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10 new doctors join Blessing Health System



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To improve the health of our communities

The Blessing Health System Vision Statement:

We will be the region's health care leader

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It's your health. It's your life. It's your choice.

By Maureen Kahn, RN, MHA, MSN, president/chief executive officer, Blessing Health System and Blessing Hospital

eaching people, helping them to understand their health and how the choices they make impact their health, is as much a part of caregiving as taking vital signs.

So, let's learn. The Bill of Rights comprises the first 10 amendments to the United States Constitution. It contains rights designed to guarantee individual freedom.

Those, however, are not your only rights. As a health care consumer, you are guaranteed "patient rights" by the organizations and individuals who deliver your care. These rights are designed to define your role and protect your interests when receiving health care.

Both the American Hospital Association and the American Medical Association have lists of patient rights. Among the rights defined by both organizations is the patient's right to make treatment decisions. That is a power you hold—not your health care provider—you. A treatment decision may be as simple as where to have a lab test done or X-ray taken, or as complicated as whether or not to have surgery or a life-sustaining treatment.

There was a day when patients did as they were told by their providers. Things have changed.

As the knowledge base of the health care consumer has developed over the years, and the cost of care has climbed and value has become a critical element in the decision-making process, the relationship between the patient and provider has developed into a partnership, built on the exchange of ideas. Decisions are



A Blessing radiologic technologist conducts an ultrasound imaging procedure.

made based as much on the patient's perspective as the provider's. The provider has an important role in this process, of understanding your condition and personal values and informing you of your treatment options and the benefits and drawbacks to each option. In the end, the decision of how to move forward with your care, if to move forward at all, rests with you—if it involves a lab test or X-ray or surgery.

Two-way communication and mutual decision-making create the foundation of a healthy relationship in any aspect of life, health care included. If you don't feel you have this type of relationship with your health care provider, ask them about it. If you have not yet exercised your rights as a patient, it is in your best interest to do so and to begin building a partnership with your provider. I am sure they would welcome your participation.

It's your health life. It's your life. It's your choice. ■

Turning failure into success

Michael Mixer suffers from heart failure.

The 60-year-old Quincy resident (seen in center photo) takes 11 medications to manage his conditions. In the fall of 2019, he lost his state-funded insurance and the

ability to pay the \$1,000 to refill all his medications.

"I was desperate," Michael stated. "It was my lowest point. These medications were saving my life. I was ready to give up."

Fortunately, at that time, Michael had a regularly scheduled appointment with Shanna Dierker, APRN-FNP, of the Blessing Heart Failure Clinic. Michael told her what he faced.

"She told me it's not just my battle, it's her battle as well," he recalled. "That gave me hope when everything seemed so bleak. It meant the world to me."

Blessing Health System staff helped Michael apply for and receive disability so he could continue to receive assistance with his 11 medications.

The number one cause of hospitalizations among senior citizens is heart failure. While there is no cure, it is treatable.

"Successful treatment of heart failure can require a combination of approaches and constant monitoring," said Shanna. "The Blessing Heart Failure Clinic helps patients meet both needs; development of the combination of treatment approaches that is right for them, and help understanding how to monitor their condition daily to avoid complications and





hospitalizations."

Shanna is board certified in cardiology and is an associate of the American College of Cardiology and the College of Cardiac Nurse Practitioners. She

is educated and experienced in managing congestive heart failure and visited heart failure clinics across the country to help design Blessing's clinic.

Also providing care to Heart Failure Clinic patients is Blessing Health System's newest cardiologist, Shane LaRue, MD. Dr. LaRue completed a fellowship in advanced heart failure at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, MO. He will

see Heart Failure Clinic patients in Quincy and at his office at Hannibal Clinic.

There are several different types of heart failure. In general, heart failure occurs over time as the heart weakens and pumps less blood to organs, affecting their ability to function. This causes some organs to retain fluid, sometimes contributing to the need for hospitalization. Complications can also be fatal.

The Blessing Heart Failure Clinic provides education, support and ongoing care to help the patient successfully manage the condition, reduce their risk for complications and hospitalizations and enjoy an improved level of health and quality of life.

That's exactly what Michael found in Shanna and the staff of the Blessing Heart Failure Clinic.

