

# news

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## NIH Clinical Center reaches milestone in Magnet accreditation journey

On January 12, the NIH Clinical Center reached its first major milestone in the journey to Magnet® accreditation when it submitted the formal application to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). This submission follows two years of extensive preparation.

According to researchers from the University of Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania, Magnet accredited organizations demonstrate excellence in nursing practice, high quality patient outcomes and exceed robust benchmarks for the safety of patients. They also value interprofessional teamwork to create an environment of excellence, as well as strive to elevate nursing practice through evidence-based care, professional development and leadership. Magnet recognition affirms the compassion, quality and dedication that an organization offers patients and their families. The quality of these organizations attracts talented and motivated staff, which then perpetuates the organization's success.

"When the Clinical Center's leadership decided to embark on the Magnet journey, it was to demonstrate the Clinical Center's commitment to excellent patient outcomes and a positive practice environment for its staff," said Dr. Barbara Jordan, the Clinical Center's acting chief nurse officer.

"By submitting our Magnet application, we are demonstrating our intent to be recognized as an excellent organization where patients want to receive care and staff members want to work."

The Magnet application included detailed data about the Clinical Center, for example number of licensed beds, average daily census and average length of stay. Additionally, it included supporting documents that included the hospital and Nursing Department's Organizational Charts and a list of all external databases used to collect Registered Nurse Satisfaction, Patient Satisfaction and Nurse Sensitive Indicator metrics. Perhaps most significantly, the application included a proposed April 2024 timeline for completing its "Magnet Document," which is a collection of narratives, metrics and

supporting evidence that demonstrate how the Clinical Center meets Magnet requirements.

### Years of Preparation

Over the past two years, the nursing department has hosted several virtual events, including a kick-off for Clinical Center staff to learn about Magnet and the benefits of the program. The Nursing Department also hosted special-interest virtual sessions to address questions that staff members had about the program, and to provide updates on the application process. The team set up information tables within the Clinical Center on several occasions to educate staff and the public about the Magnet program, its requirements and process.

Another important element to help reach the submission milestone was creating Magnet Readiness, Document, Steering and Ambassador Teams. For example, the Magnet Ambassador team focuses on Magnet readiness through communication and education. The team works to endorse the program among hospital staff and Institute colleagues, facilitate an atmosphere of excellence and promote engagement and enculturation of Magnet concepts within the hospital. The Magnet Document Team is focused on crafting the 2024 document, which is the next milestone in the journey. The Magnet document is a collection of narratives, metrics and supporting evidence that demonstrate how the Clinical Center meets Magnet requirements.

### Next Steps

After the planned submission of the Clinical Center's Magnet document in April 2024, a period of public comment for patients and staff will be offered.

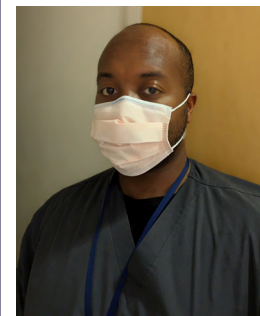
The ANCC Commission on Magnet will conduct a thorough review of the Clinical Center's submission and site visit evaluations, and will provide its accreditation decision in late 2024 or early 2025.

"We have accomplished a great deal of foundational work in order to successfully submit our application this past January," said Rachel Coumes, Magnet program manager. "I look forward to the next steps of our accreditation journey."

- Yvonne Hylton

## Black History Month 2023

Black History Month is a time to reflect on the contributions and sacrifices of Black individuals throughout history. For many, it is a time to honor the legacy of those who have fought for equality and justice in the face of adversity. At the NIH Clinical Center, we value the perspectives of our Black and African American staff, understanding that their contributions and insights are vital to the success of the organization. Currently, 36% of CC workforce identify as Black or African American.



Adam Massenburg

Adam Massenburg, a clinical research nurse, shared his thoughts on the importance of Black History Month, and how the Clinical Center can create a more supportive environment for its Black employees.

"Black History Month to me is a way to highlight and bring to surface the wonderful things that the Black and African cultures have added to society both locally and globally," said Massenburg.

He believes it is important to acknowledge and celebrate Black history because of the population demographics of this country and the impact that Black history has made to promote this country's success.

