

January 2024

# THE INSIDER

Employee news for Coffey Health System

## Johnston receives her second DAISY Award

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"Character is a journey, not a destination." William J. Clinton



## NOTES FROM JOBEN

**A**s we emerged from the haze of the pandemic, 2023 saw an exciting shift in healthcare. In many ways, COVID broke down silos and brought all disciplines together. Within individual hospitals, departments pitched in to help in any way possible. Around the world, hospitals reached out to each other to create a safety net for patients. And communities stepped up to support exhausted healthcare workers and provide desperately needed supplies whenever possible.

Have those days passed? Some would say yes. But I believe that COVID-era collaboration continues, though it isn't always rewarded as it should be. Within our own four walls, we have multi-disciplinary teams working together to build a more robust, efficient Coffey Health System. Representatives from all departments participate in daily safety huddles to quickly report issues and identify the first steps toward correction. Our new Associate Advisory Council uses the shared governance model to give voice to staff throughout CHS. It provides opportunities for engagement to all members of the CHS family.

Marketing Director Tracy Jones has developed a collaborative marketing committee to identify and prioritize projects and messaging. By weighing topics with input from leaders throughout CHS, the marketing calendar can align with the strategic plan and take better advantage of our strengths. Along these same lines, leadership team members are working with Employee Health Nurse Linsey Knipp to conduct environmental rounds. Why, you ask? Because having more eyeballs and different perspectives creates a more thorough inspection of physical spaces. We get accustomed to broken trim or scuffed flooring in our workspaces, but fresh eyes can pick up on easily overlooked issues before they become hazards.

We have countless examples of this type of internal collaboration. Still, I can't overemphasize the importance of critical relationships with other hospitals and organizations. Our partnership with Newman Regional Health in Emporia is a shining example of hospital collaboration. Beyond sharing an electronic medical record system, we have built one-on-one relationships that benefit both organizations. Every week, peers from our two hospitals brainstorm solutions to issues far beyond the EMR. We support each other, and our patients and communities see the rewards.

On a local level, collaborative partnerships are making long-term improvements in the lives of patients and families. Our obstetrics, speech, and case management departments are working alongside the Coffey County Health Department, Coffey County Library, and Coffey County Breastfeeding Coalition to offer a Mom & Infant Support Group. By combining resources and talents, this group will undoubtedly make a difference in the participants' lives.

Sometimes, the rewards of collaboration are seen immediately. Sometimes, they are seeds planted that will grow to benefit others in the years to come. Look around you. You'll see collaboration throughout Coffey Health System. If you don't, let's talk. I would love to see everyone engaged in the collaborative process. There is definitely room for you around the table.

  
Joben Rieth  
Chief Executive Officer

## Garcia named Chief Nursing Officer

Suzanne Garcia, R.N., B.S.N., is Coffey Health System's new Chief Nursing Officer.

"Time and again, Suzanne has proven herself to be an exceptional leader," said Chief Executive Officer Joben Rieth. "Her deep knowledge of the nursing field and her calm demeanor make her an excellent fit for the CNO position."

She brings two decades of nursing experience and has risen steadily in leadership positions since joining CHS

in 2018 as a med/surg and obstetrics nurse. Suzanne ended 2013 in dual roles as Director of Nursing at Coffey County Hospital and Operator at The Meadows.



**Suzanne Garcia**

Before her tenure here, Suzanne served as Hospice Case Manager at Newman Regional Hospital. She spent fifteen years at Holiday Resort in Emporia, advancing from resident care to Director of Nursing.

She is also a Certified Nurse Aide Instructor and Certified Medication Aide for the State of Kansas. She's held this certification and taught classes for ten years.

Suzanne earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Tabor College in 2016.

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Joben Rieth                      Tracy Jones  
Chief Executive Officer      Director of Marketing

Submit ideas or items for consideration in The Insider by contacting the marketing office at (620) 364-4507 or tjones@coffeyhealth.org.

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# Board hears 340B update and recommends sale of land

Coffey Health System is optimizing its 340B pharmacy program to provide more options for uninsured or underinsured patients and enhanced revenue for the hospital.

During the December meeting of the CHS Board of Trustees, coordinator Samantha Kuhlmann explained that the program generated \$677,789 in revenue in 2023. Since qualifying for the program in 2018, CHS has seen a \$5.4 million influx.

