

jackson health system

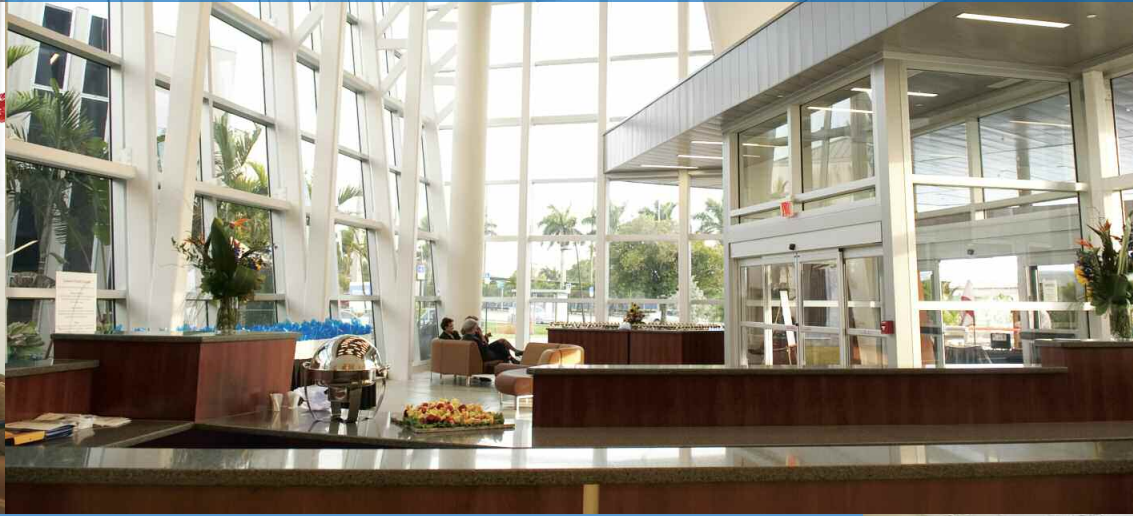
# connections

your resource for health and well being • march 2011



beating  
cancer

# Jackson South Opens State-of-the-Art Medical Tower



Jackson South Community Hospital has opened its Tower Building to rave reviews from the public, community physicians and staff.

The beautiful, four-story patient care and treatment facility was designed as part of the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places program. Local artist Leonel Matheu used an Everglades theme with different floors reflecting grass, water and flowers.

Doubling the size of the hospital, the tower features 48 private patient rooms with large windows, some with a golf course view, and 12 intensive care suites.

The eight new operating rooms are totally interactive, allowing physicians to broadcast procedures and communicate with other hospitals and medical personnel anywhere in the world via the internet.

There are also three endoscopy rooms, two cardiac catheterization labs and 24 individual recovery rooms, streamlining both inpatient and same-day procedures. A modern pharmacy includes special rooms with positive and negative air pressure to mix and administer antibiotic and chemotherapy pharmaceuticals.

But it is the new entrance to Jackson South that has garnered the most comments. The glass-enclosed welcome center and vaulted ceiling allow natural light to fill the room and bring peace and serenity to patients and visitors alike.

*Photography by UM Biomedical Communications (Ribbon Cutting and Lobby) and Steven Brooke Studios (Exterior, Reception Desk, Patient Room, and Intensive Care Unit).*



## jackson health system connections

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Cover photograph by Scherley Busch

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march 2011

## 2 Caring for Kids with Cancer

Steven Rua was diagnosed with lymphoblastic lymphoma when he was four years old. Now six, he has a bright future, thanks to the pediatric hematology-oncology team at Holtz Children's Hospital.

## 6 Dolphins Deliver a Special Kind of Therapy

After completing an aquatic rehab program at Jackson Rehabilitation Hospital, paraplegic and quadriplegic patients like Tawonda Williams are treated to a swim with dolphins.

## 9 Trial Fights Liver Cancer with Killer Cells

One of the reasons our organ transplantation programs were rated among the best in the country this year was the depth of their innovations and research.

### DEPARTMENTS

**12 Ask the Doctor:** Risk of heart problems continues to escalate for overweight children

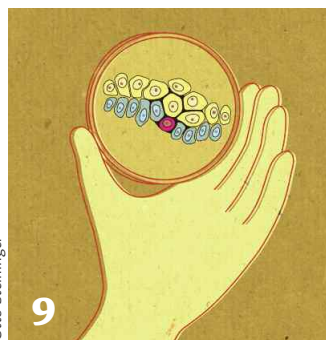
**13 Close-Up:** After suffering terrible burns, Michael Brewer looks positively at his future.

### On the Cover

After months of chemotherapy, Steven Rua is back to school and back on the playground. His mother credits the care of the specialists in the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Program at Holtz Children's Hospital for carrying their family through Steven's long road to recovery.

2

Scherley Busch



Otto Steininger

9



Sandra Fiedler

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## Connecting to You

THE MEDICAL CARE PROVIDED AT JACKSON HEALTH SYSTEM is among the best in the world. We are fortunate to have some of the nation's top doctors performing ground-breaking procedures on a regular basis. But what we do goes far beyond that. At Jackson, we strive to provide compassionate care to everyone who walks through our doors.

