

# HEROES

THE MAGAZINE OF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL NEW ORLEANS | FALL 2021



**We built  
extraordinary,  
because they are.**





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Children's Hospital  
New Orleans



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# Foreword

## HEROES

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**Children's Hospital**  
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## JOHN R. NICKENS IV, PRESIDENT & CEO



## Celebrating extraordinary

Dear friends and supporters,

It is a remarkable time for Children's Hospital New Orleans as we celebrate the completion of the \$300 million transformation of our New Orleans campus and unprecedented investment in child health for Louisiana and the Gulf South. After more than 1,400 days under construction, it is hard to believe that our transformed campus has arrived! What's most exciting is what this new chapter means for the children and families we serve.

Since 1955, Children's Hospital has served as the regional medical center for kids in Louisiana and the Gulf South. In 2017, we embarked on a visionary campus expansion project that enabled growth of our signature service lines, and delivered innovative spaces that match the level of care we are known for.

As a hospital dedicated to caring for all kids and only kids, every decision in our campus expansion was made with the child and family experience in mind. Natural light, bright colors, and the engaging themes of nature and music that are infused throughout the campus foster an environment of hope and healing. These carefully planned design elements are woven throughout the fabric of our hospital and main campus clinics.

While our bricks and mortar are truly extraordinary, more importantly, we offer unmatched clinical programs led by top pediatric specialists – experts who wake up each day with one purpose – to improve the health and wellbeing of our next generation.

Together, with our academic partners at LSU Health New Orleans and Tulane University School of Medicine, we are poised to take on the health challenges our kids and communities are facing by offering the highest level of pediatric care right here in Louisiana.

Our vision is to build a healthier, happier future for the children of our region. Together, we have made that future possible, and will move forward full of hope, determination, and an unwavering commitment to serve all children. That has been the DNA of Children's Hospital New Orleans since the beginning.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary journey.

John R. Nickens IV  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
Children's Hospital New Orleans





## Children's Hospital hosts U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and Disaster Medical Assistance Team

In August 2021, the Delta Variant of COVID-19 swept the nation, and one thing became clear – this strain of the virus has a much more significant impact on children. At Children's Hospital New Orleans, specifically in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and 5 Center, the hospital's designated COVID-19 unit, staff became inundated with COVID-19-positive patients.

Through previous spikes of the pandemic, the number of children affected and sick enough to require hospitalization was minimal compared to the Delta Variant wave experienced in July and August of 2021. It became clear that with a national nursing shortage and unprecedented numbers of both RSV and COVID-19 patients admitted to Children's Hospital, weary staff needed reinforcement. This is when the hospital appealed to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for personnel resources.

HHS sent a Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) from the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) to help relieve the stress on the hospital's clinical teams. The DMAT was comprised of 27 medical professionals who were deployed to Children's Hospital including registered nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners, paramedics, respiratory therapists, and pharmacists. These providers operate much like the Army Reserves. They are a group of military-trained medical professionals who work in hospitals in their hometowns across the country. When a disaster or emergency arises, the team is called into action and deployed where duty calls. In addition to the team sent by HHS, Children's Hospital also hosted 16 paramedics deployed by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).



The teams covered shifts in the Emergency Department, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), respiratory therapy, pharmacy, and the hospital's inpatient COVID-19 unit.

Relieved and grateful for the additional sets of skilled hands, the Children's Hospital team continued doing what they do best – providing expert care to children from across the state and region.

"This has never happened at Children's Hospital before. When these teams typically come to New Orleans and Louisiana, it's because of an external event like a hurricane," explained Associate Chief Medical Officer and Chief Quality Officer, Leron Finger, MD. "Due to COVID-19 and the Delta Variant specifically, it became necessary to utilize the Disaster Medical Assistance Team."

On the heels of nearly three weeks of assistance from the DMAT, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra made an official visit to Children's Hospital to see the team in action. Along with Secretary Becerra, Assistant Secretary Dawn O'Connell, Congressman Troy A. Carter Sr., and Louisiana State Health Officer Dr. Joseph Kanter joined for a tour of the hospital and a press conference. This marked the first occasion in which a member of the president's cabinet paid an official visit to Children's Hospital.

In each of their addresses, the delegation resounded the same sentiment – vaccination is the key to ending this public health crisis. While the circumstances of the Secretary's visit were dire, the Children's Hospital family is grateful for the support of the federal government, and those men and women who left their homes and families to care for the children of Louisiana.



## Propeller's Andrea Chen joins Children's Hospital Board of Trustees

In the Spring of 2021, Children's Hospital was pleased to add Andrea Chen, Executive Director for Propeller, to the hospital's Board of Trustees. Propeller is a nonprofit organization that helps entrepreneurs grow their nonprofits and small businesses to tackle social and environmental disparities in New Orleans. Andrea began her career as a high school English teacher at John McDonogh Sr. High School and subsequently trained teachers at the University of New Orleans and The New Teacher Project.

She has worked at the Louisiana Association of Charter Schools, where she oversaw grants totaling over \$5 million in charter school startup funds and launched a \$1.5 million below-market rate Bridge Loan Fund. She was named "40 Under 40" by *Gambit Magazine*, one of *CityBusiness*' 2021 "Women of the Year," World Economic Forum Young Global Shaper, and is an appointed board member of the New Orleans Business Alliance. She graduated from Stanford University, attended Harvard Graduate School of Education, and the University of New Orleans, and was trained in business at Dartmouth University's Tuck School of Business.



Andrea Chen

## Children's Hospital breaks ground on the new Ronald McDonald House

Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Louisiana (RMHC-SLA) has partnered with Children's Hospital to renovate two buildings on the Children's Hospital campus, creating an all new, expanded 22-bed Ronald McDonald House New Orleans with a beautiful, home-like environment that will support families from across the state and region.

In July, the two organizations celebrated a groundbreaking of the jointly funded, 17,000+ square foot building. This \$6 million project expands the current Ronald McDonald House New Orleans program for families whose children receive vital medical services in New Orleans by providing them a home away from home.

In addition to the expansion of family rooms, the new Ronald McDonald House will feature new common spaces, including a spacious kitchen and dining room that will provide space for volunteers and other community groups who give of their time to help the residents. The living room, playroom, and spacious backyard are specially designed to allow for community and fellowship among families. The building project will also include a welcoming lobby, large meeting room, library, and office space for staff.

"Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Louisiana keeps families close to each other and the medical care their child needs, by providing free accommodations for the family," said Cheryl Egan, President of RMHC-SLA's Board of



Directors. "For a sick child, having family nearby is critical to the healing process. We are thrilled that the joint effort with Children's Hospital will allow us to provide on-campus housing while increasing our impact for families traveling to our area for pediatric medical care."

