UTMB proudly opened a new Heart Center on October 24. Located on the sixth floor of Jennie Sealy Hospital, the new space houses three cardiac catheterization suites, as well as an electrophysiology laboratory. The new center is an extraordinary milestone for our patients—its construction, design and philosophy were completed with patients' needs in mind, coupled with UTMB's long-standing commitment to providing the most advanced heart and vascular care.

The catheterization and electrophysiology labs play a significant role in supporting our cardiology services and will contribute to safety and quality. The space totals 84,739 square feet. Each of the new labs are double the size of the old space at 850 square feet each. This will be amazing for our care teams and accommodate the state-of-the-art equipment needed for the complex procedures we perform. The extra space also provides the additional room needed to support our teaching mission. The new suite includes ample office and conference space so interventional and diagnostic cardiologists, fellows, cardiovascular-certified registered nurses, radiology technologists, patient services specialists and support staff can all work together even more efficiently to provide exceptional cardiac care for our patients.

The center includes a dedicated waiting area with two consultation rooms equipped with computers, so faculty members can consult with family members following procedures and teams can view procedure images for teaching and discussion. The center also features a Radial Lounge, located in the pre- and post-procedure care unit, where patients can comfortably recover from their intervention in a recliner rather than on a stretcher. This will be a wonderful patient satisfier, as many patients are now opting for the wrist instead of the groin as the access point for their cardiac procedure—in fact, more than 60 percent of coronary angiograms and interventions are now performed via the radial (wrist) approach, which
improves outcomes and reduces the likelihood of complications. The center will accommodate comprehensive interventional cardiac catheterization services such as coronary and peripheral interventions and angiograms; cardiac biopsy; structural heart procedures, such as valvuloplasty; and atrial septal defect (ASD) and patent foramen ovale (PFO) closures. Electrophysiology services will include cardiac implantations, such as pacemakers, defibrillators and implantable loop recorders. Complex cardiac ablations for supraventricular tachycardia, ventricular tachycardia, Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome, atrial fibrillation and atrial flutter will also be provided.

In coordination with Cardiac Surgery, the team will provide transcutaneous aortic valve replacements (TAVRs), which allows for the minimally invasive care of patients who are a high risk for an open heart procedure. Since August 2017, UTMB has completed TAVRs in more than 33 patients.

Congestive heart failure (CHF) care will be provided using CardioMEMS, which is a sensor implant that monitors pulmonary artery pressure. This helps improve quality of life for our CHF patients and reduces the risk of hospitalization, because we can adjust their medications and lifestyle choices before symptoms become too serious.

The team is also looking forward to soon offering Watchman for patients, which is a small implant placed in the heart that can reduce the risk of stroke in individuals with atrial fibrillation and who are unable to take anticoagulants.

There are so many wonderful things we are going to be able to do for our patients in this space, and we are excited to train our fellows in all of these life-saving procedures!

Thank you to everyone who helped make the center a reality, including The Sealy & Smith Foundation for their generous and ongoing support. UTMB’s new Heart Center will allow us to continue providing "Best Care" to our patients in a new state-of-the-art facility!
The Nursing Science & Innovation (NSI) division at UTMB is excited to partner with Diligent Robotics and the fabulous nurses on Unit 9C Surgery in Jennie Sealy Hospital to pilot an autonomous robot assistant.

Moxi, as our robot team member is called, will be making its debut appearance this winter. There will be a Meet & Greet during the day and evening for the entire UTMB community. Moxi will then spend that first week getting to know the unit.

UTMB is one of only two health care organizations in the world to pilot Moxi, which is unique in being one of the first autonomous robots—not controlled by humans. Moxi will serve as a supporting member of the team by taking over non-patient care logistical tasks, such as bringing supplies from a central storage area to patient rooms; this will help nurses maintain their focus on patient care delivery.

Moxi will work as an assistant for one month. The NSI division will be collecting data during this time. Diligent Robotics will be on-site as well for the entire pilot to answer questions and monitor Moxi’s work. Look for more details very soon!

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2018 State Employee Charitable Campaign

UTMB’s 2018 State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) is off to a great start! As of the official starting date of the campaign, Friday, Oct. 26, UTMB has already raised more than $60,000 toward our goal of $500,000!

