

# THE BULLETIN

VOLUME 67 • NUMBER 4



*Mercer University School of Medicine has officially moved into its new campus in Columbus. Please join us for the public dedication ceremony and community open house, which is scheduled for April 22 at 1:30 p.m., to coincide with the University's Board of Trustees meeting in Columbus.  
(Read more on page 13)*

APRIL 2022

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## Contents

President’s Message .....	4
Hospital News .....	6, 10

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### Ad position is at the sole discretion of the Editorial Board.

*The Bulletin* of the Muscogee County Medical Society is the official monthly publication of the MCMS located at 2612 Commons Blvd, Augusta, Georgia. Opinions expressed in *The Bulletin*, including editorials, are those of the individual author and do not necessarily reflect policies of the Society, unless stated. Advertisements in this publication are paid advertisements and are not necessarily supported or endorsed by the Muscogee County Medical Society.

Members are encouraged to submit articles, current news or upcoming events for publication in *The Bulletin*. Deadline for copy is the 10th of the month preceding date of issue. Those wishing to advertise in *The Bulletin* may request requirements and rates by contacting the society office. Items to be published should be sent to the society coordinator, Stacie Johnson, via email to [Stacie@muscogeemedical.org](mailto:Stacie@muscogeemedical.org).

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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*Michael Borkat, M.D., President*



Another national match day has come and gone. The 2022 residency match had almost 40,000 positions available. This is the largest number of positions recorded by the NRMP. Match day is a memorable and stressful time in our medical careers. It's been almost 30 years and I still remember the anticipation of opening that letter. I know all of you also remember that day. A day that would direct us in our career paths.

I'd like to congratulate the Mercer medical students, many which got their top choices.

Thank you to all of the physicians in our community that have helped these students to the next step in their medical education.

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# PIEDMONT COLUMBUS REGIONAL NEWS

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## Northside ED Expansion Complete

Construction is complete on the Emergency Department at Piedmont Columbus Regional Northside. This capital project has doubled the ED capacity from 10 beds to 20. The expansion included building out the existing 4,600 square foot shell space and features seven additional standard exam rooms, two additional resuscitation rooms, and one additional behavioral room.



The growth to the north has driven the need to expand an ER that was treating about 100 patients a day. The original expectation was 50 patients a day when the 12,000 square foot Emergency Department opened in April 2018 with ten beds. The expanded space will allow Northside to treat 160 or more patients daily. To mark the occasion, staff were treated to lunch, cupcakes, and t-shirts.



## Columbus Hub Now Live on PolicyStat

PolicyStat has replaced Compliance 360 as our Policy and Procedure platform. It's located on The Village. It can be accessed by clicking on the Policies link at the top of the homepage and selecting Piedmont Policies from the drop down. "<https://thevillage.piedmonthospital.org/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=13829>" Click here to learn more about the go-live.

## Leadership Changes

**Bonita Hubbard** is the new Director of Patient Access for the John B. Amos Cancer Center and the Financial Resource Center. Bonita previously served as Patient Access Manager at Northside. **Michael Riggs**, Director of Patient Access, will now assume responsibility for Northside in addition to Midtown.

**Chris Phillips, RN, BSN**, has been named Healthcare Risk Manager. She has been with the organization since 2014, having served in various bedside and leadership roles. Chris was most recently a staff nurse in Outpatient Surgery. In addition to earning a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from Ohio State University in 1993, she also received a Bachelor of Nursing from Valdosta State University in 2010.

**Lindsey Watson, RN, BSN**, has been named the new Clinical Manager for the OB Antepartum Unit and OB ED. Lindsey has been with the organization since May 2014. She began as a medical assistant, then a registered nurse, and later served as a charge nurse for Labor & Delivery. Lindsey holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Columbus State, as well as ACLS, BLS, Neonatal Resuscitation Program, and Intermediate Fetal Monitoring certifications.

**Dee Bryant** has been named the new Patient Experience Manager. Dee has over 28 years of diverse healthcare experience. She was previously responsible for the grievance management process at Midtown. Dee holds a Bachelor's Degree in Healthcare Administration from the University of Phoenix and a Master's Degree in Executive Leadership from Liberty University.

### **Staff Help Patient Get Haircut**

While rounding, the daughter and sister of Northside Inpatient Rehab patient Judith Archey shared she really wanted a haircut and was feeling out of sorts not being able to clean up like she usually does.



Infection Preventionist Erin Thornton, who is a personal friend with the owner of Euphoria Salon, reached out to the owner, and she agreed to come help. With the help of Caitlin Hundley in Rehab, and Erin- Judith was able to get down to the salon for a fresh wash and cut. Judith and her family were so happy we were able to quickly get someone to provide the service!

