

# Modern Healthcare

THE ONLY HEALTHCARE BUSINESS NEWS WEEKLY

SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

Special Feature

## UP & COMERS



### We're in good hands

*Up & Comers ready to fill gap whenever execs retire*

A recent Witt/Kieffer survey of hospital and health system CEOs found that many are putting off retirement because of the economic downturn. Concerns about their organizations and employees, not to mention their own futures, have prompted a significant number to stay in their roles. When this increasingly large group finally decides to leave, the gap between numbers of departing executives and those ready to step in will be that much greater.

All the more reason to celebrate the 2009 class of Up & Comers. Now, more than ever, we need young, talented leaders who are ready to step up to the challenges of an uncertain economy. What better way to develop the next generation than by showcasing early career superstars? Over the 20-plus years of Up & Comers classes—13 of which Witt/Kieffer

has been privileged to sponsor—nearly half of more than 260 winners are sitting CEOs.

Our informal survey also found intriguing generational differences in perspective.

While CEOs over 50 on the whole share broad-based concern about the lasting impact of the recession, more than one executive under 40 looked at the downturn as an opportunity to make much-needed changes now to their core business model and market approach.

The 2009 Up & Comers are similarly optimistic. Challenging economic times no doubt lie ahead, but when the current

generation finally leaves their posts, rest assured these young leaders will be ready to fill the gap.



Gauss

James Gauss  
President and CEO  
Witt/Kieffer

### How we did it

Modern Healthcare issued a call for nominations for its 23rd annual Up & Comers recognition program on May 4 and ran a series of advertisements soliciting nominations through the July 3 submission deadline. This year, we received 139 nominations, up from last year's 134 nominations. An editorial review board composed of the magazine's senior editors reviewed the nominations and selected the 12 recipients.

Ten of the profiles were written by Modern Healthcare staff reporters. Two were written by Tracey Fuller, a former Modern Healthcare editorial assistant and now a freelance writer based in Hockley, Texas. We thank all of them for their fine work.

Most importantly, we extend our thanks to all of this year's nominees and appreciate their participation in this year's program. Look for an announcement of the 24th annual Up & Comers award program next spring.

In late 2006, Peter Bergmann's career brought him home to Buffalo, N.Y. A little more than two years later, a promotion put him at the helm of the hospital where his mother worked as an anesthesiologist for 23 years.

As a native, Bergmann, 38, can (and does) speak frankly, and with affection, of winters in western New York and it was his insider's knowledge that convinced one doctor he would be "uniquely suited" to meet the healthcare and market challenges facing Sisters of Charity Hospital when Buffalo's Catholic Health System sought a new chief executive for the teaching hospital in late 2006.

"I knew it the minute that he walked in," says Philip Aliotta, a doctor and executive board member of four-hospital Catholic Health System who was on the search committee that selected Bergmann. The young executive's energy and confidence impressed Aliotta, as did his commitment to Catholic healthcare and teamwork, the physician says. The subsequent three years—which included a shotgun merger with St. Joseph Hospital in nearby Cheektowaga, N.Y.—have not diminished that opinion, Aliotta says.

Bergmann has demonstrated that consensus-building leadership style in the recent rushed merger that landed him as chief executive of a two-campus hospital, he says.

Sisters of Charity began operating St. Joseph Hospital as a second campus in April after New York state waived its decision to shutter the hospital. St. Joseph was among the hospitals mandated to close



38, CEO, Sisters of Charity Hospital, Buffalo, N.Y.

## Peter Bergmann

physicians. "He's an open person," Aliotta says.

Bergmann shepherded the two hospitals through the accelerated process of combining the operations, which included credentialing 300 St. Joseph physicians to practice at the Sisters of Charity and creating standard policies and procedures at both organizations. During the process, he says he kept in contact with a network of top executives and consultants as resources—even former professors at Cornell University, where he earned a master's degree in health administration.

Bergmann says he is excited about the newly combined hospital's future. The union allowed a hospital "integral to the community" to remain open, and St. Joseph's campus now operates in the black, he says. The chief executive's next challenge: closer integration to create a more dynamic and successful organization, he says.

