

2025  
*Legends*  
of Baptist Health Care



**BAPTIST**  
HEALTH CARE



## The Making of a Legend

A legendary tale is viewed as a story of people so heroic and selfless that it seems unbelievable. Yet here at Baptist Health Care, we have real Legends among our team. We have ordinary people who display actions filled with extraordinary Values of Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service (VOICES). We honor these **Legends of Baptist Health Care** by sharing their VOICES and stories of selflessness and conviction. Their kindness and commitment to serve make them legendary in Baptist history and gives us narratives to study, cherish and emulate.

## Honoring

**Legends of Baptist Health Care** are featured in photographs, and their stories are shared through video and printed booklets. They are formally honored by Baptist Health Care President and CEO Mark Faulkner and other Baptist senior leaders. Their stories are shared throughout the organization and become etched in Baptist history.

## Celebrating Our Legends

At Baptist Health Care, our Values are woven into everything we do. They shape our culture, guide our actions, and reflect our commitment to our Mission and Vision. Each day, team members bring Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service to life through their work and interactions. I'm proud to highlight our 2025 Legends — individuals who have gone above and beyond to demonstrate what it truly means to live The Baptist Way.



- **Amelia** coordinated with multiple teams to make a wish come true for a special-needs patient battling cancer.
- **Kimberly** stopped to help two people in need, bringing life-saving attention to one and comfort to another.
- **Avarie** formed a special bond with a patient navigating life-changing challenges and the loss of independence.
- **Tammie** coordinated a complex patient transfer when a mission trip in a foreign country took an unexpected turn.
- **Kim** guided the adoption of a newborn baby while providing support to the birth-mother and the forever family.
- **Shavia, Anna, Savanna, Kathryn, Johnna** and **Shelley** provided tremendous compassion and support, helping a new team member find strength and hope during an overwhelming time.

As you read these team members' full stories, you will learn about the remarkable ways they made a difference. I hope, like me, you are inspired. Each account is a powerful reminder of the dedication and compassion that define our organization. Our Legends of Baptist Health Care consistently rise above expectations, often stepping beyond the walls of our facilities to embody our Mission in extraordinary ways. We are proud to congratulate this year's deserving honorees.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Faulkner', written in a cursive style.

Mark Faulkner

President and CEO, Baptist Health Care

# 2025 Legends of Baptist Health Care

## Savanna Lassiter Brooks

Medical Parks Access Manager  
Patient Access  
Baptist Health Care

## Avarie Childs

R.N., BSN, MEDSURG-BC  
Nurse House Supervisor  
Jay Hospital

## Johnna Gilbert

Revenue Cycle Training Specialist II  
Patient Financial Services  
Baptist Health Care

## Kim Haesecke

MSW  
Palliative Care Specialist  
Baptist Hospital

## Kathryn Howard

Manager, Project Management  
and Volunteer Services  
Human Resources  
Baptist Health Care

## Shavia Jones

Human Resources Talent Partner  
Baptist Health Care

## Amelia Krause

R.N., BSN  
Registered Nurse  
Baptist Medical Group  
Hematology and Oncology

## Shelley Lynch

Revenue Cycle Training Specialist II  
Patient Financial Services  
Baptist Health Care

## Tammie Stefanko

R.N., BSN  
R.N. Specialist  
Clinical Documentation  
Baptist Hospital

## Kimberly Sturm

MSN, R.N.  
Informatics Manager – Acute  
Baptist Health Care

## Anna Willhite

Outpatient Access Manager  
Baptist Hospital

# 2025 Selection Committee

## Mark Faulkner

President and CEO  
Baptist Health Care

## Brett Aldridge

Executive Vice President,  
Chief Operating Officer  
Baptist Health Care

## Melissa Benton

Manager, Talent Engagement  
Baptist Health Care

## Christine Boswell

Vice President,  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
Baptist Health Care

