



# TODAY

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## Murrieta opens doors to new NICU

By Genesis Gonzalez

Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta has opened its new neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) as part of a comprehensive plan to provide families and their newborns the care and comfort they need throughout the post-delivery process.

The six-bed facility is a Level II NICU, enabling hospital staff to take care of the most common problems that can occur with premature infants born at or after 32 weeks gestation. This care can include short-term mechanical ventilation, treatment for jaundice, help with feeding, or treatment with antibiotics. The unit accepts readmits up to 28 days old for certain diagnoses, including sepsis infection.

LLUMC – Murrieta delivers more than 800 babies each year, with 8-10 percent of those newborns in need of additional special care.

The new NICU offers six private rooms designed to allow parents to stay overnight in the same room as their baby, a unique feature that isn't currently offered by providers in the area. The rooms mirror an open bay concept with three walls and a curtain track in each. In addition, the state-of-the-art unit offers:

- Lactation support to help ensure high exclusive breast feeding rates
- Top perinatal department per patient satisfaction scores
- Direct access to Loma Linda University Children's Hospital (LLUCH) and highest levels of expertise
- Family-centered care

"No mother, father or family should have to spend a minute away from their child," said Peter Baker, JD, MBA, administrator of Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta. "Our new NICU will restore the connection between a newborn and their family during a critical time when support is needed the most."

The hospital currently offers labor and delivery support, a skin-to-skin bonding program following delivery, 24/7 family visits, classes and support groups, and nursery care. The new NICU will be staffed by neonatal experts from LLUCH.

LLUMC – Murrieta and LLUCH are part of Loma Linda University Health, a faith-based health system, providing education, training, research and care to the Inland Empire community.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was celebrated on Oct. 30, 2017 in honor of the new unit. The ceremony was attended by numerous public officials, with special remarks from Jeff Stone, California State Senator, Rick Gibbs, mayor of the city of Murrieta, and Neil Winter, mayor of the city of Menifee.

Kerry Heinrich, JD, CEO of Loma Linda University Medical Center, addressed the audience with great excitement as the community of Murrieta welcomed its first NICU.



Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta on Jan. 17 opened its doors to a new NICU, the first of its kind to the Murrieta community. The Level II NICU offers six private rooms designed for families to stay overnight with their newborns.

"Our goal, our vision and our dream was to bring Loma Linda University Health physicians and our pediatric expertise with the talented individuals we have in our Children's Hospital to this community," said Heinrich.

Guests were also introduced to the Ridley family, who shared their incredible journey to have their beautiful daughter, Emree. Their daughter was in need of critical care following her birth and experienced the difficulties of traveling back and forth to LLUCH.

"Having to travel a significant distance to the hospital increases stress and financial obligations," said Ryan Ridley, Emree's father. "The availability of the new and local NICU in Murrieta is very exciting and will be very beneficial to families in the community in the event where these medical services are needed."

Families in the Murrieta community will also have the opportunity to experience expanded outpatient children's services — coming in the next few months — that will offer specialty care in pediatric cardiology, urology, neurology and other services.

For more information about the new NICU or other services at Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta, visit [murrieta.lomalindahealth.org](http://murrieta.lomalindahealth.org). Tours of the NICU are available by calling 951-290-4070.

## Inland Empire Economic Partnership presents leadership award to Loma Linda University Health

By James Ponder

Loma Linda University Health President Richard H. Hart, MD, DrPH, was named the Larry Sharp Inland Empire Leader of the Year by the Inland Empire Economic Partnership during its 2018 annual dinner and awards ceremony, held the evening of Jan. 17 in Ontario.

President of Loma Linda University Health since March 2008, Hart led the drive to build the San Bernardino campus, which has been acclaimed for its role in aiding the economic recovery of the inner city. He received one of nine awards given by the IEEP to commend individuals and organizations for demonstrating exemplary economic leadership in the community.

Loma Linda University Provost Ronald L. Carter, PhD, who serves as a member of the IEEP Board of Directors, said the organization is involved in a variety of programs to benefit the Inland Empire. "As a member of the IEEP organization, I am continually impressed with the leadership strength resident in the Inland Empire," Carter said. "The work done to improve career development, employment and healthy living throughout the Inland Empire is outstanding."

Carter noted that in selecting Hart to receive its highest award, the IEEP acknowledged the positive impact of Loma Linda University Health on the community. He also called it "a specific recognition that Dr. Hart is known as a visionary whose commitment to our region and to the world is enthusiastically endorsed by Inland Empire leadership from both the business and academic communities."



From left: Paul Granillo, Inland Empire Economic Partnership president and CEO; Richard H. Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University Health; Marco Robles, IEEP board chair; and Al Arguello, member at large, IEEP executive board.

