



*Photo Provided*

**A photo collage of toddler Alex Young graces the refrigerator door of mom Jennifer Young. She lost her youngest son in a tragic drowning in May and turned to organ donation to help others.**

## A family's tragedy brings life, hope to others

BY CINDY ABOLE

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People immediately fell in love with Alex Young. It was impossible not to fall for his vivacious spirit, boundless energy and charm. The curly, golden-haired toddler had turned 2 on his March 20 birthday, and his mother cooked all of his favorites – steak, shrimp and strawberry shortcake, topped with two candles.

“Alex was my miracle baby,” said his mother, Jennifer Young, who remembers going through a bad time in her life when her youngest son was born. “Alex pushed me to work harder in getting my life together and focus to be a better mother.”

Alex loved watching cartoons on TV; wrestling with the family dog, Karma, a 90-pound chocolate lab; playing outside while toting around his favorite

companion, Stitch, an alien dog from the Disney movie “Lilo and Stitch.”

He especially loved following around his older brother, Brice, 8.

No one could have predicted what happened to the Ladson toddler on Memorial Day weekend – when he was brought into the Pediatric Emergency Department at MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children’s Hospital. It was the night of May 23.

Jennifer was at work that day and received a frantic call from her son’s babysitter, informing her that Alex was in a pool accident. She advised her to rush downtown to the hospital. Nothing could have prepared Jennifer for the shock and disbelief she experienced when doctors told her that Alex was a drowning victim, and his prognosis was grave.

*See DONOR on page 10*

## Low COVID growth rate in latest Tri-county update – but high risk ahead

BY HELEN ADAMS

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The Tri-county area’s COVID-19 growth rate is relatively low as we head into a high-risk period.

In fact, the latest update from the MUSC COVID-19 Epidemiology Intelligence Team shows the number of reported infections in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties was 588 in the most recent week it tracked. The week before, it was 601. Visit the MUSC COVID-19 Epidemiology Intelligence Project at <https://web.musc.edu/coronavirus-updates/epidemiology-project>.

But don’t plan a Thanksgiving toast about that just yet, says the tracking project’s leader. “I can’t tell you how strongly I worry about the holidays,” said Michael Sweat, Ph.D.

“You tend to focus on what’s around you, and we are really doing fairly well here. But you know, the whole country was doing relatively well until the cold weather started.”

National reports bear that out. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s COVID Data Tracker [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases\\_casesinlast7days](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesinlast7days) showed more than 1 million cases during the week that ended Nov. 15.

“We face the risk of this national problem



**Sweat**

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Make a positive difference.

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continuing to leak into our state,” Sweat said, pointing to a rise in cases in cooler parts of South Carolina. Why might cooling weather cause COVID to spread? Sweat said social distancing doesn’t work as well in an enclosed space, and lower humidity becomes a problem, too. “Dry air seems to facilitate transmission of the virus – it makes it more stable. In the winter, people run heaters, which keeps the air dryer.”

Sweat discourages people from getting together with friends and family outside of their immediate circle. But if they do, he encourages them to try to minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19. He recommends that people check out the CDC’s guidelines for holiday celebrations at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html> which include:

- Checking to see how high the spread of COVID-19 is at their destinations, if they’re traveling. Factor that into decision-making.
- Keeping the time spent around others to a minimum. Shorter events are less risky than longer ones.
- Wearing a mask, even when you’re with family, if you aren’t normally around them.
- Celebrating outside when possible.
- Opening windows and doors to let more air circulate if you can.
- Avoiding singing or talking loudly.
- Washing your hands often and keeping hand sanitizer at the ready.

Sweat said it’s also a good idea to get tested for COVID-19 before Thanksgiving and after. Sweat directs the MUSC Center for Global Health and is hosting holiday testing events to try to get as many people as possible tested before they mingle with others. MUSC Health also has free COVID-19 mobile testing sites around the state, and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control offers free testing, too.

Sweat was thrilled to see news over the past several days about the coronavirus vaccines made by Pfizer



*Photo Illustration by Adam Niescioruk via Unsplash*

**Masks will mingle with fall’s biggest holiday celebration, Thanksgiving, as people try to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at gatherings.**

and Moderna that appear to be highly effective. “As Dr. Anthony Fauci said, the cavalry is coming – we have vaccines on the way. But it’s not going to come overnight.”

He warned against what he called risk optimism. “There is some concern that people will have this optimism about the positive vaccine news that will get in the way of them protecting themselves and their families in the interim. This virus can spread like wildfire.”

Sweat said the Tri-county area might be able to avoid a surge if people stick with experts’ recommendations.

“I’ve been reading some of the reports that say labs like Quest and LabCorp right now have really good turnaround times on their testing. But they’re worried they’re going to start having much longer turnaround times because they’re getting to capacity. So many people are being tested in the hot spots.”

Sweat said people in the Lowcountry have been relatively lucky – so far. “It’s scary to watch this ready to spill in our direction, you know? People need to come up with a plan and stick with it through the end of the pandemic.”

**MUSC**

CATALYST  
news

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**1. Lather away.**

- back of your hands
- between fingers
- under the nails

**2. Scrub.**

- Count to 20.

**3. Rinse well.**

**4. Dry completely.**

- using a clean paper towel or an air dryer.

MUSC Libraries

MUSC  
Medical University of South Carolina  
Advancing World's Health



Letter from the  
Office of the

# PROVOST

Dear MUSC staff,

As we prepare for Thanksgiving, we must all work to ensure that we don't contribute to the spread of COVID-19 amongst our family and friends during Thanksgiving and amongst our MUSC family when we return. This provides you with the details of COVID-19 testing before and after Thanksgiving. If you do plan on spending the upcoming holiday with friends and family outside your current immediate household, we strongly encourage you to take the following necessary steps to make any celebration safer and reduce the risk of getting or spreading COVID-19:



Saladin

1. Get pre- and post-Thanksgiving COVID-19 tested.
2. Stay outside as much as possible.
3. Socially distance at 3 to 6 feet at all times.
4. Frequent hand hygiene.
5. Wear masks when you cannot socially distance.
6. For the most vulnerable, take extra precautions such as limiting the number of people who serve food, or donning gloves while handling food.

