

JUNE 2014



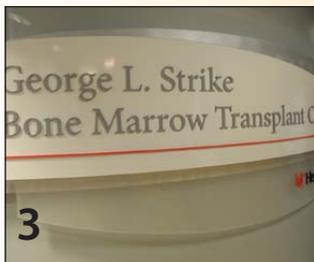
JESSE McWHORTER

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## More Options Available for Patients Increasing access drives new initiatives

UC Health's patients now have the option to receive appointment reminders via phone call or text message, and can select from up to four languages in which to receive those notifications.

The new reminder system, called Televox, will be rolled out in late June. Practices will ask patients of their appointment reminder preferences during the scheduling process or at their next appointment.

Elizabeth Hilton, director of access for UC Health, says the new system is



Hilton

designed to give UC Health patients even more options and enhance their experience.

The new appointment reminder system is just the first step in a series of access initiatives rolling out in the coming weeks and months, says Hilton.

Also in late June, patients will be able to use their My UC Health accounts to schedule their own follow-up appointments. This new direct-scheduling option will first be made available to infectious diseases, digestive diseases, hematology oncology and primary care.

*Appointment reminders by phone or text message are now offered in:*

- English
- French
- Spanish
- Arabic

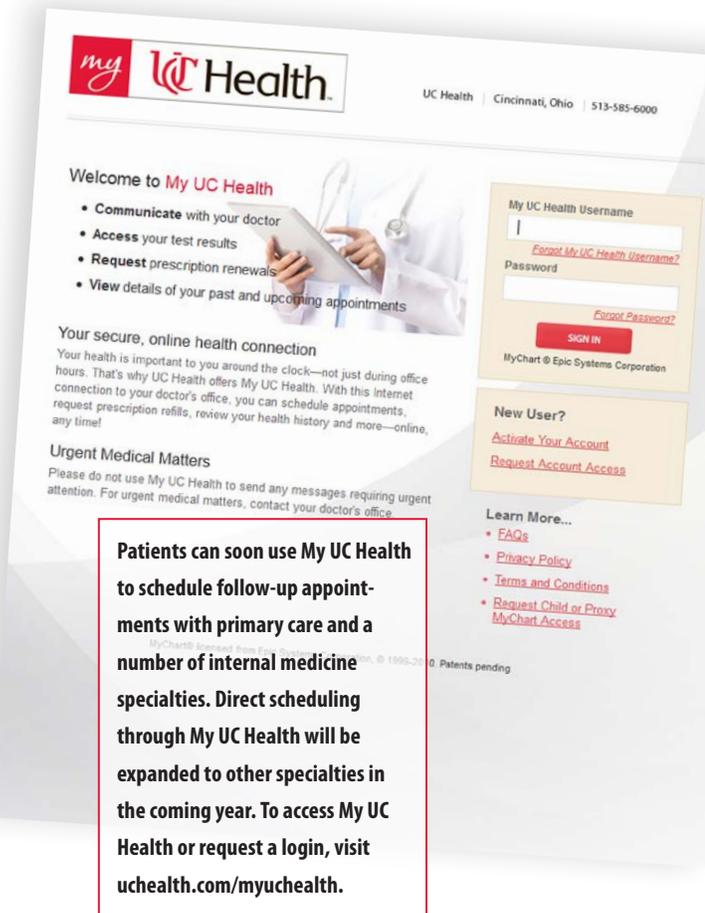
Direct scheduling through My UC Health will be expanded to other specialties in the coming year.

"Providing the best care and making it easy for patients to access that care is UC Health's focus," says Hilton.

UC Health associates will also see some scheduling changes within EPIC, the system's electronic medical records system. EPIC is being optimized to include scheduling questionnaires and more flexible scheduling templates so that schedulers can more specifically direct patient flow. ●



*Improve patient and family experiences is Initiative 7 in UC Health's Plan 2017. For more on this strategic plan, visit [UCHealth.com/plan2017](http://UCHealth.com/plan2017).*



**Patients can soon use My UC Health to schedule follow-up appointments with primary care and a number of internal medicine specialties. Direct scheduling through My UC Health will be expanded to other specialties in the coming year. To access My UC Health or request a login, visit [uchealth.com/myuchealth](http://uchealth.com/myuchealth).**

# One System: Working in Concert Toward a Patient-Centered Culture

COLLEAGUES,  
I wish to thank you for the warm reception I've received since my arrival at UC Health last December. The past



*Richard P. Lofgren*

six and a half months have been a whirlwind, and I appreciate your kindness and open arms.

I hope you had the opportunity to attend one of my town halls in May. I appreciated the thoughtful, provocative and even challenging questions! I plan to host more town halls on a regular basis to ensure I have the opportunity to hear from you.

At those sessions, I spent time talking about where we are headed as an organization, and how we can best position ourselves to become the preferred provider in the Midwest for advanced specialty care. For those of you who could not attend, a recorded

session is available online on the UC Health intranet.

As always, you are welcome to send me your thoughts and ideas via email at [rick.lofgren@uchealth.com](mailto:rick.lofgren@uchealth.com).

Critical to our success is our coming together fully as a highly integrated and unified health system. As we roll up our sleeves and work across disciplines, departments, institutes and locations towards building a tighter and more unified health system, the rewards will

be real: we will become more efficient, and those efficiencies will positively impact the delivery of care we provide our patients.

As the only academic health system in our region, we shoulder the responsibility to serve Greater Cincinnati and beyond in a way that is the most effective and affordable. To accomplish this we must drive efficiencies—without redundancies—within a complex system, while remaining highly focused on a seamless continuum of care that calms our patients' fears and helps them heal.

When we arrive as one system and continue along our journey, you will be proud of what we accomplish for the Greater Cincinnati community.

*"...we must **DRIVE EFFICIENCIES**—without redundancies—within a complex system, while remaining **HIGHLY FOCUSED ON A SEAMLESS CONTINUUM OF CARE...**"*

**RICHARD P. LOFGREN, MD, MPH, FACP**  
President and Chief Executive Officer,  
UC Health

## UC HEALTH MISSION

- Provide life changing, patient-centered medical care
- Drive innovation through groundbreaking research
- Educate and inspire the next generation of health care professionals

## UC HEALTH VISION

- To be the region's quality health care partner and a national leader in solving complex medical problems

## UC HEALTH VALUES

- Respect
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Excellence

## Connected

Connected is a monthly publication for clinicians and associates of UC Health. Send your comments and ideas to CorporatePR & Marketing @uchealth.com.

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### Photography

UC Academic Health  
Center Communications  
Services

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Volume 6, Issue 6



# Program Takes Holistic Approach to Care

## Individualized treatment plans a hallmark of hematologic malignancies team

The UC Cancer Institute Hematologic Malignancies Program and George L. Strike Bone Marrow Transplant Center offer individualized evidence-based treatment plans that incorporate holistic approaches to meet each patient's needs.

Under newly named director Stephen Medlin, DO, a multidisciplinary team focuses on six key areas—medical, financial, psychological, social, body/image and spiritual.

"We treat patients in their wholeness, meaning that a person's body, mind, spirit and community/environment are all addressed in the course of the care," says Medlin. "Excellence in health care happens when we work together and honor the expertise each of us brings to every health encounter."

Offering both inpatient and outpatient services, the team of providers cares for patients with leukemia, multiple myeloma/plasma cell disorders, myelodysplastic syndromes, Hodgkin's and Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, aplastic anemia and other hematologic disorders. Care is bolstered by cutting-edge research and innovative clinical trials led by UC Health physicians.

Both autologous and allogeneic bone marrow transplantation is offered, and the center is the only in the Tristate to offer outpatient bone marrow transplantation.

"Unlike solid organ transplants, the bone marrow transplant or BMT procedure—sometimes called stem cell transplantation—is relatively simple," says Medlin. "Diagnostic tests are performed to confirm that the patient is medically eligible for an outpatient BMT."

Outpatient transplant procedures allow patients to be cared for in their home setting by loved ones, with all chemotherapy and transplant/post-transplant care given at the outpatient

BMT clinic in the Hoxworth Building—open seven days a week. Daily visits to the clinic are required and hospital admission to the inpatient BMT unit will only be needed if a patient needs more care than can be provided to them on an outpatient basis.