340B is a national program funded by drug company discounts, not federal dollars. In addition to benefiting hospitals in vulnerable communities, the program provides discounted prescriptions to patients through participating pharmacies.

"We've taken a good look at how to manage the program, and now we can focus on growth," Kuhlmann said. "You're going to see more pharmacies added soon. We analyzed all the prescriptions we filled electronically and will partner with more pharmacies throughout the area. We were also able to obtain a different type of contract. Before this, we were on a flat-fee basis, which was a disadvantage with our lower-volume pharmacies. Now, we partner with them for a percentage, which benefits our patients, the pharmacies, and us."

After months of discussions with the county, the board moved to recommend to the Board of Coffey County Commissioners the sale of 4.9 acres southeast of The Meadows.

Within the consent agenda, the board approved expenditures of \$593,929. 56 and monthly medical staff credentialing updates. Nurse Practitioner Myra Richards and Consulting Pediatric Cardiologist Samuel Brescia, M.D. were re-appointed. Nurse Anesthetist Larry Finley with CCI Anesthesia resigned privileges as the hospital

no longer needed his services now that full-time staffing is available.

Chief Medical Officer John Shell also reported that medical staff re-elected officers to their long-standing positions: Shell, chair; Chris Jarvis, vice-chair; and Jeff Sloyer, secretary/treasurer.

The board approved a policy for obtaining records under the Kansas Open Records Act. The policy provides detailed information regarding formats, costs, and timelines. Copies are available by request to Freedom of Information Officer Rhonda Beets.

The board entered two executive sessions to discuss personnel matters of non-elected staff regarding the CEO evaluation. The first session lasted 15 minutes, and the second lasted 20 minutes.

Seven members of the board were present: Peter Allegre, Perry Chapman, Jeff Clark, Steve Hopkins, JoAnn Osburn, Judy Reese, and Dennis Young. Jodi Thomas attended via phone. Trustee Jim Dale passed away in November, and his position had yet to be re-appointed at the time.

## Coffey County Commission appoints four new CHS trustees

In their first meeting of the new year, the Coffey County Commission appointed Mike Abendroth, Burlington, to fill the CHS trustee position held by Jim Dale, who passed away in November.

Eric Ervin and Arden Payer were appointed to fill the positions vacated by JoAnn Osburn and Dennis Young (who opted not to reapply). Bob Fleming was appointed to Judy Reese's position.

*CHS is governed by a nine-member board of trustees. These individuals volunteer to serve and are appointed by the county in three-year terms. We are immensely grateful to JoAnn Osburn, Judy Reese, and Dennis Young who gave a combined 21 years of leadership. They stood beside us through the ups and downs of healthcare and the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic. We wish JoAnn, Judy, and Denny all the best!*



## Hospital Earns Performance Leadership Award

The Chartis Center for Rural Health has once again recognized Coffey County Hospital, this time with a 2023 Performance Leadership Award for excellence in quality. This award honors the top quartile performance.

"We've been recognized the past two years for our quality measures, but this honor takes a different perspective. It looks at our role as an active participant and leader within our community and state," said Coffey Health System Chief Executive Officer Joben Rieth. "I am exceedingly proud of our commitment to our communities—as an organization and as individuals."

Chartis bases the Performance Leadership Awards on the results of the Chartis Rural Hospital Performance INDEX®, the industry's most comprehensive and objective assessment of rural hospital performance.

*I am exceedingly proud of our commitment to our communities—as an organization and as individuals.*

Joben Rieth

associations, and state offices of rural health around the country to measure and monitor performance across several areas impacting hospital operations and finance.

"Wherever we go in rural America, we witness first-hand the commitment, determination, and compassion with which rural hospitals serve their communities. Rural healthcare truly is mission-driven," said Michael Topchik, National Leader, The Chartis Center for Rural Health. "This National Rural Health Day, let us recognize the efforts of this year's Performance Leadership Award winners and all those driven to deliver high-quality care throughout rural communities."





# Johnston & Denney earn special recognition

Four Coffey Health System associates were recognized on December 19 with the DAISY Award, BEE Award, and service milestone honors.

