

MUSC retains status as only comprehensive stroke center in Lowcountry

Staff Report

The Joint Commission, a nonprofit agency that accredits health care programs, has recertified the MUSC Health Comprehensive Stroke Center at its highest level.

Comprehensive status is only given to hospitals that can treat the most challenging stroke cases.

Christine Holmstedt, D.O., directs the center, which has maintained comprehensive status since 2015. “We were the first in South Carolina, we were the hundredth in the nation to get this accreditation,” the neurologist and MUSC professor said.



Holmstedt

“Having a Joint Commission Comprehensive Stroke Certification means that we exceed all of the required benchmarks for quality of care and exceptional commitment to care, not just for our community but the entire state of South Carolina. We are able to care for the patients with the most complex cerebral vascular disease issues.”

Christina Blake, nurse program manager

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Photo by Sarah Pack

From left, Cameron Coleman, Carlos Zavala-Tellez, Mike Riley, Bonnie Fanning, Christina Maw, Dr. Teresa Rice, John Kronz, Maggie Dean and Cassandra Bilyeu (standing).

Largest internal living donor chain at MUSC gives new life to four patients

By HARRISON HUNTLEY

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Thanks to the generosity of four people, four more received new kidneys and with that, new lives. The donation of a “Good Samaritan,” or someone with no connection to the donor, lit the spark for an eight-person exchange that helped four people suffering from kidney failure.

THE STORY BEHIND THE CHAIN

After three long, consecutive days of surgeries — four to remove kidneys, four to implant them — eight people made their way into a small room in MUSC’s main hospital. Some wore hospital gowns, others, street clothes. Most of these people were complete strangers to one another, but today was the day they would each come face to face with someone who they shared not only a special bond with but who

they’d forever share a part of.

Two years ago, Cassandra Bilyeu was browsing Facebook when she saw a post from a friend of a friend. This person needed a kidney transplant, and therefore a donor. “So I signed up and registered to be a kidney donor. Why not?” she asked. Thankfully, the person she signed up to donate to had already found a donor, but Bilyeu decided to follow

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provides expertise.

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AROUND CAMPUS

PEOPLE

Caroline Brown



Caroline Brown was named chief strategy and external affairs officer for MUSC. Brown, who was formerly chief external affairs officer,

will lead the newly combined Office of Strategy and External Affairs to advance MUSC's vision and mission through strategic planning and collaborations and external partnerships with global industry leaders.

Tom Crawford



Tom Crawford, Ph.D., was named interim CEO for MUSC Health Midlands Division, effective Feb.

27. Crawford previously served as system chief operation officer for MUSC Health Charleston Division. He will remain in this interim position until a search process for a permanent CEO will be confirmed.

Brenda Kendall-Bailey



Brenda Kendall-Bailey, DNP, R.N., was named chief nursing officer for MUSC Health Charleston Division. Kendall-Bailey replaces former

CNO Patty Hart, Ph.D., R.N. An experienced perioperative nurse with more than 20 years of nursing leadership experience, Kendall-Bailey comes to MUSC from Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center in Columbus, Ohio where she served as associate chief nursing officer for perioperative and procedural services. She will begin in her role April 17.

'If you see something, say something,' to keep MUSC campus safe

By MADELINE RITGER

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After the recent active threat tragedy at Michigan State University, MUSC's Department of Public Safety (DPS) urges students, faculty and staff to utilize resources that are in place to prevent something similar happening on the MUSC campus.

DPS emergency manager Bryan Wood advises that all members of the MUSC community should speak up if they see something suspicious. The LiveSafe app, free for download on the App store, is the No. 1 resource Wood advises everyone to have on their phones.

"We want everybody on our campus to be our eyes and ears. In order for that to happen, we've developed what's called the LiveSafe app for MUSC. We give presentations to anyone, anywhere, at any time about the LiveSafe app. Anybody that wants us to come in and talk to their staff for 10 minutes, we do it. It's what we love to do."

Through the app, you can send anonymous tips by text, photo, or video. "Take a picture, send it over anonymously to us, and we'll have a police officer there to investigate it within a minute."

The app also features a one-touch dialing button that connects you to either Public Safety or 911 anywhere in the country – not just on campus.

The SafeWalk feature allows fellow students and peers to follow each other to their destinations virtually. Smart alerts will be sent out either once the person has safely reached his or her destination or if the person



does not reach that destination in the estimated time.

