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NEW BEGINNINGS AND GREATER HEIGHTS

I am extremely honored and humbled to serve as your chief executive officer, and it has been my pleasure to meet so many of you throughout the past month. Thank you for your warm welcome to Jacksonville. My family and I are excited to be in the River City and call this wonderful community home.

Although from afar, for many years I have admired UF Health Jacksonville for an unwavering commitment to its mission and staff and a long record of providing high-quality care for this great community.

I want to give a huge shout-out to Russ Armistead for his leadership and stepping up to come out of retirement to lead during a very difficult time for the organization. We all hope that he can enjoy his second retirement and spend well-deserved quality time with his family.

Although I did not have the privilege of meeting Dr. Leon L. Haley Jr., his legacy lives on in each one of you, and so we will continue to honor his compassion and the impact he had on this organization. I am truly honored to succeed such a profound leader.

As both these leaders would agree, my responsibility is to care for those who care for our patients. We must never lose sight of the fact that we exist to improve the lives of the patients we are called to serve.

You, our caregivers, have been and will always be the heartbeat of this great organization — our employees, faculty, medical staff and all who make UF Health Jacksonville the place of healing and medical advancement that it is today. As CEO, I will make you a priority as we work together to give our patients and community a healthier way of life. I look forward to interacting, listening and learning from you as I walk the halls of our campuses and facilities.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that UF Health Jacksonville may have experienced the most challenging times of its history with the loss of an extraordinary leader in the midst of a pandemic. Nevertheless, you persevered with guidance from the phenomenal leadership team of our entire UF Health system, UF Health Jacksonville, the University of Florida College of Medicine – Jacksonville and UF Jacksonville Physicians Inc.

Great things are happening at UF Health Jacksonville, and you are part of that. The UF Health footprint continues to expand, and I am committed to our growth and to improving the lives of those we serve.

This past fiscal year has been a year of growth, with three new Emergency and Urgent Care Centers as well as the opening of UF Health East, UF Health Deerwood Park and the expansion of a newly renovated medical surgical inpatient unit at the Pavilion. We now await the completion of the second inpatient bed tower at UF Health North and a new trauma center and emergency room on the downtown campus.

Indeed, it is a time of new beginnings, with a clear vision to achieve greater heights. I am excited to be on this journey with you as we focus on providing the highest quality of care and enhancing the health of our Jacksonville community, Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia.

Thank you for your dedication and support as we continue our mission to heal, to comfort, to educate and to discover.

Sincerely,

Patrick

Patrick L. Green, FACHE
CEO, UF Health Jacksonville



UF CARES *presents*

27th Annual Infectious Diseases and HIV Conference of Florida *HIV Prevention and Treatment*

The event will focus on updates in HIV prevention recommendations and innovative strategies, as well as HIV medical treatment and supportive care, including the diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections.

WHEN

Friday, Sept. 29
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

WHERE

UF Health Jacksonville
LRC Auditorium and Conference Rooms
653 W. 8th St., Jacksonville, FL 32209



Registration is \$20.

Visit UFHealthJax.org/hivcare
for more information.

UF Center for HIV/AIDS Research,
Education and Service (UF CARES)
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

PATRICK GREEN

A people-first leader

By Kristian Thomas



Officially in his new role for only hours, it was clear Patrick L. Green, FACHE, the new chief executive officer at UF Health Jacksonville, was at ease, embracing every interaction with hundreds of employees who came out to meet him. First on the downtown campus, and then a few days later at UF Health North, Green took time to meet the people he was now leading.

Green brings a wealth of health care and leadership experience to his new position. For more than 25 years, he has committed himself to exhibiting quality leadership to guide and improve health systems and academic medical centers across the country. Now he will lead UF Health Jacksonville and focus on making a positive and lasting impact on health care in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia.

Servant leadership

In a matter of weeks — with the shaking of hands, rounding and consistent communication with employees — Green has made it clear that he is a leader who values the people he serves. To underscore the collaborative work environment within health systems, he makes it a point to address all personnel as associates as we work together to achieve a common goal.