Upon completion of renovations to the new housing facilities, RMHC-SLA will relocate its current 15-bedroom home located at 4403 Canal Street to the new space, which increases the available accommodations for families by 33 percent, with an additional seven family rooms.

"At Children's Hospital, we're building an environment of health centered on delivering expert care for kids with an extraordinary patient and family experience," said John R. Nickens IV, President and CEO of Children's Hospital New Orleans. "The Ronald McDonald House project will expand access to housing for those in need, while providing peace of mind and respite for families on our park-like campus that is specially-designed for children and families. Our goal is to help alleviate some of the stress and to be a resource for families."

Construction for the Ronald McDonald House project began in October and is expected to last approximately 15 months.



## Children's Hospital receives national news coverage as COVID-19 hits the nation's pediatric population



Nurse Sarah Bourgeois tends to Carvase Perrilloux Jr. on the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Children's Hospital in New Orleans, LA on August 18, 2021.

As the sun blazed and the dog days of the 2021 summer months set in, Children's Hospital New Orleans saw a rapid increase of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations of patients who were believed to be infected with the Delta Variant. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the COVID-19 Delta Variant showed higher transmission rates and an alarming rise in cases around the country, especially in the younger and unvaccinated population. Data shows that hospitalizations of children under five years of age had tripled in the first half of July 2021 alone. On July 29, the American Association of Pediatrics reported that one in four children in Louisiana had tested positive for COVID-19, making it the largest surge of the pandemic for kids.

With Louisiana reporting some of the highest numbers in the country in terms of pediatric hospitalizations and testing positivity rates, the news media flocked to Children's Hospital for an inside look at the hospital's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) to help spread the important message of just how crucial the COVID-19 vaccine is for those eligible to receive it. Children's Hospital's Chief Medical Officer and Physician-in-Chief, Dr. Mark Kline, became the spokesperson for the hospital, appearing in interviews with both local and national news outlets including CNN, CBS, MSNBC, ABC, Fox News, WDSU, WWL, WGNO, WVUE, Black News Channel, and more.

National news correspondents including CNN's Nick Valencia, CBS's David Begnaud, and NBC's Morgan Chesky made their way to New Orleans to walk the hallways of the PICU and COVID-19 unit to speak with staff and families

concerning the new strain of the virus. The stories allowed willing patients and families to physically show the world what it looks like for a child to rely on a ventilator in order to breathe and the burden on Children's Hospital's providers throughout the influx of COVID-19-positive patients.

Print media followed suit and Children's Hospital granted additional interviews from writers and photojournalists from *The Advocate*, *New York Times*, *TIME Magazine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, and more. Reaching beyond the time constraints of broadcast media, these publications dove deep into interviews with nurses, physicians, and respiratory therapists who discussed the difficulties the surge brought to the units.

As seen in every hospital across the country, some Children's Hospital team members became infected by the virus, creating staffing challenges. The hospital soon welcomed the Department of Health and Human Services' Disaster Medical Assistance Team to help providers continue to care for patients throughout the surge.

The stories told by the dozens of journalists and the images captured by each videographer and photographer helped Children's Hospital tell the sobering story of what caregivers and patients were experiencing every day. The coverage displayed the resilience of hospital team members and providers, the hope that was felt and expressed by patients and their families, and the change of heart and renewed thinking for those who were once hesitant to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.



# Celebrating transformational milestones

## Bringing the outdoors inside with the opening of the hospital's Main Concourse



On Friday, August 27, Children's Hospital New Orleans celebrated the opening of its new, light-filled Main Concourse. This new front entrance of the hospital was designed to be open and bright, bringing the beauty of the newly landscaped outdoor area of the hospital inside.

The new Main Concourse runs the length of the hospital campus, bringing the clinic and hospital buildings together. Now, the Emergency Department and inpatient side of the hospital are just steps away from the hospital's clinic spaces with the new, open floor plan. The concourse also connects patients, families, and visitors to the Café, Gift Shop, and Family Resource Center, which are all centrally located.

Children's Hospital staff celebrated the opening of the new Main Concourse with a special celebration, second lining through the new space. The front-facing Emergency Department entrance and Main Concourse were two of the final finishing touches left of Children's Hospital's unprecedented \$300 million campus transformation. This space has already been thoroughly enjoyed by patients, families, and team members.







## Expanding emergency care for the kids of Louisiana

Another milestone that Children's Hospital New Orleans celebrated in August 2021 was the opening of the new 32,000 square foot Emergency Department (ED) at the hospital's main campus. The opening of the new ED increased the number of emergency rooms from 29 to 46, including eight rooms dedicated to specialized behavioral health needs, and two dedicated trauma bays.

The expanded Children's Hospital ED offers a complete range of emergency services to care for children from birth through age 21, and is staffed with pediatric emergency medicine physicians, nurse practitioners, pediatric nurses, and other team members who work together to provide comprehensive patient and family-centered care for a wide variety of illness and injuries. In addition to investments in space, Children's Hospital added 10 additional pediatric emergency medicine providers to its staff between August 2020 and August 2021.



In addition to increased space and access at Children's Hospital's main campus, the same expert pediatric emergency care is now available to families in Metairie. On October 26, Children's Hospital opened its Metairie Emergency Room, located at 4545 Veterans Blvd.

The new 11-bed ER in Metairie offers the same trusted 24/7 full-service emergency care that families across the state have come to know at Children's Hospital. The comprehensive emergency center connects specialized pediatric emergency services with Children's Hospital's network of pediatric specialists. The ER also houses diagnostic imaging services, including CT Scans, X-Ray, and Ultrasound.

This expanded capacity at Children's Hospital's main campus and in Metairie allows for increased access to expert pediatric emergency care, close to home for families throughout Greater New Orleans.



# The healing power of **nature and music:**



A look inside the walls of Children's Hospital





**Capturing the essence of a city and integrating that aura into Children's Hospital New Orleans' campus transformation was a combined effort between the designer, the builder, and the hospital team as they set about to brand the facility in a unique way, having a distinct appeal to kids. It has long been shown that healing takes place more quickly and easily in an inviting atmosphere.**

To that end, working themes of music, so indigenous to the culture of New Orleans, and nature, which is abundant in Louisiana and all over the uptown campus of Children's Hospital, into thematic displays, was the goal of the many professionals who had input into the structure and form of the grand new facility.

"These design drivers are meant to be respectful of local culture," explained David Deis, the EYP architect for both the renovation and expansion of the hospital. "Music is a big part of the culture of New Orleans, and seeing bits and pieces of your city evokes a sense of where you are. And, by creating a space that's engaging, this allows one to be distracted from the bells and whistles going off at the side of your bed, and keeps kids' minds off of their healthcare issues."