Gigi Smith, Ph.D., R.N, associate provost for Education, Innovation and Student Life is an advocate for the safety of all at MUSC. "The Michigan shooter was an outside person, and we try very much to stay in touch with our community, both externally and internally, to make sure that we are aware of what is going on. We would rather be proactive than reactive."

"For the safety of students and the MUSC community, the Behavioral Support Intervention Team, including faculty members from each college, the Office of Student Engagement, Public Safety and University Counsel, meet regularly to discuss any possible campus issues in order to ensure that there's communication, not just within the colleges and on campus, but also with the police in case something has happened in our community so we can make sure we are aware and follow up."

Ultimately, remaining proactive and communicating with Public Safety is the best way to make sure that all students and faculty and staff members remain safe on campus. Wood reminds people to download and use the LiveSafe app – always. And, he reiterated, "If you see something, say something."



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MUSC-based center helps in aftermath of Nashville school shooting

BY HELEN ADAMS

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It's the kind of expertise Angela Moreland-Johnson, Ph.D., wishes she didn't need to have. But since she does, the psychologist is grateful that her work with the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center gives her the chance to help in the aftermath of the Nashville school shooting that killed three 9-year-olds and three adults.

"I have children the same age as the children in Nashville," Moreland-Johnson said. "So, it's immediate sadness and fear and just all of those human responses. But then it is very nice to say, 'OK, but I have something that I can do.'"

Within just a few hours of the shooting, she and other specialists at the federally-funded center, based at MUSC, prepared and sent out information about resources they knew the survivors and community would need.

The documents, also posted on the center's website, included information about:

- ❑ How teachers can help kids cope with the psychological effects of the shooting.
- ❑ Common reactions parents should look out for such as anxiety and irritability.
- ❑ How parents can help children recover.
- ❑ How to find trauma-focused therapists.
- ❑ Steps the community can take to recover.
- ❑ Unexpected challenges that can arise



Moreland-Johnson

and how to overcome them.

❑ How crime victims may be eligible for compensation from the government.

❑ The Transcend NMVC app. It was developed by the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center to help survivors reduce the risk of developing problems and recover.

The mass violence center works with hospitals, mayors, governors and other leaders to get the information into the right hands. If needed, the center's experts can also go to Nashville in person to help. But director Dean Kilpatrick, Ph.D., said in the immediate aftermath of a

mass violence incident, too many people on hand can make things more complicated. So the center focuses on science-based expertise to help over the long haul.

"When the media loses interest, usually because there's some other event that's happened, the media moves on. But the people who've been affected don't move on. And so we know that the effects of these things can last a long time," Kilpatrick said.

He, Moreland-Johnson and the rest of the center's team know from personal experience. They helped people affected by the 2015 Charleston church shooting that killed nine people, in part through an anti-terrorism emergency assistance program grant that funded their work. After that, they got a different grant to establish the National Mass Violence and Victimization Resource Center with the U.S. Department of Justice.

"We know from when the Emanuel AME shooting happened here, it's very scary and you want resources, but you don't really know quite where to look,"



Kilpatrick



AP Photo/Wade Payne

Fitzgerald Moore leads a group in prayer at a memorial at the entrance to The Covenant School on March 29 in Nashville, Tenn.

"When the media loses interest, usually because there's some other event that's happened, the media moves on. But the people who've been affected don't move on. And so we know that the effects of these things can last a long time."

Dean Kilpatrick, Ph.D.

Moreland-Johnson said.

"So if you have one number that you can call and figure it out, then it's very, very helpful. Until we launched the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center, there wasn't a central warehouse that had all the resources, all the technology, a training source

data and research, kind of everything at once."

Since its opening, the center has worked behind the scenes following a series of incidents that had widespread impact, including:

- The 2022 school shooting in Uvalde, Texas.
- The 2021 mass shooting at a FedEx site in Indianapolis
- The Flint water crisis. This was part of a special category of incidents the federal government asked the center to tackle involving criminal acts or criminal negligence and exposure to toxic substances.
- The 2018 Parkland, Florida, school shooting.

And this isn't the first time the 5-year-old center has helped in Tennessee. "We've been working with them for several years, actually. They've had just a lot of different mass violence incidents occur in their area," Moreland-Johnson said.

"The Covenant School was just a

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Gov. McMaster, statewide partners launch S.C. Innovation Month

By CINDY ABOLE

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For the first time, the Palmetto State will highlight its significant contributions in the areas of innovation, technology and entrepreneurship with statewide events and programs, having designated April as South Carolina Innovation Month.