"We also have extensive experience in the use of reduced intensity preparative regimens, a process used in transplant that offers lower doses of chemotherapy, thus, we can improve outcomes in high-risk diseases/patients," says Medlin.

The program is registered with the Food and Drug Administration and

accredited by the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy for its quality transplant patient care as well as for the collection and laboratory management of the cellular products.

"Our team—physicians, nursing staff, nutritionists, pharmacists, social workers and countless others—are dedicated to the care of our patients," Medlin says. "With our medical expertise, our tie to academic medicine and our focus on holistic care, we strive to be the best locally and beyond.

"Our goal, every day, is to turn cancer patients into cancer survivors," says Medlin. ●

### >> **APPOINTMENTS & REFERRALS**

**To schedule an appointment or make a referral, call 513-584-5432.**

### **Offering Support**

*The Hematologic Malignancies Program and Bone Marrow Transplant Center offer extensive support services to help patients and their families through every step of the care process. Assistance with lodging, transportation and emotional needs of both patients and families are among the support services provided.*

### **Physician Team, UC Health Hematologic Malignancies Program**

#### **Stephen Medlin, DO**

*Director, UC Health Hematologic Malignancies Program*

*Associate Professor, Internal Medicine, UC College of Medicine*



**Medlin**

Medlin has an extensive background in the management of hematologic malignancies and bone marrow transplantation.

He is fellowship trained in oncology, hematology and transplant, and board-certified in internal medicine and the subspecialties of oncology and hematology.

#### **Saulius Girnius, MD**

*Oncologist, George L. Strike Bone Marrow Transplant Center*

*Assistant Professor, Internal Medicine, UC College of Medicine*



**Girnius**

Girnius has an extensive background in the management of plasma cell disorders including multiple myeloma and

amyloidosis. He is fellowship trained in amyloidosis and hematology oncology and board-certified in internal medicine.

# Medical Weight Loss Offers Many Options

## Personalized diet and lifestyle plans help patients achieve goals

When starting a diet plan, people may turn to a magazine, website or even celebrity trainer for tips—but few set an appointment with their physician.

Angela Fitch, MD, hopes to reverse that trend.

Fitch, a board-certified physician and certified obesity specialist, serves

as medical director of Medical Weight Management at the UC Health Weight Loss Center.

She believes it's crucial to take a comprehensive, medically based approach from the first step on a weight loss journey—in her words, to get down to the “why” of a patient’s weight loss struggle, not just the “how” of dieting.

Her first appointment with patients includes a thorough workup, from a food journal and health history to tests on body composition, metabolic rate, comprehensive labs, an EKG and more.

Those results, combined with a discussion with the patient, allow Fitch to understand patients’ needs and help them build a lifestyle plan—including better diet, exercise, stress reduction and sleep.

“When I talk with patients about obesity, we don’t just cover one thing,” she says. “Everyone thinks it’s just ‘eat less and exercise more,’ but it’s more complicated than that.”

For example, a patient with undiagnosed pre-diabetes may have to drastically reduce their sugar intake to lose weight.

“Those patients are going to turn any sugar into fat more abundantly than patients without pre-diabetes,”

**Armed with a personalized diet and lifestyle plan, medical weight loss patients meet regularly with Fitch and UC Health’s designated health coach, psychologist and nutritionist . . .**

she says. “The key is that we have to be personalized with each person.”

Armed with a personalized diet and lifestyle plan, medical weight loss patients meet regularly with Fitch and UC Health’s designated health coach, psychologist and nutritionist for check-ins and group classes on healthy eating.

Patients also can sign up for apps on their phone to track their meals and receive encouraging text messages from the program.

Through the process, Fitch stays in touch with her patients’ primary care physicians, and can refer patients to other UC Health specialties if needed, such as endocrinology, cardiology and an integrated Women’s Center.

“We’re not on the fad diet bandwagon,” says Fitch. “We’re helping patients make lifestyle changes that are not only going to promote weight loss, but improve their health overall.” ●

Angela Fitch, MD



**>> APPOINTMENTS & REFERRALS**

Fitch sees patients at the UC Health Weight Loss Center and UC Health Women’s Center, both in West Chester. To schedule an appointment or make a referral, call 513-939-2263.