## DAISY Award

Registered Nurse Michele Johnston earned her second DAISY Award for extraordinary nurses. The award is part of the DAISY Foundation's international program to recognize the super-human efforts nurses perform every day.

Michele was nominated by a patient's family for her compassion during their father's final days. The nomination reads: "Michele went above and beyond for our family during my dad's final week of life before going home on hospice. She showed my dad & family so much compassion and truly cared for my dad. She made the hardest week for our family a little easier. Once my dad passed, she showed up at his funeral to support us through such a hard day. We truly couldn't have made it through such a horrible time without her."

In her 30-year nursing career at Coffey County Hospital, Michele has touched countless lives. She is a trusted advocate for her patients. As a result, she has earned the utmost respect of the medical staff.

"Michele has a sincere concern for our patients' well-being and brings that compassion every day to work," said Chief Medical Officer John Shell, M.D.

Patients, families, and colleagues nominated three other exceptional nurses for their skill and compassion: Rachel Adams, hospital

nurse; Kirby Mangels, emergency room nurse; and Shelly Moss, patient relations specialist, care coordinator, and utilization review nurse. All nominees receive a bouquet of daisies and a unique pin to adorn their ID badges.



All CHS registered nurses are eligible for DAISY Award nominations. To nominate a nurse for recognition, visit [www.coffeyhealth.org/patient-experience](http://www.coffeyhealth.org/patient-experience).

"Simply having someone take the time to write a thoughtful nomination for a nurse is—in and of itself—worthy of acknowledgment to the nurse," said CHS DAISY Award Coordinator Shelly Moss. "Special pins are presented to all nominees to recognize their work. These pins also help to build awareness

of The DAISY Award and ensure that meaningful recognition goes on all year long."

## BEE Award

Coffey County Hospital Environmental Services Technician Shelley Denney received the BEE Award for embodying the award's motto, "Being Excellent Everyday."

Shelley's attention to detail and warm, welcoming spirit were recognized by a colleague who wrote: "Shelley is always demonstrating a caring and thoughtful demeanor. She meets all who pass her with a smile. Upon arriving each day, she checks my room for cleanliness. She stops in without being asked, picks up trash, sweeps, and checks the laundry. This is done daily without being asked... When nursing needs rooms rearranged and extra cleaning done, Shelley jumps right in and helps move things then cleans quickly



and thoroughly without a noted complaint. Thank you, for you're always kind and sweet (and you do a) thorough job. Your hard work doesn't go unnoticed and certainly is not forgotten."

All CHS associates (except registered nurses) are eligible for the BEE Award, including clinical and non-clinical staff.



"The pandemic helped emphasize that environmental services staff are the unsung heroes of any healthcare organization. Their job is crucial to patient care and safety," Chief Executive Officer Joben Rieth said. "We are fortunate to have Shelley Denney on our team and happy to recognize her positive spirit."

Shelley has been part of our CHS family for six years, first at Sunset Manor and now at the hospital.

BEE nominees included Registered Dietitian Denise Hamilton; Certified Nurse Aide Kacey Hoch, Nutritional Services Aide Blake Schulte, and Patient Care Coordinator Erika Steffens.

## Service Awards

During the December 19 presentation, CHS also recognized colleagues who attained milestone work anniversaries in the fourth quarter of 2023. Family Practice Physician John Shell, M.D., and Director of Revenue Cycle Angela Blaufuss were honored for 30 years of service.

"Work - place longevity is hard to find in today's world, yet these two people have a combined 60 years of service to the Coffey County community," Rieth said. "Dr. Shell and Angela have touched countless lives in their careers



at Coffey Health System, and we congratulate them both."

Ultrasound/ECHO Technologist Kylie Linsey and Paramedic Doug George also attained five years each but could not be present.



All CHS associates are eligible for the DAISY or BEE Awards, and the nomination process is quick and easy!

Use the QR code or visit [www.coffeyhealth.org/patientexperience](http://www.coffeyhealth.org/patientexperience) and answer a few questions about how your nominee goes above and beyond for our patients, residents, and teammates! If you have questions, please visit with Shelly Moss or Suzanne Garcia.