Integrating nature and music, both calming influences, into the total picture meant using what was already part of the tree-filled landscape and extending it melodically into other spaces.

"The Lauricella Pavilion and the Main Concourse of the hospital are both public spaces filled with natural light, intentionally designed that way," said Ben Whitworth, Vice President of Hospital Operations. "These are relaxing spaces where patients and family members can sit and enjoy their surroundings. The curved driveway, which mimics the curve of the Mississippi River and leads to the front entrance of

the hospital, is surrounded by benches and trees and has an open airy feeling. It's all about being connected to the healing power of nature."

Similarly, the Main Concourse which sweeps from the river toward Tchoupitoulas St., is aglow with natural light, with cubby holes where it's possible for kids and adults alike to sit and quietly read a book or listen to music.

And, on the subject of music, there's symbolism everywhere in the way it has been integrated throughout the hospital.

"One of the main design themes was music, because of the jazz heritage in this city," recounted Wills Hover, Vice President of Healthcare Construction for Lemoine, the firm responsible for implementing the architectural design. "The wood-paneled slats on the ceiling of the Lauricella Pavilion are actually reminiscent of piano keys."

And, the theme extends from there. Adjacent to the public elevators, nurse's stations and reception desks are ceiling features that look like a guitar pick, and the backsplash on the walls undulates, evoking a feeling of sound waves. As you stroll across the concourse, the floor has a sinuous pattern which draws people throughout the space in a lyrical manner.

And, the elevators, which everyone previously has remembered based on color, now have an added feature for kids in that each individual elevator is now associated with a brightly colored musical instrument. Yellow is now the piano and blue is now the saxophone, and so on, making it easier for kids to associate where they're going with the band instruments they see.

From the State St. campus with its enveloping oak trees to the walking path around the campus with its river views, the hospital completely reflects the community in a uniquely New Orleans sort of way.



# Inside Children's

## Hurricane Ida: Recovering together

On Sunday, August 29, on the 16th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Ida made landfall along the Louisiana coast as a Category 4 hurricane. Ahead of the storm, LCMC Health and Children's Hospital New Orleans implemented Severe Weather Plans, preparing the facilities, team members, patients, and families for Code Gray lock down.

A team of 430 essential staff and providers stayed on-site to continue delivering expert care to 121 patients and more than 50 family members who sheltered in place at Children's Hospital. At the time of landfall, much of South Louisiana, including New Orleans, experienced winds of up to 150 mph and heavy rain for many hours. Children's Hospital withstood the storm well, and team members were able to continue caring for kids in a safe environment, without interruption.

The resilience and unwavering commitment of the Children's Hospital family to serve patients and families during this unprecedented time were truly inspiring. In the immediate aftermath of the storm, Children's Hospital focused efforts on minor repairs and cleanup to the main campus, while continuing to provide expert care for patients.

As this was an unprecedented and imperfect situation, the hospital stayed under lock down for six days to protect the safety of team members, patients, and families while ensuring all necessary teams were in-house to continue uninterrupted care for patients. Meanwhile, immense power restoration



and cleanup efforts began across South Louisiana. Children's Hospital quickly began to assess the status of off-site clinics and impacts to resuming normal operations as focus shifted from surviving the storm to thriving again.



### Supporting team members

Early in the recovery period, LCMC Health and Children's Hospital also turned attention to caring for team members, many of whom experienced devastating home damages and other losses. Caring for the Children's family is essential in those team members' ability to care for kids, so Children's Hospital leaders worked hard to quickly identify resources to support them and their families. This included connecting team members with necessities like housing, access to showers, gasoline, laundry, childcare, pet care, and more.

While Children's worked to stand in the gap for team members in need, they continued to stand in the gap for patients and families with a continued resilient spirit.





## Generosity of community in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida

### Charles Barry Wilson Team Member Assistance Fund

Donors Christopher and Lorraine Wilson generously contributed \$500,000 in the days that followed Hurricane Ida to establish a Team Member Assistance Fund at Children's Hospital. The Team Member Assistance Fund is named for Charles Barry Wilson, father of Christopher Wilson, who was born and raised in New Orleans.

"Children's Hospital's Charles Barry Wilson Team Member Assistance Fund will directly ease the financial burden our healthcare heroes are experiencing due to Hurricane Ida's devastating effects on our region," said John R. Nickens IV, President and Chief Executive Officer at Children's Hospital New Orleans. "The Wilson family's incredible generosity will be impactful for many of our team members whose homes sustained significant damage during the storm, and for those who have faced other financial challenges in their recoveries."

The support of donors amplifies the hospital's ability to provide continued support and resources to aid in team members' personal recoveries – team members who are critical to the hospital's ability to continue providing expert care for the children of Louisiana. In addition to the Wilson's gift, more than \$40,000 in additional funds were raised from individuals and businesses to support Children's Hospital team members. In the first month following the storm, more than 100 team members received financial assistance through the fund.

### Corporations lend a helping hand

On September 6, Children's Hospital received a very special delivery of 24 generators, 24 gas cans, 24 box fans, 50, 50-ft extension cords, and a supply of air conditioning units from Send Relief and Home Depot. The total in-kind value of the donated items totaled approximately \$23,000 and was incredibly impactful for the Children's Hospital team members most in need.

Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Hospitals partner, McLane Southern, also supported Children's Hospital in a big way, delivering a truck full of non-perishable food items which were given to team members in need. The Ace Hardware Foundation, another CMN partner, gifted \$25,000 to assist team members who were directly affected by Hurricane Ida.





Thank you for helping us  
**build extraordinary**





# 64 stories of healing



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A LITTLE SOMETHING EXTRA

# 64 stories of healing

To celebrate the completion of the \$300 million campus transformation project at Children's Hospital, focused on improving pediatric healthcare in Louisiana and throughout the Gulf South, the hospital is telling the stories of its patients' journeys of healing and hope. As Louisiana's children's hospital, Children's Hospital New Orleans is proud to provide extraordinary care for children from every parish in the state of Louisiana – from Caddo to Coushatta and Tensas to Tangipahoa.