"Putting yourself in the position to be there for patients, and not just as a medical provider, but as someone who shows consideration, compassion and concern does not happen often in my experience," he said. "And in my condition, it's vital."

For more information on the Blessing Heart Failure Clinic, go to **blessinghealth.org/heartfailure**.

TINY DEVICE. BIG RESULTS.

New minimally invasive procedure comes to Blessing

Mary Eustace loves being active.

The 73-year-old Pearl, IL, resident's life includes volunteering at Illini Community Hospital in Pittsfield, IL, being treasurer of her church, and serving as President of Pike County Home Extension. Aortic stenosis, a disease of the heart valves, changed her life by robbing Mary of her energy. She's lived with the condition for a couple of years. It

"It made me very tired," Mary recalled. "I would get exhausted doing small chores. I went from an active person to one who had to rest often."

worsened during 2019.

A new heart procedure at Blessing put Mary back in control of her life. It's called Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement or TAVR. Blessing is the only health care provider in a 75-mile radius performing the TAVR procedure.

THE CONDITION

Aortic stenosis is a narrowing of the aortic valve opening. Stenosis occurs when a valve stiffens due to damage, scarring or deposits, and subsequently has trouble opening. Because the valve is unable to open completely, the heart muscle must work harder to push blood through the valve.

Although some people have aortic stenosis as a result of a congenital heart defect called a bicuspid aortic valve, this condition more commonly develops during

aging as calcium or scarring damages the valve and restricts the amount of blood flowing through the valve.

Symptoms of aortic stenosis include a heart murmur, breathlessness, chest pain, pressure or tightness, fainting, or a noticeable decline in activity level.

Jeffrey Cook, MD, interventional cardiologist, Blessing Physician Services, says the condition can be missed

> because its symptoms are also associated with other conditions.

> > "It's common to hear patients say, 'I've had a murmur for a long time but no one has thought anything of it.' By the time we see them, they are very debilitated, very short of breath, passing out, that sort of thing. And, lo and behold, they have severe aortic stenosis."

Aortic stenosis mainly affects older people, beginning after age 60, but often does not show symptoms until age 70 or 80.

THE NEW TREATMENT OPTION

Treating aortic stenosis requires replacing the malfunctioning heart valves. For many years, that had to be done during surgery. Some people are not candidates for surgery due to other health conditions. TAVR is a minimally invasive procedure, during which a new heart valve is placed via a catheter using X-ray guidance.

"The valve device deploys without having to stop the heart," said John Arnold, MD, cardiothoracic surgeon, Blessing Hospital.

"The advantage of TAVR is that it is minimally invasive compared to a surgical aortic valve replacement. For patients who may not be a good candidate for surgery, TAVR can be an option for them to improve their health and quality of life," said Amy Bates, APRN-AGACNP, Valve Clinic Coordinator, Blessing Health System.

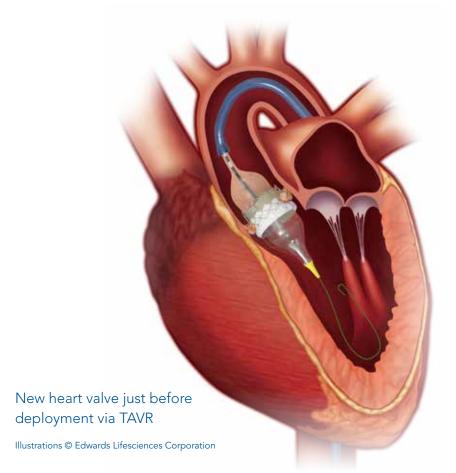
Patients who undergo TAVR can be released from the hospital in 2 days, compared to 4 to 5 days for those who undergo surgical valve replacement.

The TAVR procedure is performed by Drs. Cook and Arnold. Valve Clinic Coordinator Bates assists the patient with arranging for the testing needed before TAVR and with any needs the patient may have after the procedure.

Mary says she felt the effects of TAVR only hours after her surgery.

"Right away, I noticed a change," Mary exclaimed. "I was up and walking the evening of my surgery and I am now working my way back to doing all the things I did before."

