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Our neuromedicine and heart and vascular experts lead the way in patient care.

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Hear from six employee veterans for whom sacrifice and selflessness are second nature.

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Sasha Grek, M.D., will guide hospital system clinical quality and patient safety.

COLLABORATION + INNOVATION

We're transforming the delivery of patient care.



UF HEALTH | HOSPITALITY+SERVICE

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

A fond farewell

BY TODD TAYLOR

For almost four years, I've had the privilege to serve as News+Notes editor and a member of the Strategic Communications team. This is the last edition that I'll be serving in that role, but I'm thankful to be staying with the UF Health Communications division in my new position with the Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Brain Institute at UF.

I came to UF Health with minimal knowledge of the health care industry. Over the years, I've learned more than I could have imagined, both personally and professionally. If you regularly read this column, you know that just weeks after I joined UF Health, my daughter was diagnosed with a Wilms tumor — a rare form of kidney cancer. After undergoing surgery (removing the tumor and a kidney), and months of radiation and chemotherapy, she is now almost three years in remission.

During our daughter's journey, we spent countless hours in the hospital and encountered dozens of faculty and staff members from a wide range of teams. No matter what floor of the hospital we were on or what facility we were visiting, there was a common denominator — amazing care and wonderful people.

I'll never forget my co-workers visiting us in the hospital with flowers and stuffed animals, pitching in for gift cards and offering endless support. They didn't even know me very well yet, but treated us like family.

This personal experience with a life-threatening family health issue inspired me and made me so appreciative of the amazing things that happen at UF Health every day. It has been an honor to tell your stories, to highlight your units, departments and patients, and to keep you informed about what's happening around the organization.

This edition of News+Notes has always been one of my favorites to work on, as we feature employees who are military veterans in honor of Veterans Day. I encourage you to read about these brave individuals and how UF Health benefits from their backgrounds and experiences. In this edition, we also highlight how our new heart and neuro hospitals, which open for patients on Dec. 10, will be a tremendous asset to our community and beyond.

Thank you for reading News+Notes, and for all you do to improve the lives of our patients!



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or recycle it when done.

FSC LOGO

UF HEALTH SHANDS | CARE+QUALITY

Q&A WITH THE CEO – ED JIMENEZ

Curious to know what's on the mind of our UF Health Shands CEO?



During a recent visit to the UF Health Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Institute, UF Health Shands CEO Ed Jimenez met with (from left) Jessica Grasso, financial representative; Jimmy Rice, rehab aide; and Jamie Whittaker-Watts, administrative assistant.

We caught up with CEO **Ed Jimenez** and asked him several questions for this edition of News+Notes. See how to submit your question at the bottom of the page!

What makes military veterans special?

I look at military veterans with fondness and awe. By serving our country, they have chosen to spend a portion of their life doing something for others and they typically have to sacrifice time with their family and loved ones to do so. When you look at how long many of these individuals have served, you know they don't do it begrudgingly. They are making a conscious decision to make sacrifices in their personal lives to protect us. What they do demonstrates a remarkable giving nature and it's evident in everything they do ... and this benefits their colleagues and our patients here at UF Health.

What memories do you have of our faculty and staff's response to Hurricane Irma?


I remember the faculty and staff on "Team A" coming in that day before the hurricane passed through. With backpacks and sleeping bags in tow, none of them seemed to have a

concerned look on their face. There was a determination about them. You knew they had worries — they didn't know how long they might have to stay at work or what would happen to their families and homes — but they didn't show it. As I looked in their eyes throughout the day, it was apparent they were here because it's their special calling, something they were meant to do.

Then, as "Team B" arrived to provide relief, they had a similar look of determination about them. Of course, their worries were different. Some had lost power, some had damage to their homes and most probably didn't get any sleep. But everyone was focused on coming in, relieving their teammates and caring for our patients.

It was really a remarkable couple of days. Not for what UF Health did, but for what thousands of my colleagues did.

What have you learned during the process of opening our new hospitals?

I've learned that our staff and faculty are excited about moving into a new space and they are excited about renovating the old space, and that there is a level of enthusiasm among them that is infectious. It's like a breath of fresh air. After the doors open, we will be able to speak of the new hospitals as being a part of who we are and what we do, rather than an aspirational hope. That's really going to lift our sails! 

WANT TO SUBMIT A QUESTION?

Email roseka@shands.ufl.edu and we'll consider it for an upcoming edition.

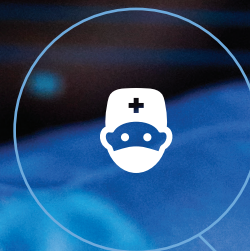
Built Around *Neuromedicine*

Patients will benefit from outstanding faculty physicians and clinical experts who collaborate across the UF Health system.

Patients will now have access to highly specialized, comprehensive outpatient treatment options and inpatient services in the same location.

