



LAWNDALE CHRISTIAN
HEALTH CENTER

Loving God. Loving People.

NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2018

LETTER FROM THE CEO

"This is Lawndale Health" is a phrase we frequently use in our publications. We use it with conviction, to create a new image of our neighborhood – reversing negative perceptions. The idea is to surprise, to communicate that we're expanding the horizon, and that we want you to join us.

Our challenge is not small. The communities we serve have not had it easy. Poverty and violence are frequent companions. Residents often look to leave. The population in our community has been in a continual decline for 60 years. Our mission is to change the pattern, to create reasons to stay and reasons to return.

In this issue, you will meet three people who are making a difference. Barbara Dukes is an active member of our Fitness Center who models what it means to walk in the light. Dr. Tara de Jesus is a talented and caring pediatrician who recently returned to LCHC to impact patients' lives in East Garfield Park. Eddie Jones has been bringing beauty to our buildings and grounds for 30 years. It is a joy to see him being recognized in this publication.

We appreciate the well-known words of Jesus found in John 10:10. "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." This verse inspires our efforts to bring abundant life to this community through our services. This is the image of surprising hope we want to create. This is the vision on which we build. This is Lawndale Health.

Come join us in our effort.



Bruce Miller
CEO Lawndale Christian Health Center



MAMA DUKES | A LIFE OF LOVE

When Barbara Dukes retired from nursing, she was determined to stay active and involved in the community. “I don’t want to just stay home, gain weight, and sleep,” she told her family. Her daughter helped her find Lawndale Christian Fitness Center four years ago, and she has been a faithful member ever since. “I used to have a hard time breathing just walking here from the ‘L’ station, but now I can go the whole way without getting out of breath. That’s Jesus!” she says, referencing her improved fitness and ability to live independently.

Although her days as a nurse have ended, Mama Dukes – as she is affectionately known – has not stopped helping the people around her. Despite facing personal challenges including losing her sister this year, she continues to praise God for his goodness in her life. She enjoys caring for sick church members, offering a helping hand to strangers, and spending time with her grandchildren. “My parents were both very loving people, and I’m glad I was raised to be like them. My father used to call me Sweet – and here at the fitness center they call me Mama Love. I just love to help people and tell them how good God is.”

Mama Dukes spends her mornings in the fitness center working out, meeting people, and offering hugs to everyone she encounters. “I’m a people-lover and a hugger!” she says. The warmth she brings every time she comes to the fitness center is readily reciprocated. “When I walk in that door I get love,” she says. Her life is a testimony to the importance of staying connected to faith and community, which is exactly what LCFC seeks to foster as we continue to improve our facilities and provide excellent service to our community.



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DR. TARA | A WARM RETURN

Returning to Lawndale after an 8 year absence has been filled with joy for Tara de Jesus, MD, a pediatrician at our Breakthrough clinic in East Garfield Park. After getting married and starting a family, Dr. de Jesus decided to pursue another job opportunity. About three years ago, she unexpectedly received a clear vision from God that she would move to East Garfield Park and come back to LCHC. She had no doubt that God was asking this of her.

While this calling was frightening at first, Dr. de Jesus says that God reminded her He would provide for her and her family – and He has done just that. “One of the things I remember most about the atmosphere of LCHC is the feeling of family connections here. Being welcomed back and seeing so many people that are happy to see me has been amazing.”

She has shared her personal story whenever possible as a testimony to the Lord’s faithfulness. “I have been through some dark times, but I’m so encouraged by all the brightness I see in my life.” Dr. de Jesus is excited to continue her career here at LCHC, and the clinic at Breakthrough is thankful to have her join their team. “I’m just so blessed to be back in a community of like-minded people, and I hope that I’m a blessing to the patients that God puts in front of me.” As a Health Center, we too are blessed to have talented providers like Dr. de Jesus serving our neighbors with compassion and care.

EDDIE JONES | ON TRANSFORMATION

Eddie Jones is an Environment of Care worker at Lawndale Christian Health Center and one of the clinic's longest-serving employees. Having grown up in the neighborhood, Eddie has seen immense transformation take place both in his community and in his personal life. Eddie found his way to LCHC in the early 1980s when he and his friend Roy Alexander were invited to use a weight machine that belonged to Lawndale Community Church. At this time there was no gym, and the building at 3860 W. Ogden Ave had just been purchased by the church.

From the beginning, Eddie felt that there was something special about this group of people. He was invited to stay after his workouts for Bible study, became involved in the church, and was motivated by others to make changes in his life. It wasn't long before he found himself volunteering to work on the new building. "Being here helped me focus on going the right way," he says. "I continued volunteering for 2 years, until 1987 when I was offered a job as a janitor for the clinic."

Eddie joyfully stepped into his role and has served faithfully for more than 3 decades. His dedication to his community and outlook of gratitude and purpose now motivate other people around him. "God wakes me up every morning to bring me to work, to take care of my family, and to serve this community."

After many years of witnessing growth, expansion, and change in his community, Eddie is confident that the Lord has been behind it all and will continue to bless the work that is yet to be done. "Lawndale Church and the Health Center are really assets to the neighborhood. They show people a positive way of life. When God plants seeds, there's no limit to what can be done. Lawndale Christian has made a tremendous impact on this neighborhood."

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HOMAN DENTAL | ALL SMILES

LCHC's brand new Dental Clinic at the Homan Square Community Center began seeing its first patients in February. The modern, renovated space features 6 state-of-the-art dental chairs, increasing the total dental capacity to 21 chairs across our campuses.

Having a comprehensive health clinic at Homan Square has long been an integral part of our vision for the North Lawndale and Garfield Park neighborhoods. The area was severely impacted by the loss of its working middle class in the 1960s-70s, 'white flight', and the closure of the Sears headquarters. The area was left in need of services, access to healthcare, and community investment. In the 1990s, residents of Homan Square and a talented real estate developer came together with a vision for a space that would address

the needs for health care, family services, education, and a community recreational space. In 2001, the Homan Square Community Center on Arthington Avenue was opened. LCHC is proud to be a part of this unique model of collaboration of healthcare, education, and recreation services – a hub of community health.

The opportunity to bring a dental office to LCHC's existing Homan Square medical clinic, while updating existing exam rooms and waiting areas, is an exciting step forward in our mission to provide top-quality services to all of our patients. Generous support from the Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation and other donors allowed LCHC to continue to invest in the needs of this community, where access to dental care remains a recognized shortage and poor dental health impacts school performance, employment prospects, and overall health.



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