## MUSC COVID-19 testing

We have arranged on-campus pre-Thanksgiving COVID-19 testing for Monday, Nov. 23 and a post-test for Wednesday, Dec. 2 and Thursday, Dec. 3. This high-sensitivity, nasopharyngeal swab test is available for everyone, including those who are asymptomatic. You may bring family members to this event to get tested. THERE IS NO COST for anyone. Those who have any type of insurance will be asked for insurance information, and your insurance will be billed. Those without insurance will not be charged. Below are the facts related to this testing.

## Testing Hours

- ☐ 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., Monday, Nov. 23
- ☐ 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 2 and Thursday, Dec. 3

## Location

In front of the MUSC Drug Discovery Building on MUSC Campus in the large space between Drug Discovery, Bioengineering and the Colbert Library building. You won't miss it as there will be a large registration tent set up outside. \*See above right photo for reference.

## Scheduling and Appointments

- ☐ No appointment needed.
- ☐ Individuals will walk up to a registration tent at this location.
- ☐ The layout of the site will allow for social distancing for people waiting in line.
- ☐ Note that drive-up options will not be available at this location.
- ☐ Registration staff will be on site to facilitate the registration of all individuals.
- ☐ Individual demographic information and insurance (if applicable) will be collected.
- ☐ Please bring a government form of ID (e.g. driver's license) to assist with accurate and efficient registration process. Note: Student/employee ID's are not sufficient.

## Results

- ☐ Individuals will receive their results via MyChart, email, text and/or phone call.
- ☐ Instructions for registering for MyChart will be provided if individuals do not yet

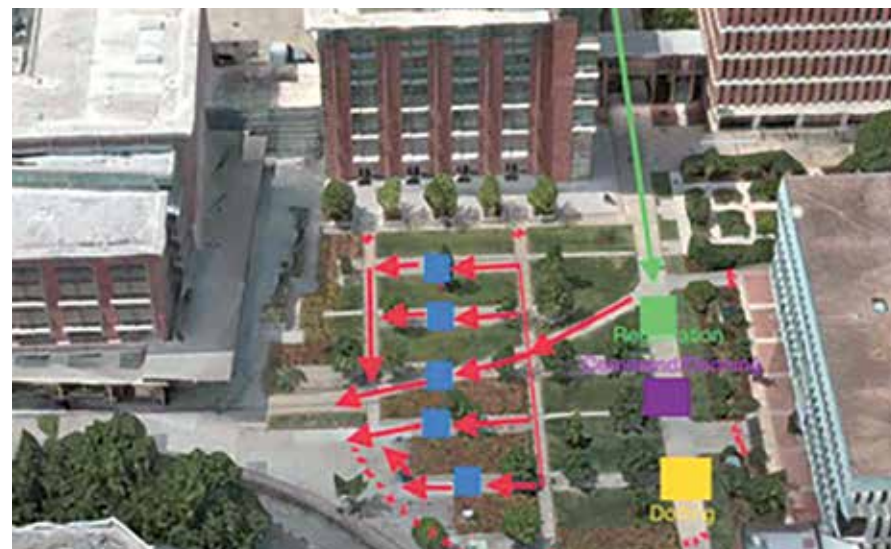


Image Provided

**MUSC Health organizers will set up an on-campus pre-and post-Thanksgiving COVID-19 test site beginning at 8 a.m., Nov. 23, at the designated area in front of the Drug Discovery Building. Participants can enter through a registration tent and will be guided to several testing pod locations. The test is available to anyone. Masks are required and social distancing precautions will be in place.**

have a MyChart account.

- ☐ Expected turnaround time 24-36 hours.

The registration tent is in green in the above diagram.

## Alternative dates and locations

For those who will be leaving prior to Monday or who can't make the Monday hours, you may choose to use the MUSC virtual care platform by going to: <https://campaigns.muschealth.org/virtual-care/index.html>. You will need to create an account and start a virtual care visit. During this process, please note that your request for COVID-19 testing is for travel purposes. You will be able to book an appointment at any of the available MUSC testing sites most of which are off campus and are drive through. Please note that we are offering pre- and post-Thanksgiving testing at our other sites to the whole Charleston community, and these sites might get booked up soon. Therefore, please book early to ensure you can get an appointment.

We look forward to the opportunity to provide on-campus testing services to our MUSC faculty, staff and students. Thank you for helping stop the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Lisa K. Saladin, PT, Ph.D.

MUSC executive vice president for Academic Affairs and provost  
James W. Colbert Endowed Chair

# MUSC asks community for support on Giving Tuesday, Dec. 1

By LESLIE CANTU

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As South Carolinians prepare to give thanks this Thanksgiving and then begin the traditional holiday shopping season, MUSC is asking people to contribute to its three-pronged mission of teaching, research and healing.

Giving Tuesday, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, has become a popular movement since it was started in 2012 as a day of generosity — whether that generosity takes the form of “showing up for an issue,” helping someone or making a financial donation, according to the Giving Tuesday website.

Nearly everyone is touched by health issues — either their own or a loved one’s — at some point in their lives. Thus, nearly everyone can relate to some aspect of MUSC’s mission, whether it’s cancer research, stroke recovery support, cardiac care or educating the next generation of health care professionals. And on this Giving Tuesday, people can direct their contributions to the area dearest to them.

Still, in this difficult year of 2020, MUSC recognizes that some people who might like to support its mission



Image Provided

There are multiple ways to show support for MUSC’s three-part mission of teaching, research and healing during this year’s Giving Tuesday.

**For information on Giving Tuesday, visit [Giving@  
musc.edu/tuesday](https://giving@musc.edu/tuesday)**

can’t make a financial contribution. Thus, there are three ways that someone can participate on Dec. 1 — by making a contribution, by holding a Facebook fundraiser or by being an ambassador.

