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Thank you for everything you do.

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UF Health Jacksonville encourages youth to explore jobs in health care.

SHOWING OUR GRATITUDE

May is a special month at UF Health Jacksonville. We celebrate two special weeks, UF Health Week and National Nurses Week. Both of these weeks are dedicated to recognizing the outstanding work of everyone who is part of our enterprise.

The theme of UF Health Week this year is a “Week of Gratitude.” We take this time to celebrate your hard work, collaboration and dedication to our enterprise, including UF Health Jacksonville, the University of Florida College of Medicine – Jacksonville and University of Florida Jacksonville Physicians Inc. There are a variety of events, themes and initiatives to get involved with during this special week in honor of you.

We also celebrate National Nurses Week in May. The Nursing team is dedicated to providing safe, compassionate care to our patients and families, and we can’t thank them enough for their support. The Nursing team not only earned its third Magnet designation in 2021, but also had many other amazing accomplishments that are recognized in the 2021 Nursing Annual Report at UFHealthJax.org/Nursing.

I know that because of you, we will achieve our mission: to heal, to comfort, to educate and to discover. On behalf of leadership, we thank all faculty and staff for your continued work in ensuring that we are the region’s most valued health care asset. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your CEO.

Sincerely,



Russell E. Armistead, MBA
CEO, UF Health Jacksonville



The background of the entire page is a soft, dusty rose color. It is decorated with several large, detailed magnolia flowers in shades of white and pink, with green leaves and dark brown branches. Two small, delicate pink butterflies are also visible, one near the top center and another near the bottom right.

UF HEALTH WEEK

MAY 9 – 13 / *A Week of Gratitude*

This year for UF Health Week, we are showing our gratitude to faculty and staff for the exceptional work you do daily. We planned a special week of discounts and events to celebrate. Visit the Bridge for more details.

Show your UF Health spirit!

Snap a selfie in a UF Health T-shirt, post it on social media and tag us to be featured on our Instagram or Facebook pages.

#UFHealthWeek2022

#UFHealthJax

#UFHealthJaxShowsGratitude

*Gratitude helps you to grow and expand;
gratitude brings joy and laughter into your life
and into the lives of all those around you.*

— Eileen Caddy

From top to bottom: Tina and Raqeem Bacon; the Bacon family of nine out together prior to Raqeem's accident; Raqeem with his siblings during their first reunion after more than three weeks apart.



A YOUNG PATIENT'S PATH TO RECOVERY

UF Health TraumaOne team saves the life of a boy who was hit by a car while riding his bike.

There is rarely a quiet moment for the Bacon family of nine. Their days are busy, between church, school, athletics and the family food truck. But their lives came to a halt on July 26, 2021, when the youngest Bacon son, Raqeem, was hit by a car while riding his bicycle.

A life-changing day

Raqeem is currently 13 years old and the youngest of seven children, but he was 12 when the accident happened. It was summer break, and everyone was home, including Raqeem's older sister, Rajae, who was visiting from college. Their grandmother, Brenda Tobler, was with them while Tina worked.

Raqeem wanted to ride his bike to the nearby gas station to buy a drink. A while later, Tobler and Rajae became worried when Raqeem had not returned and was not answering his phone. They decided to go look for him. As they neared the intersection, they heard sirens and noticed the road was blocked. Rajae spotted Raqeem's bike in the road and immediately called Tina to tell her something had happened.

Tina called Raqeem's father, Leonard, to tell him the situation and rushed to the scene of the accident, where she learned emergency responders had taken Raqeem to UF Health Jacksonville, home of UF Health TraumaOne, the only Level I adult and pediatric trauma center in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia.

At the hospital, Tina and Leonard found out Raqeem was badly injured. His jaw had been broken in two places, and he was covered in bruises, but the biggest concern was a serious head injury that forced the pediatric neurosurgery team to operate immediately. With these types of head injuries, immediate recognition and treatment are vital for optimizing outcomes for patients.

Brian Yorkgitis, DO, an associate professor of surgery at the University of Florida College of Medicine – Jacksonville and pediatric trauma medical director, was one of Raqeem's doctors.

"Raqeem came in with a traumatic brain injury after being hit on his bicycle, and we knew we needed to act quickly," said Yorkgitis. "The initial care was so important for Raqeem's recovery."

The trauma team secured Raqeeem's airway and implanted a device that allowed them to closely monitor for brain swelling and to adjust therapies to relieve the pressure in his brain.

The first few days were crucial as they continued to reduce brain swelling and monitor his progress. By the end of the week, Raqeeem underwent surgery to his jaw, requiring it to be wired shut.

A long road of recovery

Raqeeem remained in the hospital for a total of 24 days; there, he continued to heal and receive therapy. Thankfully for Raqeeem, age plays a role in the recovery of brain injuries. At a young age, his situation was hopeful.