“Being the CEO is a remarkable responsibility. We get a lot of the credit when things go well — sometimes too much,” Green said. “At the end of the day, it’s not about me; it’s about the people who care for our patients. We exist to serve the patient population of Jacksonville and surrounding areas. A big part of my role is to support our associates and collectively work together so we can build high-quality clinical programs that we can be proud of and educate the future clinicians and physicians of tomorrow.”

Green has already immersed himself in the organization, spending a significant amount of time rounding on clinical floors during all shifts and on the weekends.

Journey to UF Health Jacksonville

Prior to coming to Jacksonville, Green served as executive vice president of the Yale New Haven Health system, the largest in Connecticut. Within that organization, he also led Lawrence + Memorial Hospital in New London, Connecticut, as president and CEO.

Prior to Yale New Haven, Green served as interim chief executive officer at Centura Health in Lakewood, Colorado, after holding roles as senior executive vice president and chief operating officer. His experience also included senior leadership roles at Denver Health and at UW Medicine (University of Washington) in Seattle.



From top to bottom: Patrick Green, FACHE, CEO of UF Health Jacksonville greeting associates on his first day on the job; Mr. Green listens to speaker at UF Health North for GE Revolution Apex Elite CT Scanner ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Throughout his career, he has embraced hospitals that care for the most vulnerable and underserved.

“I’ve always been drawn to mission-driven organizations,” Green said. “When I arrived here, I could sense the spirit of commitment and dedication that staff have toward our patients, this community and this organization. I am certain together we can continue to have a positive impact on population health by working to eliminate health disparities and bringing out the best in people as we serve the greater Jacksonville community.”

A strategic path to excellence

Green has set ambitious goals for himself to ensure that the organization remains healthy and thriving. Top priorities include evaluating all aspects of the organization, including clinical care, patient experience, financial health, and employee and community engagement. He will do that with what he calls “listening sessions.”

Feedback given at these sessions will help in the development of a strategic plan for the future of the organization.

“I want to devote my first 60 to 90 days to listening and learning more about UF Health Jacksonville,” Green said. “This allows me to hear the collective voices and expectations of those who play a significant role in the success of the organization. It is also necessary to engage the community leaders, so that they know that I am committed to partnering with them to improve this community while being a strong advocate for this health system and those in our care.

“The leadership team and I will also be reviewing the goals and expectations for the new fiscal year; this is especially important to ensure our success in the coming year. Focusing on our people and operational performance is what you

can expect in our first few months together as a team.”

Growth mindset

Green said he will focus on growth, which he sees as imperative to executing on the vision of becoming the region’s most valued health care asset. By focusing on data to identify areas of strength and opportunity, he believes the organization can be the No. 1 health system, and that includes having a better understanding of the needs of the community it serves.

“It will be necessary to be data-driven as we identify areas where we can improve,” Green said. “That requires the evaluation of the needs of the community — whether that is access, patient experience, or quality and safety — understanding our current performance will help inform our growth plan. We want to be the health system that people come to first because they know we are providing the best possible care and doing so with clinical excellence.”

Family values

Green will tell you that he is a family man who cherishes that aspect of his life. He has been married for 25 years and is the proud father of a 16-year-old son.

“I am very blessed to have a great family,” Green said. “They are the center of my life. I would not be where I am today without my wife, who has been a supportive partner from Day 1. We are so proud of our son, who is a great student and has a love of sports.”

Another important member of the Green family is their four-legged Labradoodle named Caz, who is known to “run the house.”

The Greens are excited to start their journey in the River City and honored to be part of the UF Health family.

QUALITY CANCER TREATMENT SERVICES

AT UF HEALTH
JACKSONVILLE

By Alex Linton



The Cancer Center at UF Health Jacksonville uses a multidisciplinary team to provide the best patient care experience possible. This includes comprehensive care before, during and after treatment.

Miki McClain, RN, BSN, OCN, MBA, MHA, director of cancer services at UF Health Jacksonville, says there are a multitude of programs available to cancer patients during their treatment.

Patients first meet with a social worker to discuss programs that might assist them through their journey. They receive a packet that outlines potential programs, and the social worker determines whether they qualify. These programs include donations for wigs, transportation and medication assistance.

Wig donations

Hair loss is a common side effect of chemotherapy treatments. Through a grant from the American Cancer Society, patients are provided a gift card that covers the cost of the wigs the program offers. Patients are able to look through the selection of wigs available online, use their gift card to purchase a wig directly and have it sent to their home.