—Melanie Evans

When Damond Boatwright took the job as CEO of Lee's Summit (Mo.) Medical Center, he was fulfilling a long-term goal. Whether that goal relates to his career plan or the barbecue that Kansas City is famous for is open to question.

In 2003, while Boatwright was working in the Richmond, Va., market for HCA, he took a course in Lynchburg, Va., to become a certified barbecue judge by the Kansas City (Mo.) Barbecue Society. "My wife is

now convinced that I've always been scheming on a way to get to Kansas City," Boatwright says. "When I saw this opportunity (at Lee's Summit), I thought it was just the perfect job for me."

Don't get the idea that Boatwright, 37, has always wanted to be a hospital CEO. His first job in healthcare was at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, and it represented Plan B at the time, he acknowledges. "I wanted to go to law school, truth be told," he says, but his score on the Law School Admission Test fell short of what he hoped, so he decided to work for a year at MUSC.

"It was in that environment that I fell in love with the hospital setting," Boatwright says. There, he met his first mentor in healthcare, the late Frank DeMarco, who headed up HCA's Trident Health System in Charleston, S.C. While working at Trident's Colleton Medical Center as assistant administrator, Boatwright earned a master's in health administration and health sciences at MUSC and



37, CEO, Lee's Summit (Mo.) Medical Center

## Damond Boatwright

moved on to the two-year fellowship program at Duke University Health System in Durham, N.C.

At Duke, Boatwright found another mentor in Kerry Watson, now CEO of Duke's 201-bed Durham (N.C.) Regional Hospital. Watson says Boatwright stood out for his inquisitiveness and his certainty about his career goals. Duke offered Boatwright a position, but he already had that next step planned—an HCA

program to train chief operating officers, Watson says.

After completing that program with HCA's West Florida division, Boatwright moved on to the Richmond market, first as associate administrator at CJW Medical Center's Chippenham campus and later as COO at Henrico Doctors' Hospital. The promotion to Lee's Summit, part of HCA Midwest, came in January 2008.

Peter Marmarstein, CEO of CJW Medical Center, says Boatwright "was such a bright, energetic and personable guy that all of us ... used to quip to each other that we're all going to be working for Damond." Marmarstein adds, "I just see him as the total package. He always looks like he just stepped out of GQ."

Boatwright likes to shed that GQ image when he goes to a barbecue joint or a festival. "It's a place that I can go to without looking like a typical administrator with a bow tie and calculator," he says.

—Vince Galloro

**W**hen Stephanie Conners became chief nursing officer at Hahnemann University Hospital in 2004, the downtown Philadelphia provider had too many vacant nursing jobs and was spending too much money on costly contract labor.

It was hardly a unique situation at the time, as the urban hospital was emerging from bankruptcy through a financial recovery plan and was operating amid the country's rapidly growing nurse shortage.

But one of the elements of her solution proved unorthodox.

"The first thing I did was take away the signing bonuses, because I didn't think they were fair," Conners says. "I wanted to hire people who wanted to be here, not people who were here because of the signing bonus." The money saved was redirected toward existing nurse salaries, which improved morale among longtime staff, who then helped spread the word about the work environment at Hahnemann.

At the same time, Conners formed a bond with the dean of Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions to ensure that partnerships between the two organizations led to the educations of nurses with the right skills who could find hospital jobs right out of school. "When there was a nursing shortage, we came to a point where we didn't have a vacancy rate, and we had no contract labor," she says.

Hahnemann CEO Michael Halter says the decision to eliminate



**37**, chief nursing officer, Hahnemann University Hospital, Philadelphia

## Stephanie Conners

nurse signing bonuses was a difficult one at the time, but the results have vindicated it—the 483-bed hospital has 850 registered nurses today and five vacancies. Halter says the move reflected Conners' ability to think like a nurse, which is grounded in her years as a floor nurse and a nursing supervisor before she entered management.

"She knows the profession, and people know that she has been there. So when they talk to her, they get a

clear understanding that this is not just a talking head. This is someone who knows how to take care of patients," Halter says.

Conners, now 37, became a candy striper at age 13, and passed the test to become an emergency medical technician at age 16. After high school, she opted for nursing college instead of medical school because it was more affordable and she could be out of school and caring for patients sooner. By age 24 she was a nursing shift supervisor at Virtua West Jersey Hospital-Marlton in New Jersey, and became one of Virtua's first Six Sigma black belts.

