

SECURING THE PROMISE

FALL 2021

The of Le Bonheur



♥ Hero nurses provide specialized care for children to keep the hospital running

Le Bonheur
Children's Hospital

Le Bonheur Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., treats more than 250,000 children each year through community programs, in regional clinics and a 255-bed hospital that features state-of-the-art technology and family-friendly resources. Our medical staff of more than 240 physicians provide care in 45 subspecialties.

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- Michelle Rogers, Cathy Wilson

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Director, Marketing and Communications
Nellann Mettee

Editor
Sarah Newman

Contributors
Katherine Baker, Emily Joyner, Haley Overcast, Sara Patterson

Photography
Lisa Buser

Design
Rachel Gabrielleschi

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Support Le Bonheur

For more information about ways to support Le Bonheur Children's by volunteering, attending events, developing partnerships and giving financially, please visit www.lebonheur.org/ways-to-help or call 901-287-6308.

www.lebonheur.org/secure



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

Nurses truly are the heart of Le Bonheur. Their dedicated, unceasing work ensures that Le Bonheur can provide unparalleled care to any child who enters our facilities.

When a child is rushed into the trauma bays from an accident, Le Bonheur nurses are there. When a child has an asthma attack at school, Le Bonheur nurses are there. When a child's heart fails and they need a new one, Le Bonheur nurses are there. And when a child has unrelenting seizures, Le Bonheur nurses are there.

This issue of *Securing the Promise* highlights just a few of these nurses and the hope they give to patients and families and the Le Bonheur family at large.

But without you, none of this would be possible. Your generosity makes it possible to have the nurses that care for each child. Nurses are crucial for care in our hospital, but they are also essential for our Le Bonheur Pediatrics practices, Outpatient Clinics and community programs.

We are grateful for you and thank you for your continued support of our mission to help children. I hope you find these nurses as inspiring as we do each and every day and see why our nurses truly embody what it means when we say, "Le Bonheur Proud."

Sincerely,



Michael Wiggins, DBA, FACHE
President
Le Bonheur Children's Hospital





The of Le Bonheur

*Hero nurses provide
specialized care for children
to keep the hospital running*



Nurses are the heart of Le Bonheur Children's Hospital.

They go above and beyond the call of duty. They provide services outside their normal duties. And some even make patients their family.

But most of all, Le Bonheur nurses provide consistent, excellent care for children in need on all Le Bonheur campuses and in all outreach programs day in and day out. They keep Le Bonheur's main hospital, clinics and outreach programs running.

This is what it means to be a nurse at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital.

Quick Facts: Nursing at Le Bonheur

1,139 nurses

1.2 million hours worked in 2020

45 specialties covered

61 Advanced Practice Nurses

Magnet recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center

Gold-Level Beacon Award from the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses for the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)

Gold Center of Excellence designation from the Extracorporeal Life Support Organization (ELSO) for the Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) Program

Commitment to Excellence

Le Bonheur earns top nursing recognition during historic winter storm

Le Bonheur Children's Hospital once again attained Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center this past spring. This credential is the highest national recognition for nurses and a testament to the hospital's continued dedication to high-quality care.

Le Bonheur was first designated as a Magnet facility in 2016 and is one of only six Tennessee hospitals to hold the Magnet designation. Less than 10% of hospitals nationally achieve the designation.

This year's Magnet journey was unlike any other – as an historic February winter storm hit the region, Magnet appraisers virtually visited Le Bonheur.

The city of Memphis was blanketed with nearly 10 inches of snow in the course of four days. The red heart atop the hospital even frosted in white.

But the Le Bonheur team did not let Mother Nature stand in their way.

Despite the major disruption, staff and



Le Bonheur nurses welcome the Magnet appraisers to the hospital.

physicians were steadfast in demonstrating professionalism and devotion to Le Bonheur and their work.

“To earn Magnet recognition once was a great accomplishment and an incredible source of pride for our nurses,” said Le Bonheur President Michael Wiggins. “Our repeated achievement of this credential underscores the foundation of excellence and values that drive our entire staff to

strive harder each day to meet the health care needs of the people we serve.”

New Chief Nursing Officer Hella Ewing, RN, MSM, was thrilled to join a high-caliber nursing team and an organization dedicated to constantly improving nursing at the hospital.

“The Magnet Model is a framework for excellence focusing on quality, inter-professional relationships, community outreach, nursing leadership and professional development,” Ewing said. “Le Bonheur has successfully completed our re-designation showing that we excel in all of these area and reaffirms our commitment to our

The American Nurses Credentialing Center's Magnet Recognition Program® distinguishes health care organizations that meet rigorous standards for nursing excellence. This credential is the highest national honor for professional nursing practice.



organization and community.”

To achieve Magnet recognition, organizations must pass a rigorous and lengthy process that demands widespread participation from leadership and staff. This process includes an electronic application, written patient care documentation, a site visit and a review by the Commission on Magnet Recognition.

“We’re a better organization today because of the Magnet recognition we first received four years ago,” Wiggins said. “Magnet recognition raised the bar for patient care and inspired every member of our team to achieve excellence every day. It is this commitment to providing our

community with high-quality care that helped us become a Magnet-recognized organization, and it’s why we continue to pursue and maintain Magnet recognition.”



Le Bonheur nurses pose in the snow prior to the Magnet visit.



Le Bonheur nurses celebrate achieving Magnet redesignation — the gold standard for nursing excellence.



From right, Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) Transplant Coordinator Amber Merritt MSN, RN, CCRN-K, RN-BC, and Heart Transplant and Ventricular Assist Device Coordinator, Tiffany Street, RN, BSN, walk a Le Bonheur parent through required training on daily VAD care and managing emergency situations before discharging the patient home with a VAD.

A HEARTBEAT AWAY FROM FAMILY

VAD, Heart Transplant program coordinators help families navigate uncertain road

For patients facing the challenges of pediatric heart failure, the nurses driving bedside education and operations for Le Bonheur's Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) and Transplant programs feel like family.

When 5-year-old heart patient Lilly Burks, arrived at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital for a routine surgical repair earlier this year, her parents never dreamed she would soon be awaiting a heart transplant.

Born five weeks early, Lilly had pneumonia often as an infant, and chest X-rays on her first birthday revealed what looked to be a common congenital heart defect (CHD). Plans were made to surgically

correct the issue around age five.

But during Lilly's operation, her surgeons discovered that Lilly's CHD was an extremely rare, an inoperable, structural defect. Within 48 hours of admission to Le Bonheur, Lilly's medical team performed three surgeries to support her limited heart function — the last of which was implantation of a VAD, which helps pump blood from the heart to the body for patients in heart failure. Lilly's heart could no longer function on its own, and her VAD became a bridge offering support until transplant.

In the face of an unexpected and difficult diagnosis, Heart Transplant and Ventricular Assist Device Coordinator, Tiffany Street, RN, BSN, and VAD Coordinator Amber Merritt MSN, RN, CCRN-K, RN-BC, have been there to walk beside Lilly and her family every step of the way.

"Le Bonheur has been outstanding, and the people caring for Lilly have made us feel like family. Tiffany is extremely easy to talk to and understands my anxieties, and Amber and I talk almost daily about any questions or concerns I have. I feel like I could call her at midnight and she would answer." Jessica Burks, mom to 5-year-old Lilly

“We came in for a planned surgery, and this is where we are now. But Le Bonheur has been outstanding, and the people caring for Lilly have made us feel like family,” said Lilly’s mom, Jessica. “Tiffany is extremely easy to talk to and understands my anxieties, and Amber and I talk almost daily about any questions or concerns I have. I feel like I could call her at midnight and she would answer.”

Street, who was instrumental in launching Le Bonheur’s Heart Transplant and VAD programs, leverages not only her clinical nursing background, but past experiences in entrepreneurship and project management, to help ensure programs run smoothly and families have access to everything they need — physically, emotionally and otherwise.

“We are here to relieve a family’s anxiety and help bring a sense of calm,” said Street. “This experience is unknown and scary, and our families are desperate to hear a comforting voice. I would much rather a parent call and wake me up in the middle of the night to help alleviate their fear, than live with that fear overnight.”

Currently, five Le Bonheur patients are awaiting heart transplants, and Street leads weekly transplant classes for these patients and their families. Topics range from post-transplant nutrition and medications to coping with grief and what to expect before, during and after transplant. Street also provides staff education on transplant and VAD care for all cardiac bedside nurses, who play a crucial role supporting good

outcomes for every patient.

Merritt, meanwhile, helps empower patients and families to manage VAD care independently, instructing them on VAD dressing changes and other routine device maintenance. Through a new outpatient program allowing some VAD patients to recuperate at home, Merritt also partners with patients’ local medical communities to



5-year-old Lilly Burks was admitted to Le Bonheur on May 23 to undergo what was initially believed to be a routine heart repair. Placement of a ventricular assist device saved Lilly’s life in the face of heart failure, and on July 10, Lilly underwent transplant surgery at Le Bonheur and received a new heart.

offer VAD education and design emergency protocols. The first steps toward discharge, though, are the ones a patient must take following surgery.

“Each time one of our VAD patients gets out of bed to walk again for the first

time since implantation, it is so rewarding,” said Merritt. “Seeing patients who would not be here without these therapies successfully rehabilitate, spend time home with family and receive the support needed to reach the transplant stage is hands down the best part of my job.”

“We are here to relieve a family’s anxiety and help bring a sense of calm. This experience is unknown and scary, and our families are desperate to hear a comforting voice.”