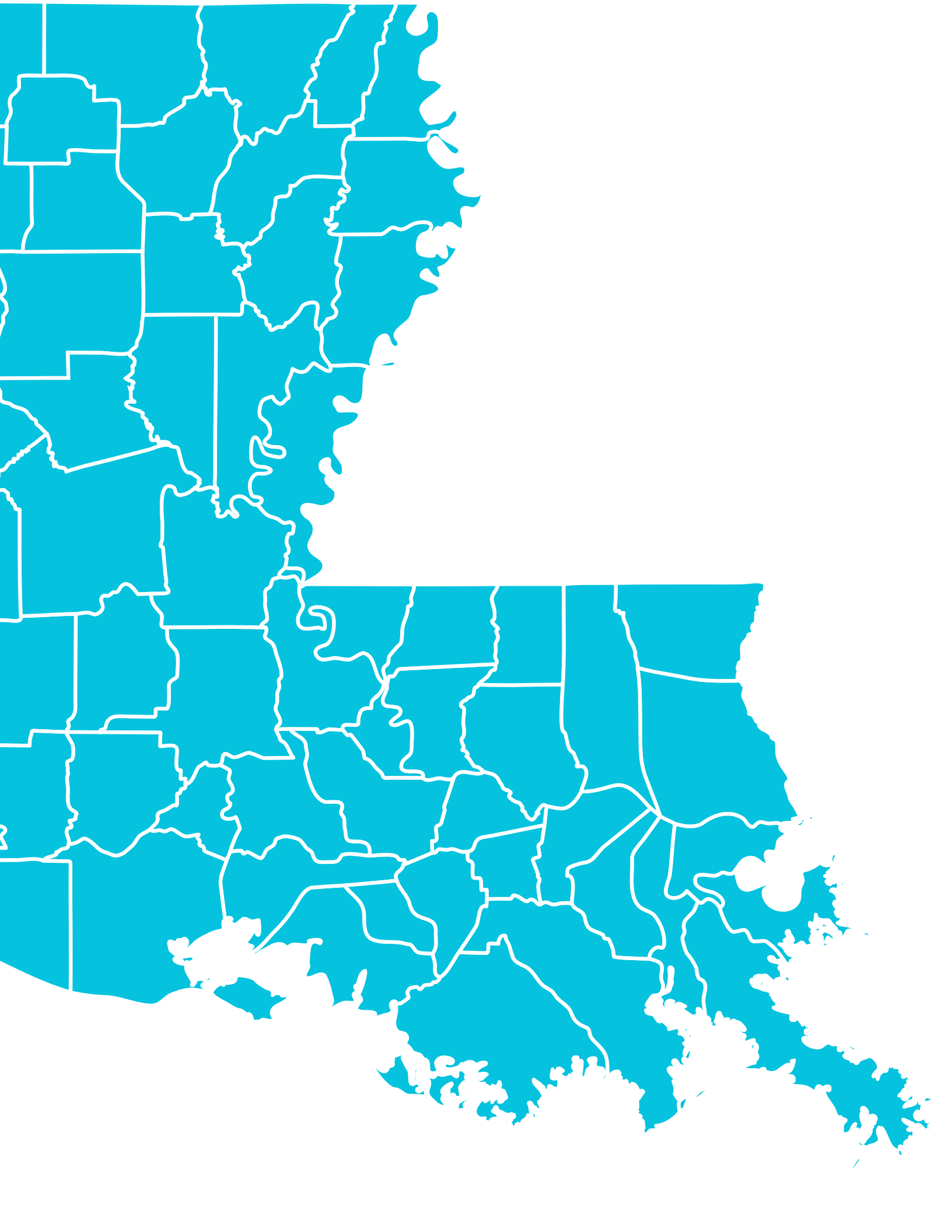
Children's Hospital is sharing the story of a patient from each of Louisiana's 64 parishes, who have experienced healing and hope with the help of the hospital's extraordinary caregivers.

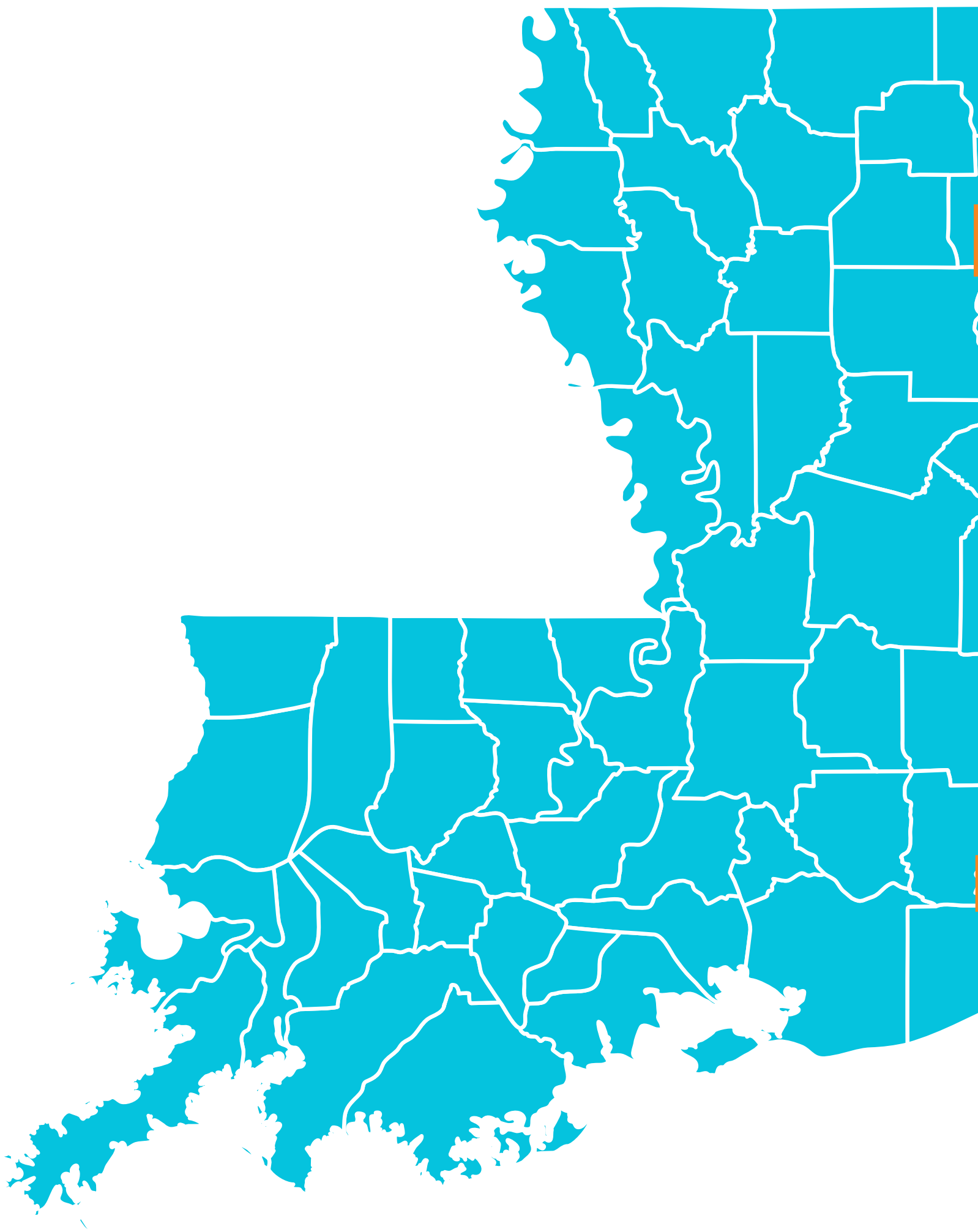
From across Louisiana and the Gulf South, the children who seek care at Children's Hospital New Orleans live with a variety of medical needs, and receive one-of-a-kind care in one or many of the hospital's 40+ pediatric specialties. Every day, Children's Hospital caregivers are humbled and inspired by the remarkable patients they care for.