Massenburg believes that every employee can make the hospital a more supportive place for Black colleagues, regardless of their background, role and level within the organization.

"The Clinical Center as an organization can be more supportive of its Black colleagues and really all of its employees simply by showing more acts of courtesy," he said.

"Whether it be a simple hello when passing or entering a space or even the tone when addressing one another. Such small changes would make the work environment supportive to all."

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# From 'First-in-Human' Studies to Enduring Advances

*"The Goal is to Put Ourselves Out of Business"*

Stem cell transplantation is the transfer of human stem cells from outside a patient's body into the patient. A complex procedure with many variations and possible complications, it is often used for treating an array of life-threatening blood cancers, while the potential in treating other diseases is being explored.

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) is conducting first in human research studies at the NIH Clinical Center exploring combinations of stem cell sources (bone marrow, circulatory system blood and umbilical cord blood) with different degrees of human leukocyte antigen matching (leukocytes are a type of molecule found on the surface of most cells that play an important part in the body's immune response to foreign substances), often depending on whether the donor cells are from a related or unrelated person.

Dr. Richard Childs, a rear admiral and assistant surgeon general in the United States Public Health Service

Commissioned Corps, is the clinical director of NHLBI's Division of Intramural

Research and serves as the principal investigator on an experimental stem cell study that began five years ago. The study is examining the effectiveness of transplanting large number of ex vivo expanded umbilical cord blood stem cells into patients with treatment refractory severe aplastic anemia with a goal of decreasing the high incidence of transplant rejection that occurs with conventional cord blood transplants.

After five years, results have been positive for most of the first 11 patients treated in the study, including 10 who have had sustained engraftment.

Seeing numerous advantages over transplants using conventional non-expanded cord blood, Childs' team has observed a much quicker return of the white blood cells that protect patients from bacterial infection and faster restoration of the immune system, which is temporarily deactivated through chemotherapy treatments prior to the stem cell transplant to prevent graft rejection.

The current goals for Childs' team are maximizing benefits of stem cell transplantation for blood cancers,

while minimizing the risks of transplant rejection, post-transplant infections due to a recovering immune system, complications posed by viral activity, and graft-versus-host-disease (GVHD) in which the transplanted cells view their new environment as foreign and go on the attack against it.

"We're seeing much improvement with this new transplant approach with a reduction in all these complications" said Childs.

"We have Food and Drug Administration-approved drugs to treat GVHD that we didn't have 20 or 25 years ago, as well as better drug therapy against infections and viruses. A very common virus called Cytomegalovirus (CMV) is cause for concern."

Once infected with CMV, the body retains the virus for life. It rarely causes problems in healthy people but can be dangerous if your immune system is weakened.

"CMV used to be one of the biggest contributors to mortality after a transplant. Now we have medications that

completely prevent CMV from reactivating in 85% of patients."

Looking ahead, Childs is enthusiastic about several primary goals for advancing the field: finding effective combinations of stem cell sources and donor types, thereby expanding patient eligibility for some cell transplants; working towards better engraftment results; and reducing the common complications of rejection, infection and viral challenges.

"In a very real way, we'd like to see a day when stem cell transplants are less prevalent. If asked about the ultimate goal of our research, we'll say it's to put ourselves out of business! But this really just means reaching a stage where many patients - despite how far we have come - don't have to endure the very real and time-consuming challenges of the conventional stem cell transplantation process - pre-transplant conditioning, uncertainty in outcomes, and potential post-transplant complications that in the worst-case scenario can be fatal," said Childs.

- Robert Burselson



*Blood sample for Human Leukocyte Antigen test*

## Chittiboia selected as new Surgeon-in-Chief

*Oversees program that performs thousands of surgeries*



*Dr. Prashant Chittiboia*

The NIH Clinical Center has a new surgeon-in-chief.

Dr. Prashant Chittiboia, a clinical investigator in the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke's (NINDS) Neurosurgery Unit for Pituitary and Inheritable Diseases, has been appointed as chief surgeon at the hospital. The surgeon-in-chief plays a vital role in ensuring patient safety and oversees all surgical activities, provides strategic planning for surgical care and works to improve surgical quality and safety protocols throughout the hospital. Chittiboia will share his time between NINDS and the Clinical Center.