Tiffany Street, Heart Transplant Coordinator

Since the launch of Le Bonheur’s VAD and Heart Transplant Programs five years ago, the teams have placed a total of 29 VADs and completed 49 heart transplants. And one of the most recent of these transplants, was Lilly.

On July 10 — just 49 days after arriving at Le Bonheur — Lilly underwent transplant surgery to receive a new heart. While her parents know the road to recovery is long, they are breathing a sigh of relief that Lilly made it safely through transplant, and they know Merritt, Street and the rest of their Le Bonheur team will walk beside them as they navigate these next steps.

“When I receive pictures from parents of kids doing things that are now possible because of a VAD, or a new heart — the feeling is indescribable,” said Street. “It’s incredibly rewarding to be part of a family’s post-transplant journey and see how, through a truly amazing team effort, our patients are given new opportunities and a new life.”

Clinical Trial Nurses: Bringing new potential treatments to children

Confronting COVID-19

Clinical trial nurses facilitate potential COVID-19 treatment for high-risk children

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a new meaning to the phrase “all hands on deck” in the health care realm. And this is no different for the nurses, physicians and staff working to bring potential COVID-19 treatments to children through clinical trials. Le Bonheur serves as a site for a clinical trial of Regeneron’s REGEN-COV® (casirivimab and imdevmmab), a monoclonal antibody cocktail being investigated for use in high-risk children with mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms.

When Le Bonheur was presented with an opportunity to bring REGEN-COV® to children in a clinical trial, Le Bonheur Clinical Trial Nurses Sarah Barve, RN, BSN, CNRN, Laura V. Boywid, BSN, RN, and Brandy Vaughn, BSN, RN, answered the call adding to their regular responsibilities to make this trial a reality. While all started their careers at Le Bonheur as nurses on the hospital floor, they are now in positions as research coordinators for

clinical trials with the responsibility of providing the crucial infusion for COVID-19 patients.

“Working in clinical trials you get more one-on-one time with the family,” said Vaughn, a neurosurgery research coordinator who took up the mantle to help with the REGEN-COV® clinical trial. “Kids who have extensive medical history can get very sick from COVID. It’s rewarding to see over the course of the next weeks how they improved and stayed out of the hospital.”

REGEN-COV® is just one of many treatments undergoing clinical trials through Le Bonheur’s Children’s Foundation Research Institute. While children with COVID-19 are less likely to develop severe illness compared to adults, some children do suffer severe illness and more data is needed to determine how they respond to available treatments. Children with a wide variety of pre-existing medical conditions are a vulnerable population. If infected, they are more at risk to experience severe symptoms that can lead to hospitalization.

“Through this study, our goal is to be able to provide a medication to reduce or prevent hospitalizations due to COVID-19, particularly for patients who are higher risk,” said Lauren Davis, BS, clinical research coordinator for the REGEN-COV® study. “The safety of patients is the primary focus of the study team and patient participation is always voluntary. But in order to have new treatment options, it is important to have clinical trials to further advance medicine.”

The study focuses on children ages 0 to 17 years with at least one risk factor, such as heart and lung disease or obesity, who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last three days. There is no placebo



A successful clinical trial of REGEN-COV® requires teamwork across departments. Above, clinical trial nurses and the clinical research coordinator conduct a follow-up visit for a patient in the REGEN-COV® trial.



Laura V. Boywid, BSN, RN, examines a patient participating in the REGEN-COV® trial. Boywid and other clinical trial nurses assist with administration of the infusion and conducting follow-up visits like the one pictured here.



The Truth about Clinical Trials and Kids

Clinical trials are essential to bring new treatments to the kids who need them. Dr. Dennis Black, Le Bonheur's vice president

of research and the scientific director at the Children's Foundation Research Institute, answers the common questions he hears about pediatric clinical trials, how clinical trials work and which kids benefit from them.



A team of clinical trial nurses, research coordinators and staff across the hospital enable trials such as REGEN-COV®, a monoclonal antibody being investigated for high-risk children with COVID-19, to take place at Le Bonheur Children's. The study is led by Principal Investigator and Chief of Infectious Diseases at Le Bonheur Sandra Arnold, MD (center).

arm in this study — all patients enrolled receive a REGEN-COV® infusion.

In this study, REGEN-COV® will be given as a one-time infusion via an IV. The infusion lasts for two hours and is followed by a two-hour observation period during which vital signs are recorded. To track the effectiveness of the medication, lab work, such as nasal swabs and blood samples, are collected before and after the infusion. Follow up occurs in approximately five months, beginning with clinic visits weekly for a month and phone call follow up for five months after the infusion.

Boywid and Vaughn are with patients every step of the way in the process from screening to performing the infusion.

“As coordinators we serve in multiple roles,” said Boywid. “We are part of actual administration of the medication and care throughout the infusion, but we also pre-screen, obtain consent and conduct follow ups with patients.”

They also play an important role in dispelling parents’ fears surrounding clinical trials and any concerns about safety.

“Our job as nurses is to be a patient advocate, part of which is patient safety,” said Vaughn. “When I talk to parents who are concerned, I tell them that patient safety is our priority. As a parent I would never put a child in a position where they aren’t safe. We spend as much time with them as they need to feel fully informed.”

But a successful study can’t take place without the help of an entire team. All pieces of the puzzle have to work closely together and in constant contact in order for timing of infusion and follow-up to be perfect, says Vaughn. This means close coordination among nurses, clinical research coordinator, principal investigator for the trial (Le Bonheur Chief of Pediatric Infectious Diseases Sandra Arnold, MD) and other areas of the hospital such as the IV team, pharmacy and lab.

Donors are another key component in bringing these new therapies to the children who need them. Whether COVID-19 or epilepsy research, clinical trials rely on donor funding to make these dream treatments a reality.

“Research at Le Bonheur is growing — we are starting up multiple new clinical trials across different specialties that require an abundance of resources,” said Davis. “We truly appreciate the donor support for helping us to accomplish this task.”

Epilepsy Exploration

Neurology clinical trial nurse manages trials for genetic epilepsy

For children with severe epilepsy and seizures who haven’t responded to medication, clinical trials can provide an avenue of hope.

Le Bonheur Nurse Sarah Barve, RN, BSN, CNRN, works to help families find that hope in her role as a pediatric neurology clinical research coordinator.

“Clinical trials provide potential treatment options for patients who have exhausted all other resources and still can’t get their seizures under control. Research is vital to be able to manage diagnoses like this,” said Barve.

Just one of these neurologic diseases in need of a treatment is Dravet syndrome, a rare genetic epilepsy that causes seizures and developmental delays. Previously, Dravet syndrome could only be managed by treating the symptoms, but thanks to a new clinical trial, the MONARCH study, Le Bonheur can offer a potential therapy to address the genetic cause of Dravet syndrome.



Le Bonheur Research Nurse Sarah Barve, RN, BSN, CNRN, meets a patient in neurology clinic.

This is the first disease-modifying treatment option to be studied for Dravet syndrome. And preliminary data from the MONARCH study shows promise with no safety concerns in the study drug and a trend toward reduction in convulsive seizure frequency among patients.

“Through the MONARCH study, I will work with families for years. I get to learn everything about the patient and family, grow a unique bond and see improvements in the patient, and that’s why we do this work,” said Barve.

Clinical trials, including the MONARCH study, are conducted through the Children’s Foundation Research Institute — a collaboration among Le Bonheur, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) and the Children’s Foundation of Memphis. Because of the complexity of the study, Barve shares responsibility as research coordinator with Misha Webb, RN, a veteran nurse with two decades of service at Le Bonheur.

But long before a clinical trial like MONARCH reaches patients, the trials and the medication they test have already undergone extensive scrutiny, research and approval processes. All clinical trials conducted at Le Bonheur are first approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and then by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the UTHSC. The IRB’s sole purpose is to protect the rights and well-being of patients participating in research.

Barve walks with children each step of the way as they participate in a clinical trial. Working in the health care field since age 18, Barve has been on both sides of the clinical trial divide — as a nurse on the critical care floor and working with a company that sponsored research studies. But she continued to miss patient care, which drew her back to Le Bonheur as a clinical trial nurse where she gets the best of both worlds — conducting research while also caring for patients and watching them improve. And now she is working toward a dual doctor of philosophy in Nursing Science and doctor of nursing



A day in the life of a clinical trial nurse consists of various tasks around recruiting for clinical trials, administering medications undergoing study and working with study sponsors. Above, Research Nurse Sarah Barve, RN, BSN, CNRN, speaks with a potential family for a neurology study.

practice at UTHSC with the long-term goal of conducting research at bedside.

A day as a research nurse is quite variable and covers a wide range of tasks associated with enrolling and treating patients and making sure administrative details are taken care of.

When a patient comes for a clinical trial visit, Barve stays with the family, documents tasks completed and collaborates with multiple departments in the hospital to ensure everything runs smoothly. When not with patients, Barve continues her work on clinical trials reviewing study protocols, making submissions to the IRB and meeting with study sponsors.

“This position gave me the opportunity to build a connection with the patients and family. Observing the efficacy of an investigational product first-hand is one of the most rewarding parts of this role,” said Barve. “To hear from the patient or parents that symptoms of a disease are improving brings so much joy to our team.”



Genetic Epilepsy: Finding a Cure

Dr. James Wheless explains the difference between genetic epilepsies and other epilepsies children might have, how parents can find out if their child has a genetic epilepsy, and treatment options available.