"We see better recovery in kids with traumatic brain injuries than with adults, so we're a lot more optimistic about them," said David Ebler, MD, medical director of the trauma program and a trauma surgeon at UF Health Jacksonville.

When it comes to trauma patients, especially those with traumatic brain injuries, UF Health Jacksonville has an experienced, multidisciplinary team of experts who are all-hands-on-deck in a patient's recovery. During his time at the hospital, Raqeeem received physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and psychological support.

"We saw progress every single day," said Tina. "The staff was truly amazing."

Sharena Givens, RN, also cared for Raqeeem and was thrilled to hear how well he is doing today. Givens was there for the first few days of Raqeeem's care, and she made a lasting impact on the Bacon family.

Tina and Leonard were grateful to all of the staff who went the extra mile to treat them like family.

"It was more than just a job; they actually cared," said Leonard. "They went above and beyond their call of duty."

It takes a village

Leonard Bacon is the pastor of a local church, and he says faith carried their family through Raqeeem's first days in the hospital. And in the weeks that followed, they leaned on the support of extended family, friends and the community. People dropped off meals and drove the other Bacon kids to school and activities. Even complete strangers stepped up to show support in various ways after hearing Raqeeem's story.

By the end of his time at UF Health Jacksonville, Raqeeem began moving more, opened his eyes and regained awareness. He had not seen anyone besides his parents in over three weeks. On his last day, Raqeeem was greeted by his siblings with hugs. It was an emotional moment for everyone.

Raqeeem was discharged to Brooks Rehabilitation, where he spent another month continuing his speech, physical and occupational therapies. UF Health Jacksonville works with Brooks Rehabilitation and continues integrated care while patients transition into rehab.

In September 2021, Raqeeem was cleared to return home, but continued going to outpatient rehab three times a week. By January 2022, he had graduated from rehab and transitioned back to school part time. Today, he is attending school full time again and doing great.

The Bacon family is forever grateful to the teams at UF Health Jacksonville and TraumaOne for saving Raqeeem's life.

Visit UFHealthJax.org/TraumaOne to learn more about our TraumaOne team and services.



The 15th annual **A Night for Heroes** gala was held on April 23 at TIAA Bank Field. Celebrating 15 years of philanthropic support, the gala raises critical support for UF Health TraumaOne, our region's only adult and pediatric Level I trauma center, as well as the critical care units at UF Health Jacksonville. The evening highlighted the story of 12-year-old Raqeeem Bacon, who received lifesaving care after a cycling accident left him in critical condition. Sponsorships and donations have helped raise more than \$2.2 million to provide lifesaving care to patients at UF Health Jacksonville.

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Preparing the Next Generation

UF Health Jacksonville's Y.E.A.H. program encourages youth to explore jobs in health care.

UF Health Jacksonville partnered with Darnell-Cookman School of the Medical Arts to expose high school students to the possibility of pursuing careers in the health and science fields through a program called Youth Education for Advancing in Health, or the Y.E.A.H. program.

As an organization employing health care professionals and research experts, part of our mission is to teach the next generation of leaders and prepare them for work in the medical sciences as health care administrators, practitioners and/or researchers. The program's objective is to provide a fun, interactive experience in which participating students can learn more about health care careers and professions they otherwise might not have known about or been exposed to.

The UF Health Program Planning Committee invited and secured faculty and staff to serve as Y.E.A.H. presenters for ninth and 10th grade student participants. They selected 18 students to attend four educational sessions that included a didactic program of topics and activities. Students briefly toured units and engaged in activities providing an in-depth look at various health care career experiences and purposes. Ultimately, the program reached students by providing support and available resources from a variety of backgrounds.

UF Health Jacksonville aims to continue implementing the Y.E.A.H. program each year and is inviting the next group of student leaders for the school year 2022-2023. Thank you to the faculty and staff and the committee for their efforts to create a program for the betterment of our future leaders.





thank you

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

MAY 6 – 12

UF Health Jacksonville thanks the Nursing team for providing safe, compassionate and innovative care to patients and families in our community and beyond.

You can read more about the many achievements of the nurses at UF Health Jacksonville in the 2021 Nursing Annual Report, including the story behind Nursing earning a third Magnet designation. Visit UFHealthJax.org/Nursing to read the report.

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NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

August: May 15
September: June 15
October: July 15
November/December: Aug. 15

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

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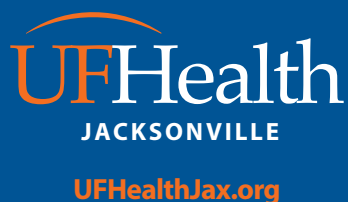


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