This effort was the brainchild of three founding network partners – MUSC, the South Carolina Research Authority (SCRA) and the South Carolina Department of Commerce – with a goal of celebrating discovery and sustainable economic growth through innovation while creating a collaborative infrastructure among the state’s entrepreneurial community and stakeholders.

The month-long celebration kicked off on April 3 at the South Carolina Statehouse with a S.C. Innovation Month proclamation read by Gov. Henry McMaster, who was flanked by S.C. lawmakers, members of the state’s innovation community, entrepreneur leaders, startup founders, investors and other supporters. Throughout the month, various programs and conferences will be offered.

The concept is modeled after other successful innovation week celebrations established in other markets, such as Launch Tennessee, a partnership that supports entrepreneurship around the state, and Atlanta Innovation Week, which highlights achievements within the Atlanta innovation community.

MUSC, where innovation has long been at the core of its mission, has annually celebrated Innovation Week since 2018, with a popular series of events. The idea of collaborating and connecting efforts with the founding partners and other statewide organizations to celebrate innovation and entrepreneurial successes seemed like a natural next step, according to Adrienne Grimes, director of marketing and communications with SCRA.

“Establishing a monthlong statewide event made sense and provides more flexibility around other founding partner’s standing celebrations like MUSC Innovation Week and other scheduled programs. It will give founders, partners’ and the state’s entrepreneurial community an opportunity to attend and support statewide events on the schedule,” said Grimes.

MUSC chief innovation officer Jesse Goodwin, Ph.D. is excited about the culture of innovation that is sweeping the state. “The growth of innovation over



Photo Provided

South Carolina Department of Commerce Secretary of Commerce Harry Lightsey III, second left, Gov. Henry McMaster, sixth left, MUSC President David Cole, center, MUSC Chief Innovation Officer Dr. Jesse Goodwin, sixth from right, and S.C. Research Authority executive director Bob Quinn, far right, join innovation partners celebrating the April 3 kickoff of S.C. Innovation Month at the Statehouse in Columbia.

the years across South Carolina, especially around the Charleston region, has been pretty incredible. We don’t want innovation to be the state’s best kept secret. It starts by telling your story within your own family and community, and that’s what we did with MUSC Innovation Week,” she explained.

“For MUSC to be a founding member and first organization to host a weeklong celebration highlighting innovation is a testament to how we’ve set the stage to make it truly foundational and allow ourselves to be a catalyst for innovation in the region. South Carolina Innovation Month is an opportunity to showcase broader initiatives from across the state. South Carolina is growing a strong culture of innovation. It’s exciting to be able to shine a light on the entire state for innovation and consider how far we’ve come collectively,” said Goodwin.



Goodwin

MUSC President David J. Cole, M.D., FACS, is a long-time proponent of influence and impact through innovation. “MUSC is honored to serve as a founding partner in creating Innovation Month for the state of South Carolina,” said Cole. “Innovation is woven throughout our institutional DNA, and it fuels our commitment to transforming patient care, providing excellent health sciences education and pursuing research discoveries that have impact for generations. South Carolinians can trust that at MUSC, our work will push the boundaries of what’s possible and enable a brighter, healthier future for all.”

Also featured in the April 3 statehouse event was a celebration of discoveries – products made in South Carolina. The gathering will feature successful statewide startups and entrepreneurs demonstrated their products and shared their own stories.

- Entrepreneurs included:
- ❑ Bubble Paper – A high-performing, eco-friendly cushion wrap packaging product that’s an alternative to using plastic wrap packaging for shipping products.
 - ❑ Integrated Biometrics-Spartanburg – Manufacturer

MEET RONNIE

**Ronnie Chatterjee****Department; Years at MUSC***Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; 7 years***How are you changing what's possible at MUSC***By working to embed equity in practice and policy in care, research and education***Family** *Nibedita and Rohit***Hobbies and interests** *Live music, local food and drink and the beach***First thing you do to start your morning** *Coffee, and then more coffee***A unique talent you have** *I'm an aviation enthusiast***Favorite summertime memory**
*Traveling to India to spend time with extended family***Favorite quote** *"You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water."**– Rabindranath Tagore*

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MUSC Charleston Urban Farm Area

Come one, come all to the **Stress Less Bash!**

Drop by to enjoy music, games, stress reliever activities, free food and refreshments, prizes, and more! All are welcome!

CHAIN *Continued from Page One*

through with a donation anyway, even if it were to go to a stranger.