Whatever success Conners has had as a manager, she attributes to her ability to work with front-line staff to set the path for long-term positive change. "When you're looking to create change, it's definitely not the ones in the suits that create it. It's the ones on the front lines," she says.

—Joe Carlson

**M**emorial Hermann Southeast Hospital CEO George Gaston understands the important role healthcare workers play in the lives of patients and their families. That's because Gaston has been on the receiving end of patient care, an experience the 38-year-old says changed him as a leader.

"I turned my life over to the hands of others numerous times," Gaston says, adding that placing trust and confidence in caregivers is not something to take lightly. "Sometimes we get caught up in the hustle and bustle and throughput, but we've got to stay focused on the impact we have on people in their lives and their loved ones."

Gaston had been a part of the Memorial Hermann system for five years when physicians discovered a major cyst in his brain on the day after he turned 30. Although found to be benign, the cyst caused headaches and numbness in his hands and feet. He underwent several surgeries and had to leave his role as assistant vice president of operations at Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital. Today, as CEO of Memorial Hermann Southeast, Gaston says he relates to the patients and families he sees when he makes rounds at the hospital.

A 1993 graduate of Baylor University, Gaston began his career at the Houston-based system in June 1996, when he started a two-year administrative fellow program there. It was the same year he earned a master's degree in health administration, with honors, from



**38**, CEO, Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital, Houston

## George Gaston

Washington University in St. Louis. He rose quickly in the ranks at Memorial Hermann, serving first as an administrative director for Memorial Hermann Northwest, then as a senior administrator in two capacities: assistant vice president of operations from 2000 to 2002 and assistant vice president of campus expansion and specialty projects until 2003.

For the next two years, Gaston served as assistant vice president of

hospital operations at Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital before he moved to the Southeast facility in June 2005. After serving as the facility's chief operating officer, Gaston was named CEO in May 2007.

"George understands processes and how to make processes a reality that really does work," says Rebecca Lilley, director of physician development at Memorial Hermann Southeast.

Lilley, who began her career at the system in 1983, says Gaston is the only administrative fellow about whom she wrote a glowing letter to the system's CEO at the time: Dan Wilford. Now, working for Gaston, Lilley continues to hold him in high regard and describes him as a "servant leader."

"He feels like it's his calling to be here to serve everybody that's here, to serve our community and to put everybody else ahead of himself," Lilley says. "He looks at the big picture."

—Jessica Zigmond

For many, one's career is decided during college. Barbara Walczyk Joers has known what she wanted to do since her childhood. After having ear surgery for impaired hearing when she was just 5 years old, a career in healthcare became her lifetime goal. She participated in health organizations and activities while in high school and college, determined to make her dreams a reality.

Walczyk Joers, 39, who received her bachelor's degree in business administration/hospital administration from Marymount University and her master's in health services administration/management and policy from George Washington University, has since proved to her peers and mentors alike that she has what it takes to shine as a leader in healthcare.

"She holds herself, as well as others, accountable," says Wright Pinson, a physician and deputy vice chancellor for health affairs for Vanderbilt University Medical Center. "She is serious about her work and very focused."

As chief operating officer of the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt in Nashville, she has made the wellness of individuals in her community and performance management and improvement of the hospital among her top priorities.

"Barbara's championing of the PM&I (Performance Management and Improvement Program) effort at this



39, chief operating officer, Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, Nashville

## Barbara Walczyk Joers

Children's Hospital has been lauded nationally as being a leader in improving quality and patient outcomes," says John W. Brock III, surgeon-in-chief for the children's hospital. "Barbara has assembled an outstanding team that helps her with this, and she has been able to organize their efforts, orient them in the proper position and allow them to move forward in their job. The hallmark for a leader is hiring excellent personnel and then

allowing them to do their jobs."

Walczyk Joers' efforts have been recognized not only by her colleagues, but in her community as well, being named as one of *Nashville Business Journals* "Top 40 Under 40," an honor that she says led her to make great connections, and has helped her form different perspectives. Her community involvement is also of great importance to her, whether it's coordinating fundraisers for the Autism Society of Middle Tennessee or assisting local leaders in bringing Best Buddies to Nashville.

