



SPRINGFIELD • Business JOURNAL

September 2023

Angie Sowle YMCA of Springfield

Diversity among doctors

Health care staffing apps
face legal scrutiny



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Health influences

If you were asked to name the factors that influence a person's health – for better or worse – your list would probably include genetics, along with lifestyle choices such as eating habits, level of physical activity and use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. It might not occur to you to include ZIP code on the list, but according to the most recent Sangamon County Community Health Needs Assessment, that plays a significant role: "Socioeconomic factors and physical environment, which represent 50% of positive health outcomes, can be largely attributed to the ZIP codes where community members reside. Socioeconomic factors include education, job status, family and social support, income and community safety."

On the cover this month is Angie Sowle, CEO of the Springfield YMCA, who has devoted her career to ensuring that those in the community, particularly underserved populations, have access to the health and wellness resources offered by the Y (p. 6). A college internship working at a YMCA summer camp for low-income children showed her the profound effect the Y could have on children's lives, and she's worked for the organization ever since.

This month's issue also profiles Chris Schmulbach, owner of Fitbodies HIIT Training (p. 9). He's spent his life sharing his passion of health and fitness with others, but his own journey has had some unexpected twists and turns. Following surgery in 2016 to remove a large brain tumor, Schmulbach now competes in CrossFit's adaptive division where modifications are made for athletes with disabilities. He still deals with lasting side effects from the surgery but says, "It doesn't matter what holds you back, it can be achieved."

Too many people are still held back by systemic inequalities in health care, which leads to worse outcomes for both individuals and society as a whole. Aside from our own health goals, we must advocate for policies that improve health for all.



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By David Blanchette

a Q & A with Angie Sowle

Angie Sowle grew up in a small town in Iowa where the YMCA was an integral part of the community. The summer before her senior year of college, she had an internship at her hometown YMCA, overseeing a summer program for low-income children. Seeing the profound effects it had on the children's lives influenced her career trajectory. After graduation, she was hired by the Springfield YMCA and has devoted her entire career to the organization. Sowle was appointed the CEO in 2013.

She and her husband, Todd, live in Leland Grove. They have four grown children; the youngest is away at college. Sowle was a recipient of *Springfield Business Journal's* Women of Influence award in 2018.

Where were you born and raised, and how did you end up in Springfield?

I was born in Belleville, Illinois, and my family moved to Keokuk, Iowa, when I was 5 years old. That was my home until I went to college. I went to Northeast Missouri State University in Kirksville, which is now Truman State, and majored in parks and recreation with an emphasis on exercise physiology.

I applied for two jobs when I was approaching the end of my senior year in college, both of them at YMCAs. I got hired at the Springfield YMCA, and I have been here ever since.

What was it like being involved in the planning and realization of the new YMCA facility?

Looking back now, I can say that it was a little bit scary. But we encountered so many fabulous people who believe in the Y and what the Y does for the community. So it was really refreshing and validating to meet with various community leaders about it.

The scary part was really the feelings we had before we started doing it, but once we started going out and having those meetings, asking community members what they wanted to see in the new facility, it was very affirming.

What are the nuances of the job at the YMCA that most people may not realize?

We are actually a large employer; we employ over 400 people, so personnel is a big piece of it. And being a nonprofit doesn't mean that you don't have to make good financial decisions. You have financial benchmarks and milestones that you have to make to continue to operate.

How do you stay on top of the services members want to receive?

I have a fantastic team, and that is the key. To lead an organization, you need to surround yourself with fabulous people. People who work in nonprofits are a different breed; they put other people in front of themselves, they work tirelessly for a cause. They are always promