

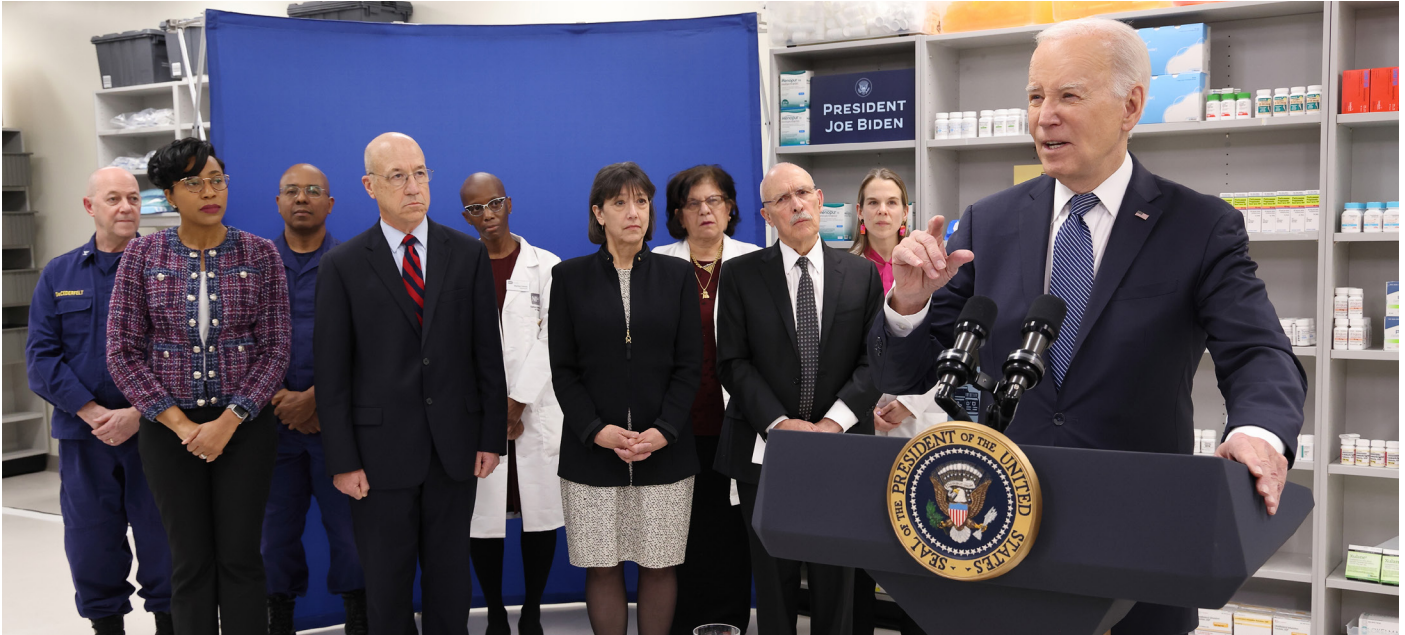
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CC NEWS

Clinical Center News

Mar/Apr 2024



President Joe Biden visits Clinical Center to highlight prescription drug prices

The NIH Clinical Center hosted U.S. President Joe Biden on Dec. 14, 2023 to deliver remarks on efforts to reduce the price of prescription drugs and highlight how legislation is capping prescription drug costs.

The president was joined by NIH

Director Dr. Monica Bertagnolli, Clinical Center CEO Dr. James Gilman and several Clinical Center Pharmacy Department staff.

The Clinical Center frequently hosts U.S. Presidents beginning with President Harry Truman, who laid the

cornerstone for the Clinical Center in June 1951. Other U.S. Presidents that have visited the Clinical Center includes Presidents Johnson, Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Clinton, George W. Bush and Obama.

— Yvonne Hylton



Dr. Saly Gabriel to lead NIH Clinical Center Pharmacy Department

Dr. Saly Gabriel joined the NIH Clinical Center in February as its new chief of the Pharmacy Department.

Gabriel says she plans to focus on staff engagement, the quality of patient care, regulatory compliance and supporting NIH partner Institutes and Centers (IC).