**Three Weight Loss Plans**

The program offers a continuum of medically supervised weight loss plans. Some patients move through each, others start with the plan that fits their weight, goals and medical needs. All include regular check-ins and classes.

**VERY LOW-CALORIE DIET**

A supervised plan using high-protein shakes to replace meals.

**LOW-CALORIE DIET**

A plan combining meal replacement shakes with healthy foods.

**HEALTHY LIVING PLAN**

A food-based plan that may include mindful eating techniques, medication or meal replacement shakes.

# Traumatic Brain Injury Topic of Research

## Air Care patients eligible for national medication study

Researchers from UC and UC Health will soon participate in a national clinical trial to determine if a new therapy can improve outcomes for patients with traumatic brain injury (TBI).

The multi-center study will test whether people who have life-threatening or life-altering TBI do better when they receive a medication called Tranexamic Acid (TXA), which is used to stabilize bleeding.

When given intravenously, TXA prevents the breakdown of blood clots. It is already used to control bleeding for many conditions, including ruptured aneurysms and hemophilia, and during cardiopulmonary bypass and liver transplantation. Recently, it has been studied by the military for use in trauma patients at risk for hemorrhage and in those with TBI.

Locally, the TXA study will be led by Bryce Robinson, MD, UC Health trauma surgeon and an associate professor of surgery at UC.

Working with Jason McMullan, MD, UC Health emergency medicine physician and assistant professor of emergency medicine at UC, Robinson and collaborators will study whether TXA, when given as soon as possible



Robinson



McMullan

after injury, improves patients' mental recovery. Specifically, they will focus on patients transported by UC Health Air Care after a traumatic injury.

Because patients with traumatic injury may be unable to give consent to participate in the study, the TXA trial falls under the unique FDA federal regulation concerning "exception from informed consent."

Such regulations are strict and the research must meet very specific federal regulations and local Institutional Review Board review and approval. These regulations give the researcher the ability to enroll patients into the study when they cannot consent for themselves because of life-threatening injury or illness.

"In the TXA study, medics will use information such as blood pressure, pulse rate, injury type and level of mental activity to determine if a

patient with a traumatic brain injury is eligible to take part in the study," says Robinson. "Enrolled patients will randomly receive one of two combinations of TXA or plain saltwater by the medics and in the hospital."

"All other treatments will be the same," adds McMullan. "Participation in the TXA does not affect any other step of the patient's care, and patients who choose not to participate in this study will receive all of the standard care determined by their physicians."

Study leaders will be conducting community consultation meetings in the next several weeks about the TXA study. To schedule a community consultation meeting or receive more information, contact the study staff at 513-558-6332.

The TXA study is sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health and the Resuscitation Outcomes Consortium and includes 10 North American Level I trauma centers.

Patients who wish to not be included in the TXA study can request an opt-out bracelet or wallet card that indicates to paramedics that the patient declines to be part of this study. ●

### Tranexamic Acid (TXA) Study

- To study whether TXA improves recovery for patients with traumatic brain injury.
- Local focus on patients transported by UC Health Air Care after a traumatic injury.
- Participation does not affect any other step of care and patients who choose not to participate will receive all of the standard care determined by their physicians.
- Can request an opt-out bracelet or wallet card to decline participation.

### >> FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more on the study, or to request an opt-out bracelet, call 513-558-6332 or email [txa@uc.edu](mailto:txa@uc.edu).



# in brief

## Barone Receives YWCA Career Women of Achievement Award

Nancy Barone, vice president and chief operating officer at UC Health's University of Cincinnati Medical Center and Daniel



Barone

Drake Center for Post-Acute Care, has been named among the 2014 YWCA Career Women of Achievement Award recipients. Barone and

seven other women leaders from across the region received their award at a May 14 luncheon at Cincinnati's Duke Energy Convention Center.

A fellow of the American College of Health Care Executives, Barone currently maintains operational oversight of several UC Medical Center hospital-based clinical areas, including the operational support for the UC Cancer Institute, UC Neuroscience Institute, ambulatory services, operative services, psychiatric

services, social work, transplant services and women's health. She also oversees design and construction, environmental and food and nutrition services within the hospital.