In addition, wigs are donated to the Cancer Center. Patients can schedule a time to visit the “wig closet” and choose from those on hand. These wigs are provided to patients at no cost, and there is no wait to get the physical wig. They can select a wig and wear it home the same day.

Transportation assistance

An additional grant from the American Cancer Society allows the Cancer Center to provide transportation assistance. The \$25,000 grant is to be dispersed among qualified patients. The distribution is handled primarily through the donation of gas cards. McClain says it can be challenging for some patients to get to multiple appointments, and paying for each trip adds to the cost of treatments. Gas cards are meant to ease that financial burden. The amount provided for each gift card varies based on the mileage calculated from the patient’s home to their appointment location.

Another component of the transportation assistance program is a partnership with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority, or JTA. Patients are given a bus pass that allows them to ride the bus to their appointments. In the event a patient is unable to transport themselves, cancer services can assist with coordinating pick up and drop off through JTA Connexion.

Medication Reimbursement Program

The Medication Assistance Program typically assists patients who are uninsured or have insurance with little to no coverage for high-cost medications. Social workers and financial reps are available to assist patients in applying for these programs.



A Catalyst for Change

By Alex Linton

Good nutrition is one of the keys to good health. That's something we're taught throughout our lives, but for some people, getting that nutrition is easier said than done. And for people with limited means and access to nutritious foods, even the best clinical care can fall short of meeting health goals.

To bridge that gap, the Urban Health Alliance at UF Health Jacksonville launched the Food Pharmacy in June 2021. This program offers qualified patients at the UF Health Total Care Clinic – Jacksonville access to foods tailored to meet their medical needs. Program participants work with a nutritionist to improve their overall diet and foster healthy eating habits. Since opening, the Food Pharmacy has served more than 360 patients.

For many, the assistance and nutrition education is life-changing. This certainly has been true for Laura Heckt, who started using the Food Pharmacy in the fall of 2022. It all began when she overheard a nurse talking about the Food Pharmacy with her primary care physician, Dr. Ross Jones, an associate professor of community health and medical director of the Urban Health Alliance. After learning more about the program, she was intrigued and wanted to know how she could use the resource. Heckt has diabetes and hoped that better nutrition might help to improve her health.

As part of the Food Pharmacy program, participants plan their diet and learn best practices to promote healthy eating habits. For Heckt,

and many others, that training makes a significant difference. Since joining the program, Heckt has shown great improvement in her eating habits and has been able to reduce her blood sugar levels, as measured by an A1C test.

"My A1C is better; it's decreasing," said Heckt, explaining that she has been able to reduce her diabetes medication from four pills to one pill a day. She has also lost more than 50 pounds and continues to work on improving her quality of life.

"My physical and mental state changed for the better," Heckt said. "I learned how to control my cravings; I started having more energy, getting better sleep, and I stopped smoking." Changing her diet has proved to be a catalyst to changing her other life habits.

Prior to using the Food Pharmacy, Heckt would often feel tired and sluggish. She was eating a lot of carbohydrates and junk food. With access to nutritional information and better food choices, things truly began to change.

Heckt has made sure to include more fresh fruits and vegetables in her diet and works on controlling her portion sizes. She has limited her consumption of processed foods, incorporating healthier recipes into her regimen. Keto lasagna is one of her favorite meals. She looks forward to visiting the Food Pharmacy every two weeks and being able to include the fresh fruits and vegetables in her diet.

She credits the program for changing her life. "I wouldn't be where I am today if it hadn't been for the Food Pharmacy," Heckt said.

UF College of Medicine – Jacksonville opens the Leon L. Haley Jr., MD, Medical Student Lounge

By Kristian Thomas

On April 27, the purple ribbon to the Leon L. Haley Jr., MD, Medical Student Lounge was cut. The lounge bears the name of the much beloved Dr. Haley, former CEO of UF Health Jacksonville and dean of the University of Florida College of Medicine – Jacksonville. Senior leaders, medical students, faculty and staff came to take a peek inside the designated space for students on campus to relax and recharge in a nonclinical setting.