Although all three roles have existed in past Giving Tuesdays at MUSC, this year MUSC is offering expanded support for the ambassador and fundraiser roles, including graphics that can be shared across social media and a step-by-step guide for fundraising.

Ambassadors share as much as they’re willing of their personal stories about why MUSC is important to them — whether because of life-saving care they received or because they studied or work here. Fundraisers ask family and friends to give what they can to the area that means the most to them.

The upcoming Giving Tuesday is actually the second of the year, after nonprofit groups around the world held

an emergency Giving Tuesday in the spring in response to the financial strains from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The last time we had Giving Tuesday was in May, just a couple of months after COVID-19 hit the area,” said Kate Azizi, vice president for institutional advancement. “At the time, we were not sure how successful it would be. There was so much uncertainty about so many other things.”

As it turned out, the community donated more than \$110,000 to MUSC that day, more than any other Giving Tuesday. Most of the money received that day is supporting testing and other COVID response efforts at MUSC.

“I think people saw Giving Tuesday as a way to regain some control over a situation that seemed pretty out of control at the time,” Azizi said. She said that proceeds from this Giving Tuesday also will be used to help MUSC’s six colleges and its health system recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19.

Overall, less than 4% of MUSC’s budget comes from state funds. Philanthropy plays an important role in enabling MUSC to continue to excel in education, research and health care.

**Employee Engagement Panel**  
Join us to pick up some new tips, ideas, and best practices for creating and sustaining a great work environment.

When: Tuesday, Dec. 1, 12:00-1:00pm  
Where: MS Teams (virtual)

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

**Panelists include:**

- Dr. Andrew Azz, Chair, Department of Pediatrics, College of Medicine
- Dr. Mark Bowden, Director, Division of Physical Therapy, College of Health Professions
- Dr. Willette Burnham-Williams, Chief, MUSC Office of Equity
- Ms. Jackie Carter, Manager, Talent Acquisition
- Ms. Ann Lefebvre, Executive Director, SC Area Health Education Consortium (AHEC)
- Ms. Robin Smith, Supervisor, Grounds Department

This panel event aims to provide additional support for institutions by featuring a discussion with university leaders who have achieved some of the highest engagement scores in the organization. This event will place a special focus on the items that are most critical to the "Team Index," "Tiger Score" and the "Leader Index" Score.

This event is sponsored by the Office of the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Office of the Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration.



## MEET KIM



Kim Seymour-Edwards

**Department; Years at MUSC**

Biomedical Informatics Center; 30 years

**How are you changing what's possible at MUSC**

*By doing my best at my job every day to contribute to research, education and daily administrative duties that are entrusted to me*

**Family and their names**

Husband, Randy; daughters, Peyton, 24, and Skyler, 17; parents, Hazel and Francine Seymour; and grandmother, Julia Mikell

**Who was MUSC president when you started**

Dr. James B. Edwards

**What contributions are you most proud of**  
*I'm so very proud to be a part of an institution that is nationally and internationally known for its progress and successes in medical research and innovation. I'm blessed to have been part of MUSC's Hypertension Initiative (Dr. Brent Egan) to improve cardiovascular health in the state. Today, I'm even more enthusiastic to be part of the Biomedical Informatics Center team and the cutting edge work they do in medical informatics. Mostly, I'm grateful to all. It's been a long ride, but worth every moment.*

## ANGEL TREE DONATIONS



2020 WE'VE  
GONE VIRTUAL!

Thank you for choosing to "adopt" a needy child this holiday season. Virtual adoption is also now available - <https://bit.ly/3p4NMxG>. We hope our sponsors will donate the following items for EACH Angel (new and unused) -

\*2-3 gifts/toys of your choice that are age appropriate.

\*Consider using the Angels wish/need list items located on the Angel tag.

**HOW TO PACK YOUR ANGEL TREE DONATIONS -**

\*use the provided clear bags for your donations

\*DO NOT wrap gifts for security measures

\*separate bags should be used for each Angel adopted

\*be sure to place the Angel tag with the Angels unique numeric code inside the bag provided, facing outwards

\*items too large to fit into the provided bag (ex. bike) please label it with the unique Angel code found on the Angel tag.

\*Return the Angel donations by the due date listed on the tag. Donations can be brought to the MUSC Lobbies (11/30-12/4), the MUSC Horseshoe Drive-thru on December 4th (10 AM - 1 PM), or dropped off any time at the Salvation Army, or N. Charleston Convention Center - Hall C (after Dec. 14th).

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Melissa Kuba 843-985-1020 fullmer@musc.edu



Changing What's Possible

## SHIFA CLINIC DONATIONS

The pledge class of Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity is raising money for the Shifa Clinic, which is a free medical clinic for the underserved. Money raised will go towards meals and supplies for the patients who attend this clinic. If you are interested in donating, you can venmo



Students in the College of Pharmacy are raising money on behalf of the Shifa Clinic, a free medical clinic for the underserved. Donations will support meals and supplies for patients of the clinic. Venmo donations to @Angeleki-Zecopoulos. Thank You!

Great Christmas Present!

## CMD Greenway 2020 Poinsettia Sale

Benefitting the Charleston Medical District

11AM- 2PM MWF | November 9th - December 18th

**6 inch Poinsettia**

**\$12**

red, cream, and pink available

**8 inch Poinsettia**

**\$20**

red, cream, and pink available

Website to order: <https://bit.ly/3jjbLy0>

- A custom text field is provided for customers purchasing multiple poinsettias.
- Sign up here to volunteer: <https://bit.ly/3p2yog>
- Locally grown in SC
- Drive by pickup option available for online orders at Doughty and Ehrhardt - Call volunteer cell number that will be provided and flowers will be delivered to your car
- Email Greenway coordinator with any questions at [coordinator@charlestonmedicaldistrict.com](mailto:coordinator@charlestonmedicaldistrict.com)

Order early, quantity is limited! Pickup starting Nov. 10th.

