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Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022

Today's headlines:

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Blessing Health Keokuk closure highlights importance of REH

[Blessing Health System announced it will shutter the doors of Blessing Health Keokuk](#) at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 1. [Kathy Hull, chief of small rural hospitals for Blessing Health](#), said the hospital has been in a financial crisis for 10 years. Hull said decayed infrastructure, current and expected patient use of hospital-based services in Keokuk and financial concerns in rural health settings contributed to the decision.

Blessing Health Keokuk employes 147 staff and the health system said it will work to transfer as many as possible to other Blessing facilities. Keokuk residents will need to travel for care or wait for local urgent care facilities to open.

"Our hospitals, especially in rural settings, provide vital, quality care to the communities they serve," said IHA President and CEO Chris Mitchell. "It's critical to advocate for policies that will preserve local access to health care for all Iowans by preventing additional closures of rural hospitals. IHA and member hospitals worked to pass the rural emergency hospital designation so we can see better outcomes in rural communities hit hard by workforce shortages and financial hardship."

The rural emergency hospital designation allows hospitals with fewer than 50 beds to continue operating with outpatient and emergency services only. IHA advocated for the new designation and is providing feedback to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services about the conditions of participation and regulations for payment.

Meet the IHA board nominee: Matt Wenzel

At its August meeting, the IHA Board of Officers and Trustees approved the Governance Committee's recommendation for the IHA Board of Officers and Trustees. In this edition of IHA Today, we feature board nominee Matt Wenzel.

The 2022-23 slate of officers and nominees will be confirmed by IHA members at the House of Delegates meeting Tuesday, Oct. 4 at the [IHA Annual Meeting](#).



IHA Board Nominee
Matt Wenzel - President/CEO
Great River Health, West Burlington

Matt Wenzel has been president and CEO of Great River Health in West Burlington since January 2018.

Wenzel was with Kansas City-based Saint Luke's Health System for a decade before joining Great River Health as president and CEO. He also was marketing manager of physician solutions at Cerner before his appointment to Saint Luke's Health System.

Wenzel holds masters' degrees in health administration and health care informatics from the University of Missouri in Columbia.

Swinging for Scholars raises \$129,000

Thursday's 15th annual Swinging for Scholars event, Thursday, Sept. 1, was a success with more than \$129,000 raised. The funds will help Iowans as they pursue their health care degrees and higher education in their health care-related fields. More than 200 attendees, 156 golfers and 30 sponsors came together at the Tournament Club of Iowa in Polk City.

More than \$2 million in health care career scholarships have been awarded to Iowans since the IHERF Health Care Careers Scholarship Fund was created 17 years ago. The day's attendees celebrated this year's scholarship recipients. Scholarships awarded this year totaled \$207,500.

IHERF awards scholarships of up to \$7,000 (\$3,500 per year for a maximum of two years) or \$1,000 per year for EMS certification to Iowans enrolled in an accredited program leading to licensure or a clinical laboratory degree. Recipients must commit to working one year in an Iowa hospital for each year of scholarship award.



From left, guest Wayne Cafferty, Pocahontas Community Hospital CEO James Roetman, Pocahontas Community Hospital EMS Director Patrick Moonev. Humboldt County Memorial

Hospital CFO A.J. Mason, Humboldt County Memorial Hospital CEO Michelle Sleiter and Humboldt County Memorial Hospital Chief Nurse Executive Victor Bycroft comprised one of 26 teams of golfers to participate in the 15th annual IHERF Swinging for Scholars event at the Tournament Club of Iowa Thursday, Sept. 1.

Workforce main topic at IHA statewide meeting

Beth Townsend, director of Iowa Workforce Development, highlighted the many programs the state has implemented to boost Iowa's workforce. During the 2022 IHA All-Districts Meeting Wednesday, Aug. 31, Townsend said the state is expanding several training programs and adding resources to the department.