### **Students Dance for a Good Cause**

The 2022 Auburn University Dance Marathon (AUDM) raised a total of \$273,328.22 for The Children's Hospital at Piedmont Columbus Regional. AUDM has raised close to \$3 million since they started doing the dance marathon 11 years ago.



The students held events throughout the school year to raise funds and awareness, culminating in the main event! Current students and alumni danced and had a good time while raising money for a good cause. This event was held at the Student Activities Center at Auburn and included remarks from hospital

and foundation staff, miracle family testimonials, a hypnotist, dance lessons, costumes and more. The students had fun while putting their hearts and souls into making a positive difference in the lives of children here at our hospital.

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Piedmont Classic- Driven by Mercedes-Benz of Columbus**

The Piedmont Columbus Regional Foundation will host the 2022 Piedmont Classic - Driven by Mercedes-Benz of Columbus on **April 22-25** at Cooper Creek Tennis Center and the Country Club of Columbus. The annual golf and tennis tournament was founded to benefit the John B. Amos Cancer Center and the patients we serve. New to the Piedmont Classic in 2022 is *"Pickleball for the Kids"* benefitting The Children's Hospital. It will be held at the Country Club of Columbus on **April 23** for men and women.

The Piedmont Classic raised a total of \$268,000 in 2020 and 2021 to purchase new Varian Linear Accelerators– the next generation of radiological cancer treatment for the TSYs Radiation Oncology Center at the John B. Amos Cancer Center. This year, the Piedmont Classic will focus fundraising efforts to help purchase an additional CT Scanner, and we hope to count on you to help make it possible.

For more information on sponsorships or how you can be a part of these tournaments, contact Zarina Cheves at 706-660-6204.

#### **National Volunteer Week**

Our Piedmont Columbus Regional Auxiliary volunteers are superstars! National Volunteer Week is April 18-22. Let's thank our dedicated volunteers during this week, and let them know how special they are to our organization.

#### **Columbus Lions CMN Night**

The Columbus Lions Arena Football Team has partnered with The Children's Hospital at Piedmont Columbus Regional and Children's Miracle Network (CMN) for their **April 23** game. For every ticket purchased for their home opener, 50% of total sales will go to CMN to help our local children. "<https://columbus.spinzo.com/columbus-lions-vs-carolina-cobras-2022-04-23-XBDJA?group=piedmont-columbus-regional-juqa>" Click here to purchase tickets online.

#### **CME opportunities offered for physicians**

The following Continuing Medical Education (CME) opportunities for physicians have been approved for one hour of CME credit each:

- Cancer Conference: Every Monday, 12:30 p.m., June Wright Community Conference Center at the John B. Amos Cancer Center. The 3rd Cancer Conference each month is Thoracic specific. For more information, call **Sandra Farley at 706.571.1881.**
- Pediatric Grand Rounds: Every Thursday, 8:15 a.m. (September through May), Conference Center at Piedmont Columbus Regional's Midtown Campus. Open to

any physician or other health professional providing care for children. For more information, call **Lea Werner at 706.571.1217.**

• **Hughston Grand Rounds:** Once a month, every first Wednesday, dinner at 6 p.m. and rounding begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Hughston Foundation Building. Open to any physician, resident, medical student, nursing staff, PT, MA and local EMS. For more information, call **Belinda Klein at 706.494.3326 or email at [bklein@hughston.com](mailto:bklein@hughston.com).**

Piedmont Columbus Regional's Midtown Campus is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The Midtown Campus designates this live activity for a maximum of one AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

<p><b><u>Restaurant Hours:</u></b> Tuesday-Thursday 5:30pm-10:00pm Friday-Saturday 5:00pm-10:30pm</p>	 <p><b>EPI©</b></p> <p>Chef Jamie Keating, CEC</p>
<p><b><u>Pre Fixe Menu:</u></b> Three Course Dinner Tuesday-Thursday 5:30pm-6:30pm Friday-Saturday 5:00pm-6:00pm \$35 per person <small>(Taxes &amp; Gratuity Not Included)</small></p>	<p><i>Ask About The Interactive Culinary Experience Of The Chef's Table!</i></p> <p><b>706-507-9909</b> 1201 Front Ave., Suite E, Columbus, GA 31901 Located in the Historic Eagle &amp; Phenix Mill Private Dining Available, Reservations Recommended <a href="http://epiccuisine.com">epiccuisine.com</a> * <a href="mailto:info@epiccuisine.com">info@epiccuisine.com</a></p>