## CKBakes4U

Chakeria Heyward

843-534-8670

<https://ckbakes4u.wixsite.com/ckbakes>

[Facebook.com/ckbakes](https://facebook.com/ckbakes)

- Seafood Pies
- Dessert Pies
- Pound Cakes (various flavors)
- Cookie Cakes
- Carrot Cake
- Pineapple Upside Down Cake
- Cupcakes
- Chewies
- Brownies
- Banana Creamed Banana Pudding





# Mother, daughter recover from COVID-19, make experience count

By KIMBERLY MCGHEE  
mcgheek@musc.edu

Back in March, when Lucy Krasker was finishing up her final year at the University of Virginia, she began experiencing what she thought were allergy symptoms as she does each year. But when she lost her sense of smell, she decided to be tested for COVID-19. When her test came back positive, her family also went in for testing, and her mother, Amy Krasker, also tested positive.

“It’s an indelible memory for the two of us – having spent such a weird anomaly in time,” said Amy Krasker. “And we were very, very fortunate that we had such mild cases.”

Once she recovered, Lucy knew she wanted to find a way to help to advance research into the disease.

“I think in an age where the world is really scared right now, we have to trust in each other and fight for learning,” she said. “I’m for learning as much as we can to prevent something like this happening again in the future. I’d hate for the next generation to have to go through this.”

Lucy expressed her desire to engage in research to Meredith Hayden, M.D., associate executive director of student health at the University of Virginia.

“As a smart and engaged fourth-year UVA student, Lucy was very interested in becoming involved in COVID-related research to benefit public health,” said Hayden. “Since she was living in the Charleston area at the time, I recommended that she reach out to MUSC, my alma mater, to see if there were opportunities available.”

Amy Krasker, who also lives in Charleston, felt compelled to join her daughter in finding a way to contribute to the knowledge base about COVID-19.

“We had light cases, and so we felt we needed to do something for the people who perhaps had more severe disease or who had lost family members,” she said. “We were lucky and so, because of that, we were especially compelled to participate.”

Lucy and Amy took Hayden’s advice and looked for opportunities to engage in research at MUSC. When they saw a news story about the MUSC COVID-19 biorepository, they reached out to Patrick Flume, M.D., about contributing. Flume directs the biorepository and is co-principal investigator of the South Carolina



*Photo by Sarah Pack*

**Dr. Patrick Flume, right, director of the COVID-19 Biorepository, in discussion with a colleague.**



**Lucy Krasker and her mother Amy donated to the COVID-19 biorepository.**

*Photo Provided*

Clinical & Translational Research (SCTR) Institute. The biorepository, housed in the SCTR-funded Research Nexus laboratory, is a collection of patient blood and saliva samples that researchers across the state and nation can study to learn more about the virus once they have obtained the necessary approvals. Since it opened in April, the biorepository has enrolled 144 unique patients, collected 6,586 aliquoted – or portioned – samples and supported 12 investigator-led research projects, including two at Clemson.

“The biorepository is a resource needed to perform research on important questions on how we respond to SARS CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19,” said Flume. “How do we form antibodies or mount a T-cell response? What happens in an inflammatory response to infection? Answering these questions will be important not only for diagnostic testing – the measurement of antibodies – but also for

understanding best vaccine development – in other words, what is the most effective immune response to the infection.”

Lucy and Amy were especially excited to contribute samples to the biorepository because they knew that this gift would bear exponential returns for research. They knew that each of their samples would be divided into 20 aliquots, each of which could be used by a research team now or at some time in the future.

“The fact that this was a databank of samples that could be used not only now but in years to come – there was something attractive about it,” said Amy. “That just made it even more of a compelling reason to participate.”

And the process for donating couldn’t have been simpler, she said. She quickly and safely made her donation at a special clinic in the SCTR-funded

# Angel Tree program adapts to pandemic as Lowcountry families need holiday help

By HELEN ADAMS

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The coronavirus pandemic has led to a big increase in the number of Lowcountry children whose families are struggling and need holiday help through the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program. There were about 2,000 angels, or kids in need, in 2019. This year, the total is closer to 3,000.

So the program's biggest contributor in the Charleston area, MUSC, is taking on more angels than ever before — more than 2,000 — to help make up the difference. It's asking employees, who are able, to choose an angel and buy at least some of the items requested so parents will have gifts to give their kids during the holidays.

And MUSC volunteer services coordinator Melissa Kubu said the increase isn't the only change. "This is the first year we're going virtual."

Normally, the Salvation Army prints out a card for each child whose parents have asked to be included in the Angel Tree program. The cards go to MUSC and other organizations that agree to help out, where they're hung on trees for people to pick up. Each card lists a child's first name, age and gift requests.

That will still happen this year. But

since the pandemic has pushed a lot of people into remote working, most of the angels will be featured online. Salvation Army Captain Mike Michels thanked Kubu for suggesting that. "This year is a different year, and we have had to rethink a lot of things. The MUSC family has helped us reimagine what an Angel Tree can look like."

Michels made those remarks in front of a living Angel Tree on the Calhoun Street side of the new MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital, just before flipping a switch to light it. The eastern red cedar was planted for that purpose — to be lit during the holidays.

It's visible not only to drivers passing by but also to children staying in the hospital. Some of them can see it from their windows. And kids who couldn't see the tree lighting in person were able to watch a camera feed in their room through the hospital's GetWellNetwork.

While the Angel Tree lighting was a reminder that the holidays are just around the corner, MUSC President David Cole, M.D., said this is clearly not an average holiday season. "Let's be honest — 2020 is likely not going to hit the history books as the best year ever. And as everyone knows, we're not yet out of the woods," he said.

"But in the days ahead, I know we



*Photos by Sarah Pack*

**Dr. Mark Scheurer, chief medical officer of MUSC Children's Hospital, right, watches as the Angel Tree lights up. He called it a wonderful chance to talk about giving the gift of kindness to others.**



**Dr. Mark Scheurer, left, and Dr. David Cole at the first Angel Tree lighting ceremony in front of the new MUSC Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital. The tree is visible to patients and to people driving by on Calhoun Street.**

can count on the MUSC family to come together. And once again, we want to ensure that children throughout the Lowcountry receive something they want or need during the holiday season. We light the tree and do what we can to continue to shine the light into our community."

David Zaas, M.D., chief executive officer for MUSC Health's Charleston Division and chief clinical officer for MUSC Health, said 2020 has been the most challenging year that many people can remember. "I think it makes this holiday season even more important that we appreciate each other and how fortunate we are for the families, the college, the teams that we get to work with every day."

MUSC has worked with the Salvation Army to make holidays a little happier for Lowcountry kids for almost 20 years. Kubu said she believes MUSC will be able to accommodate the increased demand this year. "It's beautiful to see how much MUSC works together to make this happen, see the happiness that it brings within departments. I think that that's one thing that we think about — how the teams come together to support angels and support children in the community."

You don't have to work for MUSC or another organization participating in the Angel Tree program to take part. To find a child or children to help, visit <https://www.tsamm.org/angeltree/adopt>.

**Salvation Army Captain Mike Michels, left, presents the first Angel Tree tag of the season to MUSC Health's Dr. David Zaas. To adopt an angel, visit <https://www.tsamm.org/angeltree/adopt>.**





# From court side to classroom, MUSC Health has Cougars covered on, off fields of play

By Bryce Donovan

donovanb@musc.edu

If Clyde the Cougar stubs a paw, MUSC Health now has the College of Charleston mascot covered.

The two institutions recently inked a deal putting MUSC Health on the front lines of sports medicine for the 250 year-old college. From men's basketball to women's volleyball, if there's an injury to any student athlete on or off the court, they will get the best care



Leddy

available in the state.

"It's a tremendous honor. Exciting is the right word. Our team looks forward to being able to deliver and elevate the level of care that their student body and student athletes can realize," said Lee Leddy, M.D., MUSC Department of Orthopaedics and Physical Medicine chair and chief of the Musculoskeletal Integrated Center of Clinical Excellence. "It's a real privilege and one that MUSC is uniquely well positioned to provide."

For the better part of a year and a half, Leddy said, MUSC Health's Sports Medicine Team has been providing training room service to the Cougars. But an opportunity came along to expand that relationship, and that's exactly what they've done.

The deal adds to an already impressive portfolio of MUSC Health partnerships,



Photo by Sarah Pack

**Dr. Harris Slone is part of the new team at MUSC Health that will look after all the College of Charleston Cougars.**

*"They have an outstanding group of trainers and a deep commitment to their athletes, and we are truly honored that MUSC will have the opportunity to have an even greater impact."*

Lee Leddy, M.D.

greater impact."

This relationship will be comprehensive and multidisciplinary, Leddy said, not just focused on sprained ankles and torn ligaments, but concussion management, mental health, nutrition and even primary care.

Leddy, a former collegiate basketball player at Emory University, will be joined by three fellowship trained orthopaedic surgeons, Shane Woolf, M.D.; Harris Slone, M.D.; and Josef Eichinger, M.D., who will provide orthopaedic coverage. Program support will be handled by MUSC Health physical therapist and sports medicine manager Mike Barr. Primary care coverage will continue to be provided to student athletes by MUSC Health fellowship-trained primary care sports medicine physicians Alec DeCastro, M.D.; Libby Winton, M.D.; and Louis Gerena, M.D.

"This collaboration is really about the comprehensive nature of the program that MUSC has developed, which will provide the College of Charleston students and student-athletes convenient access to nationally recognized experts," Leddy said.

which includes providing care for all of the region's professional teams: the Charleston Battery, Charleston RiverDogs, S.C. Stingrays, tennis players at the Volvo Car Open and many other area high schools, as well as providing coverage for special events throughout the Lowcountry.

"I really think the College was impressed with the level of care provided in the training room," Leddy said. "They have an outstanding group of trainers and a deep commitment to their athletes, and we are truly honored that MUSC will have the opportunity to have an even

## The Perfect Angel



### Angel Clothes & Toy Donation Guidelines

Thank you for choosing to "adopt" a child in need for this holiday season. We hope these guidelines will answer your questions about what to buy for the Angel and how to package the donation for return to the Salvation Army. Again, thank you for your support to help Lowcountry Children have a Merry Christmas.

**We ask Adopters to donate for EACH Angel: NEW and/or UNUSED ITEMS**



**Pants + Shirt + \*Shoes = Outfit**

- ✓ 2/3 Gifts or Toys of your choice that are age appropriate
- ✓ Consider using the Angel's need/wish/favorite character list located on the Angel Tag
- ✓ Provide at least 1 outfit (shirt, pant and \*shoes) (\*if possible)
- ✓ Coat, Socks, Pajamas, Hats, Gloves, and Undergarments are also good gifts for your Angel.

#### How to pack your Angel Tree Donations:

- Please use a large plastic bag for your donations; Separate bags should be used for each individual Angel adopted.
- Please, NO GIFT CARDS or CASH. (Online Game playing cards can be accepted (ie XBOX Live Card Codes)
- Please DO NOT WRAP gifts. We unwrap all gifts as a matter of safety and security.
- Be sure to place the printed Angel Tag with the Angel's unique numeric ID inside the bag, if possible please ALSO securely place a label on the outside of the bag (tape an index card, post-it note or small paper label)
- If you purchase an item that is too large to fit in the provided clear bag, please label the item with the unique Angel ID.
- Please **return Angel donations:**
  - MUSC Lobby ART, Main or Shawn Jenkins Nov 30-Dec 4
  - MUSC Horseshoe Pick-up is Dec 4<sup>th</sup> 10AM-1PM
  - The Salvation Army Locations November (9:00 AM - 4:30 PM) Nov 30 - Dec 13
  - North Charleston Coliseum Exhibit C from (9:00AM-6:00PM) NLT December 14-16.

For More Information, please call 843.747.5271

The Salvation Army of Charleston Locations

6209 Rivers Avenue, N. Charleston SC 29406 | 2135 Ashley River Road, Charleston SC 29407



# Lung transplant patient gave up much to finally fish with grandkids

BY HELEN ADAMS

adamshel@musc.edu

Louis Besse can't wait to do something he's wanted to do for years but couldn't because he was tethered to an oxygen tank. "I want to take my grandchildren fishing. They've got a pond near their house in Lancaster. And I've never been back here. Literally, I just couldn't make it."

It took a major operation, a 40-pound weight loss and a ban on his beloved beer, but he's now able to look forward to casting a line with his 11 and 16-year-old grandkids.

Besse recently became the 100th lung transplant patient at MUSC Health, which relaunched the program in 2011. Medical Director Timothy Whelan, M.D., called the milestone a great reason to celebrate. "It's 100 second chances. That's a big accomplishment."

When Besse developed a bad cough several years ago, neither he nor his doctor connected it to his work as a chicken inspector for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Batesburg, South Carolina, west of Columbia. As he saw expert after expert, he got worse and worse. "I'd say five, six years ago, I wasn't getting enough oxygen to talk and walk at the same time."

A doctor referred Besse to Whelan at MUSC Health, which has the state's only transplant center and nationally recognized pulmonary fibrosis center. Whelan diagnosed Besse with chronic hypersensitivity pneumonitis. "It's also known as bird fancier's disease. Just a daily exposure to the chicken dust," Besse said.

"Sometimes during the day, I'd have to go into what they call live hang. That's where the chickens come off of the trucks and they hang them onto the line to go into the building. While I was in there, you could see the sunbeams coming through the holes in the wall, and the dust was so thick you could cut it. It's the feather dust, the feces dust."

Now that he had his answer about what had made him so sick, Besse began to think about getting a lung transplant. He'd have to drop from 250 pounds to just over 200 to improve his odds of success.

"And that's not the only thing I had to sacrifice. I had to give up my beer," Besse said.

He knew his chance of getting a transplant through MUSC Health was good. Whelan told him about the program's track record. "When we look at the data, at MUSC, if you're on the list for one year, you have a 97%-plus chance you will get your lung transplant. If you're at other programs, it's as low as a 50% chance," Whelan said.

And the medical director said the program's success rate is strong, too. "If you look at the cohort of 100, it's an 86% one-year survival rate, which is right in



*Photos by Emma Vought*

**Double lung transplant recipient Louis Besse of Batesburg, South Carolina, gets a breathing treatment as he recovers from surgery.**



**Lung transplant recipient Clarence Pitts traveled from Watkinsville, Georgia, for surgery at MUSC Health in Charleston after meeting Dr. Timothy Whelan at a satellite transplant clinic in Greenville, South Carolina.**

there with the national average. For programs with low transplant rates within one year, you may never get the chance. MUSC is committed to giving its patients that second chance."

Besse's time on the list led to a double lung transplant at MUSC Health, and he immediately felt better. "I can definitely tell the difference."

Besse didn't know it, but another grandfather who loves fishing was about to become the 101st lung

transplant recipient at MUSC Health. Whelan said the program has been growing, increasing from about 12 lung transplants a year to 20 during the past 12 months. "Lung transplant growth for MUSC is a short-term goal to support the residents of South Carolina and the surrounding region."

The 101st recipient was Clarence Pitts, a construction project manager from the Athens, Georgia, area. He had idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, lung disease from an unknown cause. But he knew one thing. "I found out I had a great-grandbaby coming."

Pitts wanted to see that child grow up a little. He talked to a transplant center in Georgia but ended up choosing MUSC Health because it felt more comfortable to him. Whelan, the transplant pulmonologist, traveled to MUSC Health's transplant clinic in Greenville, South Carolina, less than two hours from Pitts' home, to meet with Pitts and his son.

"I'm pretty blunt and asked some pretty strong questions," Pitts said. "Dr. Whelan spent a long time with us, an hour or more. He was great."

Pitts had a bilateral lung transplant, and soon after, was sitting up and talking. Both he and Besse expressed gratitude to the donors and their families.

Whelan said it was rewarding to see their success. "There's nothing cooler than seeing someone go from a lot of extra oxygen to no extra oxygen overnight. It's amazing."



**DONOR** *Continued from Page One*

Alex was soon placed on life support, allowing the family to arrive and Jennifer to plan her next steps.

Elizabeth Emrath, M.D., was one of the doctors on the team caring for Alex from the time he was admitted to the hospital. Emrath evaluated Alex's condition and conducted tests to assess his brain function. She later spoke to Jennifer about his diagnosis and discussed end-of-life care options, including organ donation.

For Jennifer, the decision wasn't easy. Processing the news of Alex's critical condition along with having to make end-of-life decisions all at once was stressful, confusing and scary for her. Jennifer's father had just died 13 months earlier, and here she was struggling to accept the reality of now losing her baby boy.

Jennifer knew a little about pediatric organ donation. She supported a close friend who had lost her baby to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and made the "gift of life" choice of organ and tissue donation.

According to Kristine Neal, communications director for We Are Sharing Hope SC, children as well as adults can become organ and tissue donors. When a pediatric patient progress to brain death, or a parent or family member makes the decision for mechanical support to be withdrawn, it is then a child can become a donor "hero."

"Most of the time, families are unaware of organ donation," said Emrath. "We provide some guidance as to what's happening to the patient: What are the concerns of the medical team and the patient's prognosis and outcome. If a family asks about organ donation, we guide that conversation and steer that transition to the We Are Sharing Hope SC team for better insight and detailed information."

We Are Sharing Hope SC is South Carolina's federally designated organ and tissue recovery service. It provides organ and tissue donor services to more than 80 hospitals throughout the state.

A We Are Sharing Hope SC family support counselor was assigned to

Jennifer and her family. That person worked with Emrath and MUSC's multidisciplinary care team of nurses, medical specialists, technicians and social workers to answer questions and serve as a resource for the family. More importantly, she helped Jennifer make informed decisions about Alex.

On the second day, Jennifer completed the paperwork to initiate the organ and tissue donation process that would make Alex a donor hero to three waiting recipients. Alex's heart was donated to a pediatric patient in Ohio and his kidneys went to two adult patients in North Carolina. Alex also made history as the children's hospital's first organ and tissue donor since the facility opened its doors on Feb. 22.

