areas like behavioral health.

That goal drew heightened attention in 2016 when GBMC teamed with Sheppard Pratt, a nonprofit provider of

mental health and related social services, for an innovative partnership that allows patients to receive immediate access to mental health providers during primary care visits.

The Sheppard Pratt Integrated Behavioral Health at GBMC program embeds full-time behavioral health specialists into GBMC's primary care practices, along with visiting Sheppard Pratt psychiatrists and substance-use counselors. The goal is to remove the stigma of seeking mental health services and increase access to care.

GBMC began partnering with the state of Maryland and several community organizations in 2018 on a Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) program to identify patients whose health is at risk due to alcohol and drug usage. The SBIRT team has recognized the need to expand peer recovery services outside of the emergency department and into pediatrics and obstetrics.

"Patients may not know they need recovery," said Mark Fisher, R.N., interim assistant director, emergency and pediatric services. "That is why these programs are so important for the health care continuum and the patients we serve."

GBMC's Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) and Domestic Violence Program treats victims of all ages in a confidential setting at no cost to the patient. SAFE registered nurses are trained and certified to care for victims of rape,

sexual assault, child abuse and intimate partner violence.

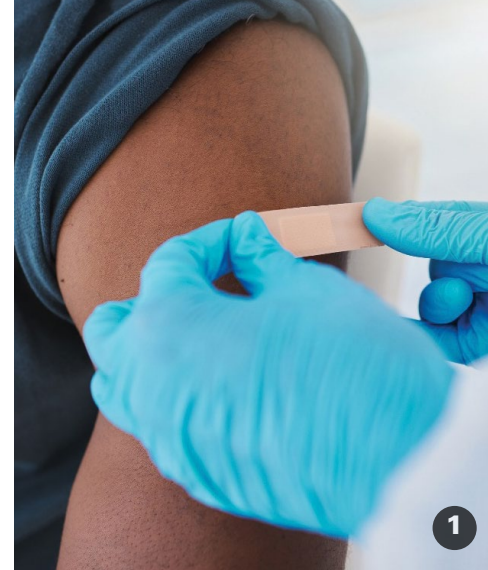
Since 2012, the Gilchrist We Honor Veterans program has addressed the mental and physical health of veterans, honoring them for their sacrifices as they approach the end of life.

Over the past two years, Gilchrist hosted more than 700 "Salute to Service" tribute ceremonies and two Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day celebrations honoring more than 1,500 attendees.

As they did during their military service, the veterans continue to give back. "Many of those veterans have become volunteers at our hospice organization," Hamel said. ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. John B. Chessare, M.D., president and CEO of GBMC HealthCare
2. The SBIRT program helps identify patients whose health is at risk due to alcohol or drug usage.
3. The We Honor Veterans program offers a "Salute to Service" for hospice patients.
4. Sheppard Pratt partners with GBMC to offer extensive behavioral health services in the Baltimore area.



Meritus Health
Hagerstown, Md.

Forging relationships to improve community health

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Meritus Health purchased a medically equipped mobile van to provide vaccine doses at 500 pop-up clinics in underserved and rural areas of Western Maryland, southern Pennsylvania and the eastern panhandle of West Virginia.

The van and pop-up clinics grew out of the Meritus Community Health Education & Outreach program. Mobile health clinics sprouted at churches, truck stops, convenience stores and ethnic grocery stores.

But early on, this outreach initiative had to overcome barriers posed by vaccine hesitancy. To meet that challenge, Meritus communicated through “messengers,” or individuals who were known and respected in diverse communities, as well as diverse members of the Meritus Health team.

“Forming relationships with messengers who are known and trusted in their diverse communities drove our success,” said Douglas Spotts, M.D., chief health officer. “It wasn’t just our saying, ‘Here we are with vaccine.’ We listened to the community to understand vaccination hesitancy. Our family medicine residents, who comprise a diverse group, listened and answered questions. Team members who live in the community, including nurses and nurse practitioners, did the same. It’s about answering questions and building relationships.”

Active listening and communicating contributed to the success of the program, which provided more than 11,500 vaccine doses to underserved and rural patients at 500 designated clinics. (Meritus administered a total of 183,493 COVID-19 vaccine doses as of July 7, 2022.)

Relationships established during the pandemic are being leveraged to provide full mobile health services that include screenings and links with primary care and preventive health measures.

Meritus’ social determinants of health (SDOH) initiative includes a patient courtesy van that provides more than 3,000 transports a year. The van not only provides rides from the hospital to home, but from patients’ homes to doctor appointments, dialysis treatments and wound care appointments. The van also delivers medications.

“One of the most consistent social determinants of health barriers that patients identify is difficulty with transportation,” said Allen Twigg, executive director of behavioral and community health services. “For someone who doesn’t have independent transportation, it’s absolutely critical that they have assistance with that.”

The SDOH initiative also includes a Care Callers program that provides a phone call once or twice a week to patients identified as being lonely during a screening.

“We’re calling more than 100 people a week through

40 volunteers,” said Maulik Joshi, president and CEO. “We have surveyed 50 of the people who have been called, and 48 out of 50 said they are less lonely.”

Joshi added that helping patients feel less lonely might reduce unnecessary emergency department usage or other forms of unnecessary care, “but this is about trying to impact the health of the community. The connection among loneliness, social isolation and health outcomes has been studied, and it is dramatic. We’re not looking for a financial ROI, we’re looking for a health ROI.”

Meritus is working on plans to open a four-year medical school, the Meritus School of Osteopathic Medicine, in 2025. “It will be a key part of our community health initiatives,” Joshi said. “It will train generations of physicians who are professionally accomplished, socially responsible and community oriented. And that’s specific in terms of our mission statement.” ●

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

1. Hagerstown youth getting a COVID-19 vaccination.
2. Meritus Health’s mobile health clinic
3. Maulik Joshi, president and CEO of Meritus Health, is an active participant on the Care Caller team.
4. Donations from staff heading out to a local pantry

Making a lasting impact on health care and the health of communities

The Baxter International Foundation and the American Hospital Association founded the Foster G. McGaw Prize on the belief that the relationship between a hospital and its community is unique. We celebrate the winners and finalists of this award because they show us how people working together in hospitals and communities can enrich the environment in which they live.

In the decades that come, the bond between the community and its health care providers will become stronger and more interdependent. And we shall continue to honor those individuals and organizations that distinguish themselves through excellence in community service.

We congratulate Memorial Hermann Health System on the impact it has had to advance care and well-being in its communities, along with all of this year's Foster G. McGaw Prize finalists who are inspiring new ways to deliver health care and adapting to meet evolving local needs.

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