



Nightingale

Affinia Healthcare receives Charless Foundation Grant for senior health services

Affinia Healthcare was recently awarded a \$30,000 grant from the Charless Foundation to continue providing high-quality and exceptional service at the Southside Wellness Center, a leading wellness center for seniors in St. Louis.

This grant will support Affinia Healthcare's work with the Southside Wellness Center and other senior living institutions by providing routine health screenings, including blood pressure and blood sugar screenings on a quarterly basis. Those seniors needing additional screenings and services will be connected to a Community Health Worker who will assist by scheduling an appointment with a medical provider.

In addition to seniors at Southside Wellness Center, the grant covers other seniors living within the 63104 and 63118 zip codes.

"The seniors in our community have given so much to their families, to our communities,"

See Seniors, cont'd on page 5



Affinia Healthcare nurse Iris Norise administers a vaccine to Ollie Stewart, Executive Director of the Southside Wellness Center at an event in 2023.

AHA awards \$30K grant for blood pressure treatments

Affinia Healthcare has been awarded \$30,000 grant to support efforts to reduce high blood pressure in patients. The American Heart Association (AHA) Going for Gold and Beyond grant will allow staff to improve outcomes for patients with high blood pressure and other related conditions.

The team executing the terms of the grant will consist of a pharmacist who will provide hypertension management and prescription education; a community health worker to address non-medical needs; and a

behavioral health consultant for their services as needed. This grant will also allow eligible patients to receive food vouchers, blood pressure cuffs and for the first month, there is no copay for prescriptions if they are uninsured.

"Providing exceptional service to our patients goes beyond medical appointments," said Affinia Healthcare President & CEO Dr. Kendra Holmes. "We want to provide a holistic approach to help improve health outcomes which means providing education, access to

See AHA, cont'd on page 3



*Recognizing the excellent service
and accomplishments
of Affinia Healthcare staff!*

Celebrating Excellence, Care & Compassion: Nurses of the Month

Affinia Healthcare launched its Nurse of the Month appreciation program to recognize members of the nursing staff and the vital role they serve in healthcare. Here are the final 2024 honorees for November and



Boehm

December. (For 2025, nurses will be recognized quarterly.)

November: Cynthia Boehm has a passion for taking care of patients as she has been a nurse for 31 years. Affinia Healthcare has been fortunate to have someone like Cynthia on the team for four years. She loves working at Affinia Healthcare because

everyone has the same goal of giving the best care to patients.

December: Chéyron has been a nurse with Affinia Healthcare for four years and chose nursing as her career because she's able to positively impact lives in the community. She enjoys working at Affinia Healthcare because of the difference the organization is making in the area. "I feel that I am contributing to closing healthcare gaps and making a positive difference in our community."



Robinson



Milestone Celebrations

Two longtime employees recently celebrated milestone anniversaries with Affinia Healthcare. In the photo on the left, **Dr. Vivian Knipp**, Psychologist, is congratulated by her supervisor, Dr. Juee Phalak, on 20 years of service to the health center. In the photo on the right, **Kimberly Mitchell**, Receptionist at the St. Louis Dental Center, was recently recognized for 35 years of service! She is congratulated by Elma Buie, Dir., Dental Services, and Dr. Michele Abidin, Dental Director. Congratulations!



Message from the President & CEO

Our unchanging commitment to the community

As we navigate changes under the new presidential administration, I want to emphasize Affinia Healthcare's steadfast commitment to providing access to quality healthcare for all vulnerable communities including our immigrant and refugee families. Our mission has always been to serve with compassion, equity, and respect, and that will not change.

Recent executive orders have raised questions regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, as well as gender identity and immigration priorities. The Missouri Primary Care Association and the National Association of Community Health Centers are currently conducting a legal analysis to assess the potential implications of these policies on community health centers like ours.

It is important to note that longstanding federal civil rights laws protect individuals from discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. While this administration has indicated a particular focus on revising or restricting federal contracts



Civic and community leaders joined U.S. Rep. Wesley Bell (D-1st Dist.) for a press conference to show unity in light of the White House 'funding freeze' order (and subsequent rescission). Representatives from community health centers, as well as other community organizations and governmental agencies, stood in solidarity to advocate for continued funding for their organizations and communities.

and programs related to DEI and affirmative action, we remain steadfast in our mission to provide equitable, high-quality care to all who need it, regardless of their background.

Let us continue to create a safe and welcoming environment for everyone — patients and colleagues — who walks through our doors. We will closely monitor the evolving guidance from federal and state agencies in the coming

months and adapt as necessary to ensure we continue to meet the needs of our community while upholding our values of inclusivity and compassion.

Thank you for your dedication to our mission and for your ongoing work to create a welcoming environment for everyone we serve.

Dr. Kendra Holmes

President & CEO

AHA *cont'd from page 1*

healthy food items and other necessary tools for our patients."

