U.S. Army Flight Medics Receive Training at the Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus  

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The month of April was tumultuous to say the least. The marathon bombing, a vigorous man hunt, threatening letters mailed to our elected officials and an unexpected fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas. Sometimes it seems as we are living in the middle of a fiction novel, and unfortunately everything I mentioned was a reality for our country.

If you are anything like me, you were glued to the television to get the latest updates on each story. I can’t stop thinking about the families who have been impacted by these unfortunate events. Lives are forever changed… and our country is forever changed.

While watching the news, I was struck by how well the healthcare system responded. Although chaotic, everything seemed to go smoothly as far as integration with local law enforcement, EMS and hospital providers. The hospitals received an enormous amount of critically injured patients all at one time. As an administrator, I can only imagine all that was going on within the walls of those hospitals: internal disaster, staffing, physician coordination, supply management, security, crowd control, media relations and the list goes on and on… I also realize that if an event like this were to happen in Houston, our Campus would be the destination for many of these patients and families. Would we be ready? Are we trained well enough? Do we have the capacity, supplies and coordination to care for so many critical patients at the same time?

Without a doubt, this Campus would rise to the occasion and we would do a terrific job. Our hospital is made up of professionals who all know their responsibilities and would take a leadership role to make the real-time decisions necessary to care for these types of patients. I am certain that all of this would take place because of the natural instinct our staff has to take care of people. However, I also realize that we have a lot to learn from the facilities in Boston. Over the next few weeks, we will examine how they responded and begin to think about how we can be better prepared for a mass casualty event in our city. We will continue to learn and prepare for events that we pray never come our way.

One last important aspect that took place during that horrific day in Boston - did you notice all of the people who immediately stopped to assist? Normal, everyday citizens, bystanders, police, fire, EMS, medical personnel, national guard - all at the scene within seconds helping others. I’m certain their quick response saved many lives. Sometimes when the worst possible things happen we get to see the very best in people. In the midst of the tragedy, heroes emerged and we were able to witness the true compassion of humanity. The quote below was circulating on social media for several days after the bombing and really resonated with me.

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’ To this day, especially in times of ‘disaster,’ I remember my mother’s words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in this world.”

– Fred Rogers (aka… Mr. Rogers)

Talk soon,
Craig

Marguerite Badger Award Winner

At the annual Volunteer Services banquet held on April 21, Warren Frost was named the recipient of the Marguerite Badger Service Award, created in honor of the late Marguerite Badger, who was recognized with a Lifetime Achievement Award for her service and dedication to the hospital. Frost began his volunteer commitment with Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center in June 1999, and dedicated more than 10,000 hours systemwide, including the Northwest and TMC Campuses. For more than a decade, Frost spent his time uplifting staff with the gift of massage therapy and assisted numerous departments throughout the Campus. Frost passed away in late February, and his wife, Joyce, and daughter, Renee Frost Warnock, an employee at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital, accepted the award on his behalf. They are pictured left with Kristen Wilkerson, manager of Volunteer Services.
For generations, Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center has provided emergency care for critically ill and injured residents of the Greater Houston area. Our Campus is home to an expert team of affiliated physicians, nurses and technicians, and is at the forefront of the latest medical advancements and research in trauma services.

Nationally recognized as a leader in providing emergency care, Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute provides training for surgical residents clinical staff, and even teaches NASA astronauts how to quickly assess and treat serious medical conditions. Recently, the United States Army requested assistance with training their flight medics prior to deployment.

During their time at our facility, the medics were placed through clinical rotations consisting of classroom lectures involving medical and trauma aspects of patient care, patient and aero medical safety briefings, invasive skills practices and hands-on experience with caring for the severely ill in the acute phases of medical management.

George Tarver III, E.M.T-T.-P., F.P.-C., E.M.S.-I., flight paramedic and clinical educator of Life Flight®, was very involved with the training process. He said, “The intent was to provide them with the most information, up-to-date practices and experience in the civilian aspects of medicine. Our major goal and focus was to see that these army medics take what they learned in the civilian medical management realm and combine it with military medicine practices. Used in conjunction, these two practices will provide them with an even higher level of patient care in their day-to-day practice in the armed services.”

Colonel Kok of the United States Army recently visited Memorial Hermann-TMC to see his U.S. Army flight medics train with the clinical staff of Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute and Life Flight.

John B. Holcomb, M.D., F.A.C.S., director of Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute, chief of the division of Acute Care Surgery and professor of surgery at UTHealth Medical School, Colonel Kok and other members of the U.S. Army were able to witness first-hand results of the flight medic training program during a simulation lab test. In the test, the medics were charged with treating and stabilizing a wounded soldier “in flight.” After only a few minutes, the team successfully stabilized the patient.