## Many Strengths. One Mission.

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH : LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY | SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS | SCHOOL OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH | SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY | SCHOOL OF MEDICINE | SCHOOL OF NURSING | SCHOOL OF PHARMACY | SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH | SCHOOL OF RELIGION | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER | UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL/ADULT SERVICES | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER EAST CAMPUS | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY SURGICAL HOSPITAL | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER MURRIETA | LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH BEAUMONT - BANNING

# San Manuel Gateway College holds second commencement ceremony

By DonaJayne Potts

Fourteen students graduated from the clinic-based community health workers pilot program at San Manuel Gateway College in San Bernardino on Dec. 18 — 10 months after the Promotores Academy moved its home to the facility.

The Promotores Academy — a partnership between Loma Linda University Health and El Sol Neighborhood Education Center at San Manuel Gateway College — recruits community health workers who are actively engaged in creating and sustaining healthy communities. Enrolled students receive training in individual and community capacity building, health promotion, disease prevention, cultural mediation, advocacy and home visitation.

Clinic-based community health workers serve as liaisons between the community and a health care team, building rapport and trust in patients through their lived and shared experience.

Workers have the ability to improve a patient's health literacy, motivation and adherence to health plans by addressing the barriers — using patients' individual strengths to help them build and sustain individual capacity.

Of the 14 graduates, 11 were alumni of the basic community health worker program who graduated from San Manuel Gateway College's first graduation in June.

"I am eager to help eliminate health disparities in my community," said Cinthia Arechiga two-time Promotores Academy alumna. She chose to continue her education through the clinic-based community health worker program to strengthen her knowledge of behavioral health and disease prevention. "The program has given me the confidence and skills I needed to pursue a career in a field that I am passionate about," she said.

A week prior to her graduation in December, Arechiga accepted a position at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, where she will work within an interdisciplinary



Fourteen graduates of the clinic-based community health worker program at Loma Linda University Health San Manuel Gateway College Promotores Academy celebrated the completion of their program in mid-December.

team to train clinicians on the roles of clinic-based community health workers.

The ceremony's keynote speaker, Stacey Belliard, DPT, instructor and physical therapist at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, welled with tears as she noted the graduates' accomplishments and impact they will have in their local community.

"You are something new, different and wonderful to the world of health care," Belliard said.

Community health workers play a crucial role in addressing the social determinants of health. They connect the community with various health and social services and work to achieve the Institute for Healthcare

Improvement's Triple Aim objectives: improve patient experience, increase population health and reduce the per capita cost of health care.

Belliard concluded her commencement address with a series of graphically-represented metaphors. "When utilized to your full potential you become: ambassadors — enabling both parties to succeed by allowing each to be heard and understood; mirrors — reflecting compassion to patients; and bridges — providing pathways to and from the community.

"Be a living tree bridge — firmly rooted in the community, connecting those you serve to health care — but always remember your roots."

# School of Public Health to launch PhD in nutrition

By James Ponder

Loma Linda University School of Public Health will offer a PhD degree in nutrition with an advanced research focus on plant-based nutrition, making it the only doctoral program in nutrition in Southern California.

The new degree program, which will feature a research-based curriculum, will start this fall. Prospective students are encouraged to apply for admission early by following instructions here.

Sujatha Rajaram, PhD, associate professor and program director, says the school hosts the largest research cohort of healthy vegetarians in the world: the Adventist Health Studies. The studies date back to the 1960s and contain information on more than 96,000 subjects from the United States and Canada. "There are plenty of research opportunities," Rajaram said, adding that multiple human intervention studies (clinical trials) on plant foods and health outcomes are underway at the school at any given time.

The school is recognized as an international leader in establishing and disseminating the benefits of plant-based nutrition — not only for the individual, but also for the health of populations and the planet.

The school has hosted the International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition for the last 35 years. Also, the school is part of a health sciences university that includes seven other schools and provides numerous opportunities for



Loma Linda University Health's new PhD degree in nutrition will be the only program of its kind in Southern California.

units while the DrPH required 99. The culminating activity for the PhD program will be a research dissertation. Students will also be required to submit their research papers for peer-reviewed journal publication.

Additional information about the new PhD in nutrition is available by contacting Rajaram directly at [srajaram@llu.edu](mailto:srajaram@llu.edu).

cross-disciplinary research collaboration.

The PhD degree will supplant the DrPH in nutrition the school has offered in the past. Rajaram said the school used to offer DrPH degrees in five disciplines, one of which was nutrition. Now, however, the nutrition degree will be a PhD.

The school will continue to offer DrPH degrees in health education, preventive care, and health policy and leadership, as well as a PhD in epidemiology. She added that all DrPH programs have been revamped to meet the 2016 competency requirements of the Council on Education for Public Health.

"The refocused curriculum and degree offering are part of the school's new strategic direction," Rajaram said, adding that they also align with accreditation requirements of the Council on Education for Public Health.

Rajaram noted that one major difference between the new PhD degree and the previous DrPH in nutrition is the number of units required to complete them. Under the new PhD degree program, students will only need to complete 72

# In Oregon's Adventist schools, results sprouting from Loma Linda's EXSEED program

By Genesis Gonzalez

Educational leaders from the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists visited Loma Linda University last month to thank executives for a group training program for school teachers that boosts the delivery of STEM instruction, an initiative that local church leaders say has helped stabilize enrollment in denominational schools and boosted instructional enthusiasm.

Nearly 800 K-12 teachers have been trained in over the past seven years through the Loma Linda University program, called Excellence in STEM Experiential Education (EXSEED). Instructors have taken part in numerous hands-on workshops, offering mission-focused and integrative activities that can be implemented in their own classrooms.

EXSEED enhances integrated science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education in Adventist K-12 schools by bringing together teachers for one-week training sessions during the summer. The goal of EXSEED is to support and empower K-12 educators to apply the STEM disciplines within a mission-focused learning environment.

Gale Crosby, MS, vice president of education for the Oregon Conference, has worked closely with Loma Linda University to challenge teachers in the Adventist school system to help prepare their students for careers in the medical, science and technology fields. The impact is already visible, even after just two years of participation, Crosby said.

"Following our conference participation in EXSEED, enrollment has stabilized in our schools and our churches are showing signs of growth," Crosby told a group of Loma Linda University executives, deans and faculty on Jan. 8.

Crosby proudly introduced members of his team and teaching staff as they shared the progress of project-based learning, problem-based learning and how the EXSEED program has impacted their students and the classroom.

Former participants and their students shared how they have applied what they learned.

Angela White, associate superintendent for the Oregon Conference, touched on the importance of their instructors incorporating the four c's—critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration. She reminded the group that learning has to be a constant for students and that the greatest student outcomes result from collaboration.

"Every child in the classroom matters," White said. "We have to ensure every student has learned what they personally need to learn to be the maximum person God created them to be."

Some of the project-based learning opportunities Oregon has incorporated include ergonomic living, farm-to-table, playground design and building, earthquake preparation, services for homeless teenagers, and numerous parents' nights out to see presentations highlighting what their children and peers are learning.

"We're opening a world of possibilities for our students with the help of EXSEED," said Elizabeth Ann Fish, teaching principal at McMinnville Adventist Christian School.

Fish incorporated the STEAM approach to learning at her school and presented to Loma Linda University leaders wearing a conductor's hat to emphasize how her teaching staff are ready to move "full steam ahead" in helping their students achieve success in science, technology, engineering, art and math. This is the second year Fish has implemented a Family STEAM night for both students and parents to get engaged.

Heidi Kruger, principal and 6-8-grade teacher at Riverside Christian School shared how her students embraced new project-based learning activities, including outdoor building and gardening, building interactive floats of the 50 states, dressing up as famous characters and "menu" book reports.

"It helps me to be a lot more creative," said one middle school student who talked about the fun she's been having with her classmates working on collaborative projects and a new, fun way of thinking about book reports and other essays.

Richard H. Hart, MD, DrPH, president of Loma Linda University Health, said EXSEED is a way to integrate the education resources of the Adventist Church that can benefit a variety of schools, such as the two-room school he attended in Northern Idaho as a child.

"There are still a lot of schools like that, and they are still just as much a part of the Adventist educational system as everyone else," Hart said. "We're wanting to empower teachers to teach STEM who may not have that strong of a background in those subjects."

"Our goal is to have the entire system working together to train our young people," he added. "Careers in STEM are developed as early as the sixth grade."

Event attendees included Hart, other executives, faculty, five school deans, and Ron Carter, PhD, Loma Linda University provost, who opened the meeting.

"Loma Linda University and the EXSEED program have been in a partnership that has focused on a special week during the summer that typically focuses on the sciences," Carter said. "With the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, we were able to have a comprehensive group of teachers and a third of pastoral staff to focus on STREAMS. STREAMS integrates the arts, religion and service with STEM and provides an integrated approach to obtaining 21 Century learning skills."

The EXSEED program received significant philanthropic support from Tom and Vi Zapara, said Rachelle Bussell, MA, CFRE, Loma Linda University Health senior vice president for advancement. Tom Zapara was also in attendance at the meeting. Zapara, a life-long learner, encouraged the Oregon leadership group and EXSEED planning group to continue innovation and stay faithful to the mission of Adventist education.

"The Zaparas have had a lifelong concern for nurturing and encouraging K-12 teachers," Bussell said. "Their philanthropic support has created a teacher support program that is a model for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and by extension, can be such to many school systems."

For more information about EXSEED, visit [home.llu.edu/exseed](http://home.llu.edu/exseed) or email [exseed@llu.edu](mailto:exseed@llu.edu).



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**Heidi Kruger, principal and 6-8-grade teacher at Riverside Christian School shared how her students embraced new project-based learning activities**

# Loma Linda University Health faculty earn the first-ever board certification in the field of lifestyle medicine

By Genesis Gonzalez

Seven physicians at Loma Linda University Health received the first-ever board certification in lifestyle medicine, making it the organization with the largest number of newly-certified practitioners in the country. The certification was introduced by the American Board of Lifestyle Medicine (ABLM) at the Lifestyle Medicine 2017 conference in October.

The certified physicians include Camille Clarke, Ingrid Edshteyn, Margarete Ezinwa, Cheryl Green, Brenda Rea, Karen Studer, and April Wilson. They were among 200 physicians and more than 40 health clinicians who sat for the exam and passed. The certification designates them as diplomates of the ABLM.

To qualify for the exam, applicants were required to:

- Be board certified in another specialty area
- Complete 30 hours of approved training in an online program
- Complete 10 hours of in-person CME courses
- Complete a case study

Loma Linda University Health has been at the forefront of lifestyle medicine and it “has been a part of our heritage and roots since the first Sanitarium opened in 1905,” said Brenda Rea, MD, DrPH, PT, RD, family and preventive medicine physician.

According to Rea, lifestyle medicine is about finding and treating the underlying cause of a disease. The goal is to change behaviors, such as nutrition, sleep habits, spiritual well-being and physical activity. Currently, chronic disease accounts for 70 to 80 percent of all health care expenditures according to the ABLM.

“As we learn more about medicine, we’re starting to appreciate that a lot of the diseases we see are reversible with lifestyle medicine,” said April Wilson, MD, MPH, chair of the Preventive Medicine Department. “We can reverse hypertension, diabetes, metabolic conditions and some autoimmune diseases.”

It’s common for many patients to see a physician primarily for sick care, says Rea, but the goal at Loma Linda University Health is to flip this paradigm and offer a resource to help individuals become healthier or maintain good health. “We give them the support to make the change if they want to,” Rea said.

In 2017, Loma Linda University Health opened a Lifestyle Medicine Consultation Service Line that offers lifestyle coaching to patients in the inpatient and outpatient settings. Soon after, the first lifestyle medicine fellowship was created. The program is designed to prepare the fellows to complete their lifestyle medicine board exam next year.

According to Wilson, chronic disease is occurring at increasingly younger ages. “The generation that has been born in the last 10 years is predicted to have a shorter life span than their parents due to increasing rates of obesity,” Wilson said. “The urgency to solve these problems and other disabilities is critical.”

The Loma Linda University Health team is currently developing tools, in partnership with other entities, to assess the presence or absence of healthy behaviors in environmental and social factors. Rea says the Graduate Medical Education at Loma Linda University offers a lifestyle medicine component in family and preventive medicine. She hopes an

increasing cohort of physicians will focus on lifestyle coaching in the future.

In addition, Wilson serves as director for a required longitudinal course devoted to helping medical students learn how to make lifestyle recommendations throughout their entire third year clerkships.

Rea and Wilson would love for all of Loma Linda University Health’s primary care and preventive medicine physicians to train for the lifestyle medicine board certification.

“We continue to be leaders in this space,” says Wilson, full-time faculty at Loma Linda University. “The certification validates lifestyle medicine as a legitimate field and that we are qualified as practitioners to do the work we have been doing for more than 100 years at this institution.”

The next U.S. exam will take place on Oct. 25 at the 2018 ACLM Lifestyle Medicine Conference in Indianapolis.



Several physicians at Loma Linda University Health received the first-ever board certification in the field of lifestyle medicine. From left, Drs. Margarete Ezinwa, Brenda Rea, April Wilson and Cheryl Green.

## Bailey, other Loma Linda University Health representatives, guests on 2018 Rose Parade float

By Janelle Ringer

Three Loma Linda University Health (LLUH) representatives were guests on the City of Riverside’s float in the 129th Rose Parade on January 1, including Leonard Bailey, MD, the prominent pediatric heart surgeon.

Bailey is the chief of surgery for Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital (LLUCH). He became known internationally in 1984 after transplanting a baboon’s heart into an infant girl and has since continued doing what he loves: using his abilities to make a difference in patient’s lives.

Also on the float was Lexi Anderson, a patient who had a critical heart condition and underwent a successful heart transplant surgery at Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital last March. Because of the complexity of care that LLUCH can treat, the Chino Hills High School student can continue to make a difference in her school and community.

Rachelle Bussell, MA, senior vice president for advancement at LLUH, also joined the group. Bussell is working to transform health care for our region through her professionalism, as well as her passion for making a difference through world-class health care and education.