PROFILE: HELLA EWING, RN, MSM

Compassionate care inspires Le Bonheur's new chief nursing officer

More than 30 years ago, Le Bonheur Children's Hospital's Chief Nursing Officer, Hella Ewing, RN, MSM, was serving her country overseas as a fighter aircraft technician in the Air Force. During her second tour of duty, her husband — also serving in the Air Force — became very ill and required a 4 ½-month hospitalization.

Ewing was struck by the compassionate care provided by his nurses.

"My husband had been hospitalized for a month and I walked in after I had been working a long shift. The nurses gave me an update on his health and fixed me a plate of food," said Ewing. "I had not eaten all day and every evening that I visited for the next month and a half, they had a meal ready for me. I decided then I would become a nurse and make a difference caring for individuals."

Ewing went back to school to earn her nursing degree and went on to work for six organizations in the span of her nearly three-decade nursing career. She most recently served as chief nursing officer (CNO) at Lucille Packard/Stanford Children's Hospital in California and prior to that was CNO at East Tennessee Children's Hospital in Knoxville, Tenn.

This year, Ewing brought her nursing expertise to Le Bonheur.

She was attracted to the hospital because of the close collaborative partnership between doctors and nurses.

"My first week included a lot of rounding. I thought I might find a deflated team because of the challenges presented by COVID-19, but



Le Bonheur Chief Nursing Officer Hella Ewing, RN, MSM brings nearly 30 years of experience to her new role.

instead I found a team that was joyful when they talked about their unit, colleagues and Le Bonheur," Ewing said. "Nurses here are extremely connected to the mission — which is uniquely intertwined with the community — and it's reflected in the quality care they provide."

"Nurses here are extremely connected to the mission — which is uniquely intertwined with the community — and it's reflected in the quality care they provide."

Hella Ewing, RN, MSM

At Le Bonheur, nurses treat children from tiny neonates to teenagers on the cusp of adulthood. Every patient population is special and has different needs, requiring unique care with a holistic approach.

Family-centered care, incorporating families

into health care decisions for their child, is crucial to treating patients at Le Bonheur.

"Whether it's one day or months, having a child in the hospital can be a scary time and we want families to be supported and have a listening ear," Ewing said. "By the time patients leave, our goal is to have them feel like they are part of the Le Bonheur family and know the hospital is a safe place."

Ewing joined Le Bonheur as the hospital was receiving Magnet reaccreditation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. This credential is the highest national recognition for nurses and a testament Le Bonheur's continued dedication to high-quality care.

"The Magnet Model is a framework for excellence focusing on quality, inter-professional relationships, community outreach, nursing leadership and professional development," Ewing said. "Le Bonheur has successfully completed our re-designation showing that we excel in all of these areas and it reaffirms our commitment to our organization and community."

As she looks towards the future, Ewing hopes to continue to elevate the voice of frontline staff and nurture an environment where nurses can come forward with ideas to improve care.

Ewing continues her daily hospital rounds, which fuels her day-to-day gratitude ritual.

"Each day, I write down three things that inspired me or made a difference like a nurse getting accepted into a master's program or a patient being able to go home," Ewing said. "I'm grateful to be part of the Le Bonheur family and interacting with staff, patients and their families truly fills my cup."

In the last 12 months, Le Bonheur Pedi-Flite transported 2,484 patients to and from the hospital. More than half of those transports were inbound trauma patients in need of life-saving care.



WHEN THE UNTHINKABLE HAPPENS

Trauma nurses offer healing, hope for critically-injured children and families

When trauma nurses Rhett Whitlow, BSN, CPEN, and Terrika Johnson, BSN, CPEN, clock in for a shift in the Le Bonheur Children's Hospital Emergency Department (ED), they know they must be prepared for anything. Between them, the nurses have 23 years experience caring for critically ill and injured children at Le Bonheur. But both agree that every day working in emergency medicine is different.

In an average 24-hour period, Le Bonheur's ED staff treats more than 200 patients with a wide range of injuries and acute medical concerns, and trauma nurses may see anywhere from one to five trauma patients in a single shift. During peak seasons

or holidays, both of those figures may double. On Independence Day this year, the ED treated 20 children injured by fireworks, five of whom required surgery on one or both hands. Summer also brings an increase in all-terrain vehicle traumas, motor

vehicle accidents, concussions and potential spinal injuries as training begins for football season.

Traumas typically arrive at a moment's notice, and the ED must often organize an entire trauma response team within 15 minutes time. Thankfully, Le Bonheur's Level 1 Pediatric Trauma Center designation means children throughout the region have access to the highest-quality trauma care at the most critical times.

Le Bonheur trauma nurses are certified in advanced pediatric lifesaving skills and must successfully complete the Trauma Nurse Core Course (TNCC), as well as eight hours of annual continuing trauma education. Whitlow, who serves as one of Le Bonheur's TNCC instructors, invests in any trauma learning

“Children need someone who knows how to take care of them, who’s compassionate, who wants to be there and can be their voice, because sometimes we may be a child’s only advocate in the room. Becoming as trained and knowledgeable as I can to give them the best outcome possible truly feels like a calling.”

experiences he can find, from advanced life-support courses to rural trauma team development.

“Children need someone who knows how to take care of them, who’s compassionate, who wants to be there and can be their voice, because sometimes we may be a child’s only advocate in the room,” said Whitlow. “Becoming as trained and knowledgeable as I can to give them the best outcome possible truly feels like a calling.”

While Whitlow has always worked nights in his nine years at Le Bonheur, Johnson spent one year working days

and another year as a nurse for Pedi-Flite, Le Bonheur’s medical transport team. But ultimately, nights in Le Bonheur’s ED have her heart. Besides preferring the after-hours rhythms, Johnson has a two-hour commute to the hospital from her Jackson, Tenn., home, and working nights allows

Rhett Whitlow, BSN, CPEN



Le Bonheur trauma nurses Rhett Whitlow, left, and Terrika Johnson, right, have 23 years of experience between them caring for critically ill and injured children seeking care in Le Bonheur's Emergency Department.

her to pick her 6-year-old twin boys up from school, even on the days she works.

Johnson admits the job can be nerve-racking, even for a seasoned nurse, and reflects that some patient stories are hard to move past, particularly as a mother to young children. But, she also asserts that roles like hers are where loving what you do and making a difference come into play.

“When I am at work and the radio goes off, I have to be calm. I cannot get overly worked up. I cannot raise my voice,” said Johnson. “Families do not wake up thinking this is going to happen today, and taking the time to talk to them, to calmly explain what’s going on and to just hold their hand — it means a world of difference. It’s our job to take care of the family as well as the child.”

And when staff need help coping after a difficult case, debriefing sessions are held so team members can process their experience together. Debriefings are typically chaplain-led, and while any team member may request one, sessions are automatic following larger-scale traumas.

Team members also benefit from opportunities to see and hear from children who suffered severe traumas and had good long-term outcomes.

Trauma Program Director Anissa Revels, MSN, RN, recalls the case of a young patient who survived multiple gunshot wounds and shared her story to spotlight the daily challenges some community members face.

“She spoke with so much determination to move on with her life, and she shared deep appreciation for our team for helping her overcome her mental wounds as well as the physical ones,” said Revels.

Beyond the frontline ED staff, Le Bonheur’s trauma



The trauma center at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital was recently verified as a Level 1 Pediatric Trauma Center for the fourth time by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and also celebrated 10 years as a Level 1 Pediatric Trauma Center. This achievement recognizes Le Bonheur trauma center’s dedication to providing optimal care for injured patients.

program is comprised of five nurses devoted to quality improvement and community outreach, a dedicated trauma social worker, three registrars who connect Le Bonheur’s trauma data with national registries and a clinical analyst to identify research opportunities and up-to-date information in the trauma field.

Put simply, caring for trauma patients takes a village, and part of Le Bonheur’s community-based mission includes offering education for schools and families on injury prevention and safety, as well as training Mid-South health care workers on pediatric trauma care. Nurses from institutions citywide seek out TNCC education taught by

Le Bonheur experts, whose courses are routinely at capacity.

“Pediatric trauma happens more often than we’d like to think,” said Revels, “but Le Bonheur is the place to handle it when it does.”



When trauma patients arrive at the doors of Le Bonheur’s Emergency Department, the trauma team springs into action to stabilize the patient for surgery or other necessary treatment and care. 2020 saw a sharp spike in traumas and a staggering 66-percent jump in gunshot wounds.

Shelter in the Storm

FedExFamilyHouse provides respite, reliable access for hospital staff during snowstorm



FedExFamilyHouse

Barbie Stewart, RN, MSN, CNL, NE-BC, keeps an air mattress and spare bedding in her office in case of the unexpected.

As clinical director of Le Bonheur's Emergency Department, she stays ready to spend the night on campus to offer staffing support or help during a crisis. But when a severe winter storm blanketed the city with more than half a foot of snow and ice earlier this year, Stewart became just one of thousands of frontline workers struggling to navigate perilous commutes and seeking safe overnight alternatives.

Thankfully, FedExFamilyHouse is located just across the street from Le Bonheur, and has served as a home away from home for more than 260,000 patient family members since opening in 2010.

In a typical year, FedExFamilyHouse provides a safe haven for about 4,400 Le Bonheur patient families, but according to House leadership, this year's winter storm was the first time hospital employees have sought urgent lodging assistance.

