



**Christine Alexander-Rager, MD**

President and CEO  
The MetroHealth System  
2500 MetroHealth Drive  
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

March 2026

## **President's Report to the Board of Trustees**

Good afternoon, Trustees:

Thank you for your service to our system, our patients, our caregivers and our community.

Fifty years ago this month, MetroHealth revolutionized healthcare in Cleveland by opening the Kenneth W. Clement Center. This was our first community health clinic, and it was located on East 79<sup>th</sup> Street in the heart of one of our city's most underserved neighborhoods.

Named after the remarkable and trailblazing physician and civil rights leader, the Clement Center paved the way for a new model of medicine. It proved that integrating care directly into the community improves health, well-being and lives by creating lasting, meaningful relationships with patients. The Clement center was a cornerstone for Cleveland's Black community and a powerful symbol of Black excellence.

The legacy of that single clinic is our current network of over a dozen community health centers, school programs, mobile clinics and other initiatives that bring care directly to our patients, where they live, learn, work and pray.

A celebration honoring the 50-year anniversary is in the works. In the meantime, our caregivers working across our community honor the legacy of the Clement Center every day.

Here are some other highlights since we met last. As usual, please consult your Board books for more details and updates.

- What we offer our community as the region's premier and most experienced Level I Trauma Center goes far beyond the life-saving care we provide inside our hospital walls. We train not only EMS, police and fire professionals from across the region but also community members who want to be ready when every second counts.

Last month, 21-year-old **Giles Foster V** used techniques he learned from our "Stop the Bleed" team to help save the lives of two men after a shooting outside a local restaurant. He learned those life-saving skills at a community training event organized by Cuyahoga County Violent Prevention Administrator **Myesha Watkins**, County Councilwoman **Yvonne Conwell** and Cleveland Councilwoman **Stephanie Howse-Jones**, who reached out to our team.

Because of this young man's heroic actions – and the collaboration that comes in a community-focused regional trauma system – the lives of two members of our community were saved.



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● On Sunday, March 15, I had the honor of assisting the MetroHealth Medical Staff as it inducted seven remarkable medical professionals into the MetroHealth Hall of Honor. Each of the seven dedicated their lives to serving our patients, advancing medicine and improving patient care. The seven new inductees are **William H. Andrews; Robert M. Bilenker, MD; James W. Campbell, MD; Louis J. Karnosh MD; Brian M. Mercer, MD; John J. Moore, MD; and P. Hunter Peckham, PhD.**

● On March 5, I joined a group of women leaders from MetroHealth at the Weatherhead School of Management's Leadership Conference, an event in Downtown Cleveland focused on educating, inspiring and empowering women leaders. I participated in a panel discussion on the challenges and risks shaping our future and how we can turn them into opportunities and optimism, especially for our region's women leaders.

● On March 7, I had the honor of participating and speaking briefly at the annual Richmond Heights Women's Empowerment Luncheon. This year, a record crowd of more than 200 came together to support and lift each other and to help celebrate Women's Month and International Women's Day. Thank you to Richmond Heights Mayor **Kim Thomas** for her vision and for all she does for Greater Cleveland's women.

● As you know, listening – truly listening – is important to me as a physician, a colleague and a leader. As our leadership team has listened to our front-line caregivers, we've heard many of them speak candidly about the challenges created by silos across our system. So we are working to break those silos down and replace them with open channels of communication and collaboration. Earlier this month, we launched something we are calling Enterprise Units, which are cross-functional groups bringing together clinicians, leaders and operational experts to tackle system-wide challenges.

Rather than adding bureaucracy, these new groups will bring the right voices together to make sound decisions. Led by two individuals, one clinical and one operational, the first five Enterprise Units will focus on key areas like Community Health and Surgical Specialties. They will work together to design collaborative solutions and then submit them to our Core leadership for approval and action. This will create a more unified, accountable and effective health system.

I will make sure to provide you with regular updates on this exciting new project.

Thank you again, Trustees, for all you do for MetroHealth.

With deep appreciation,

**Christine Alexander-Rager, MD**

President and CEO  
The MetroHealth System



**MetroHealth**

# Report to the Board of Trustees

Christine Alexander-Rager, MD

President and CEO

**March 2026**

# The MetroHealth Foundation



## Notable Gifts (\$25K+)

- \$623,000 three-year commitment to provide support of the “I Am Here – Peer to Peer” program.
- \$240,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Children and Youth in continued support of the Institute for H.O.P.E.™ Community Advocacy Program: A Medical-Legal Partnership.
- \$50,000 gift in support of the Vital Nurse Smart Room Project.
- \$25,000 gift in support of MetroHealth's mission.

## Champion of Philanthropy: Mala Singh

Recognized for her generosity and leadership during We Give Metro, inspiring colleagues to support programs like the Employee Hardship Fund. [Read her story.](#)

## Fifth Third Bank Financial Literacy Workshop

The Financial Literacy Workshop on February 26 provided practical budgeting and credit tools that advance the Institute for H.O.P.E.™ mission. MetroHealth Foundation Board Member Dana Capers from Fifth Third Bank attended.

## Cultivation Event Hosted by Aaron Witwer, Foundation Board Member

On March 5, guests heard powerful insights from Dr. Michael Seidman and Bridget Gill on Healthcare for Those Experiencing Homelessness, including upcoming enhancements like a mobile EKG unit supported by philanthropy.

## Threads of Hope

Employee volunteers made no-sew blankets for trauma and burn patients, offering comfort during extended stays and transitions in care.

## Save the Date

- Investiture of J. Daryl Thornton, MD, MPH, as the chairholder of The Mary Elizabeth Connors Professorship in Critical Care Research: Tuesday, March 31, at 4:30 p.m., at Main Campus.
- KeyBank Rooted in Community Celebration: Wednesday, April 22, at 10:00 a.m., at Buckeye Health Center.
- Outpatient Health Center Opening Celebration: Saturday, May 16, at Main Campus. More details are coming soon.
- 10th Annual Resiliency Run: Saturday, June 6, 2026, at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. To sponsor, contact Abbie Sender at 440-592-1390 or [asender1@metrohealth.org](mailto:asender1@metrohealth.org)



# Human Resources

- Planning sessions underway with **Cleveland Metropolitan School District** regarding the Pathways Program for the 2026/2027 school year – specifically Allied Health: Respiratory Therapy.
- The leaders of Talent Acquisition, Workforce Development and HR Business Partners met with the Associate Dean of Nursing at **Cleveland State University** to strengthen our partnership and expand clinical placement opportunities for their nursing students at MetroHealth. The discussion also included plans for more frequent classroom engagement to increase student awareness of career pathways within MetroHealth.
- HR Business Partners collaborated with department leaders across the System to analyze their **2025 Employee Engagement Survey** results. This included supporting leaders in presenting survey findings to their teams and developing strategic Action Planning tactics.
- The **Workplace Safety Governance Committee** was established late last year to formalize and advance our workplace safety strategy. The committee is composed of executive leaders who champion safety initiatives in alignment with ORC and Joint Commission standards. The committee held its second meeting on March 12.



# Government

The Government Relations team has also been active, engaging with elected officials, attending key meetings and events, and strengthening relationships that support our policy and advocacy work.

- Cuyahoga County Health and Human Services Addiction Services in the Jails presentation
- Richmond Heights Women's Empowerment Luncheon
- Hosted members of Cuyahoga County Council for a tour of the Main Campus Emergency Department and Level I Trauma Center



# Community Relations

The Community Relations team recently represented MetroHealth at a wide range of community events and meetings, including:

- Forum at The City Club of Cleveland about Healthcare Inequality and Access Forum Featuring Katie Davis-Bellamy
- Richmond Heights Wellness Fair
- Black History Month Prayer Breakfast
- Make Them Know Your Name Fitness Expo
- One Hope NEO Women's Day
- Honey from the Rock- Foster Care Closet Visit
- Trauma 101 Community Town Hall



# Outreach – Level I Trauma Center

Metro Life Flight's **2026 Erie Shores EMS & Critical Care Symposium** brought together more than 270 participants and 21 industry partners for two days of high-impact education, collaboration and hands-on learning.

As the region's premier Level I trauma center, MetroHealth is committed to strengthening the knowledge and readiness of our prehospital and critical care community.

This year's symposium delivered on that promise – offering world-class lectures, interactive breakout sessions and meaningful engagement with vendors leading the way in clinical technology and patient-care innovation.



# Communications

## Media Relations Highlights –Trauma and Financials

- [MetroHealth warns of existential threat from Clinic’s proposed trauma center](#) – Crain’s Cleveland Business
- [Guest Column: A responsible pause in the Clinic’s trauma center plans - for the health of Cleveland \(Vincent E. Stokes II and Jimmy Gates\)](#) – Cleveland.com/Plain Dealer
- [Opinion: Before adding another trauma center, Cleveland must ask if it truly needs one](#) – Crain’s Cleveland Business
- [MetroHealth launches dyad leadership model from Level I trauma center](#) – Becker’s
- [MetroHealth 'making strides' with financial results despite stiff headwinds](#) – Crain’s Cleveland Business
- [MetroHealth ends 2025 in black after surprise Medicaid payments](#) – Plain Dealer/Cleveland.com

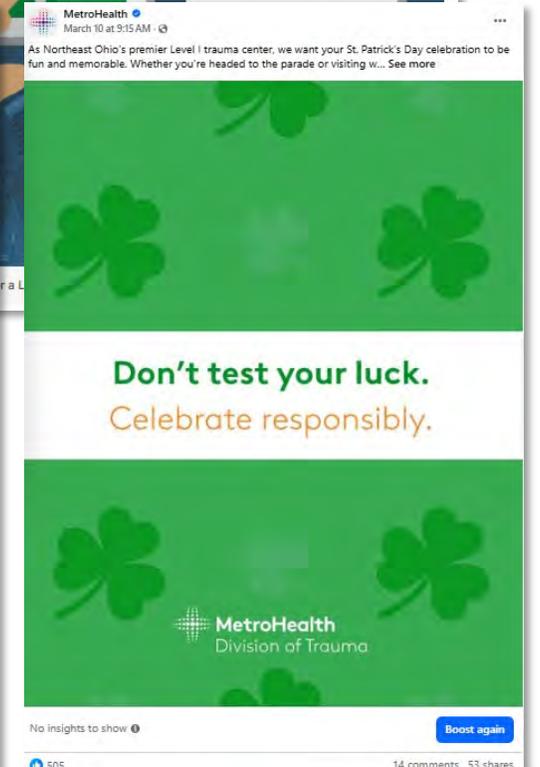
## Social Media Highlights

- **Focus on Trauma:** Resiliency Run promotion, trauma prevention (hydroplaning, St. Paddy’s Day safety, etc.), patient stories, TBI forum and more.

OPINION

## A responsible pause in the Clinic’s trauma center plans - for the health of Cleveland: Vincent E. Stokes II and Jimmy Gates

Published: Mar. 08, 2026, 5:31 a.m.



# Communications

## Other Media Highlights

- MetroHealth's Anthony DiMarco, MD, featured in WKYC story, ["Beyond the Superman science: Cleveland researcher behind Christopher Reeve's 2003 implant pushing spinal cord care forward."](#)
- **Expert placement:** Lisa Ramirez, PhD, quoted in ideastream story, ["Can representation help solve the mental health crisis among Cleveland's Black youth?"](#)
- **Expert placement:** MetroHealth's Aisha Siraj, MD, featured in WKYC story, ["Heart disease kills more women than anything else – here's what they're missing."](#) You can watch Dr. Siraj's full interview with Monica Robins [here](#).
- **Expert placement:** MetroHealth's Maureen Sullivan is quoted in Becker's piece, ["The next phase of patient experience."](#)
- **Expert placement:** MetroHealth's Dr. Candace Mori quoted in Becker's piece, ["The financial incentives nurses crave."](#)
- **Expert placement:** MetroHealth Mengdan Xie, MD, featured in the Sound of Ideas segment, ["Northeast Ohio doctors discuss rising colorectal cancer deaths in adults under 50."](#)
- **Expert placement:** MetroHealth's Julie Pajek, PhD, was quoted about the mental health impact of school lockdowns in the Cleveland.com/Plain Dealer story, ["Ohio schools just saw dozens of fake bomb threats. Is it time to rethink lockdowns?"](#)
- [Foster kids were exiting hospital in gowns following crisis. A Cleveland nonprofit stepped up to clothe them](#) – Cleveland.com/Plain Dealer

## Internal Communications:

- Managed employee communications around System financials, Enterprise Units, Patient Safety Week, Employee Appreciation Day and more.