## Oral Cancer Screenings Offered

Keith Casper, MD, of UC Health Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, will perform free oral head and neck cancer risk screenings from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, June 19, in UC Health Barrett Center Area F. Space is limited. Call 513-475-8400 to reserve an appointment.

## Nominate a Nurse of the Year

Nominate a nurse who provides exceptional care to the March of Dimes Ohio Nurse of the Year awards. There are awards in 17 categories, including advanced practice and surgical services.

The 2014 recipients will be announced during an awards ceremony in November.

Submit nominations to [ohionurseoftheyear.org](http://ohionurseoftheyear.org).

## UC Medical Center Named Partner in Collaborative



A new program to support families with sick and premature babies hospitalized immediately after birth was unveiled at University of Cincinnati Medical Center in May.

While on site May 19 to celebrate the one year anniversary of the formation of the March of Dimes Prematurity Research Center-Ohio Collaborative, Jennifer Howse, president of the March of Dimes (*above, third from right*), made official the opening of the March of Dimes NICU Family Support Center at UC Medical Center.

The March of Dimes NICU Family Support program is implemented in more than 130 hospitals across the country. It offers information, comfort and support to 92,000 parents in crisis with a baby in the newborn intensive care unit (NICU) to help them cope from birth through the transition home. ●

## INDYCAR DRIVER MAKES PIT STOP AT UC CANCER INSTITUTE



Just days before the 98th running of the Indianapolis 500, IndyCar driver Pippa Mann visited with researchers and clinicians at University of Cincinnati Cancer Institute. Mann, who drives a pink Susan G. Komen Verizon IndyCar series car, partnered with the Susan G. Komen Foundation for a visit to the lab of Komen-funded researcher Xiaoting Zhang, PhD, associate professor in the UC Department of Cancer Biology, and to UC Health Barrett Center, where she met with clinicians. Elyse Lower, MD, director of the UC Cancer Institute's Comprehensive Breast Cancer Center and professor in the hematology oncology division at UC, led Mann on a tour through areas newly renovated through the Rooms that Rock for Chemo project.

### CLINICAL TRIAL SPOTLIGHT:

## Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

**WHAT:** If you or someone you know is currently suffering from PTSD, you/they may be interested in taking part in the "PORT STUDY,"



a clinical research study looking at an investigational medication for adults with PTSD. The study will test whether the investigational medication improves the symptoms of PTSD when added to a commercially available, approved medication.

**WHO:** Adults 18-65 years of age; Diagnosed with PTSD and still have frequent and severe symptoms; Experiencing PTSD symptoms for at least 3 months; The event that triggered your symptoms must have occurred within the past 15 years.

**PAY:** Study-related medication and all study-related assessments will be provided at no cost to you.

**DETAILS:** For more information, contact Laura Imhoff at 513-558-4112 or [laura.imhoff@uc.edu](mailto:laura.imhoff@uc.edu).

**HOW WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

# Expert Surgery, Rehab Steps in Journey to Recovery

## Longtime Cincinnati physiatrist thankful and enjoying life again

**A**lmost three years ago, Richard “Dick” Watson, MD, found himself in an unfamiliar position for a doctor: lying on the operating table instead of standing over it. He didn’t know it at the time, but it was the beginning of a journey that would take him from intensive physical therapy to being recertified to be a physician—not bad for a former ruptured aneurysm patient.

Watson, 68, is a longtime Cincinnati physiatrist (specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation) who worked at Christ Hospital for 30 years and ran the Mercy Health Mt. Airy rehab unit for the last eight years of his career. He met his wife, Shelagh, a physical therapist, at Christ.

On Sept. 24, 2011, Watson experienced a massive headache at the couple’s Northern Kentucky home. They went to Christ Hospital, where the decision was made to send him to the Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit (NSICU) at University of Cincinnati Medical Center. There, he was found to have two ruptured posterior brain aneurysms resulting from stenosis of the right vertebral artery.

Mario Zuccarello, MD, UC Health and Mayfield Clinic neurosurgeon and Frank H. Mayfield Professor and Chair of Neurosurgery at the UC College of Medicine, determined that Watson was in a difficult situation, made even more difficult by his history of cardiovascular disease. Surgery was delayed by the search for a solution, and Zuccarello told Watson’s family members that he had only about a 10 percent chance of surviving the week.