Follow along, and read the patients' extraordinary stories of healing, hope, resilience, and triumph by visiting [chnola.org/64stories](https://chnola.org/64stories).













## Amoura's story LaSalle Parish

# 64 stories of healing

Amoura's story began on August 12, 2019 when she came fighting into the world. Her mother, Brandi, went into labor at her home in Jena, Louisiana, nearly an hour away from the nearest hospital. Brandi arrived at her delivery hospital in Alexandria just in the nick of time. Within an hour, Amoura was born. Groggy and in pain from a natural childbirth, Brandi immediately knew there was something wrong with her newborn daughter. As a mother of two daughters before Amoura, Brandi instinctively knew there was something different when she saw Amoura.

"She wasn't breathing," explained Brandi. "She was floppy and limp." Amoura was brought to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, where her mother was wheeled to see her new baby. The doctors explained to Brandi that Amoura had ingested meconium, or waste the baby emits at birth. This caused Amoura to aspirate which resulted in a lack of oxygen to her brain. When this happens in newborns, the brain damage that the baby sustains is called Hypoxic-Ischemic Encephalopathy (HIE).

Amoura was diagnosed with HIE, pulmonary hypertension, and cerebral palsy. At just a few hours old, she was fighting to survive. That same day, Amoura's doctors told Brandi that her six-pound baby needed to be airlifted to Children's Hospital New Orleans to receive the lifesaving care she so desperately needed. Without hesitation, but fraught with worry for her little fighter, Brandi agreed to drive to New Orleans as Amoura was flown there in "Abby," Children's Hospital's helicopter.

Immediately, the Children's Hospital Pediatric Critical Care Air Transport Team was on its way to Alexandria to bring then 15-hour-old Amoura to New Orleans for lifesaving care. "They were the ones who made me feel okay," said Brandi with tears in her eyes. "The transport team allowed me to watch as they got her ready. They asked me to talk to her, and I thanked them for taking their time with my baby girl. I knew I was letting her go into the best hands." Just 76 minutes later, Abby and the transport team safely delivered Amoura to Children's Hospital, a third of the time it took for her mother and aunt to drive. The time-saving flight and those 76 minutes were critical in getting Amoura to the NICU at Children's Hospital as quickly as possible, where doctors, nurses, and respiratory therapists were awaiting her arrival.

When Brandi and her sister were still about two hours from New Orleans, Children's Hospital Service Line Chief for

Neonatology, Dr. Brian Barkemeyer, called Brandi to inform her that her daughter had arrived and was stable. He also told her that Amoura's care team was watching her closely and that she may have to be placed on Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO), a heart-lung bypass machine, at any moment. ECMO is a specialized procedure that takes over the functions of the heart and/or lungs when those organs are too sick to properly support the body. Children's Hospital is one of three pediatric facilities to provide this lifesaving service in the Gulf South.

Brandi arrived to be by her baby's side in the NICU, and the next day, Amoura was placed on ECMO. Five days later, her Children's care team was thrilled when they saw vast improvement in less than a week. Amoura was taken off of ECMO, and two weeks later was moved out of the NICU and into a regular room. After a long five weeks at Children's Hospital, Amoura was finally discharged to go home.

Now, Amoura takes on new challenges every day as she continues to grow. Brandi says that they take everything one day at a time, but she is excited to see her daughter reaching milestones. "I know she'll always have cerebral palsy, but I hope that she can have a normal life," says Brandi. "Children's Hospital and the critical care air transport team gave me that hope."



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# One-of-a-kind care for Louisiana's one-of-a-kind kids



## Without change, there would be no butterflies.

Change isn't always easy, and it certainly wasn't inexpensive when it came to the complete renovation and expansion of Children's Hospital New Orleans, whose original structure was erected in 1955. But, embracing change is a concept that's embodied the nearly five-year bricks and mortar metamorphosis of the hospital that's long been lauded for excellence, dating back to its days as The New Orleans Crippled Children's Hospital, a 50-bed rehab facility which sprang from the polio epidemic of that era.





The campus transformation, including the hospital's new Behavioral Health Center on State St., would weigh in at a cost of \$300 million, with a vision to bring the existing facility into the 21st century by demolishing some areas, renovating others, and building some wings from scratch, like the gleaming new central tower.

"By building that new tower between the two wings of the hospital, everything makes much more sense now," explained David Deis, the architect on the project from the firm EYP out of Atlanta, which specializes in healthcare design. "Now there is state-of-the-art imaging, with MRI's, CT scanners, and a PET scanner all under one roof, eliminating any need to transport a patient elsewhere. The Emergency

Department has been greatly expanded, and is now completely on one floor of the hospital, as opposed to two floors previously. The new Surgery Center has large operatories to accommodate the latest equipment, including robotics. And, right above the surgical suites is the 28-bed Cardiac Intensive Care Unit. Combined, they now have six times the amount of space they had previously with a layout and floor plan that make perfect sense for families who can be accommodated along with their children in private rooms. It's all best practice standards in medicine."

Back in 2015, when all of this was still in the discussion phase, and options were being weighed, the previous executive leadership team contemplated buying new property to build on, from the ground up.



That price tag, according to the architect, would have been closer to \$500 million, and the traditional old-world charm of uptown and its magnificent oak trees would have been lost to a much more sterile-looking environment. The decision, eventually, was to renovate in place, while maintaining a fully operational facility – a scenario not without its unique set of challenges.

“With whole walls coming down, there were definitely circumstances where caution was the operative word,” recounted Children’s Hospital President and CEO, John R. Nickens IV. “A guy is swinging a hammer doing construction on one side of a wall, and on the other side is a kid in the pediatric ICU. The construction folks would paint that wall red, which meant not to ever approach that wall, because there was a child directly on the other side. It was these sorts of things that Wills Hover had to manage constantly.”

Wills Hover was the gentleman tasked with making everyone’s vision come to life. As the Vice President of Healthcare Construction out of Lemoine’s New Orleans office, he was the last word on every bit of construction, down to the final nail.