Steven Rua, the kindergartener featured on the cover, developed a special bond with the Holtz Children's Hospital hematology-oncology team. In the nearly two years since his diagnosis, Steven's health has dramatically improved. His parents attribute that to the specialized cancer care he received at Holtz – and the love and support he received from everyone who works there.

Therapists in Jackson Rehabilitation Hospital show how committed they are to their patients with spinal cord injuries by organizing an annual "Swim with the Dolphins."

Few cases have touched us all more than that of Michael Brewer, a teenager who was transferred to Ryder Trauma Center and the UM/JM Burn Center after being horribly burned over much of his body. After three months at the burn center, Michael has returned to school and dreams of being an FBI agent.

I hope that you enjoy reading more about these stories and what makes Jackson so special. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,  
Eneida O. Roldan, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.  
President and CEO, Jackson Health System



Scherley Busch



Theater of the Sea



# Caring for Kids

*with*



# Cancer

AFTER THE SHOCK AND PAIN of losing her mother to cancer, Edith Madrigal thought her worst years were behind her. Then, the unthinkable happened.

After several tests and failed treatments for what was thought to be just swollen neck glands, her son, Steven, was diagnosed with lymphoblastic lymphoma, a type of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He was just four years old.

BY KATHLEEN ROHAN

When she was told the news, one question immediately came to her mind. "I asked where to get the very best care for my son," she said.

She was given one answer: Holtz Children's Hospital. Since that frightful day in July 2009, Steven has been in the care of a team of specialists from the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Program at Holtz, a team whom she credits with carrying their family through Steven's long road to recovery.

"Everyone at Holtz treats you special in every way: the doctors, specialists, nurses, secretaries, child life specialists – everyone," she said.

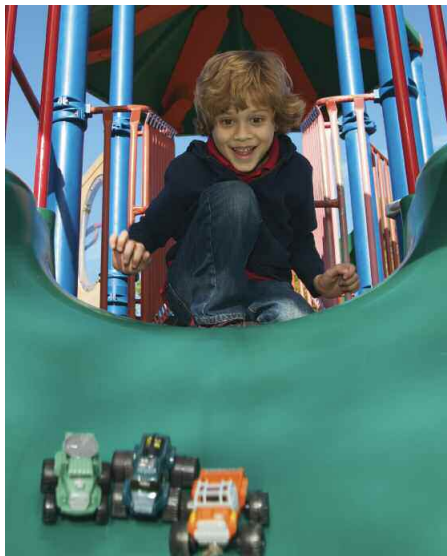
## Specialized Cancer Care for Kids

Located at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center, Holtz is one of the largest children's hospitals in the southwest United States. Working in affiliation with the faculty of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Program at Holtz is the only university-based pediatric cancer group in South Florida with some of country's finest pediatric hematologists and oncologists – all of whom were honored on the distinguished Best Doctors In America list for 2011.

The seven physicians on the pediatric hematology-oncology team are all experts in their fields, each specially trained and, more importantly, having extensive experience in treating children with

*Opposite page: (top left and center) Steven and Dr. Julio C. Barredo; (right) Steven playing in the park; (bottom left) Steven and his favorite nurse, Frances.*

*Photography by Edith Madrigal (Steven and Dr. Barredo and Steven and his nurse) and Scherley Busch (Steven and his parents in the park).*



*Now six years old, Steven really enjoys his collection of cars.*

different types of cancers, sickle cell disease, hemophilia and blood disorders.

Holtz has both a reserved unit for its cancer patients to receive around-the-clock care from specially trained nurses, and an outpatient clinic where children can receive treatments that do not require hospitalization. The hospital is accredited by the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT) and works closely with Sylvester Cancer Center at the University of Miami, allowing Holtz patients to have access to specialists and resources at the cancer center.

The physicians from the pediatric cancer team are also actively engaged in research for both cancer and blood disorders. Their mission is to take techniques developed in their laboratories on the UM/JM Medical Center campus and create new treatment options for their patients. Children at Holtz have access to a wide array of clinical trials, which offer more of the latest treatment options, some of which are only found here in South Florida. The hospital and physicians are



*Steven's "family time" is most important.*

members of prestigious national organizations, including Therapeutic Advances in Childhood Leukemia & Lymphoma and the Sarcoma Alliance for Research through Collaboration, allowing them access to studies and trials being performed around the nation. The program is a full member of the Children's Oncology Group (COG), the national organization to which nearly all pediatric cancer programs belong.

Julio C. Barredo, M.D., is director of the UM Division of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology and the associate chairman for basic research at Holtz Children's Hospital. "We provide a holistic approach to the treatment of children and adolescents with cancer and blood disorders," he said. "Our goal is to treat the entire patient and not only to eradicate the cancer. With that in mind, we have developed the kind of specialized cancer programs that only a university-based facility can offer in order to allow patients to be able to receive state-of-the-art therapy close to home and not have to travel out of state for specialized cancer care."