For more information on TAVR, go to blessinghealth.org/TAVR





JEFFREY COOK, MD

CARDIOLOGIST



JOHN ARNOLD, MD CARDIOTHORACIC SURGEON



AMY BATES

NURSE PRACTITIONER AND VALVE CLINIC COORDINATOR

ALL HANDS ON DECK Giving a second chance on life

or most of his 68 years, Billy Davis enjoyed good health. "A few aches and pains", he says, but, "nothing I knew of that was leading me to what happened."

What happened is Billy built a pool deck in the backyard of his Memphis, MO, home in the spring of 2019.

Billy is no stranger to the manual labor and the heavy lifting required of building a wooden deck. He was not familiar with what he felt as he worked. Billy would experience a strange

sensation between his stomach and throat at random times. He describes the feeling as little bubbles popping, accompanied by a burning sensation across his back at his shoulder blades.

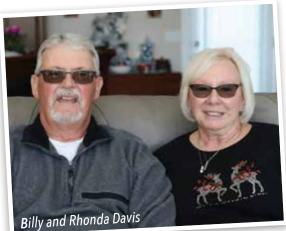
"I would never have pain in the chest," Billy recalled.

"I would try to work through it."

At first the symptoms would clear up over several hours. Eventually, they did not.

"It got to the point where I would be doubled over," he added.

After several months of suffering, and with his wife of 49 years, Rhonda, at his side, Billy went to his doctor at Scotland County Hospital in July 2019 for tests on



his throat, stomach and colon. The tests showed no problems. Dr. Lisa Rollison referred Billy to Dana Valencia, MD, Hannibal Clinic cardiologist,

> who also sees patients at Scotland County Hospital. Dr. Valencia performed tests that indicated the need for cardiac catheterization. The catheterization detected a number of blockages in Billy's heart that required triple bypass surgery.

"He was very kind," Rhonda says of Dr. Valencia. "We

really expected a couple of stents and that would be it. But when he came out of the procedure, he patted me on the shoulder and said, 'It's going to be okay. I've got a guy who can fix him up.' Dr. Valencia was very reassuring."

"I never met a doctor who put me at ease so quickly, as did his staff."

Billy and Rhonda's children live in Omaha, NE, and asked their parents to consider having the surgery done there. Billy and Rhonda told their children they wanted to meet first with the cardiothoracic surgeon to whom Dr. Valencia referred them, John Arnold, MD, at Blessing Hospital.

After meeting Dr. Arnold, it did not take long for Billy and Rhonda to make their decision. "We looked at each other and said, 'This is it. We are not going anywhere else," Rhonda recalled with a smile.

"I never met a doctor who put me at ease so quickly, as did his staff," said Billy.

The Davises said that level of care followed them wherever they went in Blessing Hospital, particularly in the Cardiovascular Unit.

"They took good care of him and were concerned about me, too," Rhonda stated.

"Helpful, friendly, knowledgeable people," Billy added.

"We are all glad the outcome was good," said Dr. Arnold. "It's a team approach."

Today, the Davises await the arrival of summer to use their deck and pool. But Billy is not waiting to share the lessons he has learned.





"Don't mess with this. If you start feeling badly, go see a doctor immediately," he stated. "I was one of the lucky ones. By all rights I shouldn't be here right now. I was given that second opportunity. Please people, if you are not feeling well, go see you doctor, get it taken care of early."

For more on Blessing Health System's heart and vascular care, go to blessinghealth.org/heart.

Billy and Rhonda Davis admire the pool deck Billy built. Pain he experienced during the project led to open heart surgery.



Taking back control of life

Leah Heming finished graduate school with a master's degree as a nurse practitioner and a big problem—a very busy schedule over the course of her education and clinical

training had ruined her previously healthy lifestyle, leading to weight gain.

"After grad school I tried to get back into my routine of healthy meal preparation and exercise. I would be successful for a couple of weeks and then fall off the wagon. I did that yo-yo diet for several months," said the 41-year-old mother of five, seen at right.

As a result of Leah's weight gain, she became pre-diabetic and developed sleep apnea.

"I decided to ask for help," Leah stated.

A Blessing Health System employee, she turned to the Blessing Weight Loss Center for help where she worked with the center's team, including surgeon Melissa Matrisch, MD, nurse practitioner Jennifer Holcomb, clinical dietician Annslee Fahy and social worker Katie Thomure.