“The running joke was that a new hospital would certainly have been easier to build, without question,” said Hover. “So, every week there were new challenges to overcome. There were 77 different phases to this project, all with their own deadlines. There were between 300 and 350 people on this job site on a daily basis at peak production,

and anywhere from 3,500 to 4,000 people have touched this project in one way or another... some permanent and some temporary. We’ve had a presence here every single day for the last five years, with the exception of a couple of weekends, which involved hurricanes. There were plenty of sacrifices made by the staff of this hospital, because every week it was a new scenario, and the only constant was change.”

To put a finer point on just how complicated this process was, imagine the central corridor of the pre-existing hospital which connected the patient corridor to the Ambulatory Care Center, and then factor in that all of the utilities for the entire hospital emanated there, whether it was the AC, the pneumatic tube system, the chilled water, the fire alarm system... everything. In order to keep the hospital up and running, the entire system had to be constantly rerouted until ultimately that entire corridor was demolished.

“The last 4+ years have been challenging,” recalled Ben Whitworth, Children’s Vice President of Hospital Operations. “It’s been analogous to flying a 747 and replacing the engines while in mid-air. We ripped out the entire middle of the campus with every single water pipe, along with the wiring for data and phone connectivity. We’d reroute the section and demolish the one behind it over and over and over again. This was the most complex project ever for most of the construction team.”





But, if the axiom “no pain, no gain” applies, then it was all worth it. With an additional 235,000 square feet of clinical space, there’s room to do so much more. For instance, the hospital offers programs like a specialized brain injury program that exists nowhere else in Louisiana, and not even at Texas Children’s Hospital, from which CEO John Nickens was recruited back in 2017. Another first in the region is the Halo Program for scoliosis, which was started two years ago at the hospital.

“Our original DNA is the Crippled Children’s Hospital, so we’re rehab to our core,” said Nickens. “So when you had a child whose spine was really struggling, we would traditionally use gravity to stretch it out, but there is a better way, with a halo. You won’t find this program anywhere else in the Gulf South region because you must go through clinical trials, and get your doctors certified. In ten years, I expect everyone will be doing this, but for now, we’re taking the lead.”

One of the patients who has benefited immensely from this program is five-year old Zoe Rose Reed. Born with a genetic syndrome known as Noonan’s, she wasn’t diagnosed until the age of two. But, her medical problems began immediately after her birth in Morgan City.

“Right after she was born and they handed her to me, she turned blue,” remembered Zoe’s mother, Mickenzie. “The next thing I knew, she went into cardiac arrest, and while the medical staff worked on her, the decision was made to transport her via helicopter to Lafayette.”

She spent 39 days in Lafayette before she was transported to Children’s Hospital, as it had become apparent she needed a pediatric heart specialist to determine the underlying medical issues causing her problems. Diagnosed with a hole in her heart affecting all four chambers, she underwent her first heart surgery to repair her aortic arch at just two months. Then, at six months, she had further problems requiring a second surgery.

Zoe’s spinal problems were detected over a year later, when a swallow test performed to find out why she wasn’t eating, revealed extreme scoliosis, or curvature of the spine. At this point Zoe was tested for a whole host of genetic diseases and her Noonan’s was then diagnosed. That particular syndrome impedes growth and comes with the possibility of both heart and spinal issues, among other problems. She then became the patient of Dr. Michael Heffernan, pediatric orthopedic surgeon at Children’s Hospital.





"Early onset scoliosis with a 95-degree curve is always challenging," explained Heffernan. "At the age of two, we want to see growth, but adding growth to scoliosis actually makes it worse. When a particular growth plate on either side of the spine feels pressure, it grows more slowly, making the equation more lopsided, and exacerbating the curve. We need to try and keep the spine straight so it can gain vertebral height, but it's a complicated mix of castings and surgically-implanted growth rods which have to be changed out every six months."

But, when the desired effect for Zoe wasn't being reached with the rods, Dr. Heffernan decided upon a halo brace and traction to further elongate and straighten Zoe's spine.

This entails placing four small screws (under anesthesia) into the forehead and skull to secure a metal halo ring. In Zoe's case, it was worn continually for one month, while slow, steady traction stretched her curving spine into a straighter pattern. At that point, the halo was removed and another growth rod was surgically inserted to hold the correction from the month-long stretch. That rod is secured by hooks on her ribs and pedicle screws at the bottom of her spine. This isn't about cosmetics. Untreated, severe scoliosis can push the lung out of the way, so it can no longer function.

To meet Zoe, who has lived a large part of her life in hospitals, is to come face to face with a whirling ball of energy. Meeting her outside the Hogs for the Cause Family

Center, the residential facility for families at Children's Hospital in the park-like setting of canopied trees, she was inquisitive about everything, and at one point was showing off her jumping skills around the base of a 75-foot tree. The nurses at Children's who have been a part of her life for three years now marvel at her perky disposition and fearlessness, in the face of what anyone would consider a barrage of medical procedures already, throughout her short life.

"This is an amazingly active child who doesn't let anything stop her," commented Patty Cadella, RN, and the nurse navigator for orthopedics. "My job, among other things, was to get her through the four weeks after her halo was placed. Imagine that you're attached to weights with this gigantic thing on your head. Yet, Zoe wanted to have a dance party every day at the nurse's station... with her halo on. Zoe also likes to sing and to color, so sometimes we'd take our paints across the street and sit under a tree. It's our job here to keep her in a child's world throughout her arduous medical journey. She's the hero of the hospital and an inspiration to the older kids in the halo program who figure if Zoe can withstand her treatments, how can they complain? Our program is now two years old, and Zoe was our fourth patient. She's just incredible and she makes it so easy to love her."

At five years old, Zoe is still too tiny to contemplate a spinal fusion, but at some point in the future, that's the goal. In the meantime, the rods will be changed every six months, and she may at some point get an electronic device which allows adjustment in a non-invasive manner, but all of that remains to be seen.

"This is a marathon, not a sprint," explained Dr. Heffernan. "At around the age of ten, when she's considerably larger, and there's enough room for her lungs to function properly, we'll do a final spinal fusion to lock in the progress we've made. She started out with a 95 degree curve, and we're down to 50 degrees."

That fusion may go from T3 to L4... that's from the top region of the middle thoracic area of the spine to the mid-range of the lumbar or lower spine... 14 levels in all to stabilize Zoe, and let her get back to a semblance of a normal life.

"Zoe is currently home-schooled as it's hard to keep up a schedule at a regular school with her doctor's appointments and surgeries taking place in New Orleans when we live in Morgan City," explained mom, Mickenzie. "We don't know the prognosis yet as it's still too early to tell exactly what will happen five years from now, but the





surgeons and staff at Children's saved Zoe's life, and we are extremely grateful."