To help Jennifer and her family begin the grieving process, MUSC Children's Health teams provided compassionate support to them. At times like this, it is the role of Child Life Services, Pastoral Care Services and the Palliative Care team to work with We Are Sharing Hope SC staff to help family members begin to cope with the loss of their loved ones, providing grief counseling and offering ideas such as creating special personal memory items like footprints and hand molds or keeping locks of hair, to memorialize them.

According to Emrath, the children's hospital has also established a new bereavement team whereby a child life specialist checks in on families every few months. The feedback from families so far is that the service is valuable and most appreciated.

"Unfortunately, we see this more than we ever want to in the hospital," said Emrath. "I wish every child that comes into our unit got better, and I could make them better. But we can't. This is something that we can do for patient families that I think they'll really appreciate and remember."

Jennifer still struggles with the pain of loss. "I've got to focus on the good and not the bad," she said, reflecting on the past six months. "It's still very hard for me."

On Sept. 12, several of Jennifer's friends organized a memorial bike ride in honor of Alex. They named it #foreverahero. Nearly 55 motorcycle participants rode to five different



*Photo Provided*

**Jennifer Young with sons, Brice, left, and Alex Young.**

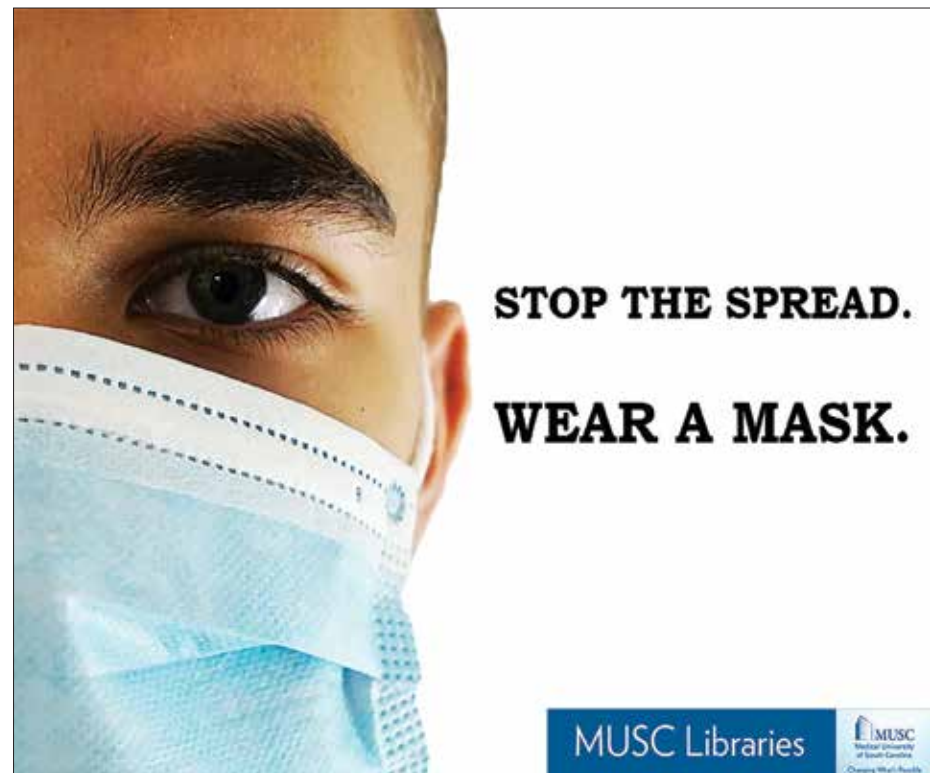
Lowcountry establishments in the Ladson, Goose Creek, Ridgeville and Eutawville areas — riding about 100 miles in all. They gathered donated items, held an auction and collected proceeds and donations to help to pay for Alex's funeral expenses.

The group plans an even larger bike ride event in 2021 around Alex's birthday. They plan to team up with the children's hospital's ICU team, We Are Sharing Hope SC and others in

the community to host an organ and tissue donor registration drive, with proceeds going to the organ procurement organization.

For now, Jennifer focuses on Bryce and her family and managing her way through this tough and personal family loss. She hopes Alex's legacy will live on in the people and families whose lives were changed through organ donation.

"I believe Alex was put on this Earth to save people. And he has," she said.





# MUSC study to address post-COVID neurological, psychiatric symptoms using at-home format

By AMANDA LAWSON

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New studies show that COVID can affect patients during two distinct phases of the disease process: the acute stage, characterized by fever, heart or lung problems, and the post-COVID phase, in which neuropsychiatric symptoms, like fatigue, anxiety and depression, can occur.

NeuroCOVID, as the second phase is called, is characterized by one or a combination of symptoms like vertigo, loss of smell, headaches, fatigue and irritability as well as anxiety and depression. One in five COVID patients will develop these symptoms – a much higher rate than in patients with the flu or a lung infection.

This finding drew the attention of Mark George, M.D., a world expert in brain stimulation and depression and professor of psychiatry, radiology and neuroscience; Bashar Badran, Ph.D., a leading researcher in the field of vagus nerve stimulation therapy and assistant professor in the College of Medicine; and Steve Kautz, Ph.D., professor and director of the Center of Biomedical Research Excellence in Stroke Recovery (COBRE).

The trio of researchers works closely together with the National Center for Neuromodulation for Rehabilitation Research and the stroke recovery COBRE, both housed at the MUSC College of Health Professions, studying brain stimulation.

George, Badran and Kautz received funding from the National Institutes of Health-funded Delaware Clinical and Translational Research Program to address neuroCOVID symptoms in patients. Their study, set to begin in late November, will use a revolutionary noninvasive technique to stimulate the vagus nerve and reduce inflammation in 20 participants who report having neuroCOVID symptoms.

By reducing inflammation, which is known to cause a host of problems in the body, the team hopes some or all of the symptoms that participants are experiencing will subside.