**Zuccarello**

“All of his medical friends who visited him in the NSICU thought that he wouldn’t make it,” Shelagh recalls.

On Day 13, Watson went into surgery for a bypass—specifically, an external carotid PICA (posterior inferior cerebellar arteries) bypass, a procedure Zuccarello helped pioneer. Todd Abruzzo, MD, UC Health and Mayfield

**Abruzzo**

Clinic neurosurgeon and associate professor of neurosurgery, subsequently coiled the aneurysms, and Watson also had a shunt implanted. He spent 26 additional days at UC Medical

Center before being transferred to Daniel Drake Center for Post-Acute Care.

At Drake, Watson—who had received a tracheostomy tube while at UC Medical Center—was in a ventilator ward for 25 days before going to rehab. He was discharged Dec. 15, 2011, but still faced many months of physical and speech therapy that brought him back to, in his wife’s words, “almost as good as new.”

He subsequently passed his driving test and recertification to be a physician, but chose to retire in March 2012. “He was having too much fun to go back to work,” Shelagh says. Since Watson’s recovery, they have enjoyed retirement and spending time with family and friends.

Shelagh has good memories of the couple’s time at UC Medical Center and the talented and caring staff they encountered there. The couple has returned several times to thank the staff of the NSICU.

“The minute I walked into UC Medical Center I was greeted by people who didn’t even know me, but even in my darkest moments they would say hello to me,” she says. The staff was

**Richard “Dick” Watson, MD, with wife Shelagh**

exceptionally kind, recognizing my pain and my despair—that meant the world to me.”

As for the medical care Watson received, he says it was “just the highest quality we could have ever hoped for—we were very fortunate to be in Cincinnati when this happened and to receive care from doctors and staff with God-given talent who saved my life.”

In an interesting coincidence, Shelagh’s father was the late Colin Macpherson, MD, who was a leader in the pathology and laboratory medicine community in Cincinnati, UC College of Medicine faculty member and professor emeritus of clinical laboratory science and medical technology in UC’s College of Allied Health Sciences. The Dr. Colin R. and Margaret E. Macpherson Scholarship in the College of Allied Health Sciences is named in his honor.

Macpherson served in several capacities at UC Medical Center, and Shelagh says he and Watson had a friendly competition. “As it turned out, it was my father’s hospital that saved my husband’s life,” she says. ●

# We're all UC Health

*Jesse McWhorter*

Buyer, Inpatient Pharmacy  
UC Medical Center

**IT WAS THE 1960s** when Jesse McWhorter started work at UC Medical Center (known then as General Hospital). In March 2014, the buyer in UC Medical Center's pharmacy was honored for his 50 years of service.

Katie McKinney, director of pharmacy services, says she couldn't help but tease McWhorter about his longevity with the hospital.

"I told him that he must have been born here, and sure enough, he was!"