Much of healing and coping has to do with one's support system, and as Dr. Heffernan likes to say, her family functions like a troop. Mom and both maternal grandparents go to all hospital visits together, and are her constant support at home. Couple that with her incredible care and it's a recipe for success.

Success comes in many forms, and one of the successes at Children's Hospital has been its devotion to making a child's experience not only comfortable, but fun. Specialists in Child Life make sure that those kids spending time in the hospital are stimulated with puzzles, music, and art projects, catered specifically to that individual child. And, Children's has invested in medical equipment tailored to appeal to a child's imagination.

"We have the very best diagnostic tools at the hospital, but sometimes getting imaging done in a large piece of equipment like an MRI can trigger fear, and could require sedation," said Whitworth. "Traveling into a long tube can produce claustrophobia, even in adults, so we've partnered with GE on something called the Adventure Series, which makes getting diagnostic imaging fun. Now, kids enter an MRI which looks like a pirate ship or

a spaceship, or is situated on a princess island. It's all part of catering to kids by making their medical experience a positive one."

The goal at Children's for years now has been all-encompassing care. In that vein, the new Burn Center has just opened, so that patients with minor burns won't have to travel elsewhere for care, but can now be treated on the New Orleans campus, under the care of a top-notch pediatric burn surgeon. This is further amplified by the hospital's world-class surgical center, and designated Level II trauma program. And, with the Ronald McDonald House now moving to Children's campus, the \$6 million dollar project now under construction will add much needed rooms for families, and will be a welcome addition to the Hogs for the Cause Family Center, which has been open, and full, since 2018.

What has always made this hospital distinct are the pediatric specialists who have long worked here. One of the goals of CEO John Nickens was to build on that premier staff and recruit the best and the brightest doctors from around the country as additions to the family. He has attracted top pediatric specialists from Cincinnati Children's, Boston Children's, Stanford, Texas Children's, Vanderbilt, CHOP (Children's Hospital of Philadelphia), and Duke, just to scratch the surface.





Success comes in many forms, and one of the successes at Children's Hospital New Orleans has been its **devotion to making a child's experience not only comfortable, but fun.**



If a hospital is only as good as its staff, Nickens has recruited the crème de la crème from across the U.S.

"I'm proud of the idea that the bricks and mortar now match the professionals inside this hospital," Nickens shared. "It honors them, and it represents us as an organization that's not casual about changing the future of healthcare in this state... and we're just getting started. With this transformation, we have the basis for a foundation to move forward. We are now partnering with schools to put nurses inside, while having an ongoing dialogue with psychologists and social workers to ensure that kids are healthy both physically and emotionally."

For those who point to the fact that Louisiana has traditionally been at the bottom of the totem pole in terms of social determinants of health for kids, the CEO asks that you look at Children's Hospital, and their ongoing commitment to excellence for Louisiana and the Gulf South region.

"The people here are wonderful, and the culture is amazing," notes Nickens. "With this new venue and our incredible staff, there is no reason why we cannot and will not lead the next generation of pediatric healthcare."





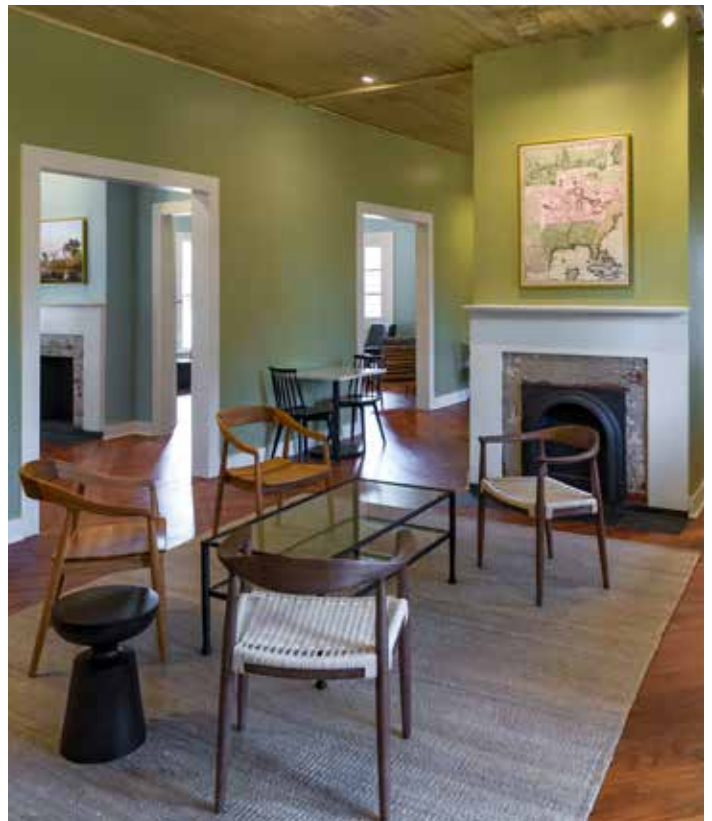
## Hales Cottage Historic Restoration

The Hales Cottage, located on the historic Children's Hospital State Street campus, is believed to be the oldest surviving residential structure in this part of uptown New Orleans. The cottage was built in three phases, and moved at least three times throughout its history. The exterior wings, galleries, and ornamental façade date back to the 1850s, with the interior rooms, floors, rafters, and chimneys constructed in the early 1830s. Parts of the wall frames are believed to date to the 1780s.

A generous gift from Nancy and Dr. Stephen Hales helped restore the cottage between 2019-2021, incorporating the historic property into the Children's Hospital campus where it will serve as a place of respite for patients, families, Children's Hospital team members, and the community to gather, relax, and reflect. The cottage includes a coffee shop, and meeting and gathering spaces for the Children's Hospital community to enjoy for many years to come.

Additionally, Children's Hospital is pleased to announce the Hales Fund, a fund established in honor of Dr. Stephen Hales and his service to the greater New Orleans community as a beloved pediatrician for more than 40 years and in his role as a member of the Children's Hospital Board of Trustees since 1981.

With his leadership, Children's Hospital first invested in Community Benefits Programs in the 1990s to best serve the needs of the community – a mission that continues today. The Hales Fund for Community Benefit Programs continues that legacy of service to our Louisiana communities. Gifts to the Hales Fund will help ensure that all children have access to the care and services they need to thrive. A portion of coffee sales in the Hales Cottage will benefit the Hales Fund through a year-long round up campaign.