Highlights include:

- In the 2016-2017 U.S. News & World Report America's Best Hospitals listing, the UF Health Shands Hospital neurology and neurosurgery specialty programs ranked first in Florida, second in the Southeast and 21st nationally among the top 50 peer programs.
- Dramatic improvements in research capabilities at UF over the last several years have resulted in many first-time treatments for brain tumors, movement disorders and other neuro-related diagnoses.
- UF Health is a leading center for deep brain stimulation based on volumes and outcomes. Our movement disorders experts perform approximately 20 DBS procedures each month.
- UF Health Shands Hospital's current Neuro ICU includes 30 beds. It will expand to offer 48 beds in the new facility. The expansion will enable our neuromedicine experts to serve more patients locally, regionally and beyond.
- Annually, UF Health neuromedicine physicians care for approximately 1,000 patients with intracerebral hemorrhages, aneurysms, subarachnoid hemorrhages, ischemic strokes and transient ischemic attacks.
- A UF College of Medicine team of physicians and scientists developed one of the world's most widely used radiosurgery systems in the 1980s. Here at UF Health, the team has used it to treat more than 5,000 patients.
- UF Health neurosurgeons perform approximately 600 brain tumor operations annually, making them one of the highest-volume academic neurosurgery teams in the country.
- Combined, the UF College of Medicine departments of neurosurgery and neurology receive more than \$35 million a year in public and private grant funding, making them among the top-funded programs in the U.S.



Nearly 600
brain tumor
operations
annually



30,000
neurology and
neurosurgery
outpatient visits
each year

32+ states send patients to UF Health Neuromedicine annually

Approximately 20 deep brain stimulation procedures performed monthly

48-bed neurointensive care unit

\$35M in funding each year

10,000 neuromedicine procedures per year

49 clinical and research faculty members

More than 50 active clinical trials

Centers of excellence/national recognition in the following areas:

- Preston A. Wells Jr. Center for Brain Tumor Therapy at UF
- UF Health Shands Comprehensive Stroke Center, designated by The Joint Commission, the American Stroke Association and the American Heart Association
- Spine Distinction Center Plus, designated by Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, designated by the National Institutes of Health
- Level 4 Epilepsy Program, designated by the National Association of Epilepsy Centers

UF Health Center for Movement Disorders and Neurorestoration

- Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence, designated by the Parkinson's Foundation
- Tourette Center of Excellence, designated by the National Tourette Syndrome Association
- Huntington's Disease Center of Excellence, designated by the Huntington's Disease Society of America
- Neuropathy Center of Excellence, designated by the Hereditary Neuropathy Foundation
- Center for a Dystonia Cure, named by Tyler's Hope
- Dystonia & Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence, named by the Bachmann-Strauss Foundation

Built Around

Heart and Vascular Care

From here forward, we are transforming the way care is delivered to patients.

The UF Health Heart & Vascular Hospital has been designed to optimize the patient experience by allowing for expanded collaboration among cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, thoracic surgeons and vascular surgeons, which will ultimately lead to better patient care.

UF Health's heart, thoracic and vascular teams are proud of the innovations and accomplishments the program offers to patients in the state of Florida and beyond, and are excited to expand faculty and staff resources with the new hospital to continue this path.

Highlights include:

- Multidisciplinary team-based care with minimally invasive approaches and close collaboration.
- Leadership and expertise of the team — we solve the tough problems other physicians can't.
- Pioneering therapies and technologies, with a series of first-in-Florida achievements.
- One of only 16 sites nationwide participating in a clinical trial for the XVIVO Lung Perfusion System, which improves the function of donor lungs.
- Nation's first computerized cardiac catheterization lab, equipped to treat adults and children.
- One of the first in Florida to implant transcatheter aortic valve replacement.
- Joint Commission-certified ventricular assist device program for disease-specific care.
- Fully accredited Chest Pain Center with Primary PCI & Resuscitation designation by the American College of Cardiology.
- Availability of clinical trials with the latest medical devices.

Florida facts and firsts for UF Health heart and vascular services:

1958	1959	1985	1994	1999	2000	2000	2004
Florida's first cardiac catheterization	Florida's first open-heart surgery	Open-heart transplant	Florida's first adult lung transplant	Florida's first radiofrequency catheter ablation for atrial fibrillation	Thoracic endovascular aortic repair	Thoracic aorta stent graft	Hybrid mini-maze treatment for atrial fibrillation





120

patient rooms equipped with the latest in heart & vascular care technology.



NEW FACILITY

The UF Health Heart & Vascular Hospital is an exceptional facility that matches the world-class care provided to UF Health heart and vascular patients. It supports the future of surgery with minimally invasive approaches, encourages collaboration among care teams and provides patients and their families with a calm and comfortable space for healing.