A cancer diagnosis in a child can be one of the most trying times for a family. Depending on his or her age, the child will undoubtedly go through a mix of emotions while trying to cope with their illness, treatment and therapy. Their families are deeply affected as well. Each child has a team of specially trained nurses, psychologists, social workers and child life specialists

# Meet Our Doctors

Holtz Children's Hospital's Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Program is staffed with experts experienced in treating children with cancer. They are:

**Ofelia A. Alvarez, M.D.**, Medical Director of the Pediatric Sickle Cell Program



**Specialty/Clinical**

**Interests:** general pediatric hematology-oncology, sickle cell disease

**Julio C. Barredo, M.D.**, Director of the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Program,



Director of the Children's Cancer Programs at UM Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, and Associate Chair of Pediatrics for Basic Research at UM

**Specialty/Clinical Interests:** acute lymphoblastic leukemia, hematopoietic and stem cell transplantation, pediatric sickle cell disease

**Joanna A. Davis, M.D.**, Medical Director of the Comprehensive Pediatric Hemophilia Treatment Center



**Specialty/Clinical Interests:** general pediatric hematology-oncology, coagulation/thrombotic disorders, pediatric leukemia, solid tumors

**John M. Goldberg, M.D.**, Director of Pediatric Oncology Early Phase Clinical Trials Program



**Specialty/Clinical**

**Interests:** general pediatric hematology-oncology, pediatric solid tumors, melanoma, sarcoma, renal cell carcinoma, early phase clinical trials in pediatric oncology, tumor immunology



**Martin Andreansky, M.D., Ph.D.**, Director of the Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplant Program

**Specialty/Clinical Interests:** general pediatric hematology-oncology, hematopoietic and stem cell transplantation



**Cristina E. Fernandes, M.D.**, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

**Specialty/Clinical**

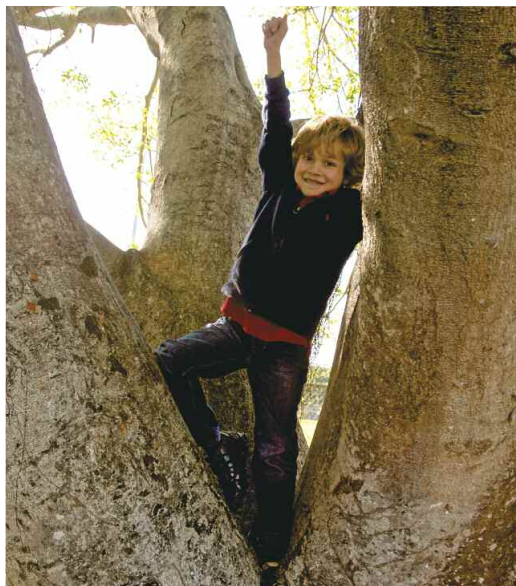
**Interests:** general pediatric hematology-oncology, retinoblastoma, cancer survivorship



**Antonello Podda, M.D.**, Director of the Pediatric Neuro-Oncology Program

**Specialty/Clinical**

**Interests:** general pediatric hematology-oncology, brain and spinal cord tumors in childhood, pediatric solid tumors



Scherley Busch

families regain as much normalcy as possible – which requires meticulous medical care, extensive and age-appropriate explanations, sensitivity to the unique needs and challenges facing each family member, and the ability on the part of the staff to truly enjoy getting to know our children and their families as people – not just as patients,” she said.

## A Bright Future

As for Steven, immediately after his diagnosis he began intense treatment in the summer of 2009, which consisted of multiple types of chemotherapy being injected directly into his central nervous system. It required him to be in the hospital for ten days at first, and then every week for months. It also brought on a slew of difficult symptoms – including hair loss, loss of appetite, tiredness and fatigue.

Steven's mother, Edith, said one of the most helpful parts of receiving care at Holtz was not only the doctors and nurses who provided him with expert care, but the child life specialists and nurses who helped him emotionally.

“Everyone here is all for helping him,” she said, as she sat in a waiting area: Steven hooked up to his chemotherapy infusion, painting a canvas with other patients and a child life specialist. “It has been a lot easier because of the toys, the activities, the child life specialists. They distract him. They make it easier here.”

Within a month of starting treatment, the size of Steven's tumor had dramatically reduced. He continues to be monitored and receives outpatient chemotherapy once a month in the Holtz outpatient clinic. He is now six years old and in kindergarten.

Dr. Davis expects he will make a full recovery. “Steven is doing great,” she said emphatically. “We anticipate that he will have a completely normal childhood after he is done. He should have no lasting complications from the chemo he received.”

As for Steven's mom, she is forever thankful she brought her son to Holtz.

“We are so blessed,” she said. “We made the right choice.”

working with their physician to build trusting relationships, and to ensure continuity of care, and that all of their needs – and those of their family – are met.

Joanna A. Davis, M.D., Steven's physician, has been a member of UM's Division of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology and an attending physician at Holtz since 1982.

Dr. Davis says it is the mission of the department to focus on the whole child, not just the medical issues they are battling.