## **Hughston Society Meeting April 21-23, 2022 in Columbus, GA**

Orthopaedic, sports medicine, and trauma physicians will gather in Columbus for the 2022 Hughston Society Biennial Meeting at the Hughston Foundation on April 21-23, 2022. The program committee has created an outstanding scientific program and enjoyable social events for attendees and their families. Program highlights include dinner and awards at the National Infantry Museum and Anthony Miniaci, MD, is the Presidential Guest Speaker. Dr. Miniaci is a staff physician at Cleveland Clinic's Center for Sports Health in Cleveland, Ohio, and at the Cleveland Clinic Canada Sports Health Team in Toronto. Other guest speakers include Brian J. Cole, MD, MBA, the Foundation's Guest Speaker; James R. Andrews, MD, is the Hughston Legacy Speaker; and Colonel (R) Francis G. O'Connor, MD, will give the Hughston Memorial Lecture. The program offers approximately 14 AMA Category I CME credits to attendees and speakers. Hughston Society members in good standing can attend the program free of charge. For nonmembers there is a meeting fee of \$200 to attend. For registration information, please visit [www.Hughston.com/hughston-society-biennial-meeting](http://www.Hughston.com/hughston-society-biennial-meeting) or contact Belinda Klein at 706-494-3326 or [bklein@hughston.com](mailto:bklein@hughston.com).



## **Scrubs Camp Hands-On Adventure in Healthcare**

Do you know a high school or college student interested in learning more about the medical field? During Scrubs Camp, students will enjoy lab demonstrations, facility tours, surgical videos, and hand-on activities. Speakers and topics covered during camp include medical illustration, surgical nursing and technologist, physician and residency program, physical and occupational therapy, athletic training, optometry, and a number of other medical professions. Our camps have been so successful, we have we are offering it twice again this year: June 13-16 and July 11-14. Attendees and staff will follow CDC guidelines for COVID throughout camp participation.



For registration and payment, please visit: <https://www.hughston.com/summer-camp>

Seeking Scrubs Camp sponsorships. In 2022, The Hughston Foundation is offering the camp twice, giving more students the opportunity to participate. As we continue to offer this life-changing opportunity for passionate students, future educators, and medical professionals, we are requesting your financial help for a student who would not otherwise be able to attend. You can make a difference by sponsoring a student to attend the camp for \$200. Every gift matters and any amount will help us continue our mission. For more details about the camp or to support this valuable program, visit our website at [www.hughston.com](http://www.hughston.com) or email

the Hughston Foundation's Executive Director, Belinda Klein at [bklein@hughston.com](mailto:bklein@hughston.com).

### **Free CME at Hughston Grand Rounds**

To participate in Hughston's Grand Rounds, sign up for email blasts about this event by contacting Belinda Klein at 706-494-3326 or [bklein@hughston.com](mailto:bklein@hughston.com).

On the first Wednesday of each month, a diverse group of local healthcare professionals—that often includes physicians from Hughston, Columbus, and Fort Benning; Hughston Sports Medicine and Trauma Fellows; Hughston Certified Athletic Training Fellows; orthopaedic residents; and medical students—come together for grand rounds lectures on evolving trends in orthopaedics at the Hughston Foundation auditorium. Grand rounds constitute a ritual of medical education and provide an excellent supplement to medical school and residency. Moreover, grand rounds help doctors and other healthcare professionals stay current in their specialty or areas of core practice. The physician lectures offer expertise on specialized topics and cover the latest evidence-based research and treatments emerging in the field of medicine. Each Grand Rounds conference is approved for 1 unit CME.

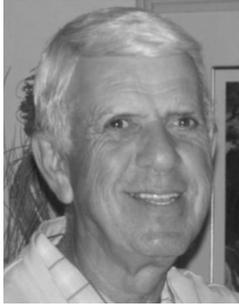
### **Extended Hours at Hughston's Urgent Ortho**

Hughston Clinic is excited to extend our practice hours to fit the needs of our patients and the community. At Urgent Ortho, walk-in are always welcome and you use the main clinic entrance from 8am to 8pm, Monday through Friday and 10am to 2pm on Saturday. A patient can call or text 706-325-8553 to get in line and for faster service, they are encouraged to go to [www.hughston.com](http://www.hughston.com) to complete pre-visit paperwork ahead of time. Urgent Ortho saves time and money by providing faster orthopaedic diagnoses and treatments for bone, muscle, and joint injuries. Sports and workers' compensation injuries are welcome as well.

### **Hughston Foundation Meeting Rooms Available**

The Hughston Foundation has the unique ability to support the medical community by hosting events in our facility. The Foundation offers an auditorium with large drop-down screens, tables and chairs, a 7' x 45' stage with podium, lighting, and sound system that is perfect for presentations and large groups. Our Surgical Education Center contains a 4-station surgical training lab for cadaveric demonstration and practice, and an additional 4-station workshop for training on plastic models. Both labs are equipped for audiovisual presentations and have the ability to broadcast lab activities to other meeting spaces. Our VIP boardrooms have large conference tables, executive chairs, and drop-down screens that are perfect for smaller private meetings. The Foundation also offers plenty of parking, accommodations for catered events, ice machine, commercial refrigerator, and free WiFi with password. Additionally, The Foundation has a spacious atrium lobby, library, and the Hughston gardens that are available for events. Go to <https://www.hughston.com/foundation-facilities-and-services/> for more information about our rates or contact Belinda Klein at 706-494-3326; [bklein@hughston.com](mailto:bklein@hughston.com) for a tour of our facility.