## Voice of the Volunteers



Thank you to everyone who supported the "Donations for Hero Dogs" project. Friends of Coffey Health System (the hospital auxiliary) collected an impressive \$5,774.30 this year. In addition to monetary donations, students from all schools in Coffey County made cards and letters for the troops, and a 4-H club collected doggie treats.

This is the 15th year for the project, which started as a way to brighten the holidays for Kansas troops stationed overseas. More than 1,400 boxes have been shipped through the program. During the pandemic, the auxiliary partnered with the U.S. War Dogs Association and began collecting monetary donations to meet the specific needs of military canines and their handlers.

We're proud of Friends of CHS and their important work in the hospital and the community year-round!

## Employee Health Scoop

Watch for some really exciting news coming soon! We're hard at work developing an **associate wellness plan** with lots of great perks for you.

If you have ideas or suggestions, I'd love to hear them!



Linsey Knipp, RN  
Director of Quality and Risk Management  
Infection Preventionist  
Employee Health

## New Physician Assistant joins ER team



Physician Assistant Josh Sweet joined the CHS family in December. He brings a wealth of healthcare experience to the emergency department, including five years of emergency medicine, eight years in an orthopedic practice, and six as a paramedic.

He earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Missouri Southern State University in 2012 and his masters in physical assistant studies from Missouri State University in 2014.

## Sowder appointed billing office supervisor



Charlene Sowder is CHS's new billing office supervisor.

She has had multiple roles within the department over the past eleven years, beginning as a payment poster and moving into a billing role for all technical charges.

Prior to employment at CHS, Charlene was in the banking industry.



*Benjamin Matthew*

Nurse Practitioner **Ashley Beying** and her husband Mike welcomed Benjamin Matthew to their family on November 28. He weighed five pounds, nine ounces, and his three big brothers welcomed him home.



*Orin Neal*

**James Phelps**, materials, and his wife Marianne welcomed a son on November 22. Orin Neal weighed seven pounds, five ounces.

## Condolences

Our hearts are heavy with tragic losses in the CHS family over the past several weeks. Our thoughts are with the families and loved ones.

Just weeks after his retirement from the facilities team, Garold Johnson passed away on December 17. Our prayers are with Pat and their family.

Two former CHS volunteers died recently. Georgette Armstrong passed in November and Judy Romary passed away on January 18.

Former Clinic Receptionist Sharon White passed away on January 14.

Trustee Jim Dale passed away in November. Jim was passionate about Coffey Health System throughout his term on the Coffey County Commission and then eagerly accepted the appointment to the CHS Board of Trustees. The Dale family and his son-in-law Jeff Clark (also a CHS trustee) are in our thoughts.

Makyli Walters' and Maycie Hegwald's grandmother recently passed away.

Former Radiology Technologist Faye Schmidt left this world on December 5.

Information Technology Director Paul Broyles's mother sadly passed away recently.

Physical Therapist Joan Kuhlmann and Director of Informatics Samantha Kuhlmann mourn the loss of their father-in-law and grandfather, Joe Kuhlmann.



"All for one" is a monthly feature in *The Insider* to share information about news in the lives of the CHS family. We share life's happiest moments and feature ways that we are pulling together to help colleagues in times of need. Please call Tracy at Ext. 4195 or send information to [tjones@coffeyhealth.org](mailto:tjones@coffeyhealth.org).





Since 2012, High 5 for Mom & Baby has been helping Kansas hospitals and birth centers adopt five evidence-based maternity care practices, along with supporting policies, proven to help ensure breastfeeding success. We're proud of our **obstetrics department** for earning this continued recognition!

Thank you to the **facilities team** for cleaning parking lots after our recent snow. Rehab parking lot was nice and clear.

**Gaynel Ventura and Jaye Magtibay** have gone far above and beyond, working many extra hours to help the lab while we have been short staffed. Thank you very much for all your help!

Santa has some pretty great elves at CHS! Thank you to:

- The **soup and chili cook-off participants**. Congratulations to **Craig Stukey, Stephanie Bess, and Casey Lyons** for their wins!
- The **Associate Advisory Council** and everyone who participated in the Holiday Throwdown and Silent Auction.
- **Stacy Augustyn** for the Turkey Hunt and "Foley," our own special Elf on the Shelf.
- **Mike Danaher, Cole Manrose, Jesse Presley, John Shell, Chris Jarvis, Jeff Sloyer, Joben Rieth, Matt Lambert, Kaleston Rieth, Amy and Tyler Osner** for representing CHS in Burlington's Christmas parade.
- **Rhonda Beets and Tracy Jones** for setting up the Christmas trees at the ER and main entrances.

