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SoutheastHEALTH to Collaborate with Cardiothoracic Surgery Division at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis SoutheastHEALTH to Collaborate with Cardiothoracic Surgery Division at Washington University

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - SoutheastHEALTH and the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine have always prided themselves on standing apart from the crowd on the strength of their dedication to quality.

Under a new agreement they will together create opportunities for young physicians and improve health care for patients throughout the region as the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine begins working in collaboration with SoutheastHEALTH.

"We are pleased to work with The Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine," said Ken Bateman, president and CEO of SoutheastHEALTH. "Bringing our two entities together marries the value our community hospital offers with the innovation and excellence only a world-class university can provide."

Washington University School of Medicine's cardiothoracic division is a leading international cardiothoracic (heart, lungs and chest) surgery program. Established in the 1930s, it was one of the earliest programs of its kind. Today, the division provides care and research in four specialties — adult cardiac surgery, adult general thoracic surgery, pediatric cardiothoracic surgery and cardiothoracic critical care — and is dedicated to training future generations of cardiothoracic surgeons.

The new collaboration represents the latest positive chapter in SoutheastHEALTH's impressive comeback story. Just two years ago, the organization faced significant financial challenges. Since Bateman joined the organization in late 2014, his leadership has brought the organization out of the red and into a position where it is well poised to seek opportunities for growth.

Bateman said he's eager to explore the many ways the ideas developed by experts at the Cardiothoracic Division can improve patients' experiences and outcomes at SoutheastHEALTH.

"We're always asking ourselves how we can improve quality, increase patient satisfaction and optimize the value proposition we can offer our patients," said Bateman. "This agreement, and the experience and energy the university's faculty and students will bring to bear, is an exciting way we can do exactly that."

Southeast Medical Group's Medical Director, Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery Paul D. Robison, MD, and Ralph J. Damiano Jr., MD, Chief, Division of Cardiothoracic

Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine and Barnes-Jewish Hospital, will lead the clinical collaboration efforts focused on providing southeast Missouri patients leading-edge medical treatments, research and access to clinical trials. Robison aspired to develop an affiliation of this nature since joining Southeast in July 2013.

"By design, this collaboration will enhance the level of interventional heart care by bringing evidence-based innovations in surgical techniques and treatment options for our critically ill heart patients," said Robison. "Dr. Damiano has been a valued collaborator of mine for years and I'm pleased to bring this relationship and collaboration together for the benefit of SoutheastHEALTH and those we serve."

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