Nevertheless, staff at FedExFamilyHouse did not miss a beat when preparing to house dozens of Le Bonheur employees along with patient families. Several team members packed overnight bags and reported to work before the storm hit, battening down the hatches and bracing for a



Barbie Stewart, clinical nursing director for Le Bonheur's Emergency Department, sends a photo to her husband and three sons before bedding down for the night at FedExFamilyHouse.

week of double shifts and atypical tasks. One such staffer was FedExFamilyHouse Guest Service Manager Stephanie Green.

"Our front desk agents were facing transportation challenges, so my teammate Allen and I decided to stay the week to make sure someone was here to greet new arrivals, help families with any issues, coordinate check-ins for hospital employees and address any questions or needs,"

said Green. "Everybody worked together to take care of our families, and hospital staff were really appreciative of the help getting to Le Bonheur safely."



From left to right, FedExFamilyHouse team members Stephanie Green, Allen Barshinger and Feris Hooks were among the staffers who stayed on campus during the storm week to keep the house open and operational. Pat Davis and Zach Stratton, not pictured, also stayed overnight to lend a helping hand.

Heavy snow began falling on Valentine's Day, and by that evening, Le Bonheur employees were checking in at FedExFamilyHouse to ensure seamless morning commutes and minimal disruptions to patient care.

One group seeking shelter: Le Bonheur nurses serving as escorts for a national nursing accreditation site visit, conducted virtually via guided tablet tours scheduled during the storm week. Others housed included bedside nurses, critical care nursing leaders and key logistics and operations staffers.

Le Bonheur's Nursing Administration team worked tirelessly fielding accommodation requests and coordinating rooms all week for staff and physicians at the House and throughout the hospital.

"I am so proud of our team for showing up and keeping the House running — from our laundry attendant, Feris, who stayed to clean rooms to our maintenance crew member, Darius, who spent the week shoveling snow and putting down salt so families and staff could travel back and forth safely," said FedExFamilyHouse General Manager Cayce Starr. "We weathered the storm and came out stronger because we were all in it together."

"I am so proud of our team for showing up and keeping the House running — from our laundry attendant, Feris, who stayed to clean rooms to our maintenance crew member, Darius, who spent the week shoveling snow and putting down salt so families and staff could travel back and forth safely. We weathered the storm and came out stronger because we were all in it together."

Cayce Starr, FedExFamilyHouse General Manager

Stewart, meanwhile, enjoyed a restful reprieve from her air mattress, spending one night in an empty patient room at the hospital before relocating to FedExFamilyHouse for four



The often bustling FedExFamilyHouse patio lies dormant, blanketed under more than half a foot of snow during a recent Memphis snowstorm.

additional nights.

"We make a commitment to our patients, families and communities to be here for them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week," said Stewart. "To enable our staff to report to work without the stress or danger of driving on icy roads was such a blessing."

Prior to her overnight stay, Stewart had visited FedExFamilyHouse only once to attend a meeting, and she was amazed by the caliber of the accommodations, from the beautiful rooms to the wide array of comforting amenities.

"I thought about what these rooms have seen and the stories they could tell while I was sheltered from the winter storm," Stewart remarked. "It was such a gift to experience even a small portion of the respite, relaxation and solace provided for our families when they need it most."

‘A Glimmer of Hope’

Mom recounts Le Bonheur nurse helping family navigate epilepsy crisis

By Heidi James, mother of 5-year-old Chloe James, a Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital’s Neuroscience Institute patient.



A soccer ball being kicked across our backyard. The laughter of children. These are the usual sights and sounds coming from my five children at our Utah home.

But our lives changed forever when my youngest child, Chloe, began experiencing terrifying seizures, often every 30 seconds, when she was 3 years old.

We turned to our local hospital where doctors diagnosed Chloe with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome — a severe type of epilepsy — and put her on eight medications. They struggled for more than a year to keep Chloe’s epilepsy under control.

As her mother, I felt helpless watching my child experience terrifying seizures. I wanted answers and a second opinion. Chloe’s doctor referred us to Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital’s nationally-ranked Neuroscience Institute and Jim Wheless, MD, co-director of the Neuroscience Institute and an expert on Chloe’s form of epilepsy.

While we hoped for resolution at home, a scary bout of seizures gave us the impetus to reach out to Dr. Wheless. Shortly after a visit with Chloe’s local pediatrician, her condition worsened. I contacted her

At left, Chloe and Heidi James of Utah during their visit to Le Bonheur to find diagnosis for and treatment of Chloe’s epilepsy.

doctor's nurse line and was told I would receive a response in 48 hours.

I thought that Chloe was on every medication possible to control her seizures, and I did not know whether to interpret her increasing seizure activity as simply part of the disease or an emergency.

I was panicked; Chloe was continually having seizures that were lasting about 45 seconds with 30-second breaks in between.

I emailed Dr. Wheless and, despite it being a Saturday, he responded within the hour and connected me with Le Bonheur's Epilepsy Program Coordinator, Karen Butler, RN, BSN.

When Karen contacted me, I described Chloe's seizure activity and she explained that Chloe was "clustering."

This was new information to me. Luckily, Karen was there to help and walked me through the process of administering rescue medications, even sending me a video illustrating the process.

Karen explained it as giving Chloe's brain a little sunshine in a "storm" of seizures, allowing her brain to rest. After our initial call, Karen continued to phone me daily to check on Chloe.

I believe that Karen saved Chloe's life at a critical moment and for that we are so grateful. Unfortunately, Chloe's seizures continued after several attempts at rescuing her and she ended up back in the hospital. It became apparent to me that Chloe would need the expert care only Le Bonheur can provide.

Karen made all the

arrangements for Chloe to be seen as soon as possible, she even spoke directly to our local pediatrician's office to get all of Chloe's medical records for Dr. Wheless to review. Chloe was discharged from our local hospital and within three days we were on a plane heading halfway across

the country to Memphis for her admission at Le Bonheur.

Once we arrived at the hospital, Karen helped us every step of the way — visiting our room daily, always ready to discuss the treatment plan and strategy. She went above and beyond to reassure me, as I was nervous about handing over Chloe's care to a doctor I had yet to meet.

But I need not worry. Within hours of being at Le Bonheur, Dr. Wheless had gotten Chloe's epilepsy under control, stopping her seizures and reducing her medications from eight to three.

Chloe also underwent a MEG scan to get a more detailed look at her brain activity, which along with the rest of her evaluation

helped doctors determine that, while she has epilepsy, she does not have Lennox-Gastaut syndrome.

Karen helped make all of this possible and was with us before, during and after Chloe's admission. Coming from so far away, Karen's guidance was critical for Chloe to be able to access the expert care at Le Bonheur.

Karen was truly a godsend during a very difficult time, she went above and beyond to ensure Chloe received the critical care she needed.



Karen Butler provided life-saving care over the phone to Heidi James when her daughter, Chloe, was suffering seizures. Butler is guided by her commitment to trying to make a difference, one patient at a time.

“I believe that Karen saved Chloe’s life at a critical moment and for that we are so grateful.”

Heidi James, Chloe's mother

FROM PATIENT TO SON

Le Bonheur nurse adopts medically-fragile patient in her care

In 2014, little Jeremiah was born with significant and complex medical needs. Unfortunately those weren't the only obstacles he was facing. After spending most of his first year of life hospitalized, he went to foster care. He would need a family with extensive medical training.

Le Bonheur Children's Hospital nurse, Jordan Dickerson, first met Jeremiah when he was a patient on the pulmonary unit in 2016. After a month or two, Jordan, who was newly married, started to feel a tug at her heart. She couldn't really explain it, but she had a strong feeling about Jeremiah that she couldn't shake.

She and her husband, Cole, had often talked about potentially fostering one day, but as newlyweds, that day felt far in the future. One afternoon while working on the 11th floor, Jordan texted Cole and asked him to start thinking seriously about foster care and told him the Lord had placed Jeremiah on her heart.

By the next day, they were looking into foster parent classes and starting the process to understand what all that might involve. The couple was initially told there wasn't a great need for foster parents for children younger than 5 years old, but Jordan knew that medically fragile children would be a different case. Among other things, Jeremiah was on a feeding tube and had a tracheostomy to

“The training and resources that Le Bonheur provided helped us feel loved and thoroughly equipped to care for our son and his medical needs. We are forever grateful for the staff at Le Bonheur.”

Jordan Dickerson, Le Bonheur Children's Hospital Nurse

help him breathe. These medical needs would require special training and certifications for any family who would foster Jeremiah.



Le Bonheur Children's Hospital Nurse Jordan Dickerson first met Jeremiah when he was a patient on the pulmonary unit in 2016. She and her husband, Cole, formally adopted him in 2018 after serving as his foster parents for a year. Pictured here is the Dickerson family on Jeremiah's adoption day.

A caseworker came to Le Bonheur to discuss long-term expectations with Jordan, because even for a skilled nurse, taking a child into her home with such intense needs would entail thoughtful and realistic consideration.

Finally, in June of 2017, then 3-year-old Jeremiah came home with Jordan and Cole. One evening at dinner, Jeremiah prayed, “Thank you for my mommy, thank you for my daddy, thank you for my Leo [the family dog] and thank you for

my little sister in two weeks. Amen.”

As precious as that prayer was, Jordan and Cole had no plans for any siblings for Jeremiah just yet — they were still getting into the groove of being a family of three, not to



The Dickerson family grew again with the birth of Caroline, the little sister Jeremiah prayed for back in 2017 before his parents knew they were expecting. Jeremiah was officially adopted by his Le Bonheur nurse in 2018.

mention the unique requirements in the life of a foster family. They gently reminded him that maybe one day he'd have a sibling, but it wouldn't be for quite a while.