- The **facilities team** for hanging the wreaths at each entrance and the swag atop the marquee.
- And **everyone** who helped to make the holidays special for our co-workers, patients, residents, and families.

**Holly Peters** has been working extra weekend to help the lab cover vacations. Thank you so much for all your help!



Jean Albeita  
Pharmacy



Tera Chapman  
Obstetrics



James Edwards  
EMS



Amber Holland  
EMS



Tammy Little  
Human Resources



Cole Manrose  
EMS



Misty Short  
Cardio-pulmonary



Josh Sweet, PA  
ER

## January Observances

### CRNA Week

Jan. 21-26

## Job Openings

### Clinical Positions

Advanced Practice Providers - Clinic & ER  
CMA - The Meadows  
Medical Lab Technologist (MLT or MT)  
Paramedic  
Paramedic Team Lead  
Patient Care Coordinator/Front Office Float  
Patient Care Coordinator - Clinic  
RN's - Clinic, ER, Med/Surg, OB  
Scrub Tech or LPN  
Ultrasound Tech

### Non-Clinical Positions

Cook - The Meadows  
Cook - CCH (PT)  
Maintenance Tech  
Patient Access Coordinator

Visit [coffeyhealth.org/careers](http://coffeyhealth.org/careers) for detailed information and requirements. For more information, call Ext. 4254.

Here is what our hospital patients are saying.

# 2023 HCAHPS Scores

Domains & Questions	Top box %	Percentile RANK
Rate hospital 0-10	89%	96th
*Would recommend the hospital	84%	91st
Communication with Nurses	89%	95th
Response of Hospital Staff	77%	91st
Communication with doctors	86%	87th
Hospital Environment	78%	91st
Communication about medicines	67%	83rd
Discharge information	95%	98th
Care Transitions	66%	95th

*\*Survey items in the top 10 priority index*

## Anniversaries

Our employees are our greatest resource. Each month, we include a list of employees who will celebrate their anniversary with Coffey Health System. Here's to each of you, and thank you for your service to our patients!

### December

**Belinda Link** 44 years  
**James Turner** 16 years  
**Melissa Davis** 13 years  
**April Cox** 12 years  
**Kelly Petit** 10 years  
**Laura Tovar-Ornelas** 7 years  
**Craig Stukey** 5 years  
**Ashley Cole, Bridget Cox, Ryan McAllister** 3 years  
**Terrie Strawder, Gaynel Ventura** 2 years  
**Rylee Mattheis, Nichole Shaver, Benjamin Smith, Tammy Brown** 1 year

### January

**Earlyne Crooks** 46 years  
**Kelly Davidson** 45 years  
**Leslie Mahoney** 35 years  
**Toby Paige** 33 years  
**Joan Kuhlmann** 26 years  
**Jana Morray** 25 years  
**Debra Huntsman** 19 years  
**Diane Werner** 15 years  
**David Rector** 10 years  
**Elaine Weston** 7 years  
**June Martin-Reno, Myra Richard** 6 years  
**Michael Collins** 5 years  
**Sabrina Graham** 3 years  
**Samantha Erps, Joben Rieth, Ashley Lingenfelter** 2 year  
**Todd Brown, M.D., Jhay Magtibay, Kirby Mangels, Olivia Young** 1 year

# When I knew...



During my student teaching placement, I realized I was not in the right field and felt lost. My Dad encouraged me to look into speech pathology due to the high need at the school and medical level. It didn't take long before I was hooked and knew this is what I wanted to do. What I love most about the medical setting is the variety of patients that I see in a day, ranging from newborn to geriatric with a wide range of diagnoses and needs. This includes a recent certification in lactation counseling. I have worked in the medical field for almost 10 years, with over 7 of those years at CHS. Since CHS did not have speech therapy, I was able to build this program from the ground up to match one of the best physical therapy and occupational therapy departments in the area. This also allowed me to be closer to my child, now children, and become more of an involved presence in their life.

Jessica Jones  
Speech Language Pathologist