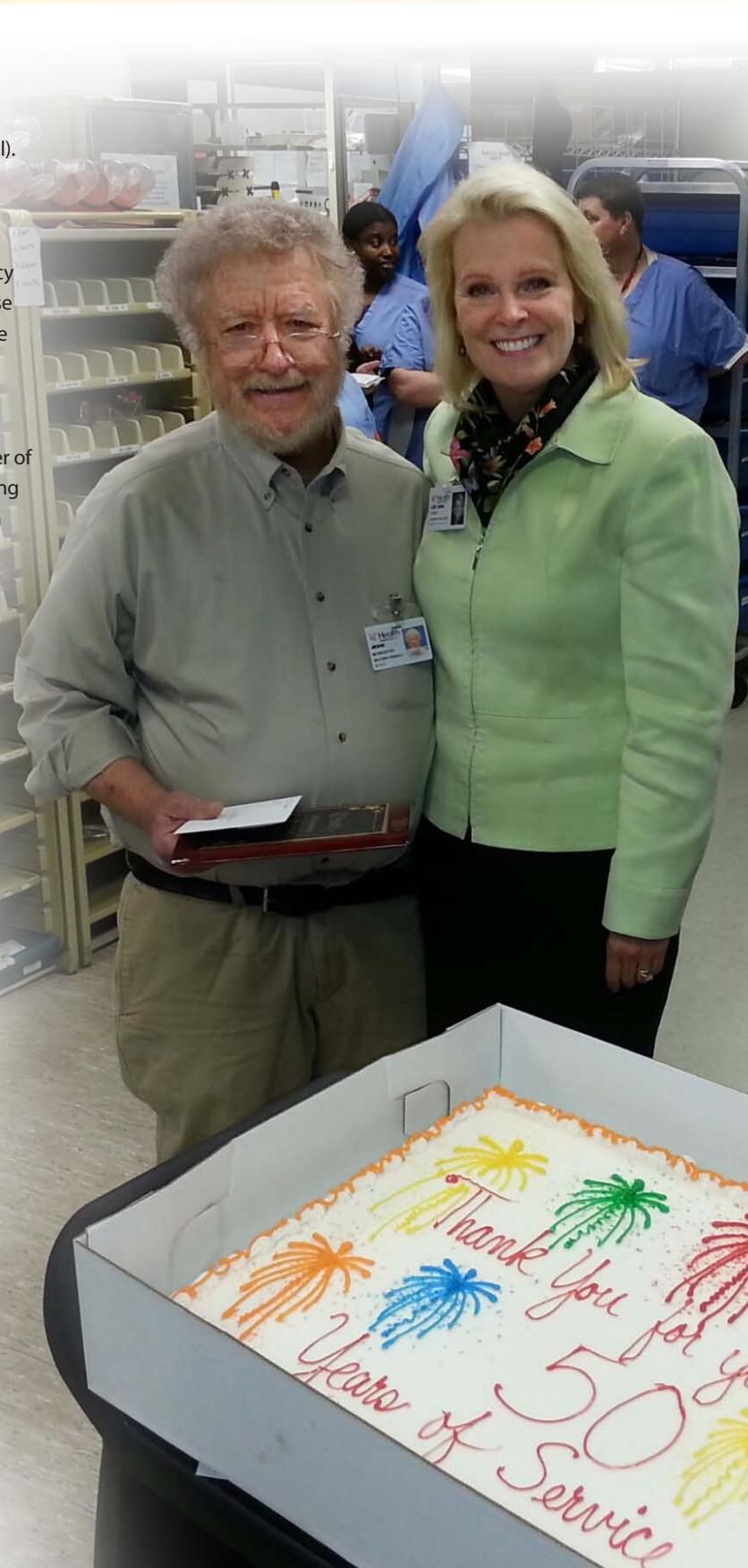
McKinney calls McWhorter the father of their pharmacy family and says his strong intuition keeps UC Medical Center from exhausting its supply of medications, even though medication shortages are at all-time highs.

"He makes purchases as he sees supply depleting, and remembers alternative products we have purchased with previous strategies to manage shortages and monitors supply of those medications, too.

"His work ethic is impeccable; he's always available to ensure UC Medical Center patients have the medications they need."

A baseball lover, McWhorter volunteers in the evenings as an umpire for Little League teams. His department celebrated his service with a Cincinnati Reds' Opening Day potluck, complete with Busken Bakery cookies decorated with the Reds' logo and departmental outing to a Reds' baseball game. ●

**Jesse McWhorter with UC Medical Center President and CEO Lee Ann Liska.**



**uchealth.com**

*Inpatient and outpatient services available in the following communities:*

**OHIO**

- ADAMS COUNTY
- ANDERSON
- BROWN COUNTY
- CLIFTON
- DOWNTOWN
- FAIRFIELD
- HARPER'S POINT
- HARTWELL
- KENWOOD
- KETTERING
- LIMA
- MASON
- MONTGOMERY
- MT. AUBURN
- RED BANK
- TRENTON
- TRI-COUNTY
- WEST CHESTER
- WESTERN HILLS
- WHITE OAK
- WILMINGTON
- WYOMING

**KENTUCKY**

- FLORENCE
- LEXINGTON
- MAYSVILLE
- SOUTHGATE

**INDIANA**

- AURORA
- BATESVILLE
- GREENSBURG
- MADISON
- NORTH VERNON
- RUSHVILLE