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## SoutheastHEALTH, Universal Health Services Sign Partnership Agreement to Bridge the Gap for Mental Health Services in Southeast Missouri

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FEBRUARY 28TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

## **SoutheastHEALTH, Universal Health Services Sign Partnership Agreement to Bridge the Gap for Mental Health Services in Southeast Missouri**

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - SoutheastHEALTH and Universal Health Services (NYSE: UHS) are entering into a partnership to address the growing, unmet need for accessible, high-quality and advanced behavioral health services in Cape Girardeau and the surrounding communities in southeast Missouri. SoutheastHEALTH selected UHS, one of the nation's most respected hospital management companies, as its partner because of its behavioral health expertise and the shared vision and long-standing commitment to patient and family-centered care, strong clinical outcomes and proven track record of partnering with academic, regional networks and community-based entities. UHS will be the majority owner and will oversee the day-to-day operations and management of the new behavioral health facility.

“With the limited access to behavioral health providers in Southeast’s service area, patients in crisis commonly come to the emergency departments of acute-care hospitals, which challenges the care team’s ability to provide appropriate treatment and stabilization, post-discharge placement, and patient transportation,” said SoutheastHEALTH President and CEO Ken Bateman. “Southeast and UHS intend to provide specialized care for patients, along with investing in medical residencies, clinical training and the latest in telehealth technology to bridge the gap in access.”

The partnership strategy includes the construction of a new, free-standing 102-bed behavioral health hospital. The \$33 million state-of-the-art facility will span more than 68,000 square-feet, and will significantly improve access to care for the full continuum of behavioral health programs and services.

“UHS is pleased to collaborate with SoutheastHEALTH, a premier organization, to provide critically needed behavioral health services in greater southeast Missouri,” said Universal Health Services National Director, Behavioral Health Integration Shelah Adams. “UHS continues to expand our partnerships with leading health care organizations across the country to develop behavioral health solutions to meet the unique needs of the system and community. We recognize SoutheastHEALTH shares our mission and vision to provide patients and their loved ones with compassionate, high-quality behavioral health care, services and support.”

Plans to establish the new facility were approved unanimously by a state board in May 2018. Construction will begin this summer on the hospital, which will be located on

Southeast's west campus adjacent to interstate 55 on exit 95. The facility is expected to open in fall 2020. "Aside from fulfilling the unmet need for behavioral health, the economic impact for this community is impressive. When fully operational, the hospital will employ over 180 clinicians, mental health technicians and support staff," Bateman added.

The new facility will feature a full continuum of inpatient services across the entire patient population, including a geriatric unit, two adult care units, and a child and adolescent unit. Specialty programs for co-occurring behavioral health and substance use issues will be offered to meet the unique needs of this patient population. In addition, the facility will offer robust outpatient programs to address the most prevalent mental health concerns, including child, adolescent and family counseling; and treatment for depression, anxiety disorders and other common mental health issues.

"UHS brings national resources with a local focus, currently operating two other facilities in Missouri, having proudly served the community for well over 100 years," said Universal Health Services Group Director of the Behavioral Health Division Ron Escarda. "Our long-standing commitment to quality care and expertise in the field of behavioral health will enable us, in partnership with Southeast, to improve access to services and enhance the level of care provided to some of this region's most vulnerable patients."

Behavioral health care continues to be at the forefront of societal concerns among health care providers, government officials, legislators and community service organizations in Missouri and across the country.

Nearly one in 10 children between the ages of 12 and 17 in Missouri experienced a depressive episode in 2017. Despite the need for mental health services among a large portion of the population, the average wait time to see a psychiatrist is 10 to 30 days for adults in Missouri and up to six months for children and teens. In the state of Missouri from 2008 through 2017, emergency department utilization for mental health-related disorders increased 212 percent for Medicaid managed care and 30 percent for Medicaid fee-for-service. The increase for all other payers combined was 42 percent.

## SoutheastHEALTH

At SoutheastHEALTH, the region's premier healthcare system in southeast Missouri, our patients receive excellent care of the highest clinical quality, close to home. Within our network are more than 50 care locations in 12 communities, including hospitals, primary and specialty care clinics representing over 30 clinical specialties and extending care for

patients in a four-state area. Learn more at SEhealth.org.

Universal Health Services, Inc.