2010	2012	2014	2015	2015	2016	2017	2017
Fenestrated stent grafts for thoracoabdominal aneurysms	Transcatheter aortic valve procedure	Branched stent grafts for minimally invasive aortic therapy	Arch aortic stent grafts	Ex-vivo lung perfusion procedure	Ventricular assist device using latest generation HeartMate III	Aortic arch branched stent graft	Transcatheter mitral valve repair

UF HEALTH | BENEFITS+TRAINING

STAY UP TO DATE ON OUR NEW HOSPITALS

Blueprints on Bridge resources provide faculty and staff with the latest information

BY RACHEL RIVERA



On Dec. 10, we will open the UF Health Heart & Vascular Hospital and the UF Health Neuromedicine Hospital to patients. Together, the hospitals provide the Southeast's most advanced home for the care of patients with cardiovascular and neurological conditions. Several hundred faculty and staff are involved in transition activities to move services, staff and patients into these incredible facilities, specially designed to meet their needs.


Visit Blueprints on Bridge (bridge.UFHealth.org/blueprints) to access the latest information to share with co-workers and patients. This new, employee-only version of the Blueprints for Progress public site (blueprints.UFHealth.org) is a go-to location for resources about new construction, renovations, access and wayfinding across the system.

During the new hospital transition, Blueprints on Bridge is where you'll find FAQs, fact sheets, naming guidelines, maps and orientation information as well as event details. If you forget the link, just type "Blueprints" in the Bridge search bar or look under the "News & Events" tab, where you'll find links for all our print and digital newsletters and tools.

"The Bridge is accessible to all faculty and staff at UF Health, and it's a convenient location for resources to help employees navigate the new hospital transition," said **Kim Rose**, UF Health Communications strategic communications director. "We want staff to be engaged, well-informed and able to talk about what's going on at UF Health with their colleagues, families and neighbors."

For new hospital orientation and training, you'll find the link for an interactive myTraining module, which is accessible via computer or mobile device at mytraining.hr.ufl.edu.

The module, developed by UF Health Shands HR Development, enables users to navigate a main menu of different training sections: programs and services by floor, parking and access, wayfinding and an information center. Each interactive section features multimedia tools, including photos, floor plans, fact sheets, maps and an introduction video created by UF Health Communications.

Users will be able to navigate training content in any order and complete it at a self-guided pace. 

HEART, VASCULAR AND NEURO RESOURCES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

Explore Blueprints on Bridge by visiting the Bridge portal at bridge.UFHealth.org/blueprints, type "Blueprints" in the Bridge search bar or hover over "News & Events" and you'll see the

link listed on the left. To access online orientation for our new hospitals, you may also go straight to the interactive training module at mytraining.hr.ufl.edu.

UF HEALTH | BENEFITS+TRAINING

BUILDING LEADERS

Fellowship prepares nurses for leadership roles

BY KLARIZZA AGGABAO

At UF Health, we pride ourselves on having some of the most passionate nurses in the industry. To retain our nursing talent and provide avenues for growth, the Rose Rivers Emerging Leader Fellowship program is available for nurses looking to take their leadership skills to the next level.

“It was Dr. Rose Rivers’ vision to develop nurses for leadership roles,” said **Jean Bulmer, D.N.P., RN-BC**, UF Health Shands Nursing and Patient Services Nursing Education administrative director. “The program also provides fellows a better understanding of UF Health through shadowing nursing leaders.”

A graduation ceremony was held on Nov. 1 for 21 nurses who completed the one-year fellowship, which includes shadowing leaders, attending seminars and completing a leadership project.

Victoria Holley, A.S.N., R.N., RN-BC, UF Health Shands Hospital Medical/Surgical Unit 64 nurse, fills informal leadership roles on her unit and saw the fellowship as a way to transition to a formal leadership role.

“I gained a better understanding of the various leadership roles and management positions,” she said. “There was a lot of exposure to the different opportunities that mirror your goals within the fellowship.”

For **Amelia Nichols Alava, B.S.N., R.N.**, UF Health Shands Hospital Burn ICU nurse, the fellowship provided her with ways to handle difficult situations and be assertive

without being confrontational. It also gave her confidence to pursue other educational opportunities.

“Before, I was afraid to take the GRE, or graduate record examination, so I could get into a doctorate program,” Alava said. She found her courage during one of the emotional intelligence seminars in the beginning of the fellowship, and now she’s enrolled at UF for her doctorate degree in nursing practice with a specialty in acute care nursing.

To be eligible for the fellowship, applicants currently employed at UF Health are required to have worked as a registered nurse for at least two years at a minimum of 0.8 FTE, and nurses with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing receive preference.

For more information, email Bulmer at bulmej@shands.ufl.edu.

“Nurses at UF Health are so very supportive and empowered,” said **Elizabeth Swindle, M.S.N., R.N., SCR.N.**, UF Health Shands Hospital Neuro ICU nurse. “It’s not like this at other hospitals, where nurses aren’t always encouraged to speak their minds and seek opportunities for development. Anybody with an interest in nursing leadership should look into this fellowship.” +

To be eligible for the fellowship, applicants currently employed at UF Health are required to have worked as a registered nurse for at least two years at a minimum of 0.8 FTE, and nurses with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing receive preference.

For more information, email Bulmer at bulmej@shands.ufl.edu.