“Part of our mission is to help the



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 305-585-5635 OR VISIT [WWW.HOLTZCHILDRENSHOSPITAL.ORG](http://WWW.HOLTZCHILDRENSHOSPITAL.ORG).

# A Cure for Separation

BY SANDRA FIEDLER

**S**andy and Steve Darrell's first pregnancy seemed to be going perfectly until a routine ultrasound showed there was trouble. At just 19 weeks, Sandy was dilated. Living in Bermuda, where there are limited neonatal intensive care services, Sandy needed to be airlifted to a hospital overseas.

Sandy's mom is a nurse and her dad is a physician in South Florida. "My mom and dad said Jackson had a really good reputation, and our personal research backed that up," she said. The couple was determined to deliver at Jackson, so that their baby would receive the life-saving care provided in the Project: Newborn Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Holtz Children's Hospital.

They made it to Miami just in time. Their daughter, Julene, was delivered at 25 weeks and weighed only 1 pound, 11 ounces. She was immediately intubated because her lungs were not totally formed. Spending time with Julene was now the thrill of a lifetime, but it was also very scary. The couple had not imagined all the beeping alarms, high-tech monitors, IVs and wires attached to their baby. Like most parents of preemies, they were afraid to touch her.

"You're always afraid," said Steve, a police officer. "They're so tiny. You're afraid they're going to break."

With the help and encouragement of the staff in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), the Darrells not only touched Julene during those first few weeks, they held her for hours at a time.

## Kangaroo Mother Care

The nurses in the Holtz NICU routinely offer to teach a technique to all parents called Kangaroo Mother Care. The therapy is designed to help re-create, at least in some way, the conditions that a premature baby should still be experiencing in the womb.

Attached to whatever tubes he or she needs, the infant is placed on the parent's chest with as much skin-to-skin contact as possible. The child is strapped in by a diaper or some other cloth supporting its bottom, and all but its head is covered by the parent's shirt. They stay like that as much as possible. Other relatives or friends can "wear" the baby to give the parents a break.

The baby stays warm, and their body temperature is regulated by sympathetic biological responses to the parent. Feeling the parent's breathing and heartbeat helps to stabilize the baby's own heart and respiratory rates. They sleep more and can breastfeed at will, thus gaining more weight, and the physical closeness encourages emotional closeness.

Julene's neonatologist, Marta G. Galarza, M.D., medical director of the newborn intermediate care nursery in Holtz Children's Hospital and assistant professor of clinical pediatrics at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, said, "One of the biggest causes of stress for NICU parents is the loss of the parental role caused by the separation from their baby.

"Holtz is the only hospital in Miami-Dade that has a policy requiring Kangaroo Care as part of the care offered to the parents of pre-term babies," Dr. Galarza said. "Studies show Kangaroo Care helps stabilize the preemie's heart and respiratory rate, promotes better thermal control, and improves breastfeeding, immune system response and bonding."

"She's the most beautiful baby I've ever seen," says Steve. "Kangaroo Care has been a great benefit. She doesn't cry. She's never had an infection. She has a special bond with mom and a special bond with me."



*Above, top: Dr. Marta G. Galarza helps wrap Julene onto her father's chest, mimicking a kangaroo's pouch.*

*Above: Steve and Sandy Darrell are thrilled at how Julene has thrived and grown.*

*Bottom: Steve loves to read to his daughter during the hours they spend "kangaroo-ing."*



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT: NEWBORN NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT AT HOLTZ CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, VISIT [WWW.HOLTZCHILDRENSHOSPITAL.ORG](http://WWW.HOLTZCHILDRENSHOSPITAL.ORG).

# Dolphins Deliver a Special Kind



## One of Four in Florida

Jackson Rehabilitation Hospital is one of four hospitals designated by Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS) for acute and rehabilitative care for adults and children with spinal cord injuries (SCI).

Specially trained therapists work closely with SCI patients to develop a treatment plan that focuses on the patient's personal goals.

Patients - both inpatient and outpatient - are taught to become as independent as possible in mobility and self-care activities, and are encouraged to practice learned skills in real-life situations.

*This page, top to bottom: Duffy and Stormy • Rita Smith, P.T., Damian Carson, Cathy Herring, C.T.R.S., Yunier Sainz, Janet Dallas, O.T., Noland Frazier, Vivian and Antonio Carvalho, Pablo Iraheta, Stephanie Godsea, P.T., James Rivera, Jill Caldwell, P.T., Tawonda Williams • Noland Frazier • Pablo Iraheta*

*Next page, top to bottom: James Rivera • Antonio Carvalho*





BY JENNIFER MOONEY PIEDRA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THEATER OF THE SEA

# of Therapy



**W**hen Antonio Carvalho suddenly became paralyzed from a rare neurological disorder, he thought he'd never be able to enjoy the outdoors – especially the water – again. But as a patient in the aquatic rehab

program for adults and children with spinal cord injuries at Jackson Rehabilitation Hospital, Antonio has learned how to swim again. The program pairs paraplegics and quadriplegics with skilled Jackson therapists, who help them move their arms and legs in the water, something they often cannot do on land.