Leah underwent gastric sleeve surgery, a minimally invasive procedure, during which 80 percent of her stomach was removed. She lost weight and received education and support to keep the weight off.

"The surgery is a tool. In order to have it work for you, you have to know how to use that tool. That's where the Blessing Weight Loss Center team comes into play," said Dr. Matrisch. "As the surgeon, I rely on the expertise of our dietician and social worker to really help our patients be successful in learning how to use that tool."

"Studies show that when patients follow the recommendations of each team member, they are more likely to be successful in their weight loss after surgery," she concluded.

"We target the complexity of obesity through a team

approach," said Annslee. "It helps the patient access support from various disciplines who are able to define the challenges the patient may face in different areas of

weight loss."

Patients must meet body mass index thresholds to be a candidate for surgery and be psychologically prepared for the changes that come with surgery in order to succeed long term.

"Changes that patients can expect with weight loss surgery affect every aspect of their life," said Jennifer. "It will also affect their family - how they shop, how they prepare their meals, their activities. There is a very big emotional aspect as well."

Katie helps patients understand the emotional aspect of their new life.

"We talk about the feelings related to food, identifying ways that food has been in a person's life, their relationship with food and voids that it fills. We then work on coping skills not related to food and make sure they have the support needed to be successful after surgery."

A support group and annual check-ups for life help keep Blessing Weight Loss Center patients successful after surgery.

Leah lost 65 pounds, is no longer pre-diabetic and does not suffer from sleep apnea.

"My feet don't ache when I get home from work, and I am not short of breath when I finish work out class. Now I can go and go and go until I fall asleep," she said proudly.

"That's the whole purpose of this, taking back control of your life. I am in control of meal planning, when I eat, what time I eat, how much I eat, all based on the tools the surgery has given me."

For more information about the care provided by the Blessing Weight Loss Center team, go to blessinghealth.org/weightloss.



FREE SCREENING SAVES LIFE

Couples disagree every now and then. Even after 52 years of marriage, Randy and Diane Schmelzel are no different than any other couple.

Last March, for example, Randy read in the newspaper that Blessing Hospital was giving away free colon cancer screening kits. He told Diane they should do the test. Diane, who underwent a screening colonoscopy 5 years before, had an answer ready for Randy.

Harsha Polavarapu, MD, colorectal surgeon, Blessing Physician Services, removed Diane's colon cancer completely before it had a chance to invade surrounding lymph nodes. The procedure was done using robotic surgery, requiring smaller incisions, resulting in less blood loss and a quicker recovery time.

"Colon cancer is preventable," Dr. Harsha stated. "And, if we catch it early, like in Diane's case, we can beat it."

Diane said Dr. Harsha told her if she had waited for her



REGULAR COLORECTAL
CANCER SCREENING IS ONE
OF THE MOST POWERFUL
WEAPONS FOR PREVENTING
COLORECTAL CANCER

"I am not due for a colon cancer test for another 5 years. I don't want to do this," she stated. "There is no colon cancer in our family. I have no signs of any kind of pain or anything like that. So there is no reason to do the test."

Randy was insistent. "Something told me we needed to do this. I can't describe what it was."

Diane eventually agreed to do the test with Randy. It saved her life.

Diane's free screening kit came back positive, meaning she should follow up with a health care provider to determine why it was positive. She did. Diane was diagnosed with stage 1 colon cancer and needed surgery.

Harsha Polavarapu, MD

"When you hear that word cancer, it takes you back," Diane said. "I never thought I would be that person. I always thought it would be someone else."

next colonoscopy and not done the free screening, her situation could have been much worse.

"If it wasn't for my husband, Blessing and my doctors, what kind of story would you be doing on me in 5 more years?" she asked. "This free colon cancer screening kit from Blessing has saved my life."

During March 2019, Blessing distributed 367 free colon cancer screening kits. Eight kits came back with positive results. Three people, including Diane, followed up with health care providers and were diagnosed with colon cancer.

"The natural progression of colon cancer is such that, by the time someone has symptoms, it has gone too far," added Dr. Harsha. "Diane was fortunate to have access to the screening kit and followed through on its results. It saved her life."

