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HONORING OUR TRAUMA AND CRITICAL CARE TEAMS

UF Health TraumaOne began in 1983 and is the region's only Level I adult and pediatric trauma center, serving 30 counties in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia. It is a significant part of what positions UF Health Jacksonville to be the region's most valued health care asset.

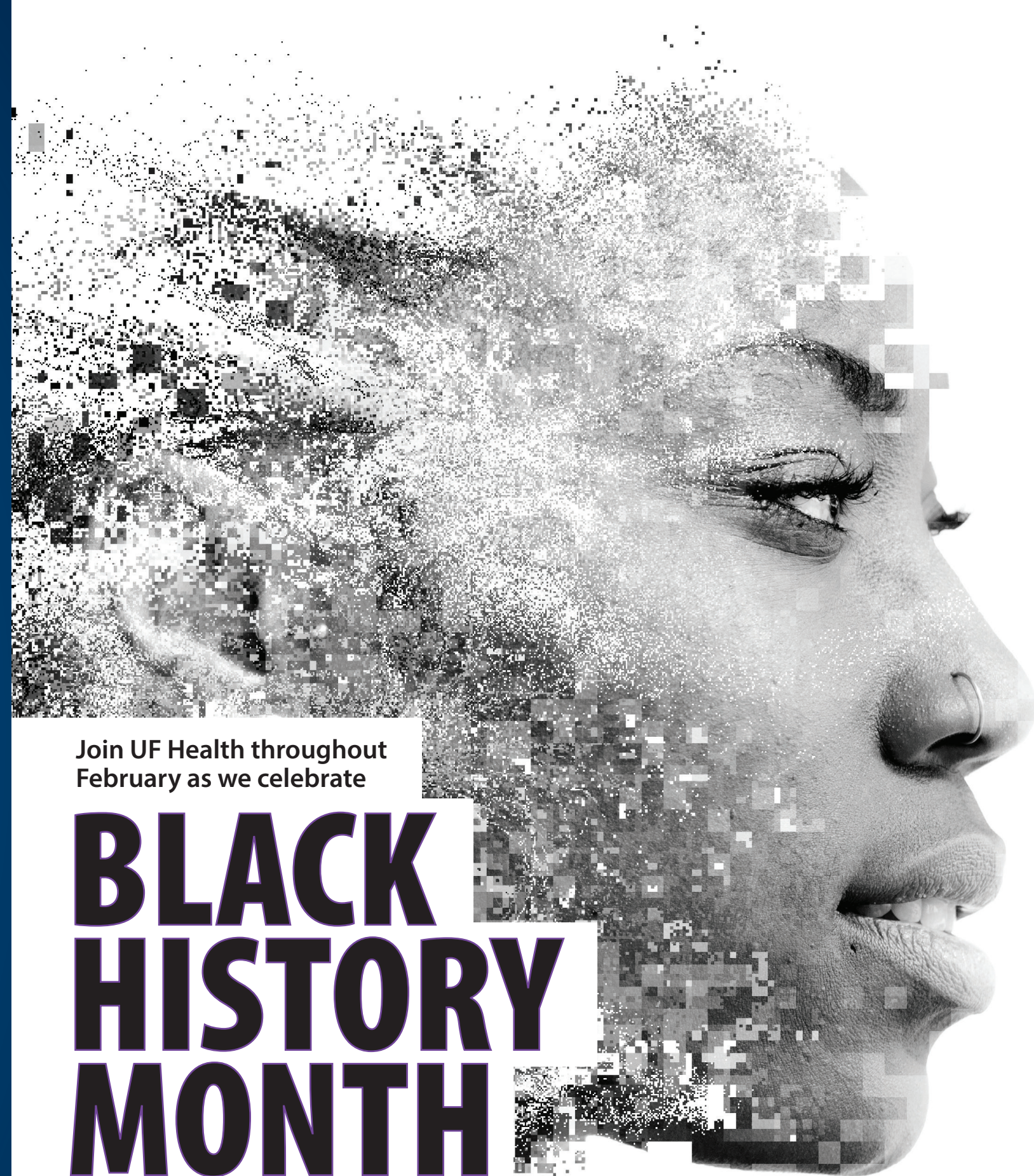
To help raise awareness and support for trauma and critical care at UF Health Jacksonville, the UF Health TraumaOne Heroes Council was established in 2008, started with a few dedicated volunteers and has since grown into a dynamic group of more than 20 members. Their flagship event, A Night for Heroes, has raised more than \$2 million to benefit our trauma program. The TraumaOne Heroes Council was recently recognized at the national level and honored as an Outstanding Civic Organization at the Association of Fundraising Professionals Florida First Coast Chapter's National Philanthropy Day award ceremony. I am very proud of the members of the council for this prestigious recognition and the work they do to help support our TraumaOne team.