Two weeks later, Jordan learned she was pregnant, and before too long, Caroline was born. She was the little sister Jeremiah had prayed for.

In July of 2018, Jeremiah officially became a Dickerson when Jordan and Cole formally adopted him. A joyous day for the Dickerson family, several years in the making.

"The training and resources that Le Bonheur provided

helped us feel loved and throughly equipped to care for our son and his medical needs," said Jordan. "We are forever grateful for the staff at Le Bonheur," said Jordan.

Jordan is an example of the heart and dedication of so many nurses that make up the Le Bonheur family. While they won't all follow the same path of bringing a child into their own family home, Le Bonheur nurses find a way to bring their patients into their hearts as they provide skilled and compassionate care every day.

Le Bonheur School Nurses: 'Calm in the Storm'

Less than an hour after the school bell rang, Le Bonheur School Nurse Nikitta Franklin, RN, heard a knock on her health room door. Eleven-year-old KaMaree Rayford came in with a cough, headache, shortness of breath and a stomachache. He'd been out of school the week before due to COVID-19 exposure, and he hadn't come back with a doctor's note clearing him to return to school.

Nurse Franklin calmly walked with KaMaree to the school's new "safe room," a socially-distanced isolation space implemented in all Shelby County Schools, where she took his temperature and performed an evaluation. She then coordinated with administrative staff for his pickup.

By the time she made it back to her office, another student was waiting. Then another. And then another.

"It's a lot right now," said Franklin. "The students have had to adjust to so much. We're doing everything we can to keep everyone safe."

When schools returned to in-person learning this fall in the grips of the highly contagious delta variant of COVID-19, the vital role of school nurses was brought into stark relief.

The concept of school nursing has existed for a century; but uniformity among states and school districts varies greatly, as do the laws governing school health services. Some school districts in the rural Mid-South, such as Tipton County, provide a nurse in every school, while others such as Shelby County provide, on average, a nurse in each school for only four hours a week.

The current Tennessee ratio equates to one nurse per 3,000 students.

Le Bonheur Children's Hospital is working to meet the school nursing needs of the community through a pilot program with five Shelby County Schools, a mobile health unit in West Tennessee, and the placement of 14 Le Bonheur nurses in Tipton County Schools.

This semester, Le Bonheur Community Nurse Supervisor Charnece Brown, RN, has pitched in to help her nurses on the frontlines, rotating between partner schools to assess and triage sick children. Before the pandemic, Brown said having dedicated nurses in school allowed teachers the ability to focus on educating their students rather than trying to diagnose their health issues.

"Now with the pandemic going on, we not only help teachers be able to do their job, but we can also be that calm in the storm, if you will," said Brown.

This elevated role of school nurses includes help with screening, contact tracing and follow-up after a student or staff member is sent home to quarantine or isolate.

Le Bonheur Children's experts have advocated for safe school practices since the start of the pandemic, and last year created a joint "Back-to-School Task Force" with University of Tennessee Health Science Center to provide guidance for educators, school officials and parents.

"In the past year, our nurses have really been the source



Le Bonheur school nurse Nikitta Franklin, RN, provides health education for students, parents and staff.

of information for COVID for many schools,” said Le Bonheur School Health Services Director Cindy Hogg, RN. “Our providers are answering questions for staff and parents, triaging kids, interpreting policies and practices — and then providing a link back to Le Bonheur.”

Hogg said the school nurses’ work throughout the pandemic has highlighted the value of relationship building, an intangible core aspect of community outreach work.

“One thing we’ve seen is the trust parents have for our nurses,” she said. “Our school nurses have been calling to check on children and families when they learn of COVID in the home. Many families were given test results with no education on what to do, how to manage symptoms, when to be concerned, how long they should stay home, etc. These families were so thankful someone was calling to check on them and so thankful to have a nurse to ask questions and get information.”

While school nurses have been vital for COVID-19 precautions and care, they also provide much needed support for children with a range of health concerns. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that each school has its own full-time nurse due to the increase of chronic conditions in children, including asthma. The increased survival of pre-term infants and



Le Bonheur School Nurse Nikitta Franklin, RN, helps implement COVID-19 precaution and protocols in school in order to create a safe learning environment.

children born with congenital anomalies has resulted in more children with disabilities and chronic diseases. In addition, the number of children with behavioral issues has also increased. Caring for these children in school requires the services of a professional registered nurse.

At the start of the pandemic, when many schools moved to virtual learning, Le Bonheur school nurses kept in contact with students known to have chronic conditions to ensure proper case management.

When school returned, the nurses checked on the whole family. For instance, when an elementary school student complained of a headache and stomachache upon return to in-person learning, a school nurse spoke with him and learned he had anxiety because he was away from his mom, who had suffered a massive heart attack during quarantine. The student’s grandfather had passed away from COVID, and his father had died when the student was a kindergartener.

The nurse spoke with the child about his worries and learned his mother, who needed heart medication, had lost her job, and in turn, her health insurance. The nurse worked with Seedco — a national nonprofit organization that connects families in need to Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) — to get the family covered, which in turn alleviated some of the anxiety keeping the child from being able to focus in school.

Le Bonheur school nurses are often the first health care contact for a child, helping to catch chronic issues before they escalate. The program’s success can be seen in the stories of children and families served.

A recent example involves an adolescent girl sent to the school nurse with a note saying the child was drinking water all day, not eating and losing weight. The teacher thought perhaps the student was suffering from an eating disorder, but the nurse recognized the signs of hyperglycemia. The school nurse called the child’s parents and secured an appointment with a primary care provider the very same day. The child was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, went on to see an endocrinologist, received a school care plan and returned to school able to manage her condition.

LE BONHEUR SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Le Bonheur school nurses function as staff members, actively working with students, teachers and families to keep children healthy, safe and ready to learn.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Providing care or first aid for sick and injured students and staff
- Helping parents and health care providers obtain necessary health information
- Administering medications as ordered by the physician and necessary for school attendance
- Assisting with state-mandated school health screenings
- Helping families find other specialized doctors and nurses when needed
- Ensuring students have the required vaccines and physical exams for school
- Providing staff emergency first aid and CPR training
- Helping families learn to care for chronic diseases like asthma and diabetes, when needed
- Providing weekly support from a licensed social worker and nurse practitioner

Conscientious Care:

Advanced practice nurses develop focused efforts for patient care



A Nurse Who Cares

Le Bonheur CARES nurse practitioner leads \$1.5-million grant for sexual abuse care training in West Tennessee

It's a question that Andrea Sebastian, DNP, PNP, SANE-P, Le Bonheur CARES (Child Advocacy Resource and Evaluation Services) nurse practitioner, hears all too often: "How do you handle the emotional toll of caring for victims of child abuse day in and day out?"

For Sebastian the answer is simple.

"This patient population is 100% my passion. Seeing kids in follow-up clinic who are now thriving gives me the drive to help the next victim of child abuse," said Sebastian. "It's a small difference I was able to make in their life."

And now she's taking that care to the next level, serving as project manager on a \$1.5-million grant to provide sexual abuse response training to nurse practitioners in West Tennessee.

Sebastian's journey into nursing started in high school as she did administrative work in a pediatrician's office. It ignited a love for caring for children.

After nursing school and earning her



Le Bonheur CARES Nurse Practitioner Andrea Sebastian, DNP, PNP, SANE-P, treats children who are victims of child abuse. She stands in front of the Pinwheels for Prevention Garden, which draws awareness to preventing child abuse. The pinwheels represent childlike whimsy and lightheartedness. Le Bonheur CARES' vision for a world where all children grow up happy, healthy and prepared to succeed in supportive families and communities.

doctorate of Nursing Practice at the University of Kentucky, Sebastian began working in Le Bonheur's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) as a nurse practitioner. She felt pulled toward caring for victims of child abuse and neglect after seeing more cases in the PICU than she ever anticipated.

"I felt like this was where I could make a difference," Sebastian reflects.

That began Sebastian's transition to working full time with the child abuse program, Le Bonheur CARES. This work runs the gamut from visiting patients in the hospital, outpatient and Emergency Department (ED) settings, holding clinic for follow-up patients, to working with the Department of Children's Services (DCS) and law enforcement and even testifying in court.

And now Sebastian adds a new vital responsibility to her plate — serving as the project manager for the three-year, \$1.5 million SANE Training and Education through Partnerships for Underserved Populations (STEP UP) grant awarded to the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) College of Nursing to expand Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) training and certification in West Tennessee. Sebastian serves as an assistant professor at the UTHSC College of Nursing.

The need for SANE trained nurses in West Tennessee is crucial. In the 21 counties of West Tennessee, there are five certified SANE nurses — four of which are in Shelby County.

"Through this grant we will be able to dramatically increase the number of nurses who are trained in sexual assault response," said Sebastian. "This will increase access to trauma-informed care in rural areas."

Sebastian and her grant team will recruit up to 61 registered nurses or advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to receive SANE certification. These certifications train nurses to address sexual assault survivors' needs and provide trauma-informed care.

The goal is to provide access to timely, expert care for all sexual assault survivors in West Tennessee.