## Charlie Brinkley

Senior Vice President,  
Chief Financial Officer  
Baptist Health Care

## Cyd Cadena

Senior Vice President, Operations  
Baptist Health Care

## Julie Cardwell

Senior Vice President  
Baptist Health Care  
Gulf Breeze Hospital Administrator

## KC Gartman

Vice President, External Relations  
Baptist Health Care

## Alli Gusmus

Executive Director, Human Resources  
Baptist Health Care

## Dana Harrison

Vice President, Baptist Health Care  
President, Physician Enterprise

## Candy McGuyre

Director, Corporate Marketing  
Baptist Health Care

## Joyce Nichols

Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer  
Baptist Health Care

## Warren Pate

Vice President, Finance,  
Baptist Health Care

## Beau Pollard

Vice President, Baptist Health Care  
Baptist Hospital Administrator

## Bobby Potomski

Executive Director, Operations  
Baptist Hospital

## Daniel Sontheimer, M.D.

Vice President, Chief Medical Officer  
Baptist Health Care

# Amelia Krause

R.N., BSN

Baptist Medical Group  
Hematology and Oncology



Amelia Krause is a registered nurse in Hematology and Oncology who provides comfort, reassurance and compassionate care to patients during some of their most vulnerable moments. She has a special place in her heart for individuals with special needs—a quality that became especially evident through her relationship with a patient named Wesley. Wesley, who has cognitive challenges, is currently undergoing chemotherapy and attending routine follow-up appointments.

When Amelia learned of Wesley's fascination with ambulances, she recognized an opportunity to bring joy and encouragement during an otherwise difficult chapter of his life. She thoughtfully coordinated a special visit with the Baptist Hospital Emergency Room team and Escambia County Emergency Medical Services, allowing Wesley to explore an ambulance and meet the paramedics. This meaningful experience exemplifies the heart of patient-centered care.

As Wesley's treatment continued, a strong bond developed between him and Amelia. He often shows his gratitude by drawing pictures for her—small but powerful expressions of the trust and connection he feels. Through Amelia's ongoing advocacy, Wesley has also had the chance to meet additional hospital teams and explore helicopters and other transport vehicles. These experiences brought excitement and happiness not only to Wesley, but also to his family.

Amelia's kindness, creativity and willingness to go above and beyond have created lasting memories for Wesley. Her dedication to emotional well-being and her genuine desire to make each visit brighter demonstrate exceptional care and compassion.



Through these actions, Amelia truly embodies Baptist values. Her Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service are why she is deserving of recognition as a **Baptist Health Care Legend**.

# Kimberly Sturm

MSN, R.N.

Informatics Manager – Acute  
Baptist Health Care

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**A**fter leaving an appointment, Kimberly Sturm decided to take a different route than usual—and that choice placed her exactly where she was needed most. Along the roadside, she noticed a man lying motionless while a woman stood nearby, visibly distressed and on the phone. Without hesitation, Kimberly pulled over to help.

As she assessed the man, Kimberly’s nursing instincts and military training immediately took over. His skin had begun to turn gray, signaling a life-threatening emergency. Identifying herself as a nurse, she quickly evaluated the situation and began CPR. For several critical minutes, Kimberly provided lifesaving care until emergency medical services arrived and assumed responsibility. Even then, her care did not stop—she turned her attention to the shaken woman, offering reassurance and compassion after the frightening ordeal.

Kimberly exemplifies the Value of Service in every aspect of her life. She served eight years in the Florida Army National Guard after enlisting in response to the September 11, 2001 attacks. A former firefighter, she currently volunteers with the Florida Highway Patrol Auxiliary as a sworn auxiliary state trooper. Her lifelong commitment to helping others has been the consistent thread running through both her personal and professional journey.

True to her character, Kimberly never sought recognition for her actions. In fact, this story only came to light because she shared it casually with a fellow team member who happened to call her shortly after the incident. By choosing a different path that day, Kimberly found herself in the right place to save a life—and once again give back to her community.

Kimberly consistently demonstrates Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service in all that she does. That’s why she is proudly recognized as a **Baptist Health Care Legend**.



# Avarie Childs

R.N., BSN, MEDSURG-BC  
Nurse House Supervisor  
Jay Hospital



**A**varie Childs is deeply proud to serve the Jay community—a place that shaped her life, where she grew up, became a mother and progressed from a newly licensed nurse to a house supervisor. Over the years, she has cared for countless patients, but one elderly woman holds a particularly special place in her heart. This patient had been hospitalized multiple times and was facing the difficult reality of no longer being able to live independently or return to her home.

After suffering a fall and being admitted once again, the patient confided in Avarie her fears of losing independence, becoming a burden to others and facing life alone. Avarie met these fears with patience, compassion, and steady emotional support. When the patient asked if Avarie would visit her, she did so willingly returning time and again simply to check in and offer reassurance.

Those visits soon became even more meaningful when Avarie began bringing her young son, Bennett. Together, their presence brought the patient immense joy and comfort. Seeking to brighten her days in thoughtful ways, Avarie surprised her with

treats from a favorite bakery and meals from a cherished restaurant. When asked why she went to such lengths, Avarie's response was simple and sincere: she feels honored to care for the people of her community and finds peace knowing patients place their trust within Baptist and at Jay Hospital.