Cristi Maw was also moved to donate a kidney from a Facebook post. After she supported a coworker through the donation process, she felt called to do the same. When she saw Maggie Dean's post about needing a kidney. "I just thought, 'I want to help her,'" she said. Even though Maw wasn't a match for Dean, the possibility of a chain gave them both hope.

The Rev. John Kronz is a 32-year-old minister in the small town of Norway, South Carolina. Two years after watching his grandmother die of kidney failure, he felt compelled to help when one of his parishioners, Bonnie Fanning, mentioned that she needed a transplant. "He hadn't been in the church very long," she said. "He said, 'I'd like to donate you a kidney' and I was like, 'Yes! That would be wonderful.'" But the pair would also need a chain for a successful transplant, since they also were not a match.

Cameron Coleman was 15 weeks pregnant when she received the diagnosis that her kidneys were failing. She went on dialysis six days a week while she was pregnant, and after delivery, she went every day. Her father, Mike Riley, signed up to donate his kidney to help her, but, as fate would have it, they also weren't a match.

But there was good news. As it turned out, the stranger that Cassandra Bilyeu would donate a kidney to was Maggie Dean. And though Cristi Maw wasn't a match for Maggie Dean, she was indeed a match for new mom Cameron Coleman, who after four months of waiting, got her new kidney. And, as remarkable, her father was able to donate his kidney to Bonnie Fanning.

That left Carlos Zavala-Tellez, a man who didn't have a previous connection to anyone in the room. A few weeks prior, he was on a waiting list for a new kidney. Thanks to the generosity of four altruistic donors who stepped forward

— especially John Kronz — he got one. "I have a son and a daughter, so I've got a lot of reasons to keep living. I want to live for a long time and take care of them as much as I can," he said. "Thanks to generous people who help people that they don't even know."

THE ROBOTIC DONATION PROCESS

Teresa "Tracy" Rice, M.D., piloted a program to bring robotics into kidney transplantation. MUSC performed its first robotic kidney transplant surgery in 2021, and by the end of this chain, Rice had completed the 60th. This program has not only helped doctors to be quicker and less invasive in their surgeries, it's also improved recovery time for donors.

"We've grown our program pretty rapidly in terms of robotics," Rice said. "I'm doing them all robotically now and making that our standard of care. It has a lot of benefits to our living donors. They have a reduced hospital stay; over 90% of our patients are now going home the day after surgery. More importantly, it's a safer operation for our living donors. The combination of robotic surgery and our enhanced recovery pathways allows for a quicker and safer recovery. Donor safety and comfort is always my number one priority."

In a traditional surgery, the surgeon stands over the patient to operate. But in a robotic surgery, the surgeon sits at a console and uses joysticks to control four robotic arms that contain a camera that gives a 3D view and tools to perform the surgery. Heather Achinson, R.N., a former nurse who now works for Intuitive Surgical helping clients like Rice make the best use of this robotic surgery technology, explained that the term "robotic surgery" gives some people the idea that doctors aren't doing the surgeries themselves.

"When we speak about robotics, particularly for people who aren't familiar, they do kind of operate under the assumption that the robot is doing the surgery," Achinson said. "What the robot really allows is for the



Photos by Sarah Pack

John Kronz prepares to donate his kidney to Carlos Zavala-Tellez.



Nurse Krystle Lee, middle, moves the daVinci Robotic arm into place as surgeon Teresa Rice, second from left, waits to set it up for a kidney transplant operation.

surgeon to utilize the full scope of their knowledge and open techniques but in a minimally invasive fashion. Robotics allows for a three-dimensional view, 10-times magnification, improved visibility and full-wristed articulation. Ultimately, what that means is that it is a safer surgery, and a lot of times, what Dr. Rice's data is showing, is that that leads to less pain and less post-op complications."

Rice also said that living donors provide better kidneys. "The gold

standard is a living donor," she said. "We can reduce dialysis, which improves their survival, and the kidneys last longer from a living donor. It eliminates that wait time and ultimately saves more lives."

INSTANT BONDS

The decision to give a kidney, even to someone he just met, was an easy one for John Kronz. "I think it's something that should be more normalized," he

See CHAIN on page 9

First MUSC Senior Expo since pandemic draws more than 500 visitors

By HELEN ADAMS

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"Good morning! How's everybody doing?" asked Tatiana Baier as she stood on stage getting ready for a boxing demonstration at MUSC's Senior Expo. The crowd listened closely to Baier, the program director of MUSC's Wellness Center.