"This is such a simple test. I don't know why someone would not do it," Randy added.

For more information on Blessing's free colon cancer kit program that takes place this March, go to **blessinghealth.org/colon**.

WELCOME BLESSING'S



MARK BAKER, MD, has joined the Blessing Hospital Emergency Center medical staff.

A graduate of the University of Illinois College of Medicine, Dr. Baker completed

an internship and residency at Southern Illinois University.



MARY CRAWFORD, DO, family medicine, has joined the Blessing Physician Services Family Medicine Department and practices at the Paris Clinic, Paris, MO.

A graduate of the Kirksville College of

Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Crawford completed her residency at Riverside Hospital, Wichita, KS.



SEAN HENDRICKS, MD, brings a new specialty to Blessing Physician Services, ophthalmology and retinal surgery. Dr. Hendricks is a Quincy native.

Certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology, Dr. Hendricks earned his medical degree from the University of Illinois College of Medicine. He completed residency at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA, where he was chief resident and completed a fellowship at Vitreoretinal Foundation Eye Specialty Group, Memphis, TN. Dr. Hendrick's areas of interest include diabetic eye disease, macular degeneration, retinal detachment and vitreous floaters.



SAMANG KIM, DO, family medicine, now provides care at Blessing Physician Services' Palmyra Clinic. He joins nurse practitioner Traci Kline on the clinic medical

Dr. Kim is board certified by the American Osteopathic Association and the American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians. He earned his medical degree from the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences in Missouri. Dr. Kim then completed an internship at Horizon Health System in Warren, MI, and residencies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and Michigan State University, Carson City, MI.



SHANE LARUE, MD, MPHS, has joined Hannibal Clinic's Department of Cardiology. He comes to Blessing Health System from Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO, where he served as Associate Professor

of Medicine, Section of Heart Failure and Cardiac Transplantation, Cardiovascular Division.

Dr. LaRue holds certifications in advanced heart failure and transplant cardiology, and in cardiovascular diseases from the American Board of Internal Medicine; and in adult echocardiography from the National Board of Echocardiography.

He earned his medical degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI. Dr. LaRue also earned a master's degree in population health sciences from Washington University.

He completed fellowships in general cardiology and advanced heart failure/cardiac transplant at Washington University School of Medicine. Dr. LaRue completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics, Madison WI, and was VA primary care chief resident at the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics/William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital in Madison.



VIVEK MANCHANDA, MD, has joined the Blessing Pain Clinic, a service of Blessing Physician Services.

Certified by the American Boards of Pain Management, Anesthesiology and Internal

Medicine, Dr. Manchanda completed a fellowship at the University of Cincinnati, a residency in anesthesiology at the University of Missouri Columbia, and a residency in internal medicine at the University of Nevada in Reno after earning his medical degree from the Government Medical College in Punjab, India.



NEW DOCTORS



CHAD NOGGLE, PHD, ABPP-CN, ABN, brings another new specialty to Blessing Physician Services, neuropsychology.

A neuropsychologist specializes in understanding the relationship between the brain and behavior. Disorders within the brain and nervous system can alter behavior and cognitive function.

Dr. Noggle holds certifications from the American Board of Professional Psychology, the American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology, and the American Board of Professional Neuropsychology.

After earning his doctoral degree from Ball State University, Muncie, IN, Dr. Noggle completed an internship at the BSU Consortium, Midwest Neurology, Neurobehavioral Associates; and a residency at the Indiana Neuroscience Institute at St. Vincent's Hospital, Indianapolis, IN.



JOHN RICKELMAN, JR., DO, has joined Blessing Hospital as an intensivist. In that capacity, Dr. Rickelman's practice focuses solely on the care of patients in the Blessing Hospital Intensive Care Unit.

Board certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine, Dr. Rickelman earned his medical degree from the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Kirskville, MO. He completed his residency at Northeast Regional Medical Center, Kirksville, MO, and a fellowship at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA.



LUC TCHAPNDA, MD, has joined Blessing Physician Services' Family Medicine Department.

Board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine, Dr. Tchapnda earned

his medical degree from Temple University School of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA and completed a residency at the University of Illinois Chicago and an internship at Howard University Hospital, Washington, DC.