UF HEALTH SHANDS | EVENTS+ACTIVITIES

THINK GREEN! WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Pharmacy teammates comes up with top sustainability idea

BY JACKY SCOTT

This summer, UF Health Shands and PepsiCo™ worked together to provide UF Health Shands employees the opportunity to “Think Green!” For a chance to win a \$10,000 sustainability grant provided by PepsiCo™, employees submitted ideas to improve the environmentally responsible use of resources in their department, facility or the organization. The four finalist grant proposals received more than 800 combined votes.

With over 300 votes submitted for their idea, the UF Health Shands and PepsiCo™ Think Green sustainability grant winners were from the UF Health Shands Rehab Hospital Pharmacy team: **Marilyn Ryan, R.P.T., CPhT**, pharmacy technician, and pharmacists **Jim Friske, Pharm.D.**, **Betsy Dodd, Pharm.D.**, and **Bill Garst, Pharm.D.** Their sustainability idea is to recycle empty plastic stock pill bottles. The \$10,000 grant will go to purchase plastic recycling bins in an effort to significantly reduce plastic waste. Each winning team member also received a \$125 gift card and an Apple Watch from PepsiCo™.

“We were excited about the fantastic response to the Think Green campaign,” said **Lara Zamajtuk**, UF Health Shands Operations associate vice president. “Employees from throughout the organization submitted innovative and feasible ideas on how to improve our work environment in eco-friendly ways. Congratulations to all of our finalists and especially to our winners!”

The runner-up finalists were UF Health Shands Rehab Center physical therapists **Christine Morgan, P.T., D.P.T., S.C.S.**, and **Debi Jones, P.T., O.C.S., S.C.S.** (reducing paper waste); **John Rukstalis, RPhT, CPhT**, UF Health Shands Rehab Hospital pharmacy technician (use of electric cars); and **Joshua Hodges, M.S.N., N.I.S., R.N.**, UF Health Shands Hospital Nursing Informatics specialist (using refillable cups). PepsiCo™ awarded each runner-up finalist \$100 Visa gift cards. All prizes from PepsiCo™ are treated as taxable income and taxes will be covered.



Winning members of the UF Health Shands Rehab Hospital Pharmacy team gathered with UF Health Shands leaders and PepsiCo™ representatives to celebrate their “Think Green!” eco-friendly idea that earned a \$10,000 sustainability grant from PepsiCo™.

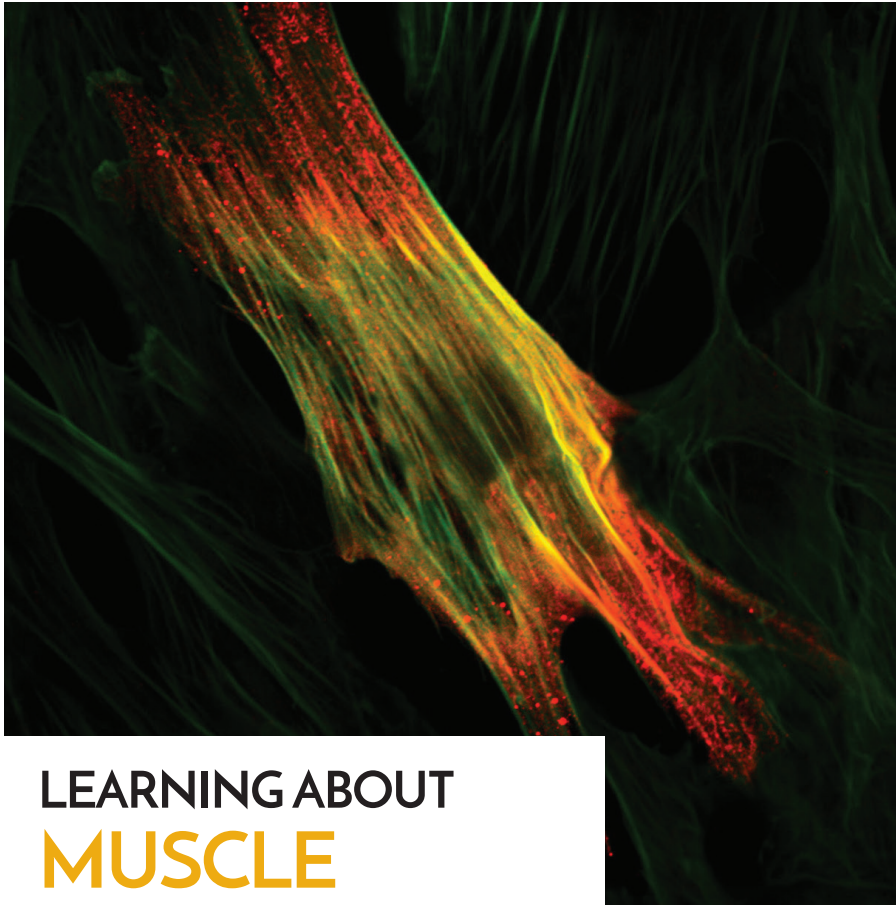
In addition to the runner-up finalists, **Laurel McKinney**, UF Health Shands Cancer Hospital Orthopaedic Surgical Unit 6 West unit assistant, and **Marsha Crane, B.S.N., RN-BC**, UF Health Shands Cancer Hospital Orthopaedic Surgical Unit 6 West clinical leader, will each be awarded \$50 Visa gift cards from PepsiCo™ for bringing light to a project that can be implemented at UF Health at no additional cost. Their sustainability idea, Project Pad, indicated that UF Health could recondition bed and chair sensor pads instead of throwing them away.