This year’s float honored Duane and Kelly Roberts, who own and revived the Mission Inn Hotel & Spa, making it a distinguished cornerstone of the city, by keeping with the 2018 theme of “Making A Difference.” Kelly serves on the Children’s Hospital foundation board and invited LLUH representatives to join the Riverside float in the parade.

Other riders on the float included Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey and his family; members of the Fox Foundation; members of the Mary S. Roberts Foundation, which is known for its effective pet adoption center; members of the Olive Crest, which helps abused and neglected children; and members of the Mission Inn Foundation.



Dr. Leonard Bailey, Lexi Anderson and Rachelle Bussell represented Loma Linda University Health at the Rose Bowl Parade on January 1. They rode on the City of Riverside’s float along with the mayor and other city leaders.

The float was the first from Riverside in nearly 60 years, and symbolized the strong bond between the city, the community and the historical and iconic hotel. Riverside’s float won the parade’s Golden State Award for “most outstanding depiction of life in California.”

## School of Nursing advances nurse anesthesia program forward with new DNP degree

By Ansel Oliver

Loma Linda University School of Nursing has launched a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program designed to educate bachelors-prepared critical care registered nurses in the advanced practice nurse anesthetist role across the lifespan. This program will be replacing the highly successful existing nurse anesthesia MS degree program, which has been in operation since 2011.

"We're pleased to offer this new program for entry into practice in response to a growing national demand for doctoral-level nurse anesthesia education," said Kurt Cao, DNAP, CRNA, and director of the nurse anesthesia program. "Nurse Anesthetists must be prepared to not only provide excellent anesthesia care to their patients, but to also meet the demands of an ever-changing healthcare system and to lead effective change to sustain and improve patient outcomes."

The program consists of graduate-level core nursing courses, nurse anesthesia concentration courses, clinical courses and DNP practice inquire project courses. It is designed to move students from foundational content through concepts and principles necessary for practice to a clinical practicum sequence for learning and refining of professional clinical practice.

Upon completion, graduates will be able to exercise advanced levels of clinical judgment, systems thinking, and expanded responsibility, as well as become accountable for planning, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based strategies. Graduates will be awarded a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree and will be eligible for certification as nurse anesthetists.

"We designed this program to incorporate the same core principles that have made our MS degree program such a success" Cao said. "This includes a focus on excellent preparation for nurse anesthesia clinical practice in an environment that fosters physical, intellectual, emotional, relational, cultural, and spiritual development."

The Nurse Practitioner and the Clinical Nurse Specialist concentrations are also offered within the DNP program.

The program's curriculum meets the American Academy of Colleges of Nursing's Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice and the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs' (COA) Practice Doctorate Standards for Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Programs. The nurse anesthesia program is accredited by the COA and the School's BS, MS, and DNP programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Loma Linda University is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

For more information, call 909-558-4923 or visit <https://nursing.llu.edu/graduate-programs/bs-dnp>.



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LLUMC – Murrieta has been serving its community since 2011. Recently the facility received national accreditation for excellence in its cancer program.

## Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta cancer program earns national accreditation

By Genesis Gonzalez

Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta (LLUMC – Murrieta), which opened in 2011, was granted a three-year accreditation by the Commission on Cancer (COC) of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) for its cancer program.

CoC accreditation challenges cancer programs to enhance the care they provide by addressing patient-centered needs and measuring the quality of care they deliver against national standards. Accreditation is earned every three years by participating in a survey process. The program must meet or exceed 34 CoC quality care standards and maintain levels of excellence in patient-centered care.

"We are very proud of this outstanding achievement for our cancer program and congratulate our dedicated team of professionals in meeting every aspect of the standards for accreditation," said Peter Baker, senior vice president and administrator of LLUMC – Murrieta. "We take pride in knowing that our patients will receive quality, comprehensive and compassionate care during their cancer journey."

The cancer program at LLUMC – Murrieta relies on a multidisciplinary approach to treating cancer that includes consultation among surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists, diagnostic radiologist, pathologists and other cancer specialists. According to the CoC, the partnership among disciplines leads to improved patient-centered care from early diagnosis and staging to treatment and rehabilitation.

Within the program, a nurse navigator is available to assist patients and their families as they begin to chart a course through the cancer journey. Additionally, the nurse navigator provides education, support, assistance with insurance or applying for financial support, as well as coordination of care.

There are currently more than 1,500 CoC-accredited cancer programs in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, representing 30 percent of all hospitals. CoC-accredited facilities diagnose and treat more than 70 percent of all newly diagnosed cancer patients.

For more information on the LLUMC – Murrieta cancer program, visit [murrieta.lomalindahealth.org](http://murrieta.lomalindahealth.org).

# Compassionate care results in recognition for Loma Linda University Health

By Janelle Ringer

David Blasy, a clinical behavioral therapist in Riverside County, recently thanked and recognized the Loma Linda University Health caregivers — a family nurse practitioner and a neurosurgeon — who saved his life.