This year’s theme is UTMB Superheroes, as we recognize the everyday heroes among us.

The great part about the SECC campaign is that it allows us to decide which groups and causes we support from among hundreds of local, national and international charities.

Every year, the funds we raise contribute significantly to needs in the communities where we live and serve—they support those in need; provide healthy meals, warm beds, a doctor’s visit, school supplies and educational support; advance environmental and social causes; and much more. SECC makes an important difference in the lives of people around us, and in the health and vibrancy of our communities.

No donation is too small! It is not the amount we give, but more importantly, the fact that we have given! One-time contributions can be made via cash, check or online, or pledges can be made through payroll deduction (monthly or a single gift).

Please visit the SECC website at http://www.utmb.edu/secc to begin the process of making your donation today!
Friday Focus recently caught up with one of UTMB’s familiar faces, Sodexo’s director of Environmental Services, Jason Botkin.

Botkin, who joined UTMB in November 2003, has local roots—he was born and raised in Houston, his father was “born on the island” and his mother is from Baytown, Texas. Prior to joining UTMB, Botkin worked at Harris Health System.

In his role as director of Environmental Services, Botkin oversees a management team of 15 individuals with a staff totaling more than 310 employees across the organization—housekeeping staff, floor technicians, trash technicians and more—all of whom are busy around-the-clock making sure UTMB stays beautiful and is a safe haven for healing, not a breeding ground for germs.

What is your favorite part of working at UTMB?

I love the team atmosphere—there are so many service-minded people throughout UTMB who are here to help our patients. And we get to work at such a beautiful location here in Galveston. I really enjoy the view from Jennie Sealy Hospital. I just love the organization as a whole and the sense of community. Even though I’m technically a contractor, I don’t feel one!

What’s your average day like?

I spend about 75 percent of my time on the floors engaging with and talking to people—not only our customers and staff, but also patients. The other 15 percent of my time is spent either in the office or in meetings.

On any given day, chances are good you can be spotted somewhere walking around Jennie Sealy Hospital. On average, how many steps do you estimate you walk each day?

I easily average 13,000 steps a day; sometimes I get up to 20,000 steps.

UTMB’s Environmental Services team is continually in the highest percentile ranking of the Press Ganey patient satisfaction surveys in the category of “cleanliness of the hospital environment.” How do you sustain this success?

It all starts at the beginning with our employees. We look for people who exhibit compassion, accountability, respect and enthusiasm, and of course, people who are service-oriented. We want people to join Sodexo and UTMB because they want to make a positive impact in people’s lives. Our goal is to treat all patients, residents, visitors and employees with compassion and empathy and create exceptional experiences, as if they were our own family members. We make sure someone from our team touches base with our patients to make sure we have introduced ourselves and let them know we are there not only to make sure their room is clean, but to ensure they have everything they need within our ability to be comfortable in their rooms.

What is one of the most challenging parts of your job?

I think one of the most challenging aspects of my job would have to be engaging staff across the entire organization to take a role in helping keep our hospital clean. Our housekeepers to their best to keep each area clean, but they can’t always be everywhere at all times—keeping UTMB clean for our patients and visitors is really every employee’s responsibility.

What’s your favorite part of your job?

I get to talk to people and make people’s lives better, one day at a time.

What does Best Care mean to you?

To me, Best Care means delivering top-notch health care and treating patients with the utmost respect and quality of care.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

I love to go fishing; any kind of fishing—bay fishing, offshore fishing—I have a saltwater soul! My favorite place to fish would probably have to be Cabo San Lucas. I caught two striped marlin, a 440-pound black marlin, an 80-pound mako shark and some mahi-mahi.
Have you seen any good movies lately?
I just got "forced" to go see "A Star is Born;" it was awesome.

Tell us about your family.
I have two daughters, a 26-year-old and 20-year-old. My oldest, Madalyn, will be graduating from the University of Houston this December with a degree in education. She is recently engaged and busy planning a wedding next winter. Hopefully she'll becoming off my payroll after that!