As part of Patient Safety Awareness Week, caregivers are invited to a special panel discussion with leadership at noon today, March 11, in Scott Auditorium. You can also stream it at [this link](#).

This year's theme – "Team Up for Patient Safety" – highlights the importance of strong teamwork among patients, families and care teams. When everyone collaborates, communicates openly and learns from one another, we create safer care environments and stronger outcomes.

The panel will feature:

- Christine Alexander-Rager, MD, President and CEO
- Joseph Golob, MD, MHSE, CPHQ, FACS, Executive Vice President, Chief Quality and Safety Officer
- Candace Mori, PhD, RN, APRN, ACNS-BC, NEA-BC, ONC, Senior Vice President, Chief Nursing and Patient Care Services Officer



### Beyond the Superman science: Cleveland researcher behind Christopher Reeve's 2003 implant pushing spinal cord care forward

More than 20 years after a historic surgery, a Cleveland researcher's work is still saving lives, thanks in part to the man many knew as Superman.



# Marketing

## Primary Care

Increase utilization, improve access awareness, and connect patients to the right provider

- Primary Care is the front door to the health system, driving access, long term relationships, and downstream growth.
- In 2026, we will deliver a coordinated, multichannel Marketing and Communications strategy to build awareness of expanded access options and make it easy for patients to choose care that fits their needs.

### Focus areas include:

- Promoting how and when patients want care (same day, evenings, virtual)
- Improving find a doctor access, including highlighting Primary Care providers and care teams with availability close to home
- Driving awareness and utilization through paid, digital, and owned channels

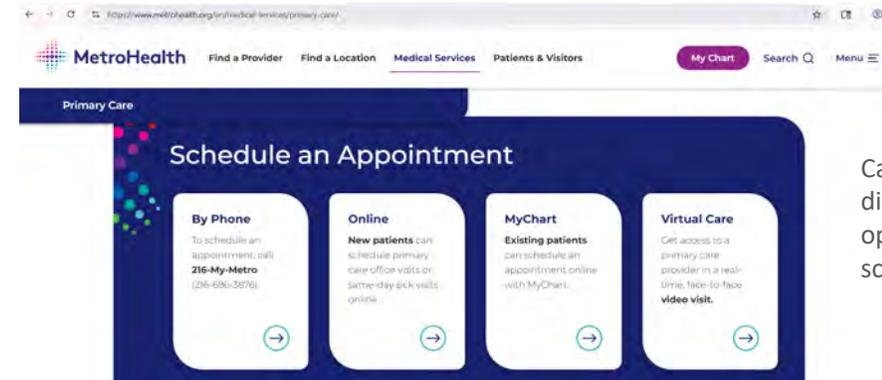


Sponsored result

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MetroHealth Primary Care

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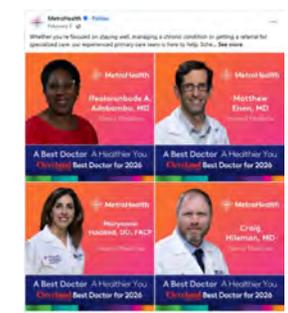
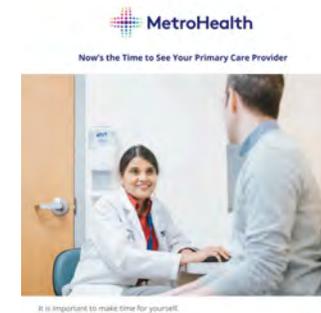
Paid Search