"A mentor of mine really challenged me back in 2000," Walczyk Joers says. "There is something to be said about being at the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. It's a great place to try new things."

—Tracey Fuller

If Catholic Health Initiatives was in search of a fresh perspective to help turn around its tiny, financially troubled Albany (Minn.) Area Hospital and Medical Center, the provider no doubt received that in the form of Ben

Koppelman. The hospital executive was just 22 and fresh out of college when he was hired in 1995 as administrator of the 17-bed, critical-access hospital.

"I had some previous experience working with Larry Schultz, the CEO of St. Gabriel's Hospital," another Catholic Health Initiatives facility in Little Falls, Minn., Koppelman says. "I had done an internship with him in undergrad for three months in 1994. He encouraged me to apply for the position and interview with the local board."

Koppelman, now 36 and president and CEO of 25-bed St. Joseph's Area Health Services in Park Rapids, Minn., acknowledges that the opportunity at such an early point in his career was fortuitous. But it was hard work and savvy leadership that enabled him and his staff to move Albany into the black.

The hospital was losing roughly \$100,000 annually when Koppelman came onboard in 1995. Five years later, it had achieved a 13% operating margin. Under Koppelman's leadership, Albany landed in the top 10 of CHI's patient-satisfaction scores seven out of eight years. The young executive also launched an aggressive recruitment plan that brought onboard six new physicians, expanded the hospital's imaging services and negotiated agreements for other



36, president and CEO, St. Joseph's Area Health Services, Park Rapids, Minn.

## Ben Koppelman

area hospitals to outsource some of their specialists to Albany on an ongoing basis.

Michael Rowan, executive vice president and chief operations officer of 60-hospital Catholic Health Initiatives, attributes Koppelman's success to an ability to not only recruit but also retain medical staff in small, nonurban settings. "Recruiting people into rural areas, you have to be able to find the right people who are willing to

stay," Rowan explains. "Because in these communities, you often get medical staff that comes in and leaves quickly."

Koppelman's peers say he has brought his early lessons and passion for rural healthcare to bear as chief executive at St. Joseph's. "He's gotten very involved in the community," says Minnesota Hospital Association President and CEO Lawrence Massa, who notes that Koppelman's leadership extends beyond St. Joseph's and into the community. He is also involved in several local organizations and is chairman of the hospital association's small and rural hospital committee.

Since arriving at St. Joseph's in 2007, Koppelman and his staff have achieved Joint Commission accreditation for the hospital. "That's noteworthy, because most critical-access hospitals aren't (Joint Commission)-accredited," Rowan says.

—Shawn Rhea

**J** Michael Kramer brought an abundance of training, skills and passion to Trinity Health system. He joined the Novi, Mich.-based system in August 2005 when he was named vice president and chief medical information officer, a newly created position at the time.

Physician informatics leader William Bria was there when Kramer received some of that training. Bria was the medical director of information systems at the University of Michigan Health System, Ann Arbor, from 1999 to 2006. It's where Kramer served a two-year fellowship in medical informatics from 1999 to 2001. Kramer also earned his MBA from Michigan in 2003.

"Michael was our first informatics fellow at the university," recalls Bria, now CMIO for the Shriners Hospitals for Children system, Tampa, Fla. "Mike was absolutely instrumental in the further development of CareWeb and the work we did with IBM and Eclipsys." (CareWeb is the University of Michigan Health System's main clinical information system.)

As CMIO, Kramer, 40, serves as the physician champion of Project Genesis, Trinity's systemwide clinical IT program, which dates back to the late 1990s.

Trinity publicizes that Project Genesis has a \$400 million price tag for hardware and software, "but if you add up all of the resources it's taken and time, I think that it comes closer to \$1 billion," says P. Terrence O'Rourke, a physician who serves as a Trinity executive



**40, vice president and chief medical information officer, Trinity Health, Novi, Mich.**

### J. Michael Kramer

vice president and its chief clinical officer.

First, O'Rourke says, Kramer is "a very nice man." With board certification in pediatrics and internal medicine, "He's got great clinical credentials," O'Rourke adds. "And, he's a self-professed geek in informatics."

Kramer was a 1991 Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Miami (Ohio) University before receiving his medical degree

from Cleveland's Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in 1995. He completed a residency in internal medicine and pediatrics at the University of Michigan in 1999 before working in urgent care, as a hospitalist and as a medical officer on duty with the Veterans Affairs Department, all at hospitals in Ann Arbor.

As of this June, Trinity had its electronic health-record system in use and documenting all inpatient and outpatient encounters at 22 of its hospitals, but installation work continues.

Kramer says the most important professional skill for a CMIO is the ability to influence and collaborate across departments and with people from multiple professional backgrounds. That means being able "to walk into the boardroom and speak at that level and walk down the hall and be able to understand how a clinical system is not behaving," Kramer says.

—Joseph Conn

**S**ince becoming president and CEO of Carolinas Medical Center-Union in Monroe, N.C., Michael Lutes has made it apparent when his employees are happy, hospital productivity and employee satisfaction increases.

"Every weekly manager's meeting ends with 'Reasons to Celebrate' and when awards are won or significant results achieved, a celebration is planned at his request," says Dennis Phillips, executive vice president of the Metro Group for Carolinas HealthCare System. "Mike also doesn't take himself too seriously. He's been known to wear costumes to various employee events or participate in dunking booths to raise money for a good cause. All of this contributes to his likability, and when he needs your help with a project, you are more than willing to help him."

This may be why Lutes, 37, is admired by his peers as well as his employees. He has set records in employee/medical staff satisfaction and has secured certificates of need for projects totaling \$40 million for growth initiatives, with Union County, N.C., where Monroe is located, being the 16th fastest-growing county in the country.

"His communication skills impressed me when we first met with Mike," says Donnie Baucom, chairman of the Community Trustee Council in Union County. "He came in one of the most difficult times in our hospital."

His leadership skills were put on display when Lutes had to take



**37, president and CEO, Carolinas Medical Center-Union, Monroe, N.C.**

### Michael Lutes

immediate action to get the 171-bed hospital in better shape than most during the recession. His proactive response to the economic downturn provided merit increases to employees and turned a healthy profit in the first quarter of 2009.

Starting out as a business major while attending Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., Lutes finally found his career path after taking an introduction to healthcare

course, and two weeks later changed his major. He received his master's of health administration, graduating with honors from the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Throughout his 13 years working in healthcare, he continually looked for opportunities to work with outstanding leaders.

"I couldn't have achieved all of these results without the dedication of our leaders," Lutes says.

"Mike is an excellent communicator who is transparent in his interactions. He is a visionary, charismatic motivator of his management team. He views his integrity as his most valuable asset," Phillips says.

Lutes believes communication is key to boosting hospital morale. "I give my staff the opportunity to recognize their successes," Lutes says. "They don't realize what an impact they have on the patients' lives."

—Tracey Fuller

**J**ulie Norton had a perfect 4.0 grade-point average with a double major in accounting and math at the University of South Dakota, but—compared with implementing an electronic health-record system “built from scratch”—making straight A’s was achieved with very little pressure.

“There were a few classes I wasn’t so sure about, but I don’t know if I was even concerned about it at the time,” says the senior vice president of finance and chief financial officer at Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center, Sioux Falls, S.D. “It was more an outgrowth of working to the best of my abilities. I attempt to put my all into everything that I’m doing and take it from there.”

As for building the EHR system, Norton says that took a lot of effort, but she adds that getting it done in the way it was done was rewarding. “I led the general ledger and financial reporting team,” Norton recalls. “It became my life. It was a large undertaking, but you could see the benefits you were going to get, and that made it all worth it.”

By starting from scratch, Norton explains, the team was able to challenge past ways of thinking, and listen to what people needed and then build a system based on those needs.

As the 38-year-old CFO of a regional healthcare network with 115 locations scattered among 54 communities in four states, Norton says she spends much of her day in meetings explaining how everything fits together for the 5,000 employees of the system,



**38, senior VP of finance and CFO, Avera McKennan Hospital & University Health Center, Sioux Falls, S.D.**

### Julie Norton

which takes in \$965 million a year.

In his letter nominating Norton for the Up & Comer recognition, Avera McKennan Regional President Fred Slunecka writes about how Norton took over last November just as the organization’s CFO for 13 years left to join a larger system and as investment losses, bad debt and lower patient volume began to take their toll. Although across-the-board pay cuts were

instituted, layoffs were avoided. “Through this process, we found Julie’s counsel to be extremely valuable,” Slunecka writes. “Julie’s calm, professional demeanor and confidence remain constant no matter what situation she’s facing.”

Norton joined Avera McKennan in 1999 as a controller, but her career path to the healthcare industry went through PricewaterhouseCoopers where she performed and supervised financial audits. “Originally, I started out with plans to be an actuary, but one of our clients at PricewaterhouseCoopers was a children’s hospital and working with them really engaged me, and I wanted to be part of such an organization,” she recalls.

Norton seeks the same rewards as a volunteer board member of the Sioux Falls-area Court Appointed Special Advocate program, which advocates on behalf of abused and neglected children.

—Andis Robeznieks

**A**s a college football player in 1992, Clarence Sevillian caught passes totaling 222 yards in a single game as a receiver for Vanderbilt University, a school record he held until 2007.

During those 15 years, Sevillian, 39, signed with the Cincinnati Bengals and played on the practice squad for two seasons, trained and worked as a physical therapist, earned an MBA and rapidly worked his way up the management ranks of McLaren Health Care Corp., a six-hospital system based in his home town of Flint, Mich.

Now Sevillian is rebuilding a losing team as president and CEO of Doctors’ Hospital of Michigan, Pontiac. The for-profit venture formed with 60% physician ownership and a 35% stake held by McLaren to bring 137-bed North Oakland Medical Centers out of bankruptcy and back from the brink of closing. (The other 5% is being held in abeyance, and may be used to establish an employee stock ownership plan.)

McLaren President and CEO Phil Incarnati calls Sevillian a “rare talent,” something Incarnati says he recognized when he blew out his Achilles tendon and first encountered Sevillian, at the time a physical therapist for 301-bed McLaren Regional Medical Center.

The CEO says he recognized a potential leader. “People call it a lot of different things—whether it’s charisma—but he has that,” Incarnati says. From there, Incarnati says he shared his impressions with the therapist’s superiors, recommended to



**39, president and CEO, Doctors’ Hospital of Michigan, Pontiac**

### Clarence Sevillian

Sevillian that he pursue an MBA, and then “kept track of him without getting directly involved.”

Sevillian became manager of wellness in 2000 and by 2004 was director of business development and strategic planning—and he was well on his way to earning that MBA. In 2006, he was made vice president of operations at McLaren’s 203-bed Lapeer (Mich.) Regional Medical Center, about 20 miles from Flint. Last year, when

McLaren was looking into the wisdom of becoming a partner in Doctors’ Hospital, Sevillian was dispatched to work on the system’s due diligence, ultimately becoming the consensus choice to be the hospital’s CEO when it emerged from bankruptcy in November 2008.

But before that, the deal came perilously close to falling apart as the physician investors struggled to put together financing. The hospital transferred its patients and started winding down services before the state stepped in with a \$5.8 million advance on disproportionate-share funds that gave the venture some room to run.

But with zero patients, in Sevillian’s football days this might be called “fourth and long.” “The majority of people gave it three months to last and it was going to close back down,” Sevillian says. The hospital lost nearly \$2.6 million in the next four months but then posted its first positive numbers in March.

—Gregg Blesch

**L**ike many Chicagoland natives, Douglas Winkelhake is a diehard Cubs fan, a feeling he was able to transfer to his eldest son. His younger, more rebellious son became a fan of the Chicago baseball team's archrival, the St. Louis Cardinals—something sure to strike the heart of a Cubs fan. But Winkelhake is able to laugh it off.

It's part of Winkelhake's desire to be a driver of consensus, instead of trying to dictate terms. And it's a trait that has come in handy in his role as president of Norton Brownsboro Hospital in Louisville, Ky., over the past few years while he has overseen the facility's \$146 million construction. Winkelhake sees the new hospital—built using environmental and patient-focused design principles—as being a catalyst of change for the entire Norton Healthcare system, a concept he anticipates with both excitement and anxiety.