Patricia and Ron Mongeon came to the North Charleston event from Cane Bay. Patricia, petite and energetic, got to her feet as Baier demonstrated boxing moves that people could do seated or standing. Ron followed along from his wheelchair.

"Guard up! Let's do some jabs," Baier

said. "Jab! Jab! Jab!" She punched the air, showing one of the moves from MUSC's Rock Steady Boxing. It's an exercise program for people with Parkinson's disease.

The Mongeons jabbed along with her. So did the rest of the crowd, representing about two dozen of the estimated 550 people who attended the March 23 expo.

Afterward, Patricia Mongeon called the demo fun. "I like to exercise and stay healthy. I want to learn more about staying fit and diet and what resources are available to us."

That's exactly what the Senior Expo at the Charleston Area Convention Center was designed for, said Lisa



Photo by Sarah Pack

Patricia Mongeon, far right wearing a blue top with a chain belt, and her husband Ron, left, in baseball cap, jab during a no-contact boxing demonstration at the MUSC Senior Expo in North Charleston.

Saladin, Ph.D., executive vice President of Academic Affairs and provost. Her office sponsors the Center for Healthy

Aging at MUSC.

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New leader focuses on building physical medicine, rehab expertise at MUSC

BY MADELINE RITGER
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The Medical University of South Carolina recently welcomed Ameet Nagpal, M.D., as chief of the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Division. The division falls under the Department of Orthopaedics and Physical Medicine, and Nagpal has big plans in mind.

In the following Q&A, Nagpal explains this area of medicine as well as his plans to shore up the clinical team and build bridges to other areas of the institution.

Q: What is Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation?

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, also known as PM&R, is a medical specialty that is designed to improve the lives of people with chronic illnesses and chronic debilitating diseases that range from complex musculoskeletal diseases like osteoarthritis all the way to complex neurologic disorders like strokes, traumatic brain injuries or spinal cord injuries that could be traumatic or atraumatic. And improving the function of people with these debilitating diseases or injuries is the hallmark of what PM&R does.

Q: You came from University of Texas Health San Antonio. How does your role here differ from your role at UT Health?

At UT Health San Antonio, I was the division chief of Pain Medicine, so I very much focused on the treatment of patients with chronic pain, which is also my clinical expertise and what I'm doing when I see patients on a daily

basis. But here, as the division chief of the entirety of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, it's a much larger specialty of medicine. And I hope that by venturing into this realm of administrative medicine, of running an entire division that eventually we'll have a residency for, we will be able to affect more lives and touch more patients with a wide variety of illnesses and diseases.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish in this role here at MUSC?

The people of the Lowcountry have not really had high levels of access to true PM&R care over the last several decades. And because PM&R hasn't existed at MUSC, many people of this area who have had traumatic brain injuries or strokes or amputations, or so on and so forth, have not had access to the type of care that we can deliver. But while there has been excellent care provided at another local hospital and at Encompass in North Charleston, now known as MUSC Health Rehabilitation Hospital, this is a small footprint for such a large catchment area. So, it is my goal and my responsibility to develop a robust PM&R clinical program and eventually a teaching program and research program to augment the great care that people are already getting from their neurosurgeons and orthopedic surgeons and neurologists, and so on and so forth, by helping them restore their function and get them reintegrated into society and in an immediately meaningful way.

Q: Will you be doing any research in this role?

Absolutely. We have a small group

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Photo by Sarah Pack
Dr. Ameet Nagpal listens as Chiquetta Heyward describes the pain she is having during her appointment at the MUSC Health West Ashley Medical Pavilion.

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LEADER *Continued from Page Eight*

of physicians right now, and all of us practice in the same subspecialty niche of interventional spine care and sports medicine and nonsurgical sports medicine for people who have musculoskeletal diseases. We are about to start a research study on the use of a novel injectable nerve blocking medication for treating chronic osteoarthritis pain of the knee. But we haven't hired the people who do so much more, like taking care of the neurorehabilitation side. I'm in the process of recruiting for those positions, and, hopefully, 18 to 24 months from now, we'll have the full gamut of everything that PM&R does – maybe even sooner than that. And at that time, once we've really developed the clinical programs out to the point where we're taking care of these people that haven't had the care that they've needed or deserved for quite a long time, then we'll really delve into making sure that we're doing high level research to improve the outcomes of the care that we provide.