Their efforts will be recognized during the 15th Annual A Night for Heroes gala this spring. The event honors the contributions of those who work tirelessly to make our trauma program a leader in the field. Proceeds from the event help purchase lifesaving equipment and support our trauma and critical care services. I look forward to this special event every year. It's the perfect opportunity to celebrate the outstanding and unique care we deliver to our patients and community.

Sincerely,



Russell E. Armistead, MBA
CEO, UF Health Jacksonville



Join UF Health throughout
February as we celebrate

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

UF Health is proud of our African American history and the staff, faculty and physicians who represent us today.

From L to R: Michael and Maria Brien are grateful to UF Health for the excellent care they received during a hard time for their family; Michael Brien with his wife, Maria, and their two children.



Patient with metastatic prostate cancer gets a new lease on life.

At age 31, Michael Brien started his computer repair business, where he worked long hours, week after week. A decade later, his business was successful, but he began to experience bouts of fatigue. His wife, Maria, thought his weariness was burnout from working too much, as well as poor diet and lack of exercise.

Brien's fatigue increased dramatically a few months later, and he hardly had enough energy to work at all. Brien made the difficult decision to close his business and focus on his health.

Life after work

Following the decision to close his business, Brien's fatigue did not go away. It slowly became worse, even when he ate well and exercised. Toward the end of 2019, he experienced another symptom — frequent urination — where he would use the bathroom two to three times a night.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 did not help. Brien's symptoms worsened, but it was difficult to see a doctor, as many offices were closed and people were encouraged to stay home.

In December 2020, Brien was able to schedule an appointment with a urology practice. The doctor gave him a physical and checked his prostate, but did not find anything unusual.

A trip to the emergency room

Brien showed a rapid decline in his health months after his initial appointment. Brien was getting out of bed seven or eight times to use the bathroom during the night. He had to put a lot of pressure on his bladder just to drain half a cup of urine. By the next month, only drops were coming out when he used the bathroom. The lower left side of Brien's back began hurting so badly that his wife took him to the emergency room.

In the emergency room, a catheter was inserted to relieve his bladder of 2,000 cubic centimeters, or 8 1/2 cups, of urine. He received intravenous fluids for dehydration, along with bloodwork. His prostate-specific antigen test, or PSA, was at a level of 337. Normal PSA levels for men in their late 40s like Brien are 0 to 2.5. Thinking this was an error, they gave him another PSA test, and when the level came back the same, Brien was sent to a local hospital for further evaluation. Brien learned he most likely had prostate cancer that had possibly metastasized, spreading to other parts of his body.

Dark times turn brighter

Brien left the hospital in March 2021, discouraged because his follow-up appointment to get a biopsy of his prostate wasn't for another four weeks. He and his wife turned to a family friend who referred them to K.C. Balaji, MD, a urologic oncologist at UF Health Urology – Jacksonville.

Within a week, Brien was seen for a biopsy and bone scan. He met with Balaji, who discussed his biopsy results and PSA levels in detail. Balaji told Brien that although he had an aggressive cancer that had spread from his prostate to bones in other parts of his body, there were several treatment options available to help people in his situation live longer through proper cancer management.

"I walked into Dr. Balaji's office a broken man, thinking I only had a couple years to live," Brien said. "When Dr. Balaji said, 'Don't worry, this is what I do. We've got this,' I left his office hopeful and encouraged."

Balaji started Brien on several medications to manage the symptoms of the disease. Within a short time, Brien's PSA level went from 337 to 25, prompting a celebration from Balaji's staff. By August 2021, Brien's PSA level was 1.4.

Precision medicine to treat prostate cancer

Balaji and his team of urologists treat men with prostate cancer using a strategy called precision medicine. One aspect of this method is a test called next-generation sequencing, which involves testing more than 500 cancer genes to look for any mutations or abnormalities.

They also use an integrated cancer care model, where all treatment is done under one roof.