Winkelhake, 39, has been with the Louisville-based health system since 1998, when Norton purchased Suburban Hospital and kept him on as assistant administrator. From there he advanced through several executive positions with the organization, exemplifying “high-energy” leadership, says Stephen Williams, the system's president and CEO.

“Due to his extensive and varied experience at Norton Healthcare, Doug possesses a comprehensive understanding of all the processes and services within our organization, from clinical, administrative and financial perspectives,” Williams says.



**39, president,**  
Norton  
Brownsboro  
Hospital,  
Louisville, Ky.

### Douglas Winkelhake

Winkelhake takes his consensus-building leadership style seriously. A 2007 graduate of the Leadership Louisville Center, he says it's important to take the time to really understand a person's perspectives and strengths, and ensure that others grasp his position as well. It's a style that he has used in his approach to Norton Brownsboro's construction.

Toward that end, the new hospital, which opened Aug. 26, incorporates

private patient rooms—open, airy spaces with natural light, views of hospital gardens and adds amenities such as Internet connections to improve patient and guest experiences, Winkelhake says. Employee workstations have been designed with input from the staff who needs to use them to maintain employee satisfaction as well, Winkelhake adds.

However, most of the clinical staff that gave their feedback to the architect two years ago aren't with the hospital any longer. So when current employees have walked through the new facility to see how it was progressing, Winkelhake was nervous. “For me, it was a little scary” as they viewed their new workstations and the new floors, he says.

But when Lynn Goranflo, the “battle-hardened” nurse manager for the intensive-care unit, saw her floor and started to cry, Winkelhake was able to relax. “Stuff like that makes me feel good. I can check that unit off,” he says, laughing.

—Jean DerGurahian

**S**ometimes in life, you have to take risks.

That's what Kamille Wright told herself four years ago, when at age 36 she left a secure job at Kings County Hospital Center, New York, to work for one of the most troubled hospitals in the nation: Martin Luther King/Drew Medical Center in Los Angeles.

“Every experience I had in healthcare led me up to that moment,” Wright, who just turned 40, says. “I felt, this is it. This is the place I need to be.”

Wright was part of a last-ditch effort to turn around the troubled hospital, which was facing the loss of its CMS contract after years of mismanagement and poor patient care. She had heard that going to King/Drew could be a blemish on her career, but she went anyway. “There needs to be more risk-takers in healthcare,” she says.

At King/Drew, Wright served as associate hospital administrator and chief operating officer. It was a very hands-on experience that involved frequent rounds and meetings with employees. “I put my whole heart into it,” she says.

Wright transferred to Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in Downey, Calif., in February 2007 to help that Los Angeles County facility with its Joint Commission survey, which it passed with flying colors. King/Drew had an unhappy ending, however, when it ultimately lost its CMS contract in August 2007.

Since then, Wright has moved up the ranks at the Los Angeles



**40, associate  
hospital  
administrator,  
ambulatory-care  
office, L.A. County  
Health Services  
Department**

### Kamille Wright

County Health Services Department. She now serves as associate hospital administrator in the ambulatory-care office. She works in the second-largest county in the nation in terms of safety net services.

Gretchen McGinley, Wright's supervisor and director of the ambulatory-care office, says that as we move toward a new model of healthcare delivery, the nation needs more young professionals like Wright, who are “trained in the trenches of our

nation's public hospitals and health systems.”

With a master's degree in health services management and policy from the New School in New York and a bachelor's of science in nursing from the Lienhard School of Nursing at Pace University in New York, Wright says she is committed to making the healthcare safety net better and more efficient.

She draws her passion for healthcare from her primary inspiration: Her aunt who raised her in Phoenix. Wright's aunt is a longtime lupus survivor who also has diabetes, and has been in and out of the hospital for treatment many times. Wright serves as her advocate, and knows first-hand how difficult the system can be for patients to navigate. “We need to make sure we are providing quality care for patients,” Wright says. “When I touch a patient, I think of that.”

—Rebecca Vesely



# We introduce leaders to each other.

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New York, NY

Toledo, OH  
Philadelphia, PA  
Pittsburgh, PA

Dallas, TX  
Houston, TX  
Seattle, WA