Q: How are you prepared to work with the colleges in terms of both students and residents?

Right now, we're going to be working with medical students as much as we can. We already have had

orthopedic surgery residents work with us. We have family medicine residents that will be working with us in the near future. And in the future, after that, we're going to have sports medicine fellows and pain medicine fellows who will work with us as well. But ultimately, the plan is to have a PM&R residency up and running here at MUSC so that we can work with more students and residents. The basis upon that is that we're an academic organization. We want to grow and foster the careers of other people who want to do what we do so that they can give back to the community, and eventually, perhaps, join the medical community of MUSC or private practice, so that we can continue to expand the offerings that are available to people in Charleston.

Q: What is your outlook for the next three months?

In the next three months, we're still going to continue to try to offer more clinical services for those patients with musculoskeletal injuries and diseases. That's sort of where our bread and butter is right now.

Q: Where would you like to see the division in a year from now?

A year from now, I want to be in the hospital, offering care to patients with polytrauma and related

diseases, like the things I've mentioned already – traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, amputation, stroke, orthopedic fractures, things of this nature and, eventually, out into the community as well. And also to take care of those patients in an inpatient rehabilitation setting – for those patients who leave their hospital stays but need acute rehabilitation in an inpatient setting. I want to be able to offer that. We also already have an affiliation with Encompass at the MUSC Health Rehabilitation Hospital in North Charleston, and we want to develop a presence there, as well, to help our patients who are suffering from these maladies and then help those people in an ambulatory setting subsequently.

Q: What are your five-year goals?

Five years from now, I want to have a comprehensive research program for treating these illnesses and diseases and have a really robust, top-of-the line residency that is well-respected nationally and have a clinical program that's humming. We should be able to take care of patients efficiently, with high levels of access. The care we will be providing should be low cost and the highest of quality.

CHAIN *Continued from Page Six*

said. "It's pretty normal to give blood nowadays; I'd like people to know that this is something that's not a dangerous thing to do."

Rice said that if you're looking to step out and help someone, don't assume you can't help just because you aren't a match. Exchanges like this one can be the answer for both the person you know and another person.

"A lot of people will be in a clinic with their spouse, and their spouse is eager to donate. But they say, 'I can't donate because I'm a different blood type,'" Rice explained. "But these exchanges allow us to overcome some of these barriers, increase the number of transplants that we can do and ultimately save more people's lives. Organ donation is a wonderful

gift, and it is an honor to be able to care for these donors who are true heroes."

As Rice walked in that hospital room, she looked around. And along with hugs and tears, she saw the perfect example of overcoming barriers: four donors who had come forward to help someone who in some way mattered to them – only to be told that it wasn't possible. Yet help they did. Not a one deterred. And with that combination of courage and kindness, the lives of four people – strangers they had never laid eyes on – were saved. For transplant surgeons like Rice, these are the happy endings that make it all worthwhile.

Those interested in joining MUSC's living donor program can visit tinyurl.com/t99ex4yp.

EXPO *Continued from Page Seven*

"As a person who dealt with an aging parent with a lot of health issues, I understand the importance of connecting people who are aging and their loved ones to the community and resources. It's critical that people are aware of the support we have in the community. So the purpose here is to get everyone exposed to and know resources available to them as they're dealing with difficult challenges," Saladin said.

The expo featured a lot of resources, from health checks and fitness demos to financial information. That third category is what Linda Cole was looking for. "I'm 61 and just trying to get some information on Medicare and Social Security, and there's a table here about wills, which helped me out a lot because I don't currently have

one," she said.

The expo, put on through a partnership between MUSC and the Trident Area Agency on Aging, was free and open to the public. Friends Dorothy McCray and Jenie Hunter stopped by a table featuring food grown at MUSC's Urban Farm and talked with educator Noni Langford about microgreens and lavender.

"I'm trying to find out exactly what it's all about," McCray said. "I'm not a gardener, but at the age of 70, we're trying to broaden our horizons and be healthy."

This marked the first MUSC Senior Expo since 2019. It was on hold during the pandemic. People seemed to welcome the chance to mingle freely again through aisles of tables featuring information from MUSC and dozens of other presenters.

Cole said it was worth the wait. "I wasn't sure what to expect, but there's a lot of information here, and I'm learning a lot."