To all who submitted sustainability ideas and voted, thank you for participating in the Think Green campaign. We heard your concerns and we hope this grant effort will have long-lasting positive impacts at UF Health. ➦

UF HEALTH | RESEARCH+DISCOVERY

LAB NOTES

Check out recent research developments at UF Health

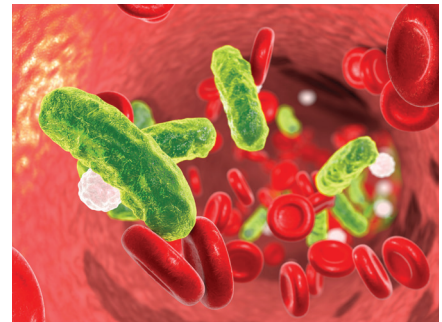


LEARNING ABOUT MUSCLE CELL REPAIR

A group led by a UF Health researcher gained a better understanding of the genetic activities that prevent muscle cells from repairing themselves. The findings apply to a rare congenital disorder known as early onset myopathy, areflexia, respiratory distress and dysphagia, or EMARDD, and have implications for other muscle disorders, including muscular dystrophy. The researchers identified a gene and mutation that function as a “switch” that prevents muscle cell proliferation in EMARDD patients. Using mouse muscle cells and mouse models, the researchers found a deficiency of a certain gene, known as *Megf10*, and the overabundance of a mutant form of this gene leads to reduced muscle cell growth and migration. ■

PROGRESS ON PARKINSON'S

A newly discovered imaging biomarker could be used to track changes in the brain associated with the progression of Parkinson's disease. The team of UF neuroscientists who made the discovery has validated the finding as part of an international multicenter study showing on diffusion MRI scans that there is an increase over one year in “free-water,” or fluid unconstrained by brain tissue, in a part of the brain in more than 100 newly diagnosed, unmedicated Parkinson's patients. This change is not seen in people without Parkinson's. Use of this noninvasive biomarker tool could lead to new ways of testing treatment of the debilitating movement disorder.



STOPPING SEPSIS

UF researchers are part of a nationwide clinical trial to evaluate whether a cancer medication can be effective against sepsis and septic shock. Sepsis is thought to blunt the immune system in ways similar to some kinds of cancer through PD-1, a protein emitted by certain cells in the body. Nivolumab, an immunotherapy drug, blocks PD-1 in cancer patients and helps the immune system recognize and destroy diseased tissue. The clinical trial seeks to determine whether blocking PD-1 can also boost the immune system in patients with severe sepsis or septic shock.

UF HEALTH | AWARDS+KUDOS

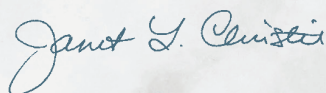
HONORING OUR VETERANS

BY NACUYA LEWIS • PHOTOS BY MINDY MILLER

Living a life of service requires selflessness and many sacrifices, but these traits come naturally to a special group of people: our colleagues who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. From battlegrounds and missions to offices and exam rooms, these individuals pride themselves on their willingness to serve others before themselves, and for that we are thankful.

At UF Health, many employees join our team after their time in the military so they can continue to assist our patients, families and the community. On the following pages, we highlight several of our colleagues who have done just that.

We thank our veterans and we are honored to have so many among us at UF Health. We encourage you to take time this Veterans Day, and every day, to acknowledge and thank our co-workers who have served and are currently serving our country.



Janet Christie
Senior Vice President, Human Resources
UF Health Shands



MARK D. CASWEL

EMT-P, A.C.S.

TRANSPORT/COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
OF HEALTH SHANDSCAIR

U.S. ARMY: 6 YEARS
LIEUTENANT

WHAT MAKES YOU PROUD ABOUT YOUR MILITARY AND HEALTH CARE SERVICE?

I was proud to be a member of our U.S. Armed Forces during the Cold War era. I am proud of my time as a paramedic and flight communicator. I am humbled to have touched so many lives in people's most dire moments, even if it was to just let them know they were not alone.

WHAT DOES BEING A VETERAN MEAN TO YOU?

Being a veteran means that you stood up and said, "I will go. I am willing to stand in the way of evil to protect those unable to protect themselves. I stand for the U.S. Constitution when forces seek its destruction."