David remembers how the turning point in his life played out — he had a feeling that something was wrong when he felt nauseated and dizzy after doing a few push-ups during a break at work in Desert Hot Springs. He stood up, hoping the pain would ebb, but instead, he began to experience a severe headache.

David called his wife, Ally Blasy, to tell her he might be experiencing a migraine. He then drove 70 miles home, hoping that lying down or taking some headache medication would help the pain. Nothing helped, so he went to the Urgent Care Department at Loma Linda University Medical Center — East Campus. At urgent care, he was seen by Jessica Fields, MSN, a family nurse practitioner.

David explained how he was experiencing a sharp pain that traveled up his neck to right temple as he did pushups, Fields said. David was showing no signs of a stroke — no slurred speech, no neuro deficits; no drooping of his face. He even told her he thought he might have strained or sprained a muscle in his neck, but she couldn't shake the feeling that it might be more.

"Your gut sometimes tells you there is a reason to be concerned," she said. "As David described the nausea and chills that he was experiencing, I thought, 'this is not normal,'" Fields said. "I thought — 'he needs a CT.'"

But there was a problem. The Urgent Care Department at Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus closes at 8 p.m., and CT scans aren't ordered after 7 p.m., Fields said. Although she knew there was a possibility of it being nothing, Fields knew she wouldn't be able to sleep that night if David didn't have a CT that evening, she said.

She went to the attending physician on duty, telling him that she was concerned David may be experiencing a bleed. He agreed — and David was transported by ambulance to the Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC) emergency department.

The transfer to LLUMC was followed by a CT scan, which led to the diagnosis—a bleed on the right side of his head caused by an arteriovenous malformation (AVM), a tangle of abnormal blood vessels.

Blasy first received treatment to slow the bleeding, followed by surgery to remove the AVM. Promod Pillai, MBBS, director of endovascular and cerebrovascular neurosurgery for the department of neurological surgery, performed the successful operation. After just six weeks of recovery, Blasy returned to work. He is experiencing no long-term effects, he said, and is continuing his active lifestyle—including walking and running every day.

David, a young professional, had experienced no symptoms when all of a sudden, he was in the hospital for a bleed in his brain, Pillai said. "Situations like this can be scary for the family. The patient was fine yesterday and today is at great risk," he said. David chose to honor Pillai through the Healing Hands grateful patient program because of the confidence he felt in him, he said.

"Dr. Pillai has a great bedside manner, and his visits boosted my morale," David said. "Ally and I also appreciated the care he took as he explained things to us—I can't speak enough about the wonderful care he provided."

Pillai considers his patients as members of his own family. "Surgery can make immediate and long-term differences in patients' lives and the lives of their families. There is no better place than Loma Linda to come with an issue like David experienced. We have every option to care for these patients." LLUMC is the first certified Comprehensive Stroke Center in the Inland Empire, a designation that reinforces the evidence that LLUMC delivers the most advanced stroke care when timing is most critical. "Situations such as David's are difficult for the entire family, and it is fulfilling when they appreciate what we do," Pillai said.

Fields was also recognized for her extraordinary care on November 13, 2017. Of the recognition, she said, "I am so humbled. I'm so grateful I was able to be of service to David that day and all those that come into the Urgent Care on a daily basis. It really is a team effort and I have been privileged to work with some great team members over my five years in the Urgent Care."

The Healing Hands program at Loma Linda University Health enables patients and their families to give a gift of any amount (and direct it to any area they would like to support throughout the organization), along with a note to the caregiver, honoring them for their exceptional care.

Learn more about Healing Hands Grateful Patient Program at [lluhealinghands.org](http://lluhealinghands.org) here.

**Top: Promod Pillai, MBBS, has received recognition through the organization's Healing Hands program for the lifesaving care he provided to David Blasy.**

**Center: Jessica Fields receives her honor for her actions in examining and treating David Blasy when he visited East Campus Urgent Care.**

**Bottom: David and wife, Ally, are grateful for the care and attention David received when he needed it most.**



# LLU School of Public Health intensifies focus on geoinformatics

By James Ponder

Two new programs at Loma Linda University School of Public Health aim to help public health professionals enhance their careers with sophisticated GIS technology.

The acronym, which stands for geographic information systems, describes a cluster of computerized technological tools that allow officials to map and monitor the geological coordinates of significant public health events locally and internationally. Examples range from helping strategists determine where to place emergency staging clinics during the Ebola outbreak of 2014 to helping local homeless shelters recover unused food from Inland Empire grocery stores.

The first new program is a certificate in health geoinformatics (CHGIS), and the second is a series of cognate courses in GIS technology and applications for students working toward a master of public health (MPH) degree. Both will become effective when the summer quarter begins June 18.