The Army’s medevac helicopter also landed on the helipad, allowing staff members of Life Flight to receive a tour.

Craig Cordola, CEO of Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus, said, “It’s an incredible honor to have the U.S. Army entrust our staff with the training of their flight medics. We are beyond grateful for their service to our country and are humbled they chose our Campus to provide them with the level of training necessary to care for the critically injured.”
The Mischer Neuroscience Institute (MNI) at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center achieved a significant milestone recently after being recognized by The Joint Commission and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association as meeting The Joint Commission’s standards for Disease-Specific Care Comprehensive Stroke Center Certification. The certification solidifies the MNI’s place in an elite group of providers focused on complex stroke care. Complex Stroke Centers are recognized as industry leaders and are responsible for setting the national agenda in highly specialized stroke care.

“The Comprehensive Stroke Certification is many steps above the Primary Stroke Certification designation by The Joint Commission,” said Nicole Harrison, R.N., administrative director of the MNI at Memorial Hermann-TMC. “There are very particular and exacting requirements, and to achieve this advanced certification is something that very few stroke centers have been able to accomplish.”

Comprehensive Stroke Center Certification recognizes those hospitals that have state-of-the-art infrastructure, staff and training to receive and treat patients with the most complex strokes. The MNI underwent a rigorous onsite review earlier this year during which Joint Commission experts reviewed the MNI’s compliance with the stringent Comprehensive Stroke Center standards and requirements, including advanced imaging capabilities, around-the-clock availability of specialized treatments, and staff with the unique education and competencies to care for complex stroke patients.

“The whole thrust of the certification is showing that you truly have an integrated program,” said Harrison. “Each discipline must collaborate with the other – including the neurosurgeons, neurologists, nursing, social work, physical therapy and more – everyone is part of the decision tree.” Harrison credits the team approach with making the difference in terms of the MNI’s ability to implement significant improvements to the program which are already leading to better outcomes for patients.

“The Comprehensive Stroke Certification is heavily data-oriented, which allowed us to see evidence-based opportunities for making our stroke care even better,” she added. “We increased our focus to include both ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke, we made significant improvements to our peer review process, and we also implemented a cognitive screening and depression screening process for every patient prior to discharge and post-discharge.”

According to Harrison, a stroke leadership committee was formed to help oversee and guide the processes necessary to achieve the certification. The committee was made up of physicians and other caregivers from across the Campus – including the Emergency department, Interventional Radiology, Education and more. For the past six months, the group has held a weekly two-hour meeting to ensure that all standards of practice and protocols – both new and existing – are completely integrated across every discipline.

By achieving this advanced certification, the Mischer Neuroscience Institute at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center has thoroughly demonstrated the greatest level of commitment to the care of its patients with a complex stroke condition,” said Mark R. Chassin, M.D., president, The Joint Commission. “Certification is a voluntary process and The Joint Commission commends the MNI for successfully undertaking this challenge to elevate the standard of care for the community it serves.”

“Education is an integral piece of this certification, and we are already seeing the benefits for our patients,” said Harrison. “It’s a two-year certification, but we have built the infrastructure to ensure that we will sustain and continue to do better. We are already seeing improvements in our outcomes, such as door-to-needle times for tPA administration in stroke patients.”

In order to ensure the stroke program had the necessary support to be considered a Comprehensive Stroke Center by The Joint Commission, several new team members were added, including additional stroke coordinators, data extractors and advanced nurse practitioners. Harrison credits hospital administration with ensuring the MNI’s success throughout the certification endeavor. “Our administrative leadership team was crucial in securing the resources we needed to make this certification happen,” she said. “Without that support, we could not have achieved this significant milestone.”
ANNUAL BENEFITS RE-ENROLLMENT BEGINS MAY 5

Annual benefits re-enrollment for the Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center Campus will take place from 7 a.m. Sunday, May 5 through 4 p.m. Tuesday, May 14. During open enrollment, all employees will have the opportunity to evaluate their benefits and make adjustments for fiscal year 2014, which begins July 1.

Please note that even if you do not make any changes to your benefits, you must complete the annual enrollment process. To enroll, log on to Employee Self Service through askHR and select your coverage plans for FY14. Be sure to allocate the amount (if any) you would like to set aside to cover healthcare costs and/or dependent care expenses in either the Healthcare or Dependent Care flexible spending account.

Once you have enrolled online, be sure to print and keep your confirmation page – you’ll be required to provide the confirmation page if any questions arise regarding your benefits selections.

For details and plan specifics, please review your Employee Benefits Guide. Additional information is available on the askHR website. For those without access to computers, a lab is available in Human Resources, which is located on the 25th floor of the Memorial Hermann Medical Plaza. If you have any questions about coverage options, contact askHR at 713.456.6447.