He will work with Clinical Center staff, including those in the Department of Perioperative Medicine, to ensure NIH continues to provide the highest level of surgical care to patients. As many as 2,200 operations are performed by over 40 senior surgical staff each year at the hospital.

Chittiboia outlined his goals for the new role. "I hope to be an effective conduit of information between the surgical community and hospital leadership. In addition to undertaking projects to improve patient safety, I hope to improve transparency of surgical operations. I also hope to organize surgeon-investigators in special interest groups to accelerate surgical science and the Clinical Center," he said.

He takes over the position from the prior surgeon-in-chief, Dr. Jeremy L. Davis.

## Scientific Diversity Advisor shares insight on her role and initiatives for the hospital

Cecelia (Cece) C. Henry has been hired as the new Scientific Diversity Advisor for the NIH Clinical Center, coming from the hospital's Nursing Department.

Henry serves as principal advisor to Clinical Center leadership, negotiating recommendations and actions on special initiatives and projects involving Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA). She leads a variety of programs designed to address DEIA issues for the Clinical Center and is Chair of the hospital's DEIA Committee.

In this role, Henry promotes DEIA within the hospital by examining policies, resources and workplace culture from this perspective. Her goal is to make sure that everyone is included and respected in the work performed in the hospital while continuing to serve the population and its mission.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility is about the life and culture of organizations. Henry believes that the value of looking at things from a DEIA perspective may not have been fully understood in the past, but the value of DEIA is much more evident now that research and data support these initiatives.

"We can improve; we can make this a richer output or product. Our work product is much richer with input from diverse people and diverse points of view," says Henry.



One of Henry's first priorities is to get the Clinical Center's DEIA Advisory Committee up and running. This committee is composed of representatives from all departments within the hospital, and it will serve as the action center for DEIA initiatives and as a conduit for people to share their concerns, feedback and ideas. Henry is excited to hear the perspectives and issues that will be brought to the table.

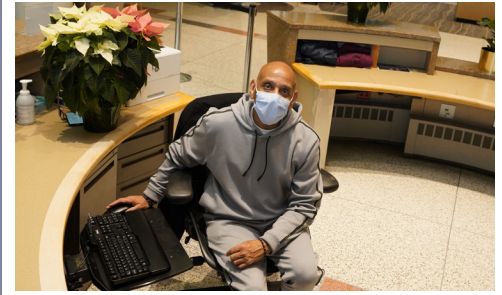
"Two people can look at something and have vastly different perspectives... exploring perspectives and finding that bridge between different groups of people to have that common understanding, that shared pool of meaning, is key," stated Henry.

Henry is dedicated to promoting inclusivity in the workplace and committed to finding common ground to help improve the work we do in the Clinical Center.

For more information about DEIA at the Clinical Center, please visit: <https://bit.ly/nihccdeia> (staff only)

- Janice Duran

## Farewell to a face of the Clinical Center



After almost 43 years of dedicated service with NIH, Michael Alexander retired from his post as hospitality service coordinator for the NIH Clinical Center's Office of Hospitality and Volunteer Services.

Alexander was a mainstay at the hospital's main lobby hospitality desk, greeting patients and their families and known for an encyclopedic knowledge of the Clinical Center's locations, departments and resources.

"Michael was, and always will be, a part of the NIH family. He inspired people and brought positivity to patients every day. We miss him already!" said Vivian Blair, the hospital's chief of the Office of Hospitality and Volunteer Services.

In 2021, Alexander received an NIH Director's award from former director Dr. Francis Collins. He was recognized for his teamwork, professionalism and pleasant demeanor which created a "welcoming atmosphere for patients and staff throughout the hospital."

- Donovan Kuehn

## Management Intern program unlocks new career paths

Have you heard of the NIH Management Intern (MI) Program? It is a highly competitive, two-year career development program for current NIH employees. MIs come from a variety of job backgrounds, including both scientific and administrative fields. Recent MIs have joined the program from positions as diverse as an intramural program specialist, police officer, contract specialist, high-voltage electrician and extramural support assistant.

MIs rotate through different administrative career fields to gain invaluable insight into the NIH while contributing to the work of the NIH through targeted assignments and challenging projects. After two years and

upon completion of the program, MIs transition into an administrative-management career in one of many areas throughout NIH.