The first program, the CHGIS, was created to meet a growing need of public health departments and agencies around the nation. Seth Wiafe, PhD, MPH, director of the health geoinformatics program at the school, says most public health departments own GIS software, but few of their employees know how to use it. The 13-unit certificate program will allow working public health professionals to study online at their own pace.

The second program, the cognate courses for MPH students, was developed in response to recommendations of the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health, which stipulate that MPH programs should prepare students in a rigorous, integrated public health core in addition to a focus on each individual program's defined area of expertise. As a result, Wiafe says the school has decided that the new public health core courses for all MPH students shall include an introductory GIS module as part of the curriculum.



Sophisticated GIS technology opens up a world of possibilities for public health professionals.

"We have included GIS training in the public health core so students will have at least a basic introduction to GIS," Wiafe said.

Wiafe — who spent several years as an intern and employee at Esri, the Redlands-based international GIS supplier — cites another example, this one local, of the ways GIS benefits public health.

While he was teaching courses in GIS technology at the school, one of Wiafe's students used GIS to map the availability of nutritious food at a variety of impoverished locations in the Inland Empire. The study gave birth to the concept of food deserts, places where fast food outlets, liquor stores and convenience stores are the only places where residents can buy food. Other examples of the usefulness

of GIS studies include a food recovery program, a study on cervical cancer and as a community assessment tool.

Wiafe said he hopes other schools of public health will follow Loma Linda's lead in offering GIS classes to their students, adding that the school has several training videos and other instructional material to share.

"GIS technology represents great opportunities for the future of public health practice," he said. "We think these two new programs represent an innovative approach to educating our students."

More information about the new programs is available by contacting Wiafe at 909-558-8169 or by email at [SWiafe@llu.edu](mailto:SWiafe@llu.edu).

## Country artist Lindsay Ell visits, sings for Children's Hospital patients

Loma Linda University Children's Hospital (LLUCH) patients were treated to an afternoon of live country music with emerging artist Lindsay Ell. The 28-year-old stopped by the acute adolescent care unit on Jan. 24 and sang a few songs from her debut album "The Project," as well as a few cover songs from some well-known artists.

LLUCH patient Precious Baltazar, 14, from Riverside, was just one child who was able to enjoy Ell's soulful voice and guitar. In between songs, the two talked about music and the future.

Baltazar said she hopes to go to Harvard after high school and loves music. "I listen to a little bit of everything," she said.

Ell's visit was made possible by Inland Empire-based country radio station K-FROG FM, which has a long-standing relationship with LLUCH.

LLUCH Foundation representative, Tiffany Hoekstra, was grateful to K-FROG and Ell for making the day of patients. "For a few sweet moments, the pain and worries were replaced by enormous smiles and joy," Hoekstra said.

**Country recording artist Lindsay Ell recently visited patients at the Children's Hospital, including Precious Baltazar. Ell's visit was made possible by K-FROG radio.**



# Two LLUH physicians make an impact on epilepsy care in Malawi

By James Ponder

Two Loma Linda University Health physicians have established the first physician-run epilepsy treatment programs in the southeastern African nation of Malawi.

Warren Boling, MD, and Travis Losey, MD, traveled last year to Malawi, where there are scant resources for treating the estimated 900,000 Malawians believed to be affected by the disease. Losey says there were only a handful of nurse-run clinics in the entire nation where patients could receive treatment for epilepsy.

Boling, a professor and chair of neurosurgery at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, and Losey, medical director for adult neurology at the Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at Loma Linda University, established the treatment programs at Malamulo Adventist Hospital in rural Makwasa, and Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Malawi's second-largest city, Blantyre. They took a video EEG system made by Natus Neurology with them to record electrical patterns in the brain, enabling physicians to diagnose seizures, convulsions and related disorders.

In the West, epilepsy — a neurological malady that causes sufferers to lose consciousness or experience uncontrollable convulsions due to abnormal electrical activity in the brain — is a common brain disorder, affecting roughly one percent of the population. But in some developing countries, it is far more common. Losey said an estimated 1 out of every 20 of the 18 million residents of Malawi suffers from the disorder.