"The consequences of child abuse don't stop the day a child leaves the hospital. Kids who are abused have long-term consequences," said Sebastian. "Support for the Le Bonheur

DAY IN THE LIFE

A child abuse nurse practitioner is responsible for a wide range of tasks throughout each day. Here is just one example of what a full day might look like for Le Bonheur CARES Nurse Practitioner Andrea Sebastian, DNP, PNP, SANE-P.

- 7 a.m.** Before work, I review every child who was admitted overnight along with their diagnosis. If I see red flags for an abuse case, I look through their chart and prepare by reviewing their medical history page by page.
- 8 a.m.** After arriving at the hospital, I visit patients who I flagged earlier or whom doctors referred for child abuse consult. In the unit, I interview parents, get medical history, examine the child and recommend any necessary testing.
- 10 a.m.** Throughout the morning, physicians and nurses will contact me if they suspect child abuse. I consult in any area across Le Bonheur's campus — the hospital, Emergency Department and Outpatient Center.
- Noon** After visiting patients, I return to my office to complete the follow-up work on these cases. I consult with the Department of Children's Services (DCS) and the police when necessary to discuss findings and medical records on every child.
- 1 p.m.** We hold CARES clinic twice a week in the afternoons in the Outpatient Center, and twice a month I go to Jackson, Tenn., for clinic. In clinic, I see how the child is progressing and order any repeat X-rays that might be needed.
- 3 p.m.** As an assistant professor at the UTHSC College of Nursing, I also help to educate the next generation of health care providers. Working with undergraduate and graduate nurses, I conduct child abuse simulations in UTHSC's simulation center and help with the clinical portion of the acute nurse practitioner program.
- 4 p.m.** The end of the day gives me the opportunity to catch up on my other miscellaneous responsibilities. That can range from serving on the Shelby County Child Fatality team, testifying in court for cases or helping to manage the STEP UP grant.

CARES program allows our care to continue, and we can help children live healthy, happier childhoods.”

SANE Training and Education through Partnerships for Underserved Populations (STEP UP) Grant

- Three-year, \$1.5 million grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Administration (HRSA)
- Expands sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) training and certification in West Tennessee
- Partnership among the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, West Tennessee Healthcare, Shelby County Crime Victims and Rape Crisis Center and the Whiteville Family Medical Clinic
- Recruit up to 61 registered nurses or advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) for SANE training paid for by the grant
- Develop and implement a regional Sexual Assault Response and Resource Team (SARRT)

A Heart for Patients CHD survivor and Le Bonheur nurse practitioner spearheads education in ACHD program

Ryan Stephens, DNP(c), FNP-C, MBA, Le Bonheur nurse practitioner in the Adolescent-Adult Congenital Cardiology Disease (ACHD) program, was born with a congenital heart defect that was repaired at 9 months of age. But this is just a footnote in his story.

His congenital heart disease (CHD) diagnosis, however, gives him a unique perspective with the patient population he serves – adolescents with congenital heart disease who are taking responsibility for their health and transitioning to adult cardiology care.



Ryan Stephens, DNP(c), FNP-C, MBA

“It’s rewarding to help patients understand that while their diagnosis is not something that will disappear, it’s possible to live with it and still have a full life,” Stephens said.

Without proper transition and education, it is easy for congenital heart disease (CHD) patients to slip off the radar when they outgrow pediatric medicine. Loss of insurance and continuity of care can present issues down the road.

Stephens was working in community health when Rush Waller, MD, medical director of Le Bonheur’s ACHD program, called him to fill this gap. Waller had been tasked with building up Le Bonheur’s adult heart services. He needed a partner to spearhead transition medicine for the pediatric CHD population.

So Stephens took the reins and developed a methodology to educate current Heart Institute patients, smoothly and methodically transitioning them to an adult heart program. An age-specific flow sheet and checklist within the patient’s chart, developed by Stephens and Waller and accessible to all providers, ensures that the patient’s education stays on track.

Education for heart patients begins as young as 12, when Stephens and the cardiologists expose them to as much information as they are ready for – understanding their diagnosis, medications, risks for future offspring and more. The earlier conversations start, the better their access to and continuity of cardiology care. As they reach 15 to 18 years old, Stephens starts to meet with them without parents to continue the journey to autonomy for their own care.

“They need to feel the tension of being responsible for their own health and feel the urgency behind it,” said Stephens.

In addition to this transition medicine in the ACHD program, Stephens also plays a large role in the Sports Cardiology Program within the Heart Institute. Athletic trainers of all the universities in Memphis and local professional sports programs such as 901 FC, the Redbirds and the Grizzlies, have Stephens on speed dial when they



Le Bonheur Nurse Practitioner Ryan Stephens, DNP(c), FNP-C, MBA, is responsible to educating adolescents with congenital heart disease on their condition and taking responsibility for their own care. Above, Stephens educates a patient on his heart condition.

have an athlete that needs a cardiac evaluation. Stephens filters them in clinic and passes them on to a cardiologist if they need further follow up.

But the COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges to sports cardiology. As concerns arose about heart injury after COVID infection, sports medicine groups began reaching out for assistance with screening their athletes to return to their sport. Stephens and the sports cardiology team knew they needed to provide guidance for screening these athletes for cardiology issues.

“Our sports cardiology team developed an algorithm for screening positive COVID-19 patients to see if they needed further evaluation from a cardiologist before returning to

sports,” said Stephens. “Out of that we developed stronger relationships with these athletic teams and saw 200 patients with COVID in a three-month span.”

At the end of the day, Stephens says he is continuously motivated by his team and the patients he serves. He cites amazing physician collegiality for collaboration and satisfaction. And he continues to educate the next generation of nurse practitioners through the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) where he is an instructor at the College of Nursing. His patients’ well-being for a lifetime pushes him to keep working hard for each one of them.

“If you invest in people’s lives, you will always get a return on your investment,” said Stephens.



“From Open-Heart Surgery to Ironman: Le Bonheur provider shares his CHD story”

To learn more about Ryan Stephen’s journey with congenital heart disease (CHD) and his next challenge — training for an Ironman triathlon — listen to this episode of the Le Bonheur Peds Pod. Find the podcast at lebonheur.org/podcast or wherever you get your podcasts.

Star on the Rise

PICU nurse recognized for exemplary care

Upon graduating in 2016, Jeff Brown began his nursing career at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. While the start of a new career can be an overwhelming time, Jeff dove right in and even agreed to train on two floors at once.

Throughout his first year, he alternated schedules between the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit (NSICU) and became a leader among his peers. His willingness to go the extra mile for his patients has never wavered. Even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when strict precautionary measures were in place, his high level of care was not sacrificed.

Physicians trust his opinions, and parents and physicians alike appreciate the non-biased information he offers regarding patients' needs.

"Patients and families love having him as a nurse because he is so naturally genuine in his care delivery and emotional support," said Andrea Orman, MSN, RN, CCRN, CNML, Le Bonheur clinical director, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit and Extracorporeal Therapy Services Line.

His natural compassion and gentle nature allow him to provide not only expert care, but also a calming presence to kids and parents facing difficult situations. Jeff has embraced his role as an advocate and going above and beyond for his patients is second nature.

"I am delighted that Jeff is being recognized as a nursing star because he is incredibly deserving. He has the unique combination of personal and professional characteristics that we all hope for in an ICU nurse," said Nadeem I. Shafi, MD, medical director of Le Bonheur's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. "He has the calmest demeanor possible through all the ups and downs of ICU care, and



Jeff Brown, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit nurse

he asks important questions, both to grow in his personal understanding and to make sure his patients are getting optimal care."

To honor the excellent work of its nurses, Le Bonheur hosts a yearly celebration during National Nurses Week in May. Appropriately named because of the way nurses shine as outstanding clinicians, the Nursing Star recipients are nominated by peers, nurse managers and patients. Each unit chooses one nurse as their Nursing Star.

Jeff has crawled on the floor to provide treatment so an anxious patient wouldn't see him; he's brushed tiny newborn heads with soft toothbrushes when regular hairbrushes

might be too large; and he exhibits dignity and kindness during times of loss.

"Le Bonheur is a place of healing," Jeff said. "Somewhere I can go and know that what I'm doing is making a difference. It's a place of trust and teamwork because no one can make such an impact on their own. We have a great team making a huge difference in Memphis."

Nurses like Jeff make Le Bonheur a hospital where families and children feel safe, loved and heard, during times when their lives feel uncertain and chaotic.

As many people know, nursing isn't just a job. It's a calling. And perhaps the most special call of all, is caring for sick children and working tirelessly in an effort to make it "all better." Jeff has heard that call and followed it with his whole heart, and for that, so many children have been positively impacted.

"Knowing that what I do is bigger than myself keeps me going on the tough days. It's all for the kids and families I'm serving," said Jeff.

LEARNING CRITICAL LESSONS

Family foundation makes conference education possible for critical care nurse

Lauren Rower has always followed in her father's footsteps. His namesake, Lauren worked for years at the family's car dealership, Lewis Ford, and when her father, Lawrence "Larry" Lewis, passed away in 2009, she took up the mantle to carry on the legacy of her family's philanthropic arm, the Lawrence Lewis Foundation.

A Le Bonheur Club member and avid champion for arts and education, Rower is a longtime supporter of the hospital. In early 2019, she helped establish a fund through her family's foundation to support continuing education and conference opportunities for critical care nurses at Le Bonheur Children's. This desire to help critical care nurses came from one of the hardest experiences in her life — an emergency blood transfusion.