*In Memoriam*



*Samuel Ted Rice, M.D.*

*Dr. Samuel Ted Rice, a member of this society since 1972,  
passed away February 14, 2022.*

*Dr. Rice was a native of Wewoka, Oklahoma. He graduated from the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine in 1965. He served his internship at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio and completed his Assistant Residency of Urology at the Medical College of Virginia and his Residency in Urology and Surgery at the University of Minnesota. He began practicing in Columbus in 1972 and did so for 49 years until his retirement in June of 2020.*

*In addition to the Muscogee County Medical Society,  
Dr. Rice was a member of the American Medical Association,  
the American Urology Society, the American Urology Association,  
and the Southeastern Urological Society.*

*In the community, Dr. Rice was a member of the Rotary Club  
of Columbus and was involved in many religious activities.*

# MERCER UNIVERSITY NEWS

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Mercer University School of Medicine has officially moved into its new campus in Columbus. Please join us for the public dedication ceremony and community open house, which is scheduled for April 22 at 1:30 p.m., to coincide with the University's Board of Trustees meeting in Columbus.



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# ARTICLE OF INTEREST

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*By Marzena Buzanowska, MD*

## **We will stand together or we will all lose**

I recently heard a story from a fellow physician mom who said that her 10 year old niece was taken to the ER after sustaining head injury. The medical team decided to admit the child to the hospital to undergo several procedures. A few weeks later the family received a letter with “explanation of benefits” from Blue Cross Blue Shield stating that the admission was not medically necessary and the procedures should have been done on an outpatient basis and the family was going to be fully responsible for the cost of treatment.

“Insurance companies aren’t doctors. So why do we keep letting them practice medicine?” wrote William Bennett in an opinion piece for Washington Post in 2019 (1). And since then things only seem to have gotten worse.

Did you know that in Georgia, a prior authorization is not a guarantee of payment? Did you also know that insurance companies change their practice guidelines at will, making their method of notification newsletters that providers must be registered with or they will not be informed of the changes. Their websites make this information difficult to locate for review and calling the plans for information only provides you with representatives that are uninformed and unable to provide you with information. And did you know that when you submit a claim for payment, insurance companies deny some claims as duplicates that have never been paid; as well as claims with remittance advice explanations - stating that they did not receive requested information from the provider or the insured. The provider is not made immediately aware of what information they state they needed to process the claim and by the time you find out what information is needed, the claim is denied as a duplicate or for untimely filing. The process to appeal is not a provider friendly process for some insurers. Yes, it takes all this effort to hopefully get paid for the services that we have already provided.

And what happens when insurance denies the claim? The patient will receive a bill for the treatment that they may or may not be able to pay. One wonders, who is this system designed to work for? According to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, the health insurance industry profit margins increase every year (\$ 48 billion in 2020) and for example Anthem reported an over 900% increase in profits in the third quarter of 2021 compared with 2020 (over \$2 billion) (2). In the meantime, “more than a third of hospitals are expected to end 2021 with negative margins, an increase from 25% in 2019” said Rick Pollard, the CEO of the American Hospital Association (3).

Our collective inability to advocate for ourselves has recently manifested itself in how No Surprises Act of 2020 was written. While the law rightfully protects

patients from surprise medical billing, it creates no incentive for insurers to include more providers into their networks. The legislation created a negotiation period between providers and insurers (independent dispute resolution process), which is meant to take multitude of factors prior to deciding on the payment rate. However, the benchmark payment assumption that is used is a median in-network rate, which “tips the scales in the payers’ favor” and the process “inevitably leads to outcomes predetermined to be at or below the median rate” states Emily Carroll, senior legislative attorney for the AMA (4).

I believe that we, as the physician community, need to evaluate our own actions and inactions that allow this current system to continue. It’s either that, or our profession will be reduced to something unrecognizable in the next ten years.

Disclaimer: opinions stated in this article are the author’s opinions and do not represent the opinions of MCMS.

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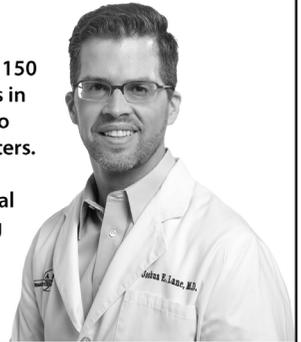


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The Doctors Lane are active in the academic community with a combined 150 plus medical and surgical publications in peer-reviewed journals in addition to multiple textbooks and textbook chapters.

Both hold faculty positions at regional medical schools and enjoy teaching medical students and residents.



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