“My biggest passion is investing in our staff to build teams that are highly engaged, strong, efficient and that are collaborative,” Gabriel said.

The “team I’ve met just through the interview process [at the CC] has been phenomenal,” the pharmacist said. “I think our vision is strong, and it makes me excited to be here,” she said.

Gabriel comes to NIH from Portland, Oregon, where she served as director of pharmacy services for the nonprofit Providence Health & Services. There, she oversaw a large

GABRIEL go to p.2

staff and diverse portfolio of hospital pharmacy services at three facilities, an oncology infusion center and research investigational trials.

Gabriel spent the prior 10 years at HCA Florida Healthcare, working as a critical care pharmacist before progressing to clinical manager then director of pharmacy services.

As a leader, Gabriel showed her talent for quickly addressing staff needs to improve staff engagement and patient care. “I’m a big believer in a shared governance approach, where we work collectively as a team to tackle improvements,” she said.

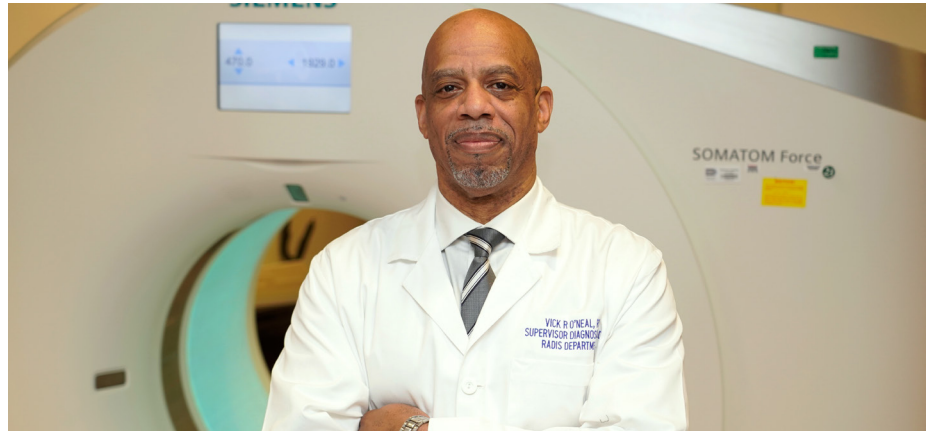
Gabriel took over a department within HCA Florida Healthcare with low engagement rate as reported in employee satisfaction surveys. Within her first year, engagement climbed to 84 percent—reaching 98 percent in her final year. Similarly, Gabriel saw the hospital’s quality ranking climb from 130 out of 186 hospitals to the top 100 within her first three months as a manager. Within her first year, the hospital ranked in the top five.

Gabriel said the turnaround was driven by “seeing the team come together as a group [and] working toward a common goal Seeing the effects on patient care on the other end was really amazing.”

Dr. Colleen Hadigan, the NIH Clinical Center’s chief medical officer and clinical director, praised Gabriel’s expertise and track record leading complex pharmacy organizations.

“She’ll be able to come in with a fresh set of eyes to help us identify what we do well and sustain that, and also see where there [are] opportunities for improvement,” Hadigan said. “I think she is going to be great for the department and the Clinical Center.”

— Sean Markey



Vick O'Neal, Radiology Supervisor

Clinical Center celebrates staff accomplishments

Hundreds of staff honored with CEO Awards

While no one was wearing tuxes or gowns, awards season came to the NIH Clinical Center in December.

The hospital at the heart of the NIH campus presented CEO Awards to 752 staff, recognizing 597 individuals and 66 groups.

“One of the pleasures of serving as the CEO of the world’s largest hospital dedicated to research comes every December when we get to publicly recognize the outstanding work performed in the hospital,” said Dr. James Gilman, NIH Clinical Center CEO.

“Our work ensures we can implement safe, cutting-edge clinical research and achieve the best possible patient outcomes.”

Vick O’Neal, a diagnostic radiology supervisor for Diagnostic X-ray, CT Scan and Nuclear Medicine in the Radiology and Imaging Services Department, received an award as a part of the portable radiographic patient ID barcode group.