THE MEMORIAL HERMANN-TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER CAMPUS CELEBRATES NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

In honor of the dedication, commitment and efforts of registered nurses across the country, National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6 through 12, which is the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

The week-long celebration aims to raise awareness of the nursing profession and to help educate the public about the valuable roles nurses play in the healthcare industry. It is a time to honor the compassionate care and clinical excellence nurses deliver to patients at our hospital every day.

“Whether practicing at the bedside or contributing to our strategic direction, it is clearly evident that the nurses who choose to provide care on our Campus are some of the best the profession has to offer,” said Victoria King, chief nursing officer of Memorial Hermann-TMC.

Cheryl Olson, chief nursing officer of Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital, added, “Nurses Week recognizes all of their hard work and commitment to providing exceptional patient care experiences and high-quality care.”

From May 6 through 9, Councils of the Professional Nursing Shared Governance Structure will host the events below in honor of their colleagues.

• On Monday, May 6, the Night Council and Magnet Champions will kick off the first day of National Nurses Week by inviting all nurses to enjoy a light breakfast and mingle with the CNOs from 7 to 8:30 a.m. in the Cullen Atrium. Nurses are encouraged to wear their nursing pins.

• On Tuesday, May 7, a punch and cake reception will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Hermann Conference Center and from 8 to 10 p.m. in the Cullen Board Room, sponsored by the Recruitment, Retention and Recognition Council. During the daytime reception, the Council will recognize the winners of the Excellence in Nursing Awards. These individuals were nominated by their peers and elected by the Councils. The 12 nurses chosen best demonstrate the roles of nurses outlined in the six pillars of our Nursing Professional Practice Model and the awards will be given across the following categories: Nurses as Clinicians, Nurses as Collaborators, Nurses as Advocates, Nurses as Innovators, Nurses as Teachers and Nurses as Leaders.

• On Wednesday, May 8, the Adult Practice, Quality and Patient Safety Council, and Research and Evidence-Based Practice Council will have educational tables, a photo booth and games from 4 to 8 p.m. on the skybridge.

• On Thursday, May 9, the Education Council and Informatics Council will have educational tables and fun nursing-based activities on the skybridge from 4 to 8 p.m.

For more information about National Nurses Week, please contact Mary Vondohlen at 713.704.8173.
LAMBORGHINI FESTIVAL RAISED MORE THAN $23,000 FOR CHILDREN’S MEMORIAL HERMANN HOSPITAL

Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital was the beneficiary of the 2nd annual Lamborghini Festival held in April. The three-day event included exciting exhibitions, test riding and a parade of Lamborghinis, as well as a VIP reception and dinner. On Friday, an exclusive display of Lamborghini’s finest models stopped by the hospital. Pediatric patients and hospital staff were invited to view the luxury vehicles and even sit behind the wheel of the exotic sports cars. Later that night, a cocktail reception was held at Hotel Sorella featuring the festival’s guest of honor, former chief test driver of Lamborghini, Valentino Balboni, who flew in from Italy, for an evening of music, art and fashion.

Track events were held on Saturday at Motor Sport Ranch in Angleton featuring various models of Raging Bulls plus Italian, British and German automobiles. For a donation, participants could ride around the track in one of the sports cars or schedule an once-in-a-lifetime ride with Mr. Balboni.

The festival concluded on Sunday with a procession of more than 50 Lamborghinis driving to CITYCENTRE, where the cars were on display for the remainder of the day. Spectators enjoyed live music, autograph and photo opportunities with the cars and drivers throughout the afternoon. In all, the festival raised more than $23,000 for Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital.

“We were thrilled to join forces once again with the Lamborghini Festival for this one-of-a-kind opportunity,” said Ed Tufaro, chief of hospital operations at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital.

Patient Giovanni Ramirez sits in the driver’s seat of one of the Lamborghini sports cars that stopped by Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital as part of the Lamborghini Festival activities last month.

“We were thrilled to join forces once again with the Lamborghini Festival for this one-of-a-kind opportunity,” said Ed Tufaro, chief of hospital operations at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital. “The event celebrated the iconic Italian automaker and its beautiful luxury sports cars while benefiting the real cause that drives us every day – children in need of expert care.”

Slovenia Visit

Native Slovenian Igor D. Gregoric, M.D., F.A.C.C., chief of the Surgical division for the Center for Advanced Heart Failure at Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute-Texas Medical Center, invited Roman Kirn, ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to the United States and Mexico, to visit in March. After an extensive tour of the Campus, Dr. Gregoric, Ambassador Kirn and Richard Wilkens, honorary consul of the Republic of Slovenia, had a successful meeting with Paul O’Sullivan, CEO of HVI. Both Memorial Hermann-TMC and HVI look forward to pursuing and developing a strong relationship with Slovenia’s diplomats and healthcare professionals.