A better outlook on life

Instead of working long hours again, Brien volunteers daily at a local charity, helps with activities at his church and keeps up with home projects. Brien's previous issues with nighttime urination are gone. He can also drink as much fluid as he wants without worrying about the constant urge to urinate.

"I can't say enough good things about Dr. Balaji," Brien said. "All the staff and doctors in the urology department were absolutely incredible. I really got the sense that everyone cares about what they're doing."

Balaji and his team of urologists offer comprehensive urological cancer care. Patients with urological conditions undergo detailed evaluation, after which an individualized treatment plan or surgery is considered.

"We're grateful to Mr. Brien for sharing his experience, so that we are able to help other patients who may be in a similar situation," Balaji said. "We are committed to meeting the patient's needs in one of the most difficult times in their lives, and to doing the best we can to be with them all the way."

Visit [UFHealthJax.org/urology](https://ufhealthjax.org/urology) for more information or call 904.383.1016 to schedule an appointment.

FIGHTING FATIGUE

through



STAY HEART HEALTHY

Learn the warning signs and symptoms of a heart attack this American Heart Month.

February is American Heart Month, a time when the nation spotlights heart disease, the No. 1 cause of death in the U.S.

Coronary artery disease is the most common type of heart disease and the main cause of heart attack. There's no better time than now to spread awareness about the warning signs and symptoms of a heart attack.

Dominick Angiolillo, MD, PhD, FACC, chief of the division of cardiology and medical director of the UF Health Cardiovascular Center – Jacksonville, discusses what you need to know, including the importance of early action.

Watch for warning signs

A heart attack can happen because one of the blood vessels that feed the heart muscle becomes clogged by a blood clot. Time is crucial when it comes to heart attacks. The longer you wait to address symptoms, the more damage can be done to the heart. Typically, heart attack symptoms include:

- Chest pain, which can be as severe as feeling like an elephant is sitting on your chest
- Pain that travels up to your jaw and down your left arm
- Shortness of breath

Symptoms can differ

It's important to know that not all people experience the same symptoms. Differences can occur between genders and in those who have diabetes. Atypical symptoms include the following:

- Heavy sweating — especially cold sweats
- Upset stomach or indigestion
- Nausea

Women tend to experience an upset stomach, indigestion and nausea more than men. The most common symptom for both men and women is chest discomfort.

When to seek help

No matter how mild or severe the symptoms feel, always head straight to the emergency room or call 911. Do not waste any time seeking help, as heart attacks cannot be self-treated. Even if you think it's something else, go get it checked out, especially if you are having a consistent upset stomach and indigestion. Taking four baby aspirin can be helpful, so keep those handy while en route to the hospital.

Prevention is key

While knowing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack is important, you can reduce your risk of experiencing a heart attack by following these healthy habits:

- Avoid smoking.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Monitor your blood pressure and cholesterol.

UF Health Cardiology in Jacksonville includes internationally recognized physicians who are leaders in cardiac care, research and education. Visit UFHealthJax.org/cardiology/locations to find a location near you and schedule an appointment.



In 2016, UF Health Jacksonville CEO Russ Armistead, left, presented Marcus E. Drewa with a token of appreciation for the leadership he provided to UF Health and the rest of the Northeast Florida medical community.

Remembering Marcus Drewa

Marcus E. Drewa, former president and CEO of Methodist Medical Center and Foundation, passed away on Nov. 11, 2021.

Drewa began his health care career in Jacksonville in 1966 at what was then known as Brewster Methodist Hospital, taking the organization from the brink of bankruptcy to being recognized as one of the region's most respected medical facilities. His vision, drive and passion formed the firm foundation of Methodist Medical Center and eventually became part of UF Health.

For more than 30 years, the hospital grew and prospered under Drewa's leadership. He retired in December 2002 after a successful 50-year career in the health care industry.

Drewa had a tremendous influence on UF Health and the Jacksonville community. In retirement, he remained a strong and active supporter of UF Health. He made a significant personal contribution, which helped establish a chaplaincy program, and he championed the creation of an endowed professorship in surgery. He also made a significant donation to UF Health North, and the atrium of the medical office complex is named after him.

He left a lasting mark on the organization, and his legacy will continue to be honored at UF Health.

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OPENLINES

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

May – Feb. 15
June – March 15
July – April 15
August – May 15

Submit your copy and photos via
email to **openlines@jax.ufl.edu**.

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