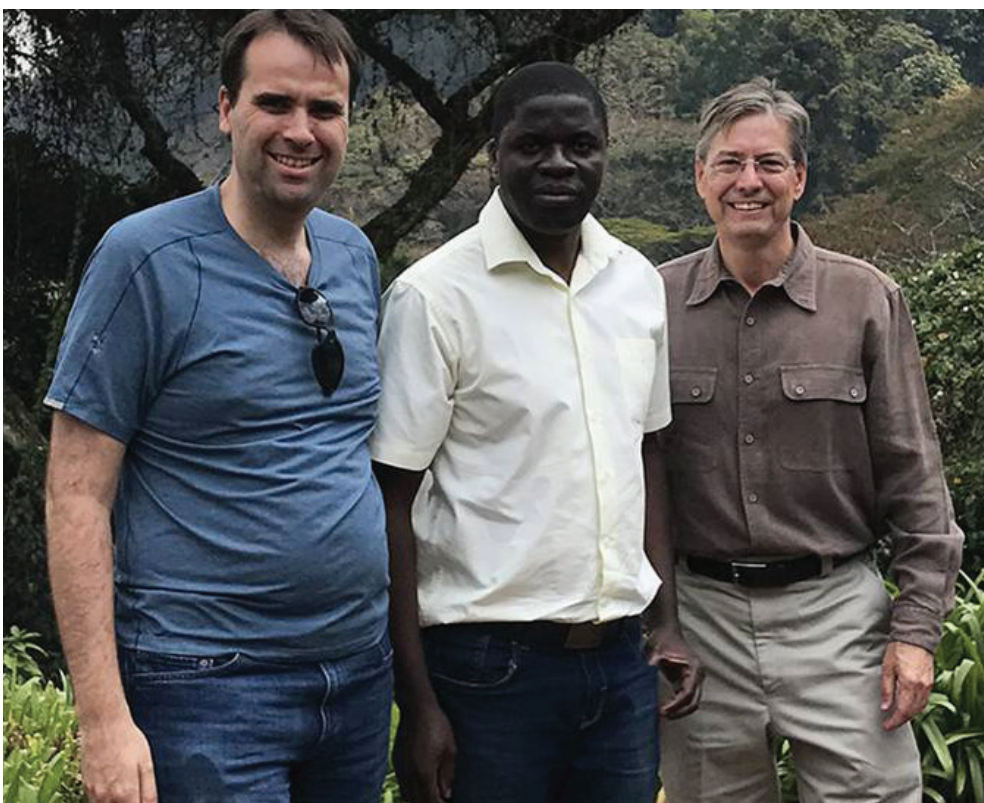
In setting up the new centers, Boling and Losey worked with neurosurgeon Patrick Kamalo, MBBS, MMED, at Queen Elizabeth, and internist Timothy Gobble, MD, a 2012 graduate of LLU School of Medicine, at Malamulo. Although Boling and Losey returned to Loma Linda in early September, they maintain close contact with their Malawian counterparts through virtual technology that allows them to consult on patient cases and continue the peer-mentoring process from afar.

Malamulo was founded in 1902 as a mission outreach of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is located in a sparsely-populated area famous for growing tea, coffee and macadamia nuts. Queen Elizabeth, on the other hand, is located in a city of more than 1 million people and affiliated with the University of Malawi College of Medicine. The two hospitals are located approximately 30 miles from each other, which enables the sharing of resources and expertise.

Epilepsy has long been misunderstood. In the past, people with epilepsy were sometimes thought to be demon possessed or insane. In recent years, however, as diagnosis and treatment have improved and the public has become better educated, the stigma of epilepsy is reducing in the West. However, in most parts of the developing world, including Malawi, epilepsy-related stigma is a widespread problem impacting people with epilepsy. While a number of factors have been associated with the disease, it can still be difficult to pinpoint the exact cause in a given patient. Sometimes congenital conditions or genetic factors are involved, at other times stroke, Alzheimer's disease or head trauma plays a role. Regardless of the cause, several treatment innovations are currently available to help people with epilepsy live full and meaningful lives.

Boling and Losey are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of epilepsy care in Africa and plan to return next summer to continue to educate the medical community and public about epilepsy and to further develop the diagnosis and treatment centers they initiated in 2017.

"In the meantime, we're staying in touch through virtual reality," Losey said. Boling notes that virtual technology makes it possible to share a high level of expertise with their African colleagues. "If you had to travel there every time you wanted to see a patient, that wouldn't be possible," he said.



LLUH physicians Travis Losey, MD (left) and Warren Boling, MD (right) with their colleague, neurosurgeon Patrick Kamalo, MBBS, MMED. Losey and Boling established the first physician-run epilepsy treatment centers in the nation of Malawi last year.

## Reportable Crimes

The Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990 requires colleges and universities across the United States to publish interim reports on campus crime activities. Listed below are the crimes reported for Loma Linda University Health for the month of December 2017:

Type of Crime	Number of Crimes	Place of Crime
Alcohol	1	Drayson Center
Arson	1	LLUMC
Assault	2	BMC; R & L Thrift
Burglary Motor Vehicle	1	Mt. View Plaza
Burglary	1	Drayson Center
Narcotics	4	Lot C; Ronald McDonald House; BMC (2)
Prowler	1	BMC
Threats	1	LLUMC

You can assist the Loma Linda University Health department of security in maintaining a safe and secure environment by notifying security immediately at extension 9-1-1 if you see or know about a crime taking place.



# TODAY

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