KYLE COOK

HR DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
UF HEALTH SHANDS HUMAN RESOURCES

U.S. ARMY: 5 YEARS
SERGEANT

**PLEASE SHARE A MEMORABLE STORY FROM
YOUR MILITARY EXPERIENCE.**

While in Afghanistan, a squad leader from my platoon was injured during an operation. I received a field promotion to squad leader and led nine men on eight separate combat operations. Being thrust into this level of leadership during wartime shaped me in a way that few people get to experience.

WHAT DOES BEING A VETERAN MEAN TO YOU?

Joining the military changed my life. My personal experience gave me the opportunity to do things I had never dreamed of doing. I will carry the memories and scars from my service for the rest of my life. I am grateful and proud to be a veteran.

ALPA DESAI D.O.

UF COLLEGE OF MEDICINE PHYSICIAN
AND MEDICAL DIRECTOR
UF HEALTH FAMILY MEDICINE AT
JONESVILLE AND UF HEALTH FAMILY
MEDICINE AT HAMPTON OAKS

U.S. AIR FORCE: 7 YEARS
MAJOR

PLEASE SHARE A MEMORABLE STORY FROM YOUR MILITARY EXPERIENCE.

I was a second-year family medicine resident when the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 occurred. I remember what a major change it meant to be an active duty service member after that day. In the months following 9/11, I witnessed numerous friends, colleagues and patients prepare for deployment to serve in various combat units. It truly was an altogether unique experience witnessing the events of 9/11 unfold as a military service member.

WHAT DOES BEING A VETERAN MEAN TO YOU?

I am very proud of the years I spent with the U.S. Air Force. I gained valuable leadership experience and was provided with unique opportunities for personal and professional growth during my military service. It also was an honor to be part of an organization made up of people dedicated to first serving the needs of their country over themselves.

DAVID SHIN M.D.

NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY RESIDENT PHYSICIAN
UF COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

U.S. ARMY: 6 YEARS
CAPTAIN

PLEASE SHARE A MEMORABLE STORY FROM YOUR MILITARY EXPERIENCE.

I was selected to be a “patient” during a mass casualty evacuation exercise. I was placed on a stretcher, loaded onto a Black Hawk helicopter and evacuated to the main field hospital. The thrill of taking off and watching the dusty hills of Camp Bullis fly by was an experience I’ll never forget.

WHAT DOES VETERANS DAY MEAN TO YOU?

As the son of immigrants who were refugees during the Korean War, I’ve always felt a strong loyalty to this country that afforded me limitless opportunity. Joining the military was simply what I needed to do to give back to this country that has already provided my family with so much.



JILL M. SUMFEST M.D., M.S., FACS

PRESIDENT AND MEDICAL DIRECTOR
GATORCARE

U.S. ARMY RESERVES: 13 YEARS
MAJOR

**WHAT ARE SOME SKILLS YOU'VE USED IN BOTH YOUR
MILITARY CAREER AND YOUR TIME AT UF HEALTH?**

The military is the ultimate matrix environment. Learning to lead by influence in situations where I did not have overarching authority was invaluable.

**PLEASE SHARE A MEMORABLE STORY FROM YOUR
MILITARY EXPERIENCE.**

Wearing a white coat over combat fatigues!

WHAT DOES VETERANS DAY MEAN TO YOU?

The Army provided me with an opportunity to go to medical school and complete my surgical training without going into debt. I will be eternally grateful for the experience and training I received.

ROQUE PEREZ-VELEZ

P.E., DSHS


PROJECT MANAGER
UF HEALTH SHANDS FACILITIES

U.S. ARMY RESERVES: 24 YEARS
LIEUTENANT COLONEL

**PLEASE SHARE A MEMORABLE STORY FROM
YOUR MILITARY EXPERIENCE.**

I remember being in Baghdad, Iraq in 2007 and meeting a great Marine officer. Fast-forward four years later and I bumped into the same Marine in Kandahar, Afghanistan. No matter time or distance, it felt like we had just met yesterday!

**WHAT ARE SOME SKILLS YOU'VE USED IN BOTH
YOUR MILITARY CAREER AND TIME AT UF HEALTH?**

Some of the skills are leadership, time management and prioritizing work and effort ... and the principles of ethical behavior and selfless service — putting others before myself. 



UF HEALTH SHANDS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL | HOSPITALITY+SERVICE

COMFORT CLOTHING

Teen collects new pajamas for young patients

BY ISAAC HELLER



(From left) Lindsay Krieg, UF Health Shands Volunteer Services director, and Peyton Dees, founder of Peyton's PJs, organize pajamas and underwear donations for our children's hospital.

Gainesville High School senior Peyton Dees is making a big impact on UF Health Shands Children's Hospital patients and families in a unique way.

Through her community service project, Peyton's PJs, Dees collects children's new pajamas and underwear and donates them to inpatient units at our children's hospital.

"I wanted to come up with something for the children at the hospital that maybe hadn't been thought of before," Dees said. "I wanted to provide them with something that will make them feel more comfortable."

The project began last October and hasn't lost steam — a donation has been made each month since then through Peyton's PJs, resulting in hundreds of clothing items for our pediatric patients.