About 55 percent of Black adults have high blood pressure, also known as hypertension. Black people also have higher rates of more severe high blood pressure than other ethnic groups and it develops earlier in life.

Services under this grant will be enacted in 2025. For more information about Affinia Healthcare, visit www.affiniahealthcare.org.



Cynthia Dickerson, Medical Assistant, administers a blood pressure test to a guest at an outreach event last summer.



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Recognition from 'home' is welcome for 2024 Employee of the Year

For most, there's no greater feeling than being in the comfort of your own home.

If you're fortunate, the workplace can be an extension of home, working with others who make the time spent at work enjoyable and comfortable. Luckily for the 2024 Affinia Healthcare Employee of the Year, Latrice Commons, working at Affinia Healthcare is an extension of her home life with colleagues being more like family, not just coworkers.

Commons started her journey with Affinia Healthcare in 2005 as a pharmacy technician. She worked in the pharmacy department for about five years before relocating to Georgia to attend cosmetology school. Whenever she would come home to visit, she made sure to stop at Affinia Healthcare to check in with everyone.

"When I would come back to drop my daughter off for the summer, I would always make sure I came and visit here too," she said about Affinia Healthcare. "It was just home."



Latrice is congratulated by her brother, DeAndre Commons

ensure that prescriptions were accurate for the patients."

After a decade of working in the pharmacy department, Commons moved to the HIV Prevention



Commons with Dr. Holmes

Team as the HIV Patient Navigator. "I wanted to be in the community more and help people more," Commons said.

In addition to her desire to serve the community in a different way, she admired the work her brother, Unhoused Case Manager DeAndre Commons, was doing in the organization. "I see my brother working with the community, and he has a love for it, and I do too."

"Affinia Healthcare is here to serve and staff like Latrice make that happen," said Dr. Kendra Holmes, Affinia Healthcare President & CEO. "We appreciate her dedication and commitment to our patients and

congratulate her on this worthy honor."

Being of service to others is something the East St. Louis native learned at an early age from her mother. "My mom would always tell us when we were younger, if a person needs something, try to help them. My mom always helps people," she said. "Even in East St. Louis the culture is different. Everyone knows everybody, and everybody is willing to help; it's the culture."

The family atmosphere isn't the only great thing about working at Affinia Healthcare. Commons tells newer employees there is room for growth. "If you want to grow, you can grow at Affinia but it's up to you and what you put in. I like to grow and do different things and if I feel strongly about something, then I try to do it," she added. Being in an environment of love and support, and her passion for serving others is what keeps Commons coming to work each day. "I love Affinia, I love my job, I love what I do, I love the people that I work with."



Affinia Healthcare sees increase in mammogram screenings

Affinia Healthcare is continuing their partnership with BJC Healthcare to provide mammogram screenings to patients in 2025. As the organization begins another year of providing this needed service to patients, statistics show a steady increase in the number of patients taking advantage of this life-saving screening.

In 2024, a total of 297 mammograms were provided, up from 285 in 2023.

“The research shows that early detection saves lives,” said Dr. Kendra Holmes, Affinia Healthcare President & CEO. “Our partnership with BJC Healthcare ensures that this life-saving service is reaching more of the community that often is hit hardest with breast cancer diagnoses and deaths.”

The Siteman Mammography Van will be available at the following Affinia Healthcare locations:

- 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday, February 24, 1717 Biddle Street, 63106
- 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday, March 10, 3396



Pershall Road, 63135

- 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday, March 17, 2220 Lemp Avenue, 63104

Additional dates will be added for the remainder of 2025. Screenings are offered to women 40 and over. Patients must register for an appointment to be seen; walk-ins are not accepted.

For more information or to register, please call 314.814.8552 or 314.477.4197.



Dr. Moore goes to Washington

Affinia Healthcare Family Medicine Physician Dr. Catherine Moore (3rd from left) recently attended the National Association of Community Health Centers Policy and Issues Conference in Washington, D.C., where she was recognized with the Elizabeth K. Cooke Advocacy MVP award. While in D.C., Dr. Moore joined other community health advocates to meet with Missouri legislators U.S. Rep. Wesley Bell (pictured here) and Sen. Josh Hawley. The healthcare advocates shared information with the legislators and asked for their support with upcoming legislation concerning community health centers and patients in Missouri.

Seniors *cont'd from page 1*

said Affinia Healthcare President and CEO Dr. Kendra Holmes. “To be in a position where we can give something back to them, something to help them have the best quality of life, is an honor and a privilege and we take pride in being able to provide these services to our elders.”

Services under this grant will be implemented at Southside Wellness Center as well as other senior centers in the targeted zip codes in 2025. For more information about Affinia Healthcare, visit www.affiniahealthcare.org.



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Flance Early Childhood Center

6763 Page Avenue

The Salvation Army Midtown Service
and Treatment Center

3396 Pershall Road

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