This year a new category of “Super Supervisor” was added, with Valeria De Giorgi, PhD from the Department of Transfusion Medicine, Steven Highfill, PhD from the Department of Transfusion Medicine/Center for Cellular Engineering and Elizabeth Rasch, PhD from the Rehabilitation Medicine Department all being selected as the inaugural winners.

Read more online at cc.nih.gov/news. Visit the 2023 CEO awards page <https://www.cc.nih.gov/ceoawards/index.html> (staff only).

Staff were honored for achievements such as:

- Being among the first in the United States to implement Individual Donor Assessment to achieve a more inclusive blood donation process.
- Eradicating multidrug resistant bacteria from the enhanced contact isolation environment.
- Extraordinary efforts which helped to create a morale-focused program to promote a sense of wellbeing and sense of belonging among staff.
- Development and implementation of methods to manufacture radiopharmaceuticals used for clinical research with positron emission tomography.
- Recognition of outstanding teaching, mentoring, and leadership skills in the Patient Support Services Department.
- Contributions to the care of Transplant and Cell Therapy (TCT) patients and [serving as] Chair of the TCT Infectious Disease Guidelines Expert Working Group.

— Donovan Kuehn

NIH Director scrubs in at the Clinical Center



NIH's Dr. Stephanie Goff (left) and NIH Director Dr. Monica Bertagnolli (right) discuss surgical procedure

December 6, 2023 was a busy day for Dr. Monica Bertagnolli. Bertagnolli was formally sworn in as the 17th director of the National Institutes of Health by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra. Prior to being sworn in, Bertagnolli went back to something that was little more familiar.

Earlier that morning, Bertagnolli arrived at the Clinical Center ready to assist Dr. Stephanie Goff, senior research physician at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), with a surgical procedure. They operated on a woman with metastatic melanoma to remove a tumor from her thigh

muscle, as part of a clinical trial protocol to test the effect of using combo immunotherapy drugs in a patient with metastatic melanoma.

“We were looking at the tumor cells and the white blood cells that are in the tumor to better understand the relationship between her tumor and her immune system,” Goff explained.

This isn't the first time that Bertagnolli and Goff have operated together. When Bertagnolli was a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Goff was a fellow in surgical oncology and spent time on Bertagnolli's clinical service.

Goff assisted with complex sarcoma operations, and was a member of her lab for 18 months.

Goff expressed admiration for her colleague: “Dr. Bertagnolli is a remarkable leader, surgeon-scientist and advocate. Her transition from NCI to the broader NIH is not only a significant milestone for her but also fantastic news for the wider scientific community, as she is poised to extend her talents beyond cancer research.”

Bertagnolli is the first surgeon and the second woman to hold the position of director of the National Institutes of Health. She transitioned from her role as the 16th director of the National Cancer Institute, a position she held since October 2022.

— Yvonne Hylton

“
Dr. Bertagnolli is a remarkable leader, surgeon-scientist and advocate.
”
— Dr. Stephanie Goff

Sweet success: gingerbread house contest returns

NIH Clinical Center's gingerbread extravaganza delighted with creativity and holiday cheer



“Dora the Explorer” by 3NE, Hematology/Oncology/Transplant

Nearly 50 dazzling gingerbread houses were created by Clinical Center and NIH staff for the hospital's annual Gingerbread House Decorating Contest.

The contest was first established in 2004 by the Clinical Center Nursing Department. The aim was to promote teamwork, holiday spirit and some friendly competition between nursing units on the eve of the hospital's expansion to the new CRC building.