My youngest daughter, Brooke, is a sophomore at the University of Southern California. She plays volleyball. She has been playing since she was 13. USC is one of the top five universities in the country for volleyball, and she is even being considered for the 2024 Olympics, so my wife, Elizabeth, and I are obviously hopeful about that.

If you could spend 15 minutes with any living person, who would it be and why?
Probably Andre Agassi or John McEnroe, because I like tennis. I grew up playing a lot of tennis and had a tennis scholarship. I really admire those guys; they're kind of my sports idols.

How did you learn to ride a bicycle?
My dad worked a lot, my mom worked a lot. I just grabbed a bicycle and started riding, I fell off and skinned my knee, got up and hopped back on until I learned how to do it. I reached out to friend, and then I taught others how to do it. Trial and error!
Caregiver “Time Out” Sessions: November

Every Wednesday at 2 p.m.
in Jennie Sealy Hospital
Conference Room 2.506A,
UTMB’s Health Resource Center
offers 30-minute “Time Out”
sessions focused on caregiving,
caregiver support, self-care and
other related topics. Sessions are
open to all. For more information,
contact Patient Resource Specialist
Savannah Parks at (409) 266-7542
or sjparks@utmb.edu.

November 7 – Patient and Caregiver Zen Hour w/Pet Therapy
Caregivers take on many responsibilities, and often their emotional and self-care needs go unmet. Caregivers, family members and patients are invited to participate in the “Caregiver Zen Hour” which offers relaxing and comforting activities to decrease stress and provide a little quiet time. Other activities include: aromatherapy, adult coloring, conversations with Pastoral Care, inspirational reading and a massage chair.

November 14 – Holidays and Self-Care
Presented by: Alice Williams, MS, LBSW
It can be stressful when a family member is ill or needs extra help during the holidays. Caregivers, family members and health care workers are encouraged to join us for a discussion on practical tips for alleviating some of these stressors. A “Holiday Stress Assessment” will be provided and there will be an emphasis on adjusting expectations to keep the holiday season a time of togetherness and joy.

November 21 – No session this week

November 28 – Mobilize Your Loved Ones
Presented by: Cathy Elton, PT, MPT and Tyler Morrison, BS, CSCS, CEAS
Cathy and Tyler, from UTMB’s Rehabilitation Services Department, will present information on good body mechanics for assisting loved ones who have impaired mobility, including transfers, such as sitting to standing, sitting to laying down, etc.. They will also share information on assist devices and how to adjust them and proper body mechanics for lifting.

Celebrating comprehensive stroke center designation
Dr. Anish Bhardwaj, chairman of the Department of Neurology, and Annette Macias-Hoag, vice president, Health System & Service Line Operations, hosted a reception in appreciation of everyone for their ongoing dedication to stroke excellence at UTMB and for those who exemplified exceptional leadership in UTMB’s quest to achieve Comprehensive Stroke Center Certification from Det Norske Veritas (DNV). The recognition validates UTMB’s commitment, expertise and readiness to care for victims of complex strokes.

According to DNV, the Comprehensive Stroke Center Certification encompasses the full spectrum of stroke care—diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and education—and establishes clear metrics to evaluate outcomes. Comprehensive stroke centers are typically the largest and best-equipped hospitals in a given geographical area that can treat any kind of stroke or stroke complication.

Left: Annette Macias-Hoag, and Dr. Anish Bhardwaj with Dr. Stephen Busby, director of Inpatient Neurology Services.

Right: Dr. Anish Bhardwaj, Brenda Yanez, stroke nursing program manager, Service Line Operations, Dr. Adham Kamel, stroke medical director and assistant professor in the Department of Neurology, and Annette Macias-Hoag.

Photos by John Carstens
SHOUT OUTS!

Congratulations to Leslye Mlcak, administrative manager in Patient Services, on her appointment as President of the Texas Alliance of Patient Services! The Texas Alliance for Patient Services (TAPS) is a non-profit association that provides professional development, networking opportunities, and resources to those who serve as patient advocates and in other patient service capacities. It is the only organization of its kind in Texas and is affiliated with the Texas Hospital Association (THA). TAPS is also affiliated and aligned with the Society for Healthcare Consumer Advocacy (SHCA), TAPS’s counterpart national organization. This relationship helps the organization bring nationally recognized best practices to the State of Texas.