"I was interested in helping critical



Lauren Rower and stepdaughter, Katy, are the family force behind the fund to support conference opportunities for critical care nurses. Katy serves as the ECMO coordinator in Le Bonheur's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

care nurses from a personal experience in the emergency room," said Rower. "One nurse stayed up with me for hours through the night giving me a blood transfusion through tubes by hand. She probably saved my life."

Rower's stepdaughter, Katy, currently serves as the Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) coordinator in Le Bonheur's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), and she highlighted the importance of critical care nurses honing their skills and expertise in conference settings.

"Patients in the ICU need people caring for them who know exactly what they're doing and won't let anything fall through the cracks. With kids the stakes are that much higher, and it made sense to designate support for Le Bonheur Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurses to gain additional skills, meet new colleagues and stay up-to-date on the latest technologies, processes and ideas."

Lauren Rower, executor, Lawrence Lewis Foundation



Le Bonheur's book cart program, affectionately nicknamed "Roll Out & Read," is underwritten by Lawrence Lewis Foundation as well as other donors.

technologies, processes and ideas."

In the fund's inaugural year, eight PICU nurses attended conferences throughout the country thanks to the Lawrence Lewis Foundation. While in-person learning opportunities were primarily suspended in 2020, eight Le Bonheur nurses received grants to attend a virtual conference in May of this year, and plans are in place to support additional conference experiences this fall.

Brittany Dedwylder, a PICU nurse of nearly 15 years, represented

Le Bonheur at the 2019 Johns Hopkins Critical Care Mobility Conference, which gave her new insights into the importance of early mobilization of critical care patients.

"A critical care committee now meets biweekly to apply knowledge from conferences into our daily care routines," said Dedwylder. "I am so thankful for the Lawrence Lewis Foundation for making continuing nursing education possible."

In addition to nurse education and gifts supporting critical care

"Patients in the ICU need people caring for them who know exactly what they're doing and won't let anything fall through the cracks," said Lauren Rower. "With kids the stakes are that much higher, and it made sense to designate support for Le Bonheur Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurses to gain additional skills, meet new colleagues and stay up-to-date on the latest

"Donor support for conference education sends a message to bedside nurses that the community is vested in them and their role as a clinical nurse, and that we are all vested in ensuring positive patient outcomes both inside and outside the walls of Le Bonheur."

La-Kenya Kellum, director of Professional Practice and Nursing Excellence

at Le Bonheur, the family foundation also sponsored the hospital's book cart, staffed by volunteers and created to provide every patient with a new book. Rower, whose background is in education, has a demonstrated passion for literacy initiatives and seeks to further her family's investment in educational opportunities for all.

"It's so important for books to land in the hands of little people," said Rower. "For many families, books are a luxury. Kids should have access to books when they need them, and now patients can choose a new book to read in the hospital and then take it home."

Whether Le Bonheur families feel the support of Lawrence Lewis Foundation through the donation of a new book or the heightened expertise of critical care nursing, the hospital is grateful for the investment of families like Rower's in educational opportunities for both patients and staff.

"As care of the pediatric patient becomes increasingly complex, it is essential that nurses continue to develop their skills," said La-Kenya Kellum, director of Professional Practice and Nursing Excellence. "Donor support for conference education sends a message to bedside nurses that the community is vested in them and their work as a clinical nurse, and that we are all vested in ensuring positive patient outcomes both inside and outside the walls of Le Bonheur."

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK FROM PEDIATRIC INTENSIVE CARE NURSES:

"Attending the SUN Conference gave me the opportunity to learn about new technology surrounding simulation, to network with nurses from around the country, comparing techniques and adapting new ideas, and to bring new concepts back to my team and implement them into practice."

Ashlee Harden, Simulation User Network (SUN) Conference, 2019

"This in-depth conference allowed me to streamline how effectively the PICU mobilizes critical care patients and gave me new understanding of the importance of early mobilization. Now a critical care committee meets biweekly to apply knowledge from conferences into our daily care routines."

Brittany Dedwylder, Johns Hopkins Critical Care Mobility Conference, 2019

"NTI was a wonderful opportunity for me to bond with fellow PICU colleagues who were more seasoned and advanced in their tenure. The conference allowed me to see what critical care teams around the country are doing, and overall it was a really meaningful opportunity to grow in my confidence as a nurse."

Robyn Brenner, NTI Critical Care Conference, 2019

Plans with a Purpose



Mississippi woman gives back to Le Bonheur through planned gift

Faith. Family. Friends.

These were the most important things in the life of West Point, Miss., native, Gladys Duncan Pope.

Gladys, who died at the age of 98 earlier this year, was a conscientious saver and hard worker. She was always the first to drop off a casserole to a fellow church member in need.

Gladys believed in serving others and giving back to the community, lessons she passed on to her many nieces, nephews and generations beyond.

When planning her estate, Gladys wanted to continue giving back to her community and chose charities and organizations that benefited children, like Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. While she had no children of her own, she loved taking care of her nieces and nephews, spending hours playing their favorite board games together.

"Her passions were her family and helping those in need," niece Mary Alice Taylor said. "Her generous spirit and legacy of giving have been passed down through generations in our family. Selecting Le Bonheur, and other organizations that benefit children, in her estate plan was so



Gladys Pope with her niece Mary Carole Jackson and her great nieces Leila and Mary Taylor Jackson

important to Aunt Gladys."

Gladys' gift helps kids like fellow Mississippian, 14-year-old Gray Myhand, who came to Le Bonheur when he needed specialized care for multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C).

Gray received treatment at Le Bonheur for seven days, spending part of it in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. He was very ill, with colon, heart and kidney issues. For 36 hours, his parents were not sure if he would survive. Due to

the quick diagnosis and treatment from his Le Bonheur care team, Gray recovered.

"Today, Gray is able to play sports and be a normal 14-year-old boy — eight



Mississippian Gray Myhand spent seven days at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital receiving treatment for multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C). Gifts from supporters like Gladys Duncan Pope help children have access to life-saving care.

months ago I would not have dreamed that my child would be able to do that," said Lacie. "Le Bonheur made that possible."

Thanks to generous planned gifts from supporters like Gladys, kids like Gray have access to the care they desperately need.

Gladys Duncan Pope named Le Bonheur as a beneficiary of a portion of her annuity. She was able to do this by completing a beneficiary designation form provided by her annuity company. You can help children by naming Le Bonheur as a beneficiary — sole or primary — of your annuity, life insurance or retirement account.

Please contact Le Bonheur's Director of Planned Giving, Cathy Wilson at 901-287-5575 or catherine.wilson@lebonheur.org for more information about beneficiary designations. Cathy is happy to work with you and your advisor to find a gift to Le Bonheur that is right for you. For more information please visit

lebonheur.planmygift.org/beneficiary-designations





Le Bonheur Children's Hospital and West Tennessee Healthcare announced a new collaboration to provide specialized pediatric care to children in Jackson, Tenn. This will build on Le Bonheur's existing presence in west Tennessee, including the Le Bonheur Children's Outpatient Center — Jackson pictured here.

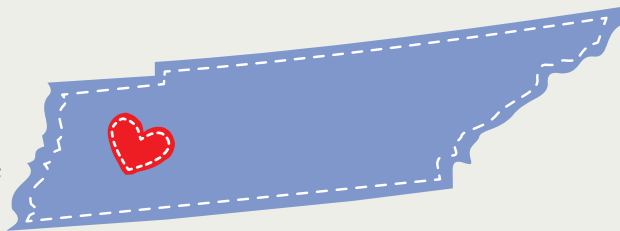
SPECIALIZED CARE, EXPANDED SERVICES

Le Bonheur, West Tennessee Healthcare collaborate for kids

The state of Tennessee has approved the collaboration proposal between Le Bonheur Children's and West Tennessee Healthcare to provide specialized care to children in West Tennessee.

This collaboration will improve access to expert pediatric care in West Tennessee by allowing Le Bonheur to place a Le Bonheur Children's Hospital care unit inside Jackson-Madison County General Hospital in Jackson, Tenn.

"We are pleased that the Tennessee Department of Health recognized the value that this pediatric unit at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital, the first of its kind in the region, will have for families all across West Tennessee," said Le Bonheur President Michael Wiggins. "West Tennessee Healthcare and Le Bonheur have long been committed to taking care of children in West Tennessee and this will ensure that families will continue to receive the best care close to



home for years to come."

Keeping kids close to home is always the best option, and together Le Bonheur Children's and West Tennessee Healthcare are working to provide expert care for kids within the 18-county West Tennessee

region. In addition, when children must travel to Le Bonheur's Memphis campus for complex pediatric care, by working together, there will be a seamless transition among providers.

"This is just one great example of us finding new ways to 'meet the need and make a difference' for our communities, especially for our pediatric population," said James Ross, CEO of West Tennessee. "We look forward to working with Le Bonheur to improve the health and well-being of the children in the region."

Le Bonheur Children's and West Tennessee Healthcare will work together to do what's best for kids in west Tennessee.

Your continued support makes this possible.

Breathing Easy

Growing up, Le Bonheur Registered Respiratory Therapist Crystal Owen would care for her brother with asthma while her mom worked nights as a nurse at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. So when the time came for a career change, Owen's mom had just the suggestion.

"After watching my brother struggle with severe asthma for so long, I wanted to do something more specialized," said Owen. "My mom said, 'Why don't you be a respiratory therapist?'"

After multiple board tests and additional specialized certifications, Owen is now a shift leader of a team of respiratory therapists at Le Bonheur.