Avarie exemplifies the true art of nursing—showing the same dedication to emotional well-being as she does to physical care. Guided by a servant's heart, she consistently goes above and beyond for her patients, demonstrating Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service. That is why Avarie Childs is proudly recognized as a **Baptist Health Care Legend**.



# Tammie Stefanko

R.N., BSN

Clinical Documentation Specialist  
Baptist Hospital

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Tammie Stefanko's local church group was on a mission trip in Honduras, placing a roof on a church in Choluteca, when tragedy unexpectedly struck. Garrett, a 22-year-old member of the team—and someone Tammie considers like a son—fell nearly 20 feet through the roof. He suffered multiple life-threatening injuries, including fractures to his neck and back, a skull fracture with associated bleeding and several broken ribs. Fearful for his life, Garrett's family knew they wanted him transported home to receive care at Baptist Hospital, and they turned to Tammie for help.

Without hesitation, Tammie sprang into action. She immediately reached out to leaders across Baptist Health Care and began navigating the complex process of an international medical transfer. From converting radiology images from Honduran systems into U.S. formats to coordinating logistics with air

transport agencies, Tammie became the vital connection between Garrett's caregivers abroad, his anxious family and the Baptist teams preparing for his arrival. Together, they worked tirelessly around the clock to ensure continuity of care and a safe transfer.

These efforts were further complicated by a severe 2025 blizzard that brought travel to a standstill. Once the storm cleared and conditions allowed, Garrett was transported via a small emergency aircraft and, two days later, safely arrived at Baptist Hospital—an outcome made possible largely through Tammie's determination, coordination and relentless advocacy.

For Tammie, this experience carried deep personal meaning. Years earlier, her church, Charity Baptist, had participated in a mission trip to Honduras that was partially supported through supplies from the Baptist Health Care Foundation. That journey forged lasting connections between the church, the Honduran community and Baptist Health Care—connections that came full circle in Garrett's moment of greatest need.

Tammie lives out Baptist values far beyond the walls of the organization. Her Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service are the reasons she is celebrated as a **Baptist Health Care Legend**.



# Kim Haesecke

MSW

Palliative Care Specialist  
Baptist Hospital



**K**im Haesecke has spent much of her career supporting families. Last Easter, she helped bring one together. In her former role as a case manager, Kim assisted a mother who arrived at Baptist Hospital to deliver her baby without an adoption plan in place and without custody of her other children. To help prevent the newborn from entering state care, Kim compassionately presented the option of pursuing adoption immediately.

Overwhelmed and anxious, the mother considered leaving the hospital before the adoption process could begin. With the support of the Baptist Mother-Baby nursing team, Kim helped her feel safe, heard and supported enough to stay and complete the necessary steps to secure her baby's future.

Unfamiliar with adoption agencies, the mother relied on Kim to guide her through the options with sensitivity and clarity. In partnership with Clay Whitaker, an open-adoption attorney with Gulf Coast Adoptions, Kim helped ensure that all

arrangements were thoughtfully and respectfully made. Together, they gently supported the mother through her decisions, trusting the agency to identify the best possible adoptive parents. Once a match was made, a couple from the waiting list immediately booked flights and arrived at Baptist Hospital the very next day.

Kim then ensured the adoptive parents had a private, welcoming space to begin bonding with their newborn. She encouraged team members to share their congratulations and support, helping the couple feel embraced even while far from their own families. To mark the baby's first Easter, Kim purchased a small stuffed bunny from the hospital gift shop—a simple but deeply meaningful gesture.



Because of Kim's compassion, swift action and steady guidance, the birth mother was treated with dignity and care, and a newborn was placed into a loving, permanent home. Her Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service are why Kim Haesecke is proudly recognized as a **Baptist Health Care Legend**.





## Shavia Jones

Human Resources Talent Partner  
Baptist Health Care



**F**inding the right job—and the right workplace culture—can be challenging for anyone. For one applicant at Baptist Health Care, the journey was far more difficult. She was a survivor of domestic violence, experiencing temporary homelessness and fighting to reunite with her baby.

During the interview process, the candidate chose honesty and shared her situation. That courage ignited an extraordinary response from six Baptist team members—Shavia Jones, Anna Willhite, Savanna Brooks, Kathryn Howard, Johnna Gilbert and Shelley Lynch—

who, over the following weeks, independently stepped forward to offer compassion, resources and unwavering support as the new team member began rebuilding her life.