“It is the most wonderful feeling,” said Antonio, 53, a professor at the Marine Corps University in Virginia, who temporarily relocated to Miami to be treated at Jackson. “I feel freedom in the water.”

As a reward for their hard work in the weekly sessions, the aquatic rehab patients are given the ultimate graduation gift for water lovers – a day swimming with dolphins.

“It gives us something to look forward to,” said James Rivera, 58, who was paralyzed from the neck down after an accident on a horse. “And it gives us a great story to tell our friends. Not many people have gone swimming with dolphins before. It’s pretty cool.”

The dolphin swims are organized by Cathy Herring, C.T.R.S., a recreation therapist at Jackson Rehabilitation Hospital. For the past seven years, Cathy has run the aquatic rehab program and organized fundraising efforts, including hot dog sales at Jackson Memorial Hospital, to pay for each patient’s dolphin encounter.

“It’s very rewarding to give our patients the opportunity to participate in this unique experience,” she said. “It is something they will never forget.”

During the most recent day trip from Miami to Theater of the Sea in Islamorada, seven patients and a team of Jackson recreation, occupation and physical therapists gathered in a lagoon, where they met Duffy and Stormy, the park’s two dolphins.

Each patient got a chance to take a ride with a dolphin by holding on to its dorsal fin as it circled the lagoon. They were even treated with kisses from the pair and a show featuring some of their tricks.

“At first I was nervous because I used to be so scared of the water,” said Tawonda Williams, 44, who has been in a wheelchair for the past two years after having surgery for calcium buildup in her spine. “But it was so much fun. I would definitely do it again.”

“It was incredible,” agreed Yunier Sainz, 22, who became paralyzed in a diving accident. “And now I’m inspired to continue trying new things.”



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON JACKSON REHABILITATION HOSPITAL'S AQUATIC REHAB PROGRAM FOR PATIENTS WITH SPINAL CORD INJURIES, CALL 305-585-6738 OR VISIT [WWW.JHSMIAMI.ORG](http://WWW.JHSMIAMI.ORG).

# Transplant Programs Rated among the Best

THREE PROGRAMS AT THE MIAMI TRANSPLANT INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI/JACKSON MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER HAVE RECEIVED NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR EXTRAORDINARY PERFORMANCE FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.



*Members of the kidney and pancreas transplant programs celebrate their Silver and Bronze recognitions.*



*Members of the Liver/GI Transplant Program are proud of their national Bronze level honor.*

BY PAT MORRISSEY/HAVLIN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY UM BIOMEDICAL  
COMMUNICATION

**T**he kidney transplant program was one of only ten transplant programs in the nation to achieve a Silver level recognition, and one of only six kidney programs to receive this honor.

Both the liver and pancreas programs received Bronze level recognition.

“These recognitions are a testament to the incredible, life-saving work done by the physicians and nurses on our transplant teams,” said Eneida O. Roldan, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A., president and chief executive officer of Jackson Health System. “Our transplant program is known for giving thousands of people a second chance at life.”

“This tribute from the federal government honors the unsurpassed surgical expertise and clinical care provided by the spectacular University of Miami/Jackson team,” said Pascal J. Goldschmidt, M.D., senior vice president for medical affairs and dean of the Miller School of Medicine, and CEO of the University of Miami Health System.

The awards were established to ensure best practices at all hospitals performing transplantation. They are based on performance in three categories: graft survival one year after transplant, transplant rate, and mortality rate after being placed on the transplant list. Only one program in the country achieved Gold level status.

## 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROGRAM

The transplant program marked 40 years of life-saving organ and tissue transplantation in 2010. It is widely known for its innovative procedures and high success rates following surgery.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary, a

## Trial Fights Liver Cancer with Killer Cells

**E**ncarnación Miranda knew he didn’t have long to live when, in October 2009, he learned that his liver, deeply scarred by the hepatitis C virus he had contracted from a blood transfusion years before, had triggered hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), the most common liver cancer.

However, a little over a year later, he became the first person in the United States with his condition to receive a transfusion of Natural Killer (NK) cells extracted from a donated liver.

“I feel like a completely new person,” he said at a press conference in December 2010. “I don’t feel tired. I don’t feel anything. It is remarkable – the difference between how I felt then and how I feel now.”

The Army veteran from Key Largo credits the difference to the multidisciplinary liver transplant team at the Miami Transplant Institute at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center. They were intrigued by a clinical trial in Japan that showed naturally occurring NK cells could be extracted and enhanced to four times their potency in the lab. When injected, the cells acted like smart bombs by zeroing in on and destroying cancer cells.

“You can call them a guided missile versus a smart bomb,” said Andreas Tzakis, M.D., Ph.D., director of the institute’s liver/GI program. “The important thing is that they don’t kill any cells we don’t want them to kill. They kill just tumor cells.”

The team collaborated with the Japanese developers to establish the first clinical trial of the NK cell immunotherapy in the United States. They hope that the exciting early results will translate into real results in lowering the recurrence rate of HCC liver cancer.