## We thank you very sweetly...

Each spring, Children's Hospital New Orleans, backed by a tremendous committee of community volunteers, hosts its signature fundraising gala, Sugarplum Ball. After it became abundantly clear in the fall of last year that the COVID-19 pandemic would prevent Sugarplum Ball 2021 from taking place, a plan to introduce a new and safe fundraiser was developed. In March, on what would have been the evening of the 2021 Sugarplum Ball, Children's Hospital kicked off "There's no place like home."

The three-part dining series, presented by Lemoine, was a resounding success raising over \$440,000 for Children's Hospital. Produced in a partnership with Ralph Brennan Restaurant Group, the dinner from Ralph's on the Park in March was followed by dinner from Red Fish Grill in May, and culminated with brunch in July from Brennan's. Patrons were invited to pick up their meals at a drive through experience inspired by the Wizard of Oz and even had familiar greeters in Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Cowardly Lion, and the Tin Man.



In addition to the meals, Children's hosted an online auction that featured specially-curated items. The auction block included artwork, VIP packages to upcoming events such as the Zurich Classic and the Sugar Bowl, dining experiences at local fine dining restaurants, Mardi Gras krewe riding packages, and fine jewelry. Held in conjunction with the final meal, the auction raised over \$16,000 for the hospital.

The series would not have been possible without the generous support of donors including the presenting sponsor, Lemoine; Dorothy sponsors, IBERIABANK, First Horizon Bank, and The McDonnell Group; and Scarecrow sponsors, B of A Securities, Baker Donelson, Bernhard, Convergint Technologies, Gallo Mechanical, Gootee Construction Inc., Haydel's Bakery, Interstate Electronic System's LLC, Marye and John Nickens, PJ's Coffee, The Ray and Jessica Brandt Family Foundation, and The Sulzer Group.

Now that 2021 was spent following the Yellow Brick Road, the final destination is in sight.

Sugarplum Ball 2022, the 40th anniversary, will return with exuberance and joy on March 19, 2022 when we will gather to celebrate, together in the Emerald City.

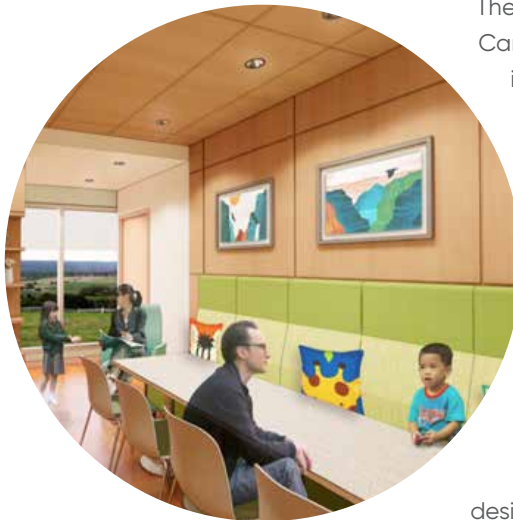


## The Bella Bowman Foundation to provide comfort to families who need it most

The Bowman family lost their eight-year-old daughter, Bella, in 2011 following the removal of a cancerous brain tumor and subsequent rigorous treatment. Bella's parents, Kim and Trey Bowman, formed the Bella Bowman Foundation to honor their daughter's life and legacy. With the mission of supporting and funding comfort care initiatives for sick children and their families, the Bowman family came to Children's Hospital New Orleans with an idea to create the hospital's first ever Comfort Suite.

Bearing the name "Bella's Room" the three-room Comfort Suite is designed to be a sanctuary for delivering expert end-of-life care for the child, as well as the whole family. The center room of the suite will provide the child with a medically safe place to stay, an adjoining room is designed for families to sleep and experience respite, and a third room will serve as a gathering place for extended family.

"This commitment is important to our foundation and to Bella's legacy," says Trey Bowman, President of the Bella Bowman Foundation and Bella's father. "By transforming Bella's Room into a space designed for each child's interests, we can help bring an additional level of home-like comfort to patients and families while in the hospital."



The Children's Hospital New Orleans Palliative Care program, known as the Pelican Krewe, is an interdisciplinary team made up of physicians, nurses, social workers, child life specialists, integrative therapists, spiritual care experts, and psychology experts who provide an extra layer of support for children and families living with serious illnesses. Bella's Room will amplify the level of care the Pelican Krewe provides for children nearing end of life and will serve as an oasis for these patients and their families.

"Bella's Room will not only be specifically designed with each child we have had the honor to care for in mind, it will also promote comfort and solace for the entire family," says Alexis Morvant, MD, Chief of Palliative Care at Children's Hospital New Orleans. "With the generous support of the Bella Bowman Foundation, honoring sweet Bella's legacy, we will transform the way children and families across Louisiana and the Gulf South experience serious illness and end-of-life care."

Construction for Bella's Room will begin in the coming months, and the space is expected to open in 2022.





**Leaving his legacy:  
Former CEO,  
Steve Worley, makes  
transformational gift  
to Children's Hospital**

Former CEO and Emeritus Board Member, Steve Worley, along with his wife Patty, have made a significant investment in the future of Children's Hospital New Orleans. With a commitment of \$1.2 million, the conference building on the hospital's State St. campus will be named the Steve Worley Conference Hall, and the playground across from the Hogs for the Cause Family Center will bear the Worley family name.

"It was always our intention to give back to the organization that means so much to us," said Steve Worley. "Children's Hospital is a treasure to New Orleans and the State of Louisiana, and we want to ensure that the children of our community and beyond have superior healthcare for generations."

"Steve Worley's leadership and business acumen laid the groundwork for what we have today," said John Nickens, President and CEO, "a children's hospital that was financially able to build a health system and has now completed a \$300 million campus and programmatic transformation for the children of our state."

Mr. Worley joined the leadership team at Children's Hospital in 1980, and served as CEO for 28 years. Under his direction Children's Hospital became the founding member of LCMC Health, which has grown to a six-hospital system and one of the strongest health systems in Louisiana. As senior advisor, he supported the system's board initiatives and administration. Since his retirement in 2015, he has continued to serve the hospital's Board of Trustees as Emeritus Member.



**"Steve Worley's leadership and business acumen laid the groundwork for what we have today."**





# We expanded our hospital wings to give them wings to soar.



**Children's Hospital**  
New Orleans  
LCMC Health

At Children's Hospital New Orleans, our transformed hospital was designed with kids at the center - with 50 percent more space, 40 pediatric specialties, and more than 600 pediatric providers. Today, as the Gulf South's largest children's hospital, there are so many big reasons to choose Children's Hospital. But we like to focus on the little ones. **We've built extraordinary, because they are.**

**Explore our campus at [chnola.org](https://www.chnola.org)**



**Children's Hospital**  
New Orleans  
LCMC Health

In proud partnership with our medical schools