Iowa Workforce Development said the state is finding solutions to expand work-based learning, like the Iowa Registered Apprenticeship Program. Townsend said the department is working through licensure issues for the 11 health care tracts in the program and encouraged hospitals to engage.

She also said Iowa Workforce Development is creating the Business Engagement Division. The new division will be a one-stop shop for employees by putting them in contact with potential employees and connecting them with resources.

Other highlights from the meeting included:

- Recognizing eight IHERF Health Care Career Scholarship recipients. Recipients in attendance were Abbie Brown, Jennifer Creekmur, Laci Darbi, Denyse Gipple, Ashley Lamin, Kamryn Lillie, Sierra Richmond and Maddison Shupe.
- Discussing the IHA member survey results.
- Receiving updates from AHA Region 6 coordinator Elizabeth Summy.
- Receiving updates about population trends during the COVID-19 pandemic with Iowa State University researcher Liesl Eathington.



IHERF Chair and CEO of Iowa Specialty Hospital-Clarion Steve Simonin presented IHERF Health Care Career Scholarship Checks to Abbie Brown, Jennifer Creekmur, Laci Darbi, Denyse Gipple, Ashley Lamin, Kamryn Lillie, Sierra Richmond and Maddison Shupe at the 2022 Statewide IHA

MercyOne acquisition by Trinity Health complete

[Trinity Health announced last week the agreement to acquire MercyOne is complete](#) and MercyOne is a full member of the health system. Trinity Health is based in Linovia, Michigan.

In April, Trinity Health signed an agreement with CommonSpirit Health to acquire all facilities and assets of MercyOne, including home care, hospice and infusion locations. MercyOne will retain its name and brand.

NewsStand

Iowa news

- [COVID-19 stays steady in Iowa](#)
- [MercyOne to switch from Cerner to Epic EHR](#)
- [Primary Health Care receives \\$50K clinical training grant from Aetna](#)

National news

- [What does 'quiet quitting' look like at hospitals?](#)
- [They left hospitals in 2020 to become travel nurses. Now they're ready to leave nursing altogether.](#)
- [Health systems shrink executive teams as costs rise](#)

Click [HERE](#) to read daily NewsStand postings.

Online education

- [Infection Prevention and Antibiotic Stewardship](#): Tuesday, Sept. 13
- [2022 IHA Governance Webinar Series](#): Tuesday, Sept. 13 - Tuesday, Nov. 15
- [Advancing Health Equity in Iowa's Hospital Systems: Cases from the Frontline](#): Monday, Sept. 26
- [Swing-bed Fundamentals](#): Tuesday, Nov. 8
- [Patient Rights: An Overview](#): Tuesday, Nov. 29
- [Pharmacy Conditions of Participation](#): Tuesday, Dec. 6
- [CMS Updates](#): Thursday, Dec. 15

In-person meetings

- [Iowa Society for Healthcare Engineering Fall Conference](#): Thursday, Sept. 15 - Friday, Sept. 16
 - [IHA Annual Meeting](#): Monday, Oct. 3 - Wednesday, Oct. 5
 - [Performance and Process Improvement - Leadership "Yellow Belt" Workshop](#): Tuesday, Oct. 18 - Wednesday, Oct. 19
 - [340B Day](#): Tuesday, Nov. 8
 - [2022 CPHQ Review Course](#): Tuesday, Nov. 29 - Wednesday, Nov. 30
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The IHA Digital on Demand store offers:

- [Demonstration and training videos](#) for DataGen, DATABANK and Dimensions dashboards.
- [CEO podcasts](#).
- Previously recorded [webinars and presentations](#) including project presentations from the Advanced Leadership Academy.
- [Trustee resources](#).

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Hospital jobs site connects hospitals with qualified candidates

Are you looking for qualified health care professionals for your Iowa hospital? [HospitalCareers.com](#) can help. This website connects thousands of nurses, providers and other hospital jobseekers with Iowa hospitals each year and is a main resource for jobseekers looking for work in health care.