Before the new team member's first day on the job, Shavia donated and purchased professional clothing and helped organize additional resources so the new hire could begin with confidence. Kathryn reached out to her church community to gather baby essentials, including clothing and toys, and helped connect the team member with transportation and counseling services. Savanna traveled more than six hours, tapping into her network of friends and contacts to collect bags of clothing and other necessities. Savanna also rallied her community to provide items that helped the new team member regain stability and dignity. The new team member said she had very few dresses for the hiring interview so these donations removed a major stressor and gave her a renewed sense of confidence as she started training.

## Kathryn Howard

Manager, Project Management  
and Volunteer Services  
Baptist Health Care Human Resources



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## Savanna Lassiter Brooks

Medical Parks Access Manager  
Baptist Health Care Patient Access



Anna contributed essential items and arranged flexible scheduling so the team member could attend critical appointments. Once employment began, Anna continued to provide mentorship and encouragement, offering steady professional and emotional support. Johnna secured a bicycle, repaired it, and ensured the team member had reliable transportation. Johnna also invited her to meet her family, shared meals, provided rides and assisted with moving from a hotel into shelter housing. During training week, Shelley noticed the new team member regularly skipped lunch. Shelley quietly stepped in—bringing meals, keeping the refrigerator stocked, providing transportation and making sure the team member never went hungry or unsupported.

## Anna Willhite

Outpatient Access Manager  
Baptist Hospital

Later, the team member shared these words of gratitude:

*“From the moment I began my hiring process and onboarding at Baptist, Shavia, Anna, Savanna, Kathryn, Johnna and Shelley each stepped forward with genuine kindness, practical assistance and unwavering emotional support. They reminded me I was not facing any of this by myself. They supported me professionally and in deeply meaningful ways that have helped me rebuild my life. Their compassion, understanding and willingness to act have given me strength and hope at a time when I felt I had none. I am still on my journey, but because of them, I know I am no longer walking it alone. Their kindness will forever be a part of my healing and growth, and I am deeply grateful.”*

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## Johnna Gilbert

Revenue Cycle Training Specialist II  
Patient Financial Services  
Baptist Health Care

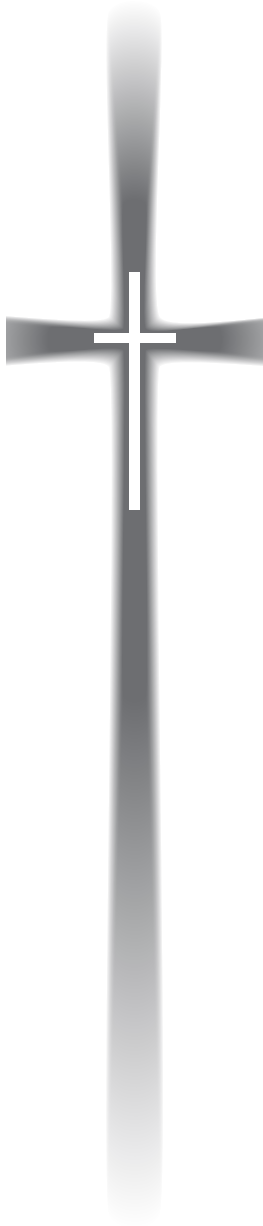


While these six individuals humbly describe the team member as the true hero—for her bravery in sharing her struggles and accepting help—their own actions have profoundly transformed a life since that first interview. The continuous demonstration of Ownership, Integrity, Compassion, Excellence and Service by Shavia, Anna, Savanna, Kathryn, Johnna and Shelley is why each of them is deserving of recognition as a **Baptist Health Care Legend**.

## Shelley Lynch

Revenue Cycle Training Specialist II  
Patient Financial Services  
Baptist Health Care





# Our **Mission**

Helping people throughout life's journey.

# Our **Vision**

To be *the* trusted partner for improving the quality of life in the communities we serve.

# Our **Values**

Guided by Christian values, we commit to the following:

**Ownership** | accountable, engaged, stewardship, responsive, committed

**Integrity** | honest, principled, trustworthy, transparent

**Compassion** | empathetic, merciful, sensitive, kind, giving, forgiving, hopeful

**Excellence** | safety, quality, distinguished, learning, improving

**Service** | welcoming, attentive, humble, respectful, exceeds expectations, collaborative







See our video at [ebaptisthealthcare.org/legends](https://ebaptisthealthcare.org/legends).