Kudos to Sherry Bogar, CMA. Sherry is currently vice president for the Texas Society of Medical Assistants and was recently installed as the 2018–2020 American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) Trustee as its 62nd Annual Conference, held in Salt Lake City, Utah. In this role, Sherry represents medical assistants and CMAs (AAMA) across the nation: “I believe that medical assistants are truly at the heart of health care. We provide quality, safe health care in all areas of the medical practice and outpatient settings. The CMA (AAMA) is perfectly suited to take on the challenge of an ever-evolving health care environment because of their versatility, broad knowledge base and complete competence in providing the best care.”

RECENT PATIENT AND FAMILY LETTERS:

“Too often we hear the negative experiences of patients and families we treat at UTMB. I want to share with you my own personal story and offer kudos to all involved...My aunt was emergently admitted to a hospital in Southwest Louisiana for what appeared to be a serious neurological defect. The doctors in Louisiana initially diagnosed her with a “pinched nerve” and told her to follow-up with an internist. Following a series of diagnostic tests, the ED physician and radiologist identified an autoimmune disorder attacking her spinal column. The team in Louisiana did not have experience with this serious condition. The doctor immediately requested a preference for a hospital for transfer; within minutes, my family agreed on UTMB.

In a very short period of time, Dr. Ahmad Shawagfeh had not only returned the call and accepted the transfer, but he also recognized that the diagnosis made by the ED physician/radiologist was not consistent with her presenting symptoms—essentially, he provided an accurate diagnosis of her condition over the telephone!

My aunt arrived via ambulance at UTMB Jennie Sealy Hospital’s Neurology Unit at 1:40 a.m. Although she did not expect to see anyone other than the nurses until the following morning, she was very surprised to have a full examination performed by the neurology resident within a half hour of arrival. Additional diagnostics were ordered/performed and treatments initiated. By 9 a.m. on Sunday, Dr. Adham Kamel examined her and reviewed all of her current findings. He indicated that she was already beginning to demonstrate a reversal of her condition. He clearly explained his treatment plan to all of us. By early afternoon, the next MRI was completed. By late afternoon, she had undergone her evaluation by physical therapy (two students and two faculty, no less) and was given several exercises to do while awaiting the start of her program on Monday. The nurse, Courtney Oberndorger, was great to us the entire shift, keeping us informed and routinely checking her for neurological changes.

The social worker, Gina Chandler, saw us and provided very important information regarding possible inpatient rehab placement after discharge, something my aunt and her family had not considered. And, I must add here that my aunt also acknowledged that she was surprised by how good the hospital’s food tasted!

I know this is a lot of detail, but I want you to know how amazing it was to experience this UTMB team in action. On behalf of my aunt and the rest of the family, please accept our sincerest appreciation for being UTMB and all that I know it can be and is.”

“I am writing this on behalf of my parents, who were brought into the trauma unit. They are unable to write, due to their injuries. They were blown away by resident Lily Valad. The care and compassion that was shown to them, including visits off-shift and the sharing of phone chargers is something they will never forget. There were some unclear issues relating to my father (he relies on my mom to be his advocate and “eyes and ears”), but she was across the hall with her own serious injuries. Just when I hit a brick wall, I had the amazing fortune of connecting with Betty Shipp. I had no idea that my parents has already met a patient navigator (Betty). She saved me and probably my dad’s life by answering and solving our questions about his medications, lesions, etc. I cannot even begin to express my gratitude to her. They also had the wonderful experience of meeting Sylvia Campbell, RN, BSN. Her helpfulness was worth noting, but her kindness in playing “the name game” with my parents over common friends both in Houston and Galveston made them feel safe, happier and not so alone. She was wonderful when I met her, too, quickly sending me the information I needed. Great people at a great hospital. Thank you”

“The staff at the Angleton Danbury Urgent Care are very friendly staff. The receptionist was professional and welcoming; I was called back in less than four minutes. The nurse was friendly and thorough in her assessment. The doctor was in the room within three minutes after nurse’s assessment. He was also thorough and compassionate. Swab tests were ordered and performed with results back very quickly. In and out in about thirty minutes...we will be using this urgent care when we are in need of one.”