One of the nation’s largest and most respected hospital management companies, Universal Health Services, Inc. (NYSE: UHS) has built an impressive record of achievement and performance. Growing steadily since its inception into an esteemed Fortune 500 corporation, UHS today has annual revenues of \$10 billion. In 2019, UHS was again recognized as one of the World’s Most Admired Companies by Fortune; in 2018, ranked #268 on the Fortune 500; and in 2017, listed #275 in Forbes inaugural ranking of America’s Top 500 Public Companies.

The UHS operating philosophy is as effective today as it was 40 years ago: Develop high quality hospitals in growing markets, invest in the people and equipment needed to allow each facility to thrive, and become the leading healthcare provider in each and every community we serve.

Headquartered in King of Prussia, PA, UHS has more than 87,000 employees and through its subsidiaries operates more than 350 inpatient acute care hospitals and behavioral health facilities, and 32 outpatient and other facilities in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the United Kingdom.

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# Colorectal Cancer Can Run in Your Family Seminar

FEBRUARY 27TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Colorectal Cancer Can Run in Your Family Seminar

Regular colorectal cancer screening is one of the most powerful weapons for preventing colorectal cancer.

From the time the first abnormal cells start to grow into polyps, it usually takes about 10 to 15 years for them to develop into colorectal cancer.

With regular screening, most polyps can be found and removed before they have the chance to turn into cancer.

Learn more about your risks for developing colorectal cancer along with screening and treatment options at our free educational seminar on March 14 in Sikeston.

**[Click here for more details!](#)**

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## SoutheastHEALTH Center Auxiliary Installs New Officers for 2019.

JANUARY 31ST 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

SoutheastHEALTH Center Auxiliary Installs New Officers for 2019.

SoutheastHEALTH Center of Stoddard County Auxiliary recently installed their officers for 2019.

Right to left: President, Bonnie Harty; Vice President, Connie Hutchcraft; Treasurer, Melba Baker. Installing officer, Mary Norman. Recording Secretary, Christ Neuber was not present for the photo.

### About SoutheastHEALTH

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## Jones Named SoutheastHEALTH Center Auxilian of the Year.

JANUARY 31ST 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Jones Named SoutheastHEALTH Center Auxilian of the Year.

Ruby Jones was named SoutheastHEALTH Center of Stoddard County Auxilian of the Year.

Presenting her with her award is Bonnie Harty, President of the Auxiliary.

### About SoutheastHEALTH

At SoutheastHEALTH, the region's premier healthcare system in southeast Missouri, our patients receive excellent care of the highest clinical quality, close to home. Within our network are more than 50 care locations in 12 communities, including hospitals, primary and specialty care clinics representing over 30 clinical specialties and extending care for patients in a four-state area. Learn more at [SEhealth.org](http://SEhealth.org).

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## Southeast Health Center of Stoddard County Marks Milestone: Fifty Years and Going Strong

JANUARY 28TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Southeast Health Center of Stoddard County Marks Milestone: Fifty Years and Going Strong

Dexter, Missouri - Back in the 1960s, Dexter residents had a choice. But it was not the choice they wanted to make. The community had no hospital, and that meant traveling to Poplar Bluff or Sikeston for hospital-related healthcare needs.

John William Ringer and a small group of other Stoddard County leaders recognized the need for a local hospital and the strengths it would bring to their growing community. Ringer, then a young lawyer, was eager to help make the prospect of a community hospital a reality.

It took determination and the will to keep trying in the face of setbacks, Ringer recalls. A bond issue to build a county, tax-supported hospital was put before county voters in the late 1950s. That failed. Next, the group settled on the pursuit of a hospital district in the county.

The hospital district was a two-step process. First, a vote to form the district and next, elect a board of directors. The vote to form the district was heavily supported by the



Dexter Jaycees, of which Ringer was President, and passed. However, during the second step, the opposition was successful in electing a majority of the Directors, who refused to levy the tax necessary to build a Hospital.

Ringer's recollections of the tenuous beginning of the hospital are crystal clear, both the good and the challenges faced. Among those challenges was the election of opponents to the board of directors of the Hospital District, a move that halted progress.

### **Deterred, but Determined**

Determined as ever, Ringer and other proponents for the hospital formed a new group, proceeding with steps to establish a non-profit hospital for the community. From there, the momentum grew and the project, and, at last, wheels began to turn.