The NIH Management Intern Program vacancy announcement will be posted on USAjobs.gov from March 1 to 10, 2023, under the title of Management Intern. To learn more about the program or to view a recording of a recent MI Information session: visit: [bit.ly/managementintertraining](https://bit.ly/managementintertraining).

- Richard Hawkins is the Management Intern Program Manager for the NIH Training Center.

## Learn more about Rare Disease Day

The NIH Clinical Center, the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences and other partners will host a hybrid Rare Disease Day on Feb 28.

The event will be held in person in the Natcher Conference Center on the NIH main campus and there will also be a virtual livestream via NIH VideoCast with the event archived for replay afterward. Rare Disease Day will feature panel discussions, rare diseases stories, exhibitors and scientific posters.

The event is free and open to the public. For registration information visit: <https://ncats.nih.gov/news/events/rdd>

# Hospital staff receive praise from Clinical Center CEO

The NIH Clinical Center celebrated its own awards season with the NIH Clinical Center CEO awards ceremony on Dec. 16, 2022. The CEO awards honor the extraordinary achievements of employees during the previous fiscal year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30).

Similar to previous years, this event was held virtually to ensure the recipients could safely share and enjoy this celebration with their families and friends.

“One of the pleasures of serving as the CEO of the world’s largest hospital dedicated to research comes every December where we get to publicly recognize the outstanding work performed in the hospital. The Clinical Center has been treating patients for almost 70 years and the medical care and research discoveries are facilitated by the thousands of staff working in the hospital,” said Clinical Center CEO, Dr. James Gilman.

The Clinical Center recognized 775 people either individually or in groups.



**Administration** (18 group and individual awards)  
**Customer Service** (9 group and individual awards)  
**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility** (2 group and individual awards)  
**Innovation** (16 group and individual awards)  
**Making an Impact** (17 group and individual awards)  
**Patient Care** (23 group and individual awards)  
**Patient Safety** (7 group and individual awards)  
**Quality of Work-Life and Well-Being** (6 group and individual awards)  
**Rising Star** (7 individual awards)  
**Science** (3 group awards)  
**Teaching/Mentoring** (7 group and individual awards)

For full details on the award winners, or to view a recording of the event, visit the CEO awards page. (staff only)

<https://bit.ly/nihceoawards>

- Donovan Kuehn

## **BLACK HISTORY** from page 1

When asked about a Black historical figure who inspires him, Massenburg replied, “The 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, would definitely be an inspirational Black historical figure for me. Having lived in times where such opportunities were unheard of, to witnessing the successful presidency truly is an inspiration and notable moment for Black history. His presidency encourages a sense of acceptance and representation in this country.”

For Alexis Braxton, a nurse educator in the Clinical Center’s Nursing Department, Black History Month has taken on a more personal tone as she’s aged.

“During my school-age years, it was a time to learn the about the giants of Black history,” she said. “I enjoyed studying how Black Americans arrived in this country; learning of Phyllis Wheatley, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr, Rosa Parks, the struggle for equality during the Civil Rights Movements of the 1960s.”

More recently, Black History Month has provided Braxton with the opportunity to take a deeper look at Black history through the study of modern authors and events not typically taught in American classrooms.



Nurse educator Alexis Braxton

Additionally, this month is an opportunity for Braxton to present as unapologetically Black. “It is extremely hard to be an authentic Black woman in spaces that are historically occupied by primarily by white persons,” she said. “We are judged constantly by our hair not being professional enough.

We often practice “code switching” when speaking with those whose lived experience is vastly different, all to be accepted and not othered.

“During February, ‘all bets are off.’ I get to celebrate out loud, every aspect of my being and experience because I am a proud Black woman. One of my goals is to ensure I show up every day and each month as my authentic self.”

When asked about an inspirational Black historical figure, she immediately thought of the legendary Billie Holiday. “Her voice was distinct and powerful,” she said. “The lyrics to many of her songs speak to experiences to which many of us can relate. Her lyrics remind me of the struggles that Blacks in America have fought, and continue to fight, to this very day. Her life reminds me that although we deal with so many problems in life, each of us can use our gifts to create a powerful impact on the world.”

While celebrating Black History Month, remember the contributions of these individuals and work to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all.

- Janice Duran

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## Clinical Center News

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