DALE ZIMMERMAN, DO, has joined Blessing Physician Services' Family Medicine Department, practicing at the Hamilton Warsaw Clinic, Warsaw, IL.

Certified by the American Osteopathic

Board of Family Physicians, Dr. Zimmerman earned his medical degree at A.T. Still University, Kirksville, MO and completed his residency at Doctors Hospital.

For more information on Blessing Health System providers, please visit us online at blessinghealth.org

EMPLOYEE ACCOMPLISHMENT



MINDY ENTRUP, MPT, physical therapist, Blessing Home Care, has earned certification as a PWR! (Parkinson's Wellness Recovery) Moves Certified Therapist. PWR! Moves is an exercise-based program for patients with Parkinson's

disease that teaches people how to move bigger and faster in everyday tasks to counteract Parkinson's symptoms.

Entrup is also a Certified LSVT BIG therapist, another Parkinson's exercised-based therapy. She sees patients in their homes and teaches a Parkinson's exercise class weekly at the Blessing Wellness Center.

A 7 year member of the Blessing Home Care staff, Entrup earned her master's degree in physical therapy from St. Louis University and is also a certified Tai Chi instructor.

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STEVEN KRAUSE, DO, MHA, FACOI Blessing Physician Services Interventional Cardiology



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MD. FACC Blessing Physician Services Invasive Cardiology



DANA VALENCIA, MD. FACC, FSCAI Hannibal Clinic Cardiology



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APRN-AGACNP Blessing Physician Services Cardiology & Cardiothoracic Surgery



SHANNA DIERKER, **APRN-FNP** Blessing Physician Services Cardiology



APRN-AGPCNP Blessing Physician Services Cardiology



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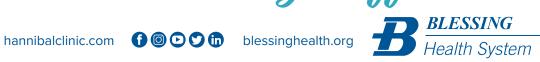














Since the last issue of Personal Blessing, four more
Blessing Hospital registered nurses have joined the ranks
of international DAISY award winners for delivering
extraordinary patient care, based on nominations
submitted by patients and their loved ones.

GARRY RANABARGAR, was nominated by an Observation Decision Unit patient who said, "Garry made me laugh with stories which took my mind off the pain for a little while. He was there for me through all of it."

The family of an Emergency Center patient nominated CINDY HOEWING for the care she provided the grieving family upon the patient's passing. "In the moment of our family's greatest grief, this professional provided the only care that was left to provide. And it was deeply appreciated. Cindy's service to this family was more than I could have expected."

ANGIE BUSS was nominated by a Progressive Care Unit patient who was also a nursing student. "I was tearful in thinking that I was going to have to drop out of nursing school due to my surgery, but Angie made me feel that I could do anything and told me that I would do well."

ANGIE KLINNER was nominated by a Blessing
Behavioral Center patient. "She calmed my nerves
and made me realize that she and the other staff were
there to help me and would keep me safe. Angela
introduced me to Blessing with kindness and caring
I had never before received."



GIVING SOCIETY

Programs, services and new technology featured in this issue of *Personal Blessing* are made possible in part by donations to Blessing Hospital, Illini Community Hospital and the Blessing Foundation. The Giving Society is an honor roll of those showing love through charitable giving of \$100 and above. Gifts below were received for the following services: 6400 Pediatrics, Big Hearts TAPP, Blessed Beginnings, Blessing Hospice - Hancock County, Blessing Hospice - Pike County, Blessing Hospice & Palliative Care, Blessing Nurses Alumni Association Scholarship, B-RCN General Endowment, B-RCN Other Grants Fund, B-RCN Unrestricted, Breast Services, Cancer Center & Radiation Services, Caring Club Fund, Child Care - General Fund, Diabetes Patient Care Fund, Employee Crisis Fund, EMS Office, Heart & Vascular Center, Home Care, Hospice Fundraising & Special Programs, Hospice/Palliative Care HOPE Project, Illini - Imaging Department, Illini - Oncology Department, Illini - Unrestricted, Merrick Family Medical Crisis Fund, Pharmacy Education, Psych Services, Quincy Hospitality House, Quincy Hospitality House Building Fund, S.H.A.R.E., and Foundation Unrestricted.

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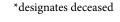
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