Recently, the role of respiratory therapist has become associated with COVID-19, particularly as a vital role in the

care of COVID-19 patients on ventilators. And while COVID-19 care has certainly become part of her job, Owen and her team of respiratory therapists handle much more.

"At Le Bonheur, respiratory therapists take care of all ventilator management in critical areas, provide airway clearance maneuvers like chest percussion and handle all breathing treatments for patients," said Owen. "We work closely with the critical care doctors in determining the best mode of ventilation depending on their disease process and how to wean kids off ventilators."

A team of 90 respiratory therapists are spread throughout the hospital with special emphasis on critical care areas where children are more likely to need their expertise. On top of that, a respiratory

therapist is always ready to assist with inserting a breathing tube and airway management in the Emergency Department when a trauma case arrives. And in between regular ventilator care and breathing treatments, respiratory therapists assist with any scans needed of all ventilated or high respiratory support patients.

Owen decided to pursue higher specialties in order to care for the smallest and sickest patients who need respiratory support. She's certified as a Neonatal Pediatric Specialist and an Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) Specialist. ECMO is a

"COVID is a respiratory disease so we want to get them on a good respiratory regimen early to keep them from getting pneumonia. This can prevent escalating care and having to move them to the PICU."

Crystal Owen, Le Bonheur Registered Respiratory Therapist

treatment that uses a heart and a lung machine to support children when their organs are too weak to support the body's needs. Children on ECMO need an ECMO



Respiratory therapists provide essential care for children on ventilators. But some, like Crystal Owen, are also trained as Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) Specialists. ECMO (pictured above) is a treatment that uses a heart and lung machine to support children when their organs are too weak to support the body's needs and requires an ECMO specialist to be in the room at all times.

Respiratory therapist provides treatment, expertise for children with breathing, ventilator needs during COVID-19 pandemic

specialist in the room at all times to provide specialized care while on this life-saving treatment.

“We do so many phenomenal things for kids — there isn’t another hospital in this area that provides ECMO for children,” said Owen. “If a child needs a high level of care or has any major trauma, they will usually end up at Le Bonheur because of our ability to treat patients with a higher level of acuity.”

And this higher level of care extends to the rise in serious pediatric COVID-19 complications that are seen at Le Bonheur — particularly in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). Respiratory therapists are critical to provide a respiratory regimen to patients who come in with COVID-19 no matter the level of severity of their symptoms.

“COVID is a respiratory disease so we want to get them on a good respiratory regimen early to keep them from getting pneumonia. This can prevent escalating care and having to move them to the PICU,” says Owen.

Le Bonheur’s respiratory therapists have encountered multiple challenges with COVID-19 that are unique to pediatric care. With the Delta variant, children present much sicker, and more end up needing ventilator support, says Owen. And while younger kids generally have less severe COVID-19 symptoms, they have seen children as young as 4 weeks need ventilation.



Crystal Owen is one of Le Bonheur’s many registered respiratory therapists who care for children with acute breathing problems and critical care conditions. Here she provides care for one of the children on a ventilator in Le Bonheur’s Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU).


Plus, 2021 saw an early start to the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) season — a respiratory virus that needs intervention from respiratory therapists as well. The combination of the delta variant and an early RSV season caused an influx of patients in need of respiratory support. The PICU has remained full, usually with half COVID-19 and half RSV patients. And now a post-COVID-19 syndrome, multisystem inflammatory system in children (MIS-C) is presenting itself in kids requiring critical care and affecting a child’s lungs and other systems in the body.

Simple measures such as the wearing of masks and vaccination against COVID-19 could help prevent these children from becoming so sick, says Owen.

“During the first wave of COVID, we didn’t see it a lot in kids, or they were quick to recover. But now, walk a day through our

unit, and you see how sick these kids are,” said Owen.

While Owen has seen sadness in the hospital during the pandemic, she says there is so much joy in the great outcomes and the way all entities have come together to provide the best care for kids in a time when everyone is under intense strain.

“Le Bonheur is the heart of this city when it comes to children. We serve the sickest kids in our area and internationally and partner closely with St. Jude to provide ECMO care and procedures,” said Owen. “Even under the strain we have been working with — with staff shortages and the influx of patients — there are still smiling faces, still doing the same thing we were before the pandemic, just having to be a little stronger.” 

17th Annual Le Bonheur Pumpkin Run 5K & Family Walk

Thank you to everyone who helped make the 17th annual Le Bonheur Pumpkin Run such a successful, fun event! More than 1,300 supporters from 37 states participated either in-person or virtually. And to top it off, more than \$93,000 was raised to support Le Bonheur's mission of hope and healing for children.



FedExFamilyHouse Gala

The FedExFamilyHouse celebrated another year of providing a home away-from-home for Le Bonheur patients with the annual FedExFamilyHouse Gala. This year's Gala event was held virtually with opportunities for participants to give through online auctions. The Live Auction was held on Sept. 25, and this exclusive event featured 10 high-valued items custom curated for valuable donors and their guests. Gala Honorary Chairs Jane and Mike Lenz kicked off the fast-paced virtual event. This year's online silent auction was held for the general public on Oct. 25-28.



Forrest Spence 5K

The Forrest Spence Fund returned in person for its 14th annual 5K on Aug. 28. For the first time, this year's event was held at Shelby Farms Park. In-person attendance was limited to 1,000 people, but 325 participated in the event virtually, which raised more than \$152,000. The mission of the Fund is to assist with the non-medical needs of critically or chronically ill children and their families throughout the Mid-South. They have been tremendous supporters of Le Bonheur Children's Hospital families since the Fund was founded in 2007.



Go Jim Go

The 16th annual Go Jim Go raised more than \$230,000 for Le Bonheur! Go Jim Go is a fundraiser on wheels for Le Bonheur featuring WREG News Channel 3 meteorologist Jim Jagers. This year 35 schools raised



money for Le Bonheur. Jagers and his team of cyclists visited schools in Shelby County, Oxford, Miss., West Memphis, Ark., Tipton County and Lauderdale County.

FedExFamilyHouse Virtual 5K

This year's FedExFamilyHouse Virtual 5K Run/Walk raised more than \$50,000! Since opening its doors in 2010, FedExFamilyHouse has been there for more than 260,000 Le Bonheur Children's Hospital family members. Housing is the last thing parents should worry about when their child is sick or injured.

FedExFamilyHouse serves as a crucial resource — providing free lodging for families who travel long distances to seek expert care at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital.



Gurus of Golf

This year's 13th annual Gurus of Golf raised \$240,000 for the children of Le Bonheur to provide life-saving care that children and their families depend on. Even with space limitations due to COVID-19 precautions, the event was sold out with 18 teams participating in this year's event.



Upcoming Event

Enchanted Forest

See the Festival of Trees, enjoy the Gingerbread Village and take pictures with Santa at this year's Enchanted at the Memphis Museum of Science and History benefitting Le Bonheur. Enchanted Forest is open Nov. 20 to Dec. 31. Timed entry tickets must be purchased in advance at moshmemphis.com.



Le Bonheur named a “Best Children’s Hospital” by *U.S. News & World Report* for 11th year

The annual Best Children’s Hospitals rankings and ratings are designed to assist patients, their families and their doctors in making informed decisions about where to receive care for challenging health conditions. The rankings recognize the top 50 pediatric facilities across the U.S. in pediatric specialties.

Le Bonheur was recognized in seven specialties — cardiology and heart surgery, gastroenterology and GI surgery, neurology and neurosurgery, nephrology, orthopedics, pulmonology and lung surgery and urology.

“I am thrilled that for the eleventh consecutive year, Le Bonheur has been recognized as a Best Children’s Hospital by *U.S. News & World Report*,” said Le Bonheur President Michael Wiggins, DBA, FACHE. “This honor is a sign of our dedication to providing the best health care for children. This means that families can count on us to provide safe and effective care for all children who need us.”

Thank you for your support that enables us to provide excellent, specialized care for children through nationally-recognized programs.



848 Adams Avenue
Memphis, Tennessee 38103

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We're
Growing
Again!

Le Bonheur Children's announces major expansion for critical care, surgical areas

Le Bonheur Children's recently announced the largest building expansion since the hospital opened in 2010. The four-story, \$95.4-million addition will allow Le Bonheur to continue on their sustainable, long-term growth trajectory. The expansion includes enlarging the cardiovascular and neonatal floors, in addition to the surgery recovery area and main floor.

"I am thrilled to announce this major Le Bonheur expansion. This addition will help us make a generational difference in the care provided to children across the country and beyond," said Michael Wiggins, Le Bonheur President and CEO. "This kind of momentum

will allow Le Bonheur to continue attracting and retaining the best physicians and caregivers to achieve our mission of providing excellent health care for children, teaching the next generation of pediatric experts, pursuing scientific discovery and serving children in their communities. It will have an impact for decades to come."

The additional infrastructure will support an expansion of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for premature babies bringing 14 new beds to the existing 60-bed unit and will include eight additional surgery recovery bays. Le Bonheur will also convert 12 existing beds to critical care use immediately to ease

capacity needs during construction.

The expansion will also bring additional beds to the Heart Institute to create a 31-bed dedicated Cardiovascular Unit by adding 10 additional Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit beds to the existing 10-bed unit and creating room for an 11 bed step-down cardiac unit. A new MRI-guided catheterization lab will be added for a total of three catheterization labs.

Your support allows Le Bonheur to continue our nationally-recognized programs and grow to care for more children who need us.