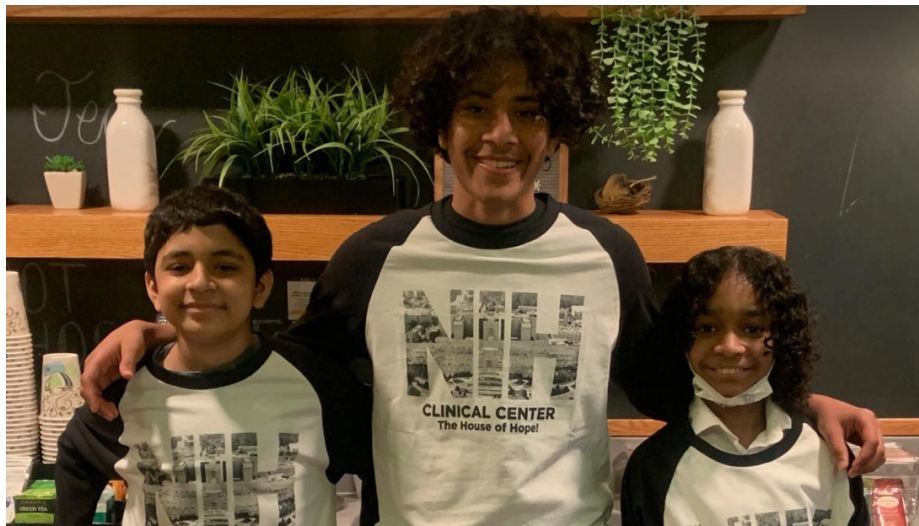
This year “Dora the Explorer” by 3NE Hematology/Oncology/Transplant took top honors.



“Kids' Choice” winner: Tiki Bar by Pediatrics Nursing

How the NIH Clinical Center cured Elyas Khandwalla

Participating in a clinical trial, the seventh-grader received a life-saving bone marrow transplant, shedding light on a promising new preoperative conditioning treatment



From left: Elyas Khandwalla, Mohammedali Khandwalla and Caesar Sant (fellow patient and friend)

Since birth, seventh-grader Elyas Khandwalla has lived with sickle cell and beta thalassemia disease, often experiencing extreme pain and fatigue, among other serious health complications.

Caused by a single genetic mutation, the inherited blood disorder creates brittle, misshapen red blood cells. The condition is compounded by low levels of the oxygen-carrying blood

protein beta globulin hemoglobin. Both deprive the body of oxygen and can cause stroke, arterial inflammation, organ failure and premature death.

But thanks to a life-saving bone marrow transplant (BMT) at the NIH Clinical Center, Elyas is now free of his disease.

“I’m happy to be cured,” the cherubic tween says, speaking

by video chat from his home in Mombasa, Kenya, surrounded by his mother Zuleikha, father Nadeem, and older brother Mohammedali. “Everything is going well.”

Bone marrow functions as a factory that produces our body’s blood cells. To cure sickle cell disease, defective bone marrow must be replaced with healthy tissue.

Elyas was fortunate to find a donor match in his older brother and underwent the procedure at the NIH Clinical Center while participating in a clinical research trial.

The trial—led by Drs. Matthew Hsieh and John Tisdale with the Cellular and Molecular Therapeutics Branch of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute—is testing the effectiveness of a promising new BMT conditioning treatment that leverages the JSP191 antibody.

Most bone marrow transplant recipients receive high-dose radiation and chemotherapy prior to their surgery to remove all traces of defective bone marrow. Elyas received the JSP191 antibody, which carries far milder side effects and was developed by Jasper Therapeutics.

Read the complete, unabridged story at cc.nih.gov/news

— Sean Markey

Clinical Center celebrates E Wing renovation

The Clinical Center’s E Wing, ribbon-cutting ceremony was recently held on the lawn in front of the CC’s South Entrance and included remarks by Dr. James Gilman, Clinical Center chief executive officer, other institute, center and project team members.

The E Wing makeover was supposed to be complete in 2021 but was pushed back due to pandemic related

delays. Despite the delay, the E Wing renovation is one of the largest and most technically challenging renovation projects on the NIH campus. The space in the CC features approximately 250,000 square feet, from level B3 to the 15th floor.

The E Wing will serve as the home for more than 1,500 research and administrative staff from 11 institutes

and other centers. The renovated wing includes the relocation of the Clinical Center’s Blood Bank which is located on the first floor, as well as the new cGMP (current Good Manufacturing Practices) laboratory on the 12th floor.

— Yvonne Hylton

Clinical Center News

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Thoughts on the new design?
Let us know! ccpressgroup@cc.nih.gov

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