Calls to Action direct patient to options for scheduling

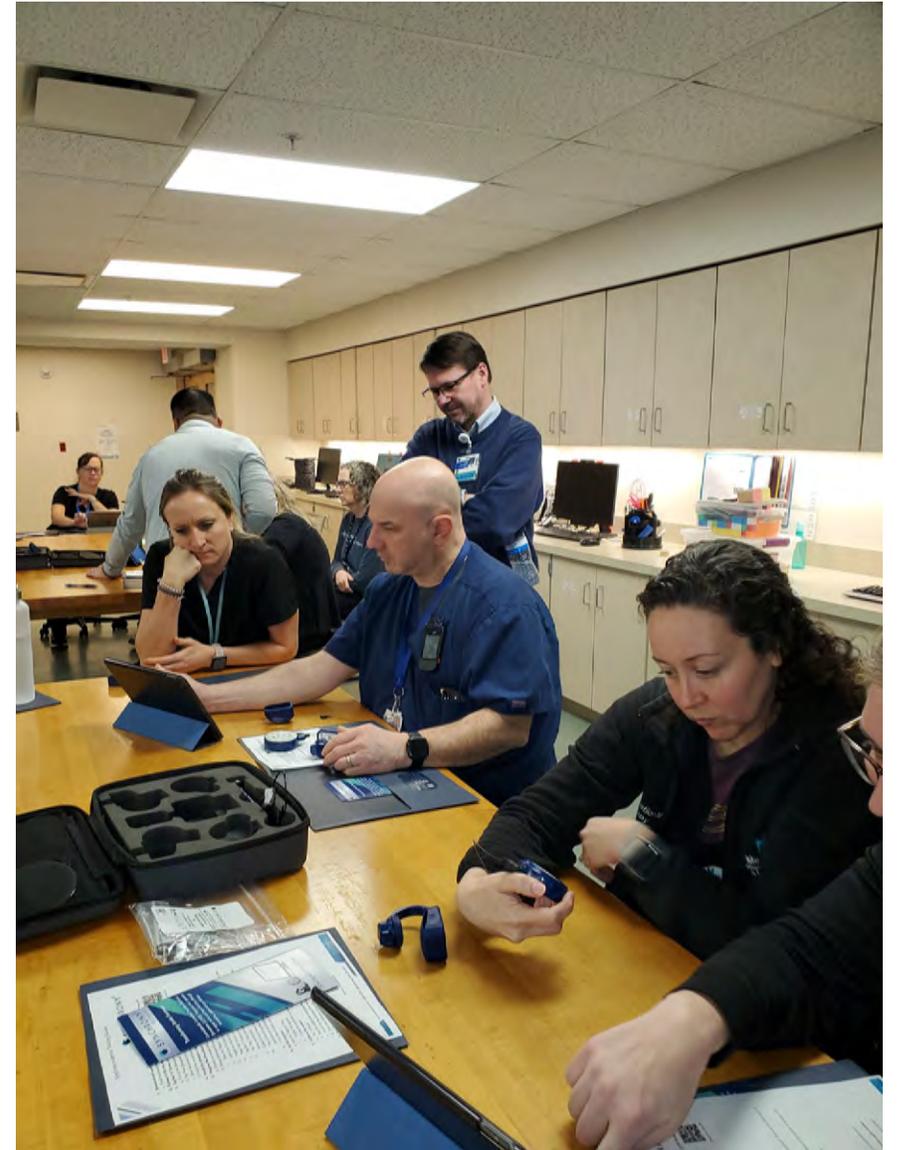
Email Campaign

Paid/Organic Social



# Academics

- MetroHealth received its institutional accreditation letter from the **Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)**, which accredits institutions for residency and fellowship training programs. MetroHealth received continued accreditation for the 18th consecutive year without any citations.
- First Lupus patient treated with CAR-T
- **Eric Schearer, PhD**, awarded a \$488,299 grant from the Ohio Department of Higher Education to study a robotic caregiver system for persons with spinal cord injury
- **The MetroHealth Center for Rehabilitation Research** sponsored a special issue of the *American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, which features neuromodulation publications from multiple MetroHealth faculty.
- Publication of a multi-site RCT on the efficacy of contralaterally controlled functional electrical stimulation (CCFES) in the journal **Stroke** as a featured article.
- **Synapse Biomedical** launches Synchrony (CCFES) at MetroHealth.



# Awards and Recognition



- **Judy Anderson, BSN, RN**, a NICU nurse, is a recent recipient of the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. Judy was recognized for the exceptional care she provided a patient and their family.
- **Charles Emerman, MD**, was recently appointed as a Director on The American Board of Preventive Medicine (ABPM), representing Addiction Medicine. Dr. Emerman maintains Addiction Medicine certification through ABPM and is certified in Emergency Medicine through the American Board of Emergency Medicine.
- The MetroHealth Cancer Institute's Blood and Marrow Transplant Program has achieved a key accreditation that will make it possible for more patients to receive life-saving cellular therapies here. On January 2, the **Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy** (FACT) awarded the program a three-year accreditation of an adult autologous and immune effector cell program, contingent upon successful annual reviews.



Judy Anderson, BSN, RN,



Charles Emerman, MD