“When your body tries to fight off COVID, there’s sometimes an inflammatory cascade that can kick in, almost like when you’ve touched poison ivy, and there’s an inflammatory response on your skin that keeps going and spreading,” said George. “A lot of people feel that the inflammation is what’s causing those symptoms to occur post-COVID. If we can reduce inflammation, we have a chance of reducing that.”

Probably the most innovative part of the study is the way it’s conducted with participants. For years, stimulating the vagus nerve to reduce inflammation has required an invasive in-office procedure. Using new technologies, pioneered and largely developed by Badran, the group has found a way to stimulate the same nerve using electrical impulses delivered through an earbud that patients can insert on their own, without leaving home.

“When we first began learning more about neuroCOVID, and we began thinking about using this noninvasive technique to stimulate that vagus nerve, we also thought, ‘What if we created a kit to see if people could do this totally at home?’” George said. “We don’t know if inflammation is the cause of all of these symptoms, but we won’t know if we don’t stimulate that vagus nerve. We’re casting a broad net to see what will help. Either way, this is a new page in how we treat people and address rehab and recovery from COVID.”

The study, which is entirely voluntary, is open to patients of any age or health background who have experienced neuroCOVID symptoms. All reporting and treatments are done online with no in-person visits. Patients receive a kit with tablets for video conferencing, an



*Photo Provided*

**Staff member Sarah Huffman demonstrates how study participants will use a briefcase containing a stimulating device and tablets to communicate with researchers and record ratings and vital signs.**

ear stimulator and tools to send blood pressure, pulse and oxygen saturation levels to researchers in real time.

“We talk to patients on the phone. We Zoom or conference with them, conduct informed consent over video and then, we send them all the materials they need at home,” said George. “This is all new and novel, and if it works,

we’re not only addressing neuroCOVID symptoms; we’re exploring a new way to do medicine and rehab. Having people receive their treatments at home, under doctors’ supervision, is so much better in this age of COVID.”

For information, contact Sarah Huffman at (843) 792-8672 or email [huffmans@musc.edu](mailto:huffmans@musc.edu).

## RESEARCH *Continued from Page Six*

Nexus Research Center on the MUSC campus. At the initial visit, she underwent a simple blood draw. Patients now also provide a saliva donation. She then was scheduled to return three more times over the course of the year.

“It took longer to put my mask on in the car than it did to donate,” she said, laughing.

Providing samples over a period of time helps researchers understand how the virus affects the body and its immune system long term.

The willingness of patients to engage in research is essential if investigators are to find treatments for new diseases like COVID-19 or to find novel approaches for established diseases.

“We will only find our way through this pandemic by continuously studying this novel infection through robust and broad-scale research,” said

Hayden. “I think many people see the negative impact of COVID-19 and want to find a way to help. I’d encourage everyone to follow the Kraskers’ example and seek out research happening in his or her area.”

Amy believes that contributing to a larger effort to combat the disease can help those who have recovered from COVID-19 regain a sense of control over their own lives.

“I think the trauma of this, for everyone in the world right now, is just feeling so helpless at the hands of this pandemic. This is a very empowering thing to do –to get on the other side of the virus and be in control and do something that makes you feel like you’re not just a victim of a problem but you’re working toward a solution.”

If you have had COVID-19 and are interested in donating to the MUSC COVID-19 biorepository, please email [coordinator@musc.edu](mailto:coordinator@musc.edu). For more information on the Biorepository, visit [SCresearch.org](http://SCresearch.org).



## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Dear MUSC family,

We are excited to announce that the long-awaited construction of the Basic Science Building (BSB) and Colbert Education Center and Library is about to begin. A two-story addition will be constructed along the south side of the BSB to create a new College of Pharmacy building, and the Colbert Education Center and Library will undergo extensive renovations.

These projects will commence in December and continue until approximately June of 2022. We apologize in advance for the necessary disruption of pedestrian traffic and other unavoidable inconveniences. While signs will be posted to reroute pedestrians, the information below also will help you to prepare for these changes.

Please note that site preparation will begin as early as mid-December, with fences and closures blocking normal pedestrian traffic flow in the following ways:

- ❑ The bridge from the library to the BSB will close.
- ❑ The main entrance to the BSB will close (south entrance).
- ❑ The sidewalks in front of the BSB, beside the Horseshoe, will close.
- ❑ Sidewalks on two sides of the library will also be affected.

Additionally, we intend to provide regular communications on other impacts as this project progresses. To read detailed information about these projects or their timelines or to view diagrams of the affected walkways/exits please visit our website <https://education.musc.edu/leadership/provost/construction-updates>. Regular updates will be posted on this page.

We thank you in advance for your patience as we navigate this critically important construction project that will greatly enhance the academic mission of MUSC.

Yours respectfully,

Lisa K. Saladin, PT, Ph.D.

Executive vice president for Academic Affairs and provost

James W. Colbert Endowed Chair

Medical University of South Carolina



Saladin

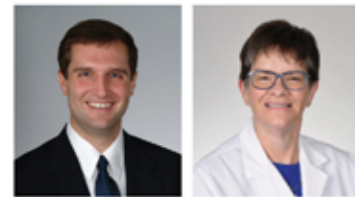
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The Village at Summerville enjoys an extended partnership with MUSC. Dr. Russell Blackwelder and Dr. Ruth Weber serve as the community's Co-Medical Directors. The Trident/MUSC Family Medicine Residency Program is conducted at The Village.

To schedule a visit or for more information, contact us at:

**(843) 873-2551**



**THE VILLAGE  
AT SUMMERVILLE**  
*Presbyterian Communities of South Carolina*

201 W. 9th North St., Summerville, SC 29483  
[summervillemarketing@prescomm.org](mailto:summervillemarketing@prescomm.org)



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### Flu Shots still available

The Flu vaccine is still available to all MUSC employees. MUHA and MUSCP care team members are required to have the influenza vaccine (or a completed declination form) by midnight, Dec. 14.

- Outpatient clinics: Various locations.
- Employee Health: Open weekdays, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information, visit <https://www.musc.edu/medcenter/influenza/flu-shots.html>.