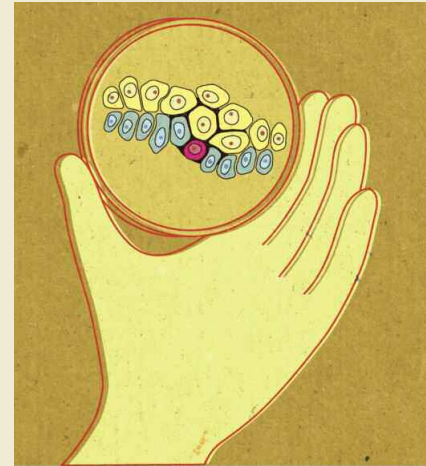


Illustration by Otto Steininger

number of former patients reunited with their caregivers.

Andrea Kessler was our first kidney-pancreas recipient. She has had her “new” organs for 20 years. She said the whole purpose of going through the long transplant process was “to get back to your life,” which for her, includes her career as a practicing attorney, and riding horses and motorcycles.

Kathryn Smith is one of the longest survivors of her rare multivisceral (multi-organ) transplant in 1999. She is now a UM/Jackson medical resident in pediatrics.

Ronnie “Rock” Walker is a former Miami Hurricanes football player who suffered from a stroke and eventually needed a heart transplant.

Cassandra Smith was born with a hole in her heart, which worsened over the years. Because of her concurrent diabetic condition, she received a heart, kidney and pancreas in 2008.

Julio Diaz received a new heart and lung a year ago. This past Christmas was his first since that gift of life, and it was one his family never thought he would see.

The world-renown Miami Transplant Institute multidisciplinary teams perform kidney, kidney-pancreas, liver, heart, heart-lung and multivisceral transplantations.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MIAMI TRANSPLANT INSTITUTE AT THE UM/JACKSON MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER, VISIT [WWW.MIAMITRANSPLANTINSTITUTE.ORG](http://WWW.MIAMITRANSPLANTINSTITUTE.ORG).



# Real Life Heroes

**EVERY DAY**, in every Jackson Health System location, more than 11,000 employees go “above and beyond” doing what they do best – saving lives. From surgeons to administrative assistants, nurses to support staff, each and every member of the Jackson family is dedicated to providing patients with the highest level of quality care.

They are the inspiration behind Jackson’s advertising and marketing campaign, “Real Heroes for Real Life Dramas,” which is featured in ads in newspapers, magazines and Playbill programs, as well as ads displayed on billboards and bus shelters, wrapped around buses, and as banners on websites.

Although all of our employees are heroes in their own unique way, the ad campaign features these 24.

*Top row, left to right:*

**Donny Dandy, Medical-Surgical Attendant:** “When transporting patients to the operating room before surgery, I do everything I can to ease their concerns. Our patients are always our priority.”

**Janelle Vega, M.D., Dermatology Resident:** “Jackson is a world-class institution that has trained some of the best doctors. The experience you get here is unparalleled.”

**Deon Wolliston, A.R.N.P., Nurse Manager:** “Jackson saved my husband’s life. After seeing the care he received, I knew that I had to be a member of the Jackson family.”

**Lynette Mena, M.S.P.T., Physical Therapist:** “I am always

excited when my patients in rehabilitation reach a milestone, such as walking again.”

**Barbara Miller, R.N., Nurse Manager:** “As the nurse manager of the surgical transplant unit, I immediately fell in love with Casey, who needed a multivisceral organ transplant. My husband and I decided to adopt her.”

**Jennifer Giral, D.P.T., Physical Therapist:** “It is very rewarding to see the patients I help get back to their families and their normal life. We do this every day.”

**Albertha Webb, Environmental Services Specialist:** “I clean the hospital and make sure it is safe for patients, visitors and employees. I am proud of what I do. I know I make a difference.”

**Abby Spurgeon, Capital Projects Project Manager:** “Every day I witness the quality care given to all Jackson patients. So when I decided to undergo weight-loss surgery, I knew I wanted it done at Jackson North Medical Center.”

**Dileep R. Yavagal, M.D., Interventional Stroke Neurologist:** “I am proud to be an integral part of Jackson’s stroke team. When someone walks out of the hospital with their paralysis gone, that is the most gratifying part of my job.”

**Adalid Gamarra, R.N., Registered Nurse:** “Each morning, I make it a priority to get to know all of my patients. I want them to know they can count on me.”

**Eddie Gomez, M.D., General Bariatric Surgeon:** “I have the honor of changing people’s lives. Using the most advanced,





BY JENNIFER MOONEY PIEDRA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIKOR.COM

TO READ THEIR ENTIRE INSPIRING STORIES, VISIT [WWW.JACKSONHEROES.COM](http://WWW.JACKSONHEROES.COM).

minimally invasive procedures, I operate on patients who desperately want to lose weight but have been unsuccessful with other methods.”

**Greg Gaski, M.D., Orthopaedic Surgery Resident:** “When it was time to decide where to pursue my residency training, the choice was easy. Jackson is one of the largest and most comprehensive medical centers in the country with an excellent academic reputation.”