In a testament to her dedication, during a recent celebration for her birthday Dees asked friends and family to skip gifts and instead donate pajamas for her project.

"She really made an effort to figure out what our patients in the children's hospital needed and then found a way to meet that need," said **Lindsay Krieg**, UF Health Shands Volunteer Services director.

Amy Wegner, CCLS, CTRS, UF Health Shands Children's Hospital Child Life Program director, has seen firsthand the impact Peyton's PJs has had on patients and staff. She said nurses appreciate that the pajamas are readily available and bagged and labeled by size, something Peyton does herself.

"We all get excited when the pajamas come in and truly enjoy being able to offer them to the patients and families here at the hospital," Wegner said.

Karen Dees, ARNP, M.S.N., R.N.C., Peyton's mother and a UF Health Shands Children's Hospital NICU nurse practitioner, said, "We've received many of our donations from our friends and family and hope to reach more people to keep this great cause going." 📧



TO DONATE NEW PAJAMAS OR UNDERWEAR FOR PEYTON'S PJS, CONTACT DEES AT PEYTONDEES36@GMAIL.COM.

UF HEALTH SHANDS | CARE + QUALITY

NEW CHIEF QUALITY OFFICER NAMED FOR HOSPITAL SYSTEM

CQO will provide strategic direction for quality and safety

BY KIM ROSE

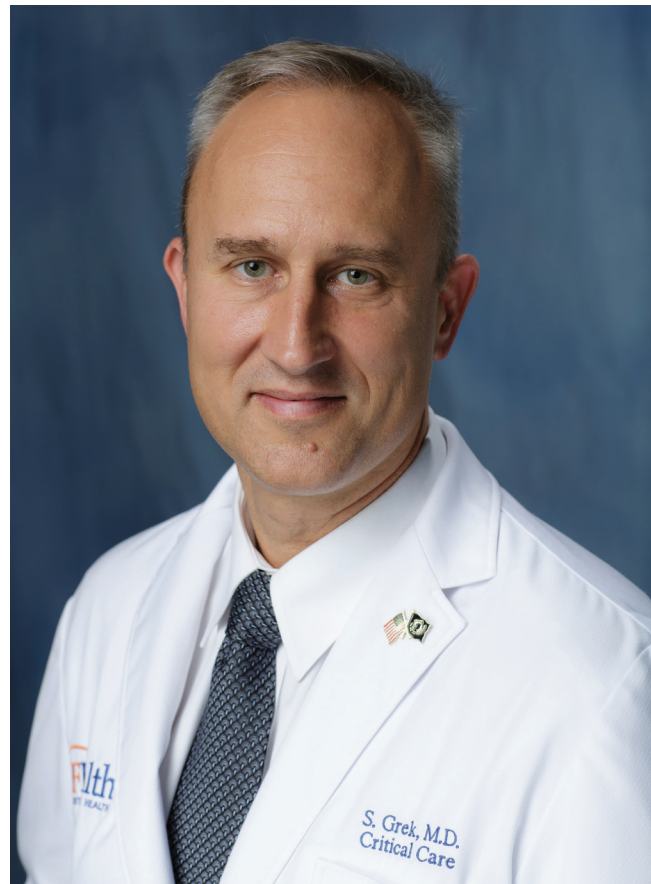
Sasha Grek, M.D., has been named chief quality officer for the UF Health Shands hospitals and associated clinical programs.

Grek joined UF in 2010 and is a UF College of Medicine clinical assistant professor of anesthesiology and critical care medicine. His interests focus on trauma and cardiac critical care, in addition to regulatory affairs and compliance. He began the new quality position on Nov. 1 in addition to his College of Medicine appointments.

In this quality leadership role reporting to Parker Gibbs, M.D., chief medical officer for UF Health Shands, Grek will provide strategic oversight for quality and patient safety improvement efforts. He will collaborate with staff in clinical risk management, accreditation, patient experience and clinical analytics through the UF Health Sebastian Ferrero Office of Clinical Quality and Patient Safety. In addition, the CQO will support and work with the physician directors of quality and quality liaisons across the organization.

Grek will guide organizational efforts to achieve outstanding performance on key quality and safety metrics, integrate and engage residents and other learners in quality and safety work, engage patients and families in quality, help maintain a positive culture of safety and be a catalyst for shared learning. He will also promote a unified approach between executive leaders, nursing and operations teams and College of Medicine clinical faculty and residents to achieve quality and safety goals.

Dr. Grek is also the chief of surgical critical care and site director for the critical care medicine fellowship program at the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center of North Florida/South Georgia. He earned his medical degree, residency and fellowship at the UF College of Medicine, and he has an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from Florida State University. He is a member of the American College of Health Care Executives and the Society of Critical Care Medicine. ■

*Sasha Grek, M.D.*

UF HEALTH SHANDS | CARE+QUALITY

HURRICANE IRMA: WEATHERING THE STORM TOGETHER

UF Health family bands together for emergency response

BY JACKY SCOTT



As Hurricane Irma moved north through Florida on Sunday, Sept. 10, and Monday, Sept. 11, more than 1,500 additional UF Health team members from our hospitals, outpatient practices and colleges in Gainesville and Jacksonville joined the teams who usually would work these days to respond with precision, composure and determination.