From left Dr. Igor Gregoric, Roman Kirn, Richard Wilkens, Paul O’Sullivan and Dr. Kar tour the Life Flight® helipad at the Texas Trauma Institute.
Last month, the 2nd annual Patient Experience Fair was held in the Hermann Conference Center, providing employees with hands-on opportunities to refresh their knowledge of AIDET principles and learn how to improve a patient’s stay. More than 1,100 employees attended the interactive, educational event.

Upon entering the Fair, all participants watched a welcome video from Campus CEO Craig Cordola, who reminded employees of their role in providing patients with quality care and great experiences. Cordola was featured as a host as part of the game-show theme of the Fair. The short film included cameos from Paul O’Sullivan, chief executive officer of the Heart & Vascular Institute-Texas Medical Center; Victoria King, chief nursing officer for Memorial Hermann-TMC; Tom Flanagan, chief operating officer at Memorial Hermann-TMC; and Cheryl Olson, chief nursing officer for Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital.

Once inside, employees played games made popular by game shows, such as The Price is Right, Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy. Each activity was designed to provide attendees with opportunities to learn new ways to interact with patients and reinforce principles learned in the past. The games included role play, quizzes and visuals.

While playing Hollywood Squares, participants determined if patient experience statements were true or false. The “celebrities” featured in the game were members of the leadership team, including Paul O’Sullivan, Tom Flanagan, and Chief Human Resources Officer Vivian Kardow. In another exercise, employees had one minute to find what was wrong with a staged photo of Cheryl Olson as a patient in a disheveled room with Victoria King as a caregiver with many dress code standard violations. A Jeopardy tournament gave employees a chance to test their knowledge of AIDET.

At each booth, employees could earn tickets for participating and successfully completing the task or game. Tickets could be redeemed for refreshments and entry into prize drawings. Beverly Dailey, an R.N. in the NICU, won an iPad mini. Norma Spaulding, an R.N. in noninvasive cardiology, received a $250 gift card for Gallery Furniture, and Renee Weck, an R.N. in the STICU, won the grand prize of a weekend getaway to the Lost Pines Resort.

“The Fair is a fun way for employees to learn something new and have a greater understanding of how we each contribute to a patient’s experience,” said Polina Strug, director of patient experience at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center. “No matter where you work within the hospital, the knowledge learned can translate into improving a patient’s stay and ultimately lead to greater satisfaction.

“I want to thank everyone who attended, especially the more than 200 employees who volunteered their time to make the Fair successful. I want to give a special thanks to Robert Nygaard in Facilities Engineering, who created the games. They were practically exact replicas of ones seen on TV game shows. He did an outstanding job,” said Strug.
**Upcoming Events**

**Global Nursing Conference**  
*May 17 and 18*  
The 4th annual Global Nursing Conference will return to Houston on May 17 and 18. This year’s conference, “Advancing the Practice of Nursing: A Global Perspective,” will take place in the Morris Cultural Arts Center on the campus of Houston Baptist University. The two-day event will provide registered nurses with the opportunity to earn up to 10 continuing education contact hours. The opening session will feature keynote speaker Captain Mark Kelly, a celebrated American astronaut and husband of former US Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. Nurses, active military personnel, veterans and nursing students are encouraged to attend. The cost of the two-day event for nurses is $200. Space is limited. Register at http://2013.GlobalRN.org by May 8.

**Celebrate 2013 National Hospital Week**  
Throughout the nation, hospitals devote the second week of May each year to National Hospital Week, honoring the everyday heroes of healthcare who embrace the daily opportunities to make a difference in the lives of patients, their families and fellow employees. It’s a time when we recognize the essential role that every employee plays in patient care and the extraordinary impact each of us has on the lives of patients and their loved ones. In honor of National Hospital Week, our Campus is hosting the following events for all employees.

**Employee Appreciation Day**  
*Wednesday, May 15*  
*Atrium* 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
*Café Hermann* 10 p.m. to midnight  
During our annual Employee Appreciation Day celebrations, lunch will be served for all employees.

**Hospital Fair**  
*Friday, May 17*  
*Skybridge* 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Be sure to stop by our annual Hospital Fair, where departments display booths that showcase their accomplishments and contributions to patient care.

*Gateways* is a publication for employees of the Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus, a leading healthcare facility that proudly stands at the gateway to the world-renowned Texas Medical Center.

We welcome your suggestions and comments. If you have news to share, concerns to address or questions you’d like answered, please send an email to medicalcentercommunications@memorialhermann.org or call 713.704.1222.