The Greenest Day: MUSC Arbor, Earth Day celebration

Earth Day is an annual event dedicated to raising awareness and inspiring action to tackle the various environmental challenges facing our planet. Countries all over the world celebrate, with more people getting involved every year. In many places, Earth Day forms part of Earth Week, and Charleston is one of those places. MUSC is excited to announce its association with the Lowcountry Land Trust for Lowcountry Earth Week – a collaborative initiative of over 40 local conservation organizations from April 15 through 22. Lowcountry Earth Week is an opportunity to come together as a community to celebrate a shared commitment to protecting the natural beauty and ecological diversity of the Lowcountry region. This weeklong celebration features a variety of clean-ups, festivals, nature activities and workshops and will conclude with a family-friendly tabling event at Holy City Brewing on Earth Day, April 22. For the full list of events, visit

lowcountrylandtrust.org/special_events/. MUSC's Earth Day event is a collaborative effort hosted by MUSC's Department of Sustainability, Grounds Department and Office of Health Promotion. "MUSC is proud to host this event with our community businesses, nonprofits and artists who are working every day to help Lowcountry residents maintain a high quality of life. We are only as healthy as our community and our environment," said MUSC's sustainability and energy manager Christine von Kolnitz, who has been leading sustainability efforts for over a decade. Arbor Day, much like Earth Day, is a holiday that celebrates nature, and this year is recognized on April 28. Its purpose is to encourage people to plant trees, and many communities traditionally take the opportunity to organize tree-planting and litter-collecting events on or around the official day. We are fortunate to

experience the mission of Arbor Day throughout the year through the expanding inventory of over 2,500 trees, ranging from ancient live oaks to new fruit saplings, planted on MUSC's downtown Charleston campus. The establishment of the MUSC Arboretum has transformed our campus into a place of optimal healing and learning by creating an urban landscape that invigorates, inspires and teaches through nature. In addition to the healing and calming benefits provided by a healthy tree canopy, trees also offer a reduction in air pollution by converting substances from the air to oxygen, reducing noise pollution and capturing and filtering storm water runoff. To celebrate MUSC's commitment to growing the health care sustainability movement and to create an environmentally responsible, climate-smart campus, MUSC is hosting The Greenest Day: An Earth and Arbor Day Celebration 2023, which will

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By Susan L. Johnson,
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of Health Promotion



be held on Thursday, April 20, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m., at the MUSC Colbert Education Center and Library Portico. The Greenest Day will feature food vendors serving up the flavors of the Lowcountry, along with environmentally minded businesses, organizations, artists, farmers and more. Shifting our diets toward delicious foods produced in just and sustainable ways, we can improve human and environmental health. Bangin Vegan Eats, James Brown Boiled Peanuts, Compass One MUSC and King of Pops, all of whom are committed to sourcing produce and products locally – defined as within 100 miles – will be serving up lunch and snacks. Festivities will also feature live music and door-prize raffle tickets for all attendees. Come out for local food and live music and get to know the local nonprofits, businesses and farmers that are working toward a more sustainable future. MUSC's The Greenest Day is an event for all ages and is free to attend. MUSC has hosted an Earth Day event every year in April for over a decade – even online during COVID. Over the years, the event has grown from a small affair to a large festival, featuring many vendors and garnering community interest. The Greenest Day: An Earth and Arbor Day Celebration is one of the many ways MUSC sends a clear signal about its commitment to environmental stewardship and recognition of the inextricable link between the health of the environment and human health.

SCHOOL *Continued from Page Three*

few days ago, but we actually started working with them on the Nashville Christmas day bombing, which was December 25th, 2020. I don't think that that one, unfortunately, received a lot of media attention." The center also helped after a 2021 mass shooting at in a grocery store in Collierville. "And then in September 2022, there was the Memphis spree shooting. A shooter went to multiple different places throughout the Memphis area. And that caused a lot of fear for the community because the shooter was on the loose." All of those incidents meant that when a shooter wreaked havoc in a Christian school in Nashville, the MUSC-based team knew exactly who

to reach out to in Tennessee. They'd already been working with the Victims of Crime Act administrator there to develop a statewide plan for mass violence readiness and response. "We still don't have a final plan. It's been developing over several years. But the main pieces of that is to have mental and behavioral health training. And they actually want us to do that across the entire district. So even before this week at the Covenant School we've been setting dates and figuring out how to go work with them," Moreland-Johnson said. Kilpatrick said at this point, his team knows exactly what to do and how to do it. "I'm incredibly proud of that, even though it's for a terrible reason – the ongoing issues with mass violence."