This was made possible through contributions to the Leon L. Haley Jr., MD Memorial Fund. Frank Genuardi, MD, MPH, an associate professor and associate dean for student affairs, led the project and was excited as the lounge officially opened.

"There were a number of occasions where I would get in touch with Dr. Haley and say, 'There is a student I think you could have a really positive impact on who is interested in talking with you.' His answer was always — 'Just tell them to call me, I'd be happy to do it,'" said Genuardi. "So we really thought it was appropriate that we name this room in his honor."

Attendees heard from Velma Tribble, a dear friend of the Haley family who spoke on their behalf.

"We are sure he would welcome the addition of this lounge as a place of respite for the students he cared so much about," Tribble said. Time moves on and our missing him remains the same, but what a legacy he left. The family deeply thanks UF Health Jacksonville for this incredible honor."

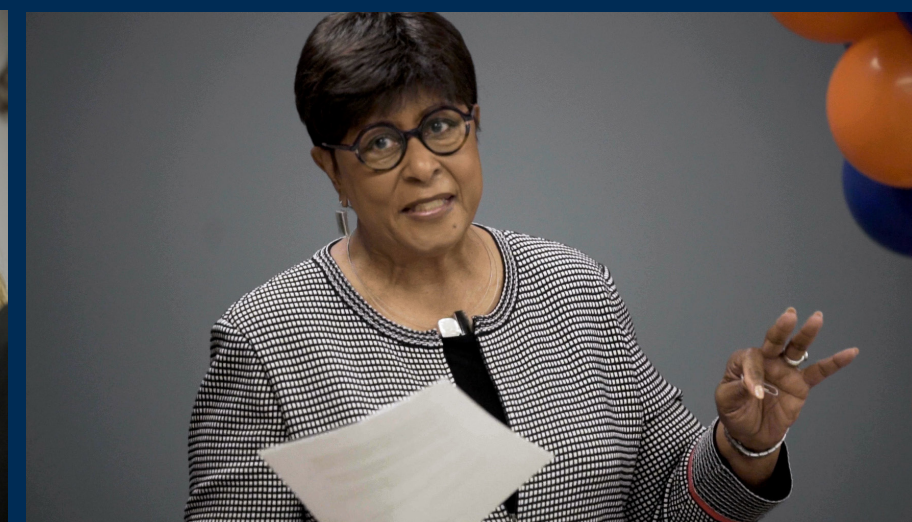
The lounge is fitted with lockers for personal items, charging stations for digital devices, a television, couches and chairs, a microwave and other amenities for students to enjoy.

Linda Edwards, MD, dean of the UF College of Medicine – Jacksonville, emphasized there was no one more deserving of this honor than Dr. Haley, as he was a champion for education.



"Dr. Haley embodied education," said Edwards. "You would come to him with an education initiative and he recognized the importance of our future health care providers and our physicians."

UF Health continues to remember the legacy of Dr. Haley and honors his memory through vital programs, facilities and awards throughout the organization, including the UF Health Jacksonville Leon L. Haley Jr., MD, Brain Wellness Program; the Leon L. Haley Jr. Leadership Award for Inclusive Excellence; and, soon, a new trauma and emergency room on the UF Health Jacksonville campus.



Top image from, L to R: Velma Tribble, Dani Brown, Frank Genuardi, MD, and a UF medical student cut purple ribbon to the Medical Student Lounge; Bottom left image: Medical students, faculty and staff came to take a peek inside the designated space for students on campus to relax and recharge in a nonclinical setting; Bottom right image: Velma Tribble, a dear friend of the Haley family who spoke on their behalf at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Phyllis Sohn Endowed Chair advances neurology research on Jacksonville campus

Ramon Bautista, MD, MBA, professor and chair of the department of neurology at the University of Florida College of Medicine – Jacksonville, has been named the Phyllis Sohn Endowed Chair in Neuroscience. The \$2.6 million endowment supports the advancement of neurology research and will push the envelope of discovery on the Jacksonville campus.

The endowment comes at a time when neuroscience research is making great strides at UF Health Jacksonville and the UF College of Medicine – Jacksonville. By developing studies that directly impact the lives of patients, Bautista and faculty in the department of neurology have been able to bolster research and the recruitment of top-level clinicians and investigators.