Ringer was elected chairman of the new committee. He recalls that the late Frank Schneider, a Dexter businessman, had friends in West Plains, Mo., who worked with that city's community hospital. Ringer, Schneider and others traveled to West Plains, returning home with ideas and how to get them done. In the fall of 1964, the local group formed a non-profit corporation with nine members. That eventually expanded to 15 members and included representative from the nearby towns of Bloomfield, Essex and Bernie. Ringer was among those elected to the original Board, a position he held until 2008, a total of 44 years, 25 of which were as President of the Board.

Up next: site selection. The group had its eye on a location along One Mile Road, at that time a narrow, gravel road with nothing on either side but open fields. After many discussions, Ringer and his team were able to convince the property owners, the Rainey family, to sell a portion of the land for the good of the community.

Twelve acres were needed for the project. It fell to Ringer and another original incorporator, Marshall Vowels, to measure it out. "We took a tape measure and walked through weeds as high as our chests, but we got it done."

### **Please Donate. They Did.**

That same, "get it done" attitude propelled the project into a new phase – raising money that would be matched by a federal government program known as the Hill-Burton Act. A community fund drive was planned, including hiring a professional fundraiser who came with a hefty price tag of \$25,000. "We were operating out of our hip pocket," he says. "We didn't have enough money to pay the fundraiser, so we went to people in the community and asked them to each loan us \$100 in good faith. We raised the \$25,000 for

the consultant, and most of the people who gave us a loan forgave it.”

The community fund drive produced large donors – some as much as \$25,000 – and also brought in a lot of small pledges. “In all, about 2500 people and businesses donated. We collected 95 percent of the pledges – the community was truly behind this project,” he says.

As with most construction projects, what seemed to be enough funding turned out to not be so. Hospital supporters once again returned to donors, asking them to add another year to their original three-year pledge. Most were happy to do so, he adds.

An architectural firm from Kansas City, experienced in hospital construction, was architect for the project, with the construction bid going to Dexter’s own Brown Construction Company. During construction, “I was at the site almost every day. I’d go by every morning on the way to the office. I was honored to lay the first ceremonial brick.” His dream was becoming a reality.

### **Vice President Keynotes Dedication Ceremony**

By August of 1968, it was time to dedicate the new hospital, to be known as Dexter Memorial Hospital. Thanks to political ties within the community, Vice President Hubert Humphrey made a visit to Dexter for the dedication ceremony. Ringer laughs when he recalls that it was Humphrey’s visit that got the dirt road beside the hospital paved. “We had not planned on having the One Mile Road paved. But because the vice president was coming, it was done. He drove in on pavement, not dirt and gravel.” Missouri Governor Warren Hearnes was also present and offered congratulatory remarks.

A large, flatbed trailer belonging to Hart Truck line which was owned by Gordon Hart, another of the original Board of Directors, served as the make-shift stage for the dedication, and a large crowd enthusiastically greeted Humphrey. “I had the privilege of taking the vice president through the hospital,” Ringer says. “He saw the hospital as a great example of federal and local cooperation. I remember him telling us that this is where our tax money is well spent – hometown people taking care of hometown people.”

By the late 1990s, the hospital had exhausted its savings and the difficult decision was made to lease hospital operations to an outside entity to ensure its viability. “We saved the hospital. It operated under that structure until we entered into our current partnership with SoutheastHEALTH in Cape Girardeau.

Ringer says that despite the “failures we had under our belt, it never entered my mind that we would not succeed in giving Dexter a hospital.” Like most Dexter residents, Ringer is

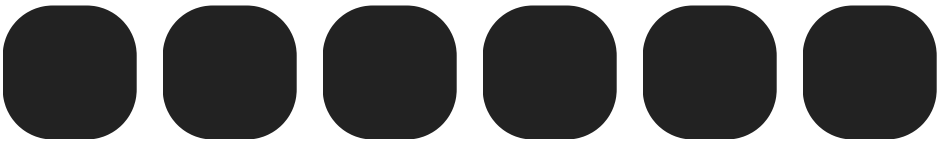
personally grateful for the hospital’s existence. “My son was born there, I underwent surgery there, and I’ve visited the ER a number of times.”

Ringer would demur if it was said that the hospital is his legacy. But it is his legacy, and it’s one that has made Dexter a stronger, more vibrant community.

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