ARROW John R. Raymond Mentoring Fellowship applications due April 28

Applications for the 2023 ARROW John R. Raymond Mentoring Fellowship are currently being accepted. The Fellowship provides financial support for a full-time female faculty member to initiate a relationship with a mentor who is an expert in her chosen field. The Fellow's field of interest may be in research, clinical practice, or education/teaching. The fellowship is administered by MUSC ARROW with support from the Office of the Provost. To apply or for information, visit the ARROW at tinyurl.com/3rbrbrhj.

CENTER *Continued from Page One*

for the center, said the recertification process is thorough. "It's always a very interesting time to have someone come in and pick apart the program and make sure that we're meeting all the standards and measures that we can for our community. It's over 500 standards we have to meet for an entire program. And then there are over 25 metrics that they take a deep dive into, looking at the data that we produce, looking at how are we providing that evidence-based care."

MUSC Health has the only Comprehensive Stroke Center in the Lowcountry and is one of just four in the entire state, according to the Department of Health and Environmental Control. It cares for patients not only on its main campus but also in MUSC Health hospitals throughout the state and other hospitals via telehealth.

Holmstedt said operating as a Comprehensive Stroke Center requires teamwork. "This isn't about me. This isn't about Christina. This is everybody who even touches the stretcher of a

stroke patient and is involved in their care because everything is down to the minute. Everything is practiced. It's a commitment by every single person in the institution so that we can be as good as we are."

It also takes a commitment to research. The South Carolina Research Studies Directory shows multiple stroke studies underway at MUSC. "Research in general offers patients that would not have particular treatments available to them the chance to receive potential treatments through clinical trials," Holmstedt said.

The Joint Commission noticed her team's commitment to clinical trials. "This year they really highlighted our focus on research and having research studies for every single stroke patient that gets admitted to MUSC or that gets seen in the outpatient clinic."

She and Blake hope the attention the certification brings will remind people of the risk of strokes in general. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines a stroke as "a brain attack, occurs when something blocks blood supply to part of the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts."



Photos by Sarah Pack

From left, Ross Senior, Brittany Dean and Dr. Sami Al Kasab look over a patient's scans.

Symptoms include:

- Trouble with balance or coordination.
- Sudden blurred or double vision or loss of vision.
- Drooping or numbness in the face.
- Arm weakness.
- Speech difficulty.

Anyone with those symptoms should get help immediately. That includes people who have symptoms that are transient, meaning they don't

last. Transient ischemic attacks are considered warning strokes.

Holmstedt said taking care of all patients, whether they have transient ischemic attacks (TIAs) or complex strokes, requires a commitment to excellence. "It's just an absolute honor to take care of stroke patients. When they do really well, it's just the best. There's no feeling like it."



Members of the stroke team, Kevin Jacks, left to right, Sarah Creed, Marisa Cobiella, Courtney Pickard, Jaci Furlano, Christina Blake and Drs. Katherine Scarpino and Jessica Decker.



INNOVATION *Continued from Page Four*

of identification security products used by the FBI and other federal agencies that features digital fingerprint scanners, touchless mobile identity devices, facial recognition technology and related software.

❑ DARI Motion-Capture System — FDA-approved technology featuring high-speed cameras, motion-capture technology and cloud processing software that assesses an individual's flexibility and movements. South Carolina is one of four U.S. locations to have this.

❑ Blinkcns Inc. — FDA-cleared non-invasive technology that uses an eye scanner to measure a person's natural blink reflex and eye tracking. This technology can be used to screen for nervous system disorders or eye diseases or measure the effects of head injury.

A valuable tool that will help to connect innovation partners and the entrepreneurial community around the

state for the purposes of sharing ideas, introducing products and promoting events and activities will be a dedicated S.C. Innovation website. Network partners will have the ability to submit information and events on a calendar while anyone can learn about statewide innovation initiatives and projects.

Looking ahead, Goodwin, Grimes and other network partners agree that they'd like to see South Carolina become a national model for celebrating innovation. As S.C. Innovation Month grows in popularity and support, Grimes hopes that it will attract its own funding and investors. "Right now, it's a platform where everyone can grow their own projects and efforts. In the future, we're hoping it continues to grow and develop so South Carolina becomes a well-known state for innovation," Grimes said.

For more information and statewide Innovation Month activities, visit scinnovationmonth.com.



*"Marshall's team was fantastic!
Helped with every detail of the
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professional. I never knew selling
a house could be so easy!"*

- Lindsay G.



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