*Bottom row, left to right:*

**Nelson L. Adams, M.D., Obstetrician/Gynecologist:** “In 32 years, I have delivered more than 7,000 babies. Welcoming new life into the world is the highlight of my job – and I am proud to do it at Jackson North Medical Center.”

**Norberto Molina Jr., R.N., Registered Nurse:** “When patients wake up after surgery, I am the first person they see. I help them come out of anesthesia, ease their fears and control their pain.”

**Mark Multach, M.D., Associate Chief Medical Officer:** “Jackson is known as the place to go when you need the best care available. But we’re very good at providing routine medical care as well.”

**Magalie Peña, D.S.W., Social Worker:** “I help HIV patients during their treatment and after they are discharged. I stand ready to do whatever I can to help them.”

**Nicholas Namias, M.D., Chief of Trauma:** “Nothing is better than sending someone home who would not have survived if it wasn’t for the medical care they received at Jackson.”

**Mercedes Briones, Ph.D., Child Psychologist:** “I help teens and their families who are struggling during particularly tough times. There is no better feeling than seeing them transform their lives.”

**Sam Ruiz, R.N., Pediatric Transport Team Manager:** “At any moment, I might have to travel to the Caribbean, South or Central America to pick up a sick child and bring them back to Holtz Children’s Hospital for life-saving care.”

**Rocio Garcia, R.D., Clinical Dietitian:** “I work with some of our most vulnerable patients – people awaiting organ transplantation – by helping them become nutritionally stable.”

**Maryann Graham, R.N., Clinical Educator, Emergency Room and Critical Care:** “The bond among Jackson employees always impresses me. It’s truly a family.”

**Marisol Garcia, Medicaid Specialist:** “I have the privilege of helping patients obtain financial assistance, so they can get the medical care they desperately need.”

**Suzette Clark, Pharmacy Technician:** “As a child in the Philippines, I dreamed of one day wearing a white uniform and working in a hospital. I am proud that my dreams have come true.”

**Orlando Rodriguez, M.D., Associate Medical Director of Hospitalists and Internal Medicine Services:** “When I was training at Jackson, having expert mentors was such an important part of my experience. Now I am training the physicians of the future.”



## Risk of Heart Problems Continues to Escalate for Overweight Children

**M**ore and more Americans are overweight, and more and more of our children are too. The rate of childhood obesity has tripled over the last 25 years and continues to increase. While disturbing, this is not new news.

The research results from a number of studies that are new – and quite disturbing – show that the main blood vessel of the heart, the aorta, of the average obese 13-year-old has the elasticity of a person 45 years old. The children’s aorta walls were as thick as those of a person three times their age.

This particular fact is considered a more reliable indicator of heart disease risk than cholesterol or other measures. In fact, researchers also measured the children’s blood pressure and blood lipid levels, and found they were not that much different than children who were not considered obese.

So even if your overweight child’s cholesterol level is normal, for instance, he or she might still be at risk for future heart attacks and stroke. What can a parent do?

Pediatric cardiologist Dr. Steven E. Lipshultz offers some answers.

### WHY IS A LITTLE EXTRA WEIGHT SO BAD?

A few extra pounds do not suggest obesity. However, they might show that your child gains weight easily and could benefit from modifications in diet and exercise habits.

### Meet the Doctor

Steven E. Lipshultz, M.D., is the chief of pediatrics for Holtz Children’s Hospital, and professor and chairman of pediatrics for the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. His publications in the field of pediatric cardiology include 37 book chapters, 191 papers and 183 abstracts as well as editing books, book chapters and journals.



### WHEN IS A CHILD CONSIDERED OBESE?

Body mass index (BMI) is the most widely accepted method to screen for excessive weight and obesity, because it is non-invasive and easy to obtain the height and weight measurements needed. You can go to the Centers for Disease Control website, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), and use their Child and Teen BMI Calculator.

However, BMI is not a diagnostic measure. Obesity is a result of genetic, biological, behavioral and cultural factors. BMI is an indicator that you need to consult your pediatrician or family physician.

### WHY SHOULD A PARENT BE CONCERNED?

Right here at Holtz Children’s Hospital, we are investigating not only how to define obesity and its causes, but how we can change it. We know obesity puts children at increased physical risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, breathing and orthopaedic problems, and trouble sleeping. On an emotional level, we know it is associated with a higher risk of problems such as depression, anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorder.

My colleague, Sarah Messiah, Ph.D.,

M.P.H., has shown that obesity can also affect learning. One of her results that was published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* was that prevention interventions in elementary school children have shown improvements in FCAT scores in math and reading.



### HOW CAN A PARENT HELP PREVENT EXCESSIVE WEIGHT IN THEIR CHILD?

Please consult a physician if you think your child is at risk for obesity. Most kids are still growing, so will thin out as they grow in stature.

Three basic things you can do are:

**Encourage healthy eating habits.** This includes serving smaller portions of food, drinking lots of water and limiting the consumption of sugar and saturated fat. If the entire family is eating healthier together, it will be much easier for your child to do the same.