Thank you to everyone who helped prepare in advance, came in to work and stayed overnight and beyond your regular shifts in the hospital, taking care of patients and each other. Your teamwork was fantastic. +



Above: The UF Health Shands Hospital emergency operations command center opened at 11 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 10.

Bottom: UF Health Shands Children's Hospital residents worked through the night as Hurricane Irma passed through the Gainesville area.

ELDERCARE OF ALACHUA COUNTY | FINANCE+FUNDRAISING

SUPPORT SENIORS IN NEED THROUGH ELDERCARE HOLIDAY DRIVE



Volunteers gathered around donations from last year's ElderCare Holiday Drive, which assisted more than 250 area seniors.

Family, friends, food and gifts are a few thoughts that come to mind when we think about the holidays. Unfortunately, many Alachua County seniors struggle financially and emotionally during the holiday season.

Throughout the year, ElderCare of Alachua County assists seniors in need and each fall it hosts the annual ElderCare Holiday Drive. Pitch in by dropping off nonperishable foods, cleaning supplies and personal care items. Last year, faculty and staff at UF Health assisted more than 250 area seniors in need through the drive. Volunteers from around the organization helped package and deliver the supplies.

This year's drive begins in mid-November and there's still time to donate. For more information, look for Shands News emails, search the Bridge or call 352-265-0680, ext. 44832.

ElderCare is a grant- and donation-funded agency that provides home and community-based services for seniors in our area and is operated by UF Health Shands.



GET YOUR FLU VACCINATION TODAY!

The flu vaccination deadline has passed, but it's not too late to get your no-cost vaccination to protect our patients and community. Those without this year's vaccination must now wear a surgical mask in patient care areas through April 30. The policy went into effect Oct. 31.

For the following employees, no-cost flu shots are available through UF Health Shands Occupational Health Services, or OHS. Please show your work ID badge.

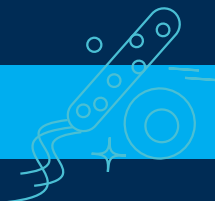
- **UF Health Shands employees and volunteers**
- **UF Health Physicians employees**
- **UF College of Medicine faculty physicians, residents and fellows**

- **Credentialed ARNPs**
- **Credentialed physician assistants**
- **Credentialed medical staff**

OHS is open from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and located on the first floor of UF Health Shands Hospital, Room 1004.

Other UF faculty and staff may contact the UF Student Health Care Center regarding flu vaccinations.

Visit Flu Central at bridge.UFHealth.org/flu for more details.





TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO CARE AT UF HEALTH

The UF Health Integrative Medicine team takes a multifaceted approach to health by focusing not only on patients' physical health, but also their emotional and spiritual health.

Dedicated to understanding each patient's unique needs, the integrative medicine team offers detailed and specialized assessments to help achieve optimum health. By incorporating stress-reducing services like yoga, meditation, medical acupuncture and massage therapy with scientific disciplines, patients can experience well-being in multiple areas of life.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 352-265-WELL (9355) or visit UFHealth.org/integrativemedicine.

BENEFITS OPEN ENROLLMENT: NOV. 6-DEC. 1

Benefits Open Enrollment for UF Health Shands employees is underway and open through Dec. 1. Take this opportunity to review your current plan and be sure you are enrolled in the benefits that best suit you and your family's needs for 2018.

Visit the Bridge homepage, hover over "Employee Services," click on "Employee and Manager Self-Service," sign in using your network User ID and password, click "Benefits" and then click on the benefits open enrollment link. Be sure to hit "submit" if you make any changes to your current elections or the changes will not save.

Enrollers are available in the UF Health Shands Hospital Atrium and offsite locations to answer questions and provide guidance.

On Dec. 17, HR will ask employees to review their benefits summary for their 2018 plan year elections. In Employee and Manager Self-Service, click on "Benefits Summary" and enter date 01/01/2018, select GO. You will see your Benefits 2018 elections confirmed here. If there are any discrepancies in your plan, please call the UF Health Shands Benefits office at 352-265-0043.



UF HEALTH SHANDS | CARE+QUALITY

TAKE THIS YEAR'S COMPLIANCE AWARENESS SURVEY!

To kick off 2018, UF Health Compliance Services will celebrate Compliance Awareness Month. Starting Jan. 1, the annual Compliance Awareness Survey and various activities throughout the month will help educate faculty and staff about compliance, privacy and ethics.

The survey helps measure organizational awareness and effectiveness of the UF Health Compliance Program. It helps the team identify its strengths and areas for improvement, and is another mechanism to confidentially and anonymously report concerns.

We encourage all employees to participate in the Compliance Awareness Month activities. Your feedback is very important! Keep a look out for Shands News emails and read more about the survey on the Compliance and Privacy Bridge site under the Employee Services tab.