Research has grown significantly. Recent accomplishments include optimizing the use of telemedicine across various neurologic conditions, improving techniques to enhance stroke care in the acute phase, addressing women’s issues in epilepsy, and helping golfers with Parkinson’s disease continue to enjoy the sport they love. The department has been involved in scholarly works that seek to better address social determinants of health that result in health disparities in neurologic care. That research has led to the creation of a multi-foundation, grant-funded Epilepsy Wellness Center that helps patients and caregivers deal with the psychosocial impacts of the condition.

Faculty are also in partnership with researchers from the he Evelyn S. and William L. McKnight Brain Institute of the University of Florida to develop a cadre of UF Health Jacksonville–based neuroscientists whose work focuses on developing strategies to optimize cognitive functioning in the elderly and apply advanced techniques such as acute intermittent hypoxia for neurorestoration following trauma or acute stroke. Collaboration extends to local institutions, with investigators from Jacksonville University and the University of North Florida working together on a study that aims to incorporate AI techniques into telerehabilitation services for patients with multiple sclerosis.

The future of neuroscience research in Jacksonville has never been brighter. Clinical services are also expanding into St. Johns and Flagler counties, where a mobile stroke treatment unit will soon be providing state-of-the-art acute stroke care. The department is also spearheading a 48-bed inpatient rehabilitation unit at UF Health North, where artificial intelligence, simulation and brain-computer interface will be integrated into the functional recovery of patients.

Bautista, who has been with UF Health Jacksonville since 2000 and has served as chair for the past four years, says this endowment not only supports research efforts but also encourages and promotes a culture of discovery.

“Our researchers at UF Health Jacksonville are intentional and strategic, studying and finding the best solutions for our patients,” Bautista said. “Clinical studies on the Jacksonville campus address the needs of those living in Northeast Florida and range from topics as varied as preventing the symptoms of dementia to improving the health of women with epilepsy. This endowment raises the visibility of the extraordinary research we are already conducting on this campus and throughout UF as a whole. This is what we do best.”



Ramon Bautista, MD, MBA, was named the Phyllis Sohn Endowed Chair in Neuroscience.



Our new website **BOOSTS** our online presence

By Marsha Blasco

The reviews are in! Our redesigned UFHealthJax.org went live in June to rave reviews. Many of you praised the beautiful, modern look. We certainly agree. After two-plus years in the making, and a stellar effort by our Web Services team, visitors are now greeted with a more engaging and welcoming layout, improved navigation and updated features.

We are especially pleased that the redesign offers more meaningful content for our patients. With a focus on health information, the website allows patients to easily find conditions and treatments and the expert physicians who can help them at a convenient, nearby location.

Now that you’ve seen the finished product, here’s a brief look at how it was created. UF Health Web Services, representing both the Communications and IT departments, conducted extensive research on how people use health care websites. First, the teams collected online user surveys and performed in-person testing of people’s needs, wants and behaviors when looking online. Then they began the work of assessing the collected intel and programming the results into a new content management system.

All of the research, analysis and planning has paid off. The end result is a website tailored to better support prospective patients in their health care decision-making. Here are some added benefits for users:

- ✓ An attractive, welcoming look
- ✓ More user-friendly, intuitive navigation
- ✓ Engaging health topic content, customized and linked to our providers and resources
- ✓ Expanded provider directory, offering meaningful information to help patients choose the physician who best matches their needs
- ✓ Easier to find physician clinical research interests and accomplishments
- ✓ Geolocation tools to help visitors find the best care close to home
- ✓ Faster performance on desktop computers and mobile devices

If you haven’t already, please visit [UFHealthJax.org](https://ufhealthjax.org) and spread the word.

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We welcome photos that are taken or submitted by employees. Photos should be at least 3 megabytes (3MB) in image size to be published. Please try to take or submit photos that are clear (camera is held very still); not backlit (flash is used and/or light source is not behind the subject); and framed correctly (feet are not cut off and/or subject is not shown too far away). Employees are encouraged to arrange photography with the Media Center before an event to ensure quality. **Direct questions to openlines@jax.ufl.edu or call 244.9750.**

Visit OpenLines.UFHealthJax.org to find current and past issues of Open Lines.