**Look for ways to make favorite dishes healthier.** Instead of trying to introduce lots of new recipes and foods, look at what your child likes to eat and substitute healthier ingredients.

**Help kids stay active.** It would be preferred if children and teens could have at least an hour of moderate-intensity physical activity every day. Again, why not establish a “family exercise hour”? Lead by example and improve your own health at the same time.

### WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE?

Tracie L. Miller, M.D., M.S., is the director of pediatric clinical research at Holtz Children’s Hospital and the UM Miller School of Medicine. She and her team have created a one-on-one, 12-week physical activity and nutrition program called CRUNCHTIME™, which improves the child’s quality of life, is sustainable and can be followed up at home. It’s just one component of our Program for Pediatric Integrative Medicine. You can find out more about the program at <http://pediatrics.med.miami.edu>.

# “Believe in Yourself”



BY SANDRA FIEDLER

**A**s Michael Brewer effortlessly sinks a 3-point jump shot against his cousin, it's tough to believe that not long ago this 16-year-old was the epicenter of worldwide media attention as he fought for his life.

In October 2009, Michael became a household name when he was doused with rubbing alcohol and set on fire. Two-thirds of his body was burned. Local teenagers are still awaiting trial for the attack.

Today, the once excruciating pain is gone. “I’m really good,” said Michael. “I have family supporting me and a lot of people supporting me.”

His mom, Valerie, says the outpouring of kindness has helped in the whole family’s recovery. Hundreds of cards and donations came from as far away as China. She says the experience helped restore the family’s faith in people – from the stranger who wanted to donate his own skin to Michael to the Jackson Memorial Hospital staff who showed great compassion during every step of a very long and painful rehabilitation process.

“The staff is incredible. A lot of them are part of our family now,” Valerie said. “The care we received at Jackson Memorial was incredible – all the way from the maintenance people to the very top surgeons. Everyone at Jackson is wonderful. If you’re injured, if you’re sick and you need a place to go, Jackson Memorial is the place.”

Michael spent three months at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Burn Center in the Ryder Trauma Center, one of the top burn centers in the nation. He was in a drug-induced coma for five weeks. He is grateful for the staff who helped him during his most painful days, changing his bandages and keeping him looking to the future.

“They kept me concentrated, thinking positive



From the top: Michael with his grandmother, Michael in rehabilitation, Michael with his cousin and parents, Michael shooting hoops with his cousin

about myself and not thinking about the burns,” said Michael. “There are a lot of nice people, nice doctors and nurses. Anything you need, they take care of it for you.”

Nicholas Namias, M.D., medical director of the Ryder Trauma Center, was one of Michael’s burn doctors. He remembered Michael as a patient who worried about others despite his own pain.

“He’s a good kid,” said Dr. Namias. “He’s tough. He’s sweet. I still remember him pushing around the other burn patients in the little red wagon.”

Michael has scars over much of his body. He struggles with night terrors, and the family continues to see a therapist for the emotional scars that will likely take a lifetime to heal. But there is a lot of joy in the Brewer household once again, and Michael is clearly the center of it all.

He hopes to finish high school and take advantage of a four-year scholarship that was given to him by a local university. He dreams of becoming an FBI agent. Michael says this experience has taught him how strong he is.

“Being burned is the worst thing that can ever happen to a human being,” Michael said. “The best thing to do is to believe in yourself and stay strong. Think positive and just do the best you can.”



FOUNDED IN THE 1960s, THE UM/JM BURN CENTER SEES HUNDREDS OF PATIENTS EACH YEAR. IN MARCH 2008, IT COMPLETED A RIGOROUS PROCESS TO BECOME VERIFIED BY THE AMERICAN BURN ASSOCIATION (ABA) AND AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS. IT IS NOW ONE OF ONLY THREE ABA-VERIFIED BURN CENTERS IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. THE CENTER’S OUTPATIENT CLINIC, HELD FOUR DAYS A WEEK WITH ALL SUBSPECIALTIES AVAILABLE, HAS THOUSANDS OF VISITS ANNUALLY. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.JHSMIAMI.ORG](http://WWW.JHSMIAMI.ORG).

Photography by Sandra Fiedler (all present-day photos) and Lorraine Nelson (rehabilitation photo)



# Experience Saves Lives



Since 1992, the Ryder Trauma Center at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center has been saving the lives of people suffering from car accidents, burns, injuries at home or work, gunshot wounds and other critical injuries.

Ryder's patients have the lowest mortality rate when compared to similar trauma patients in Level 1 trauma centers in the United States.

Experience cannot be understated. Ryder has more dedicated trauma/critical care surgeons than any other Level 1 trauma center in the country. Our doctors have seen it all and are ready to handle anything.

This experience is the reason that the Department of Defense chose Ryder Trauma Center as its only surgical training facility for the U.S. Army. For the past 10 years, Forward Surgical Teams have trained at Ryder before being deployed to war zones.

This experience and expertise is the reason that the UM/JM Medical Center is the medical facility of choice for anyone protected by the Secret Service, including the president of the United States.

**Experience is everything in trauma care.**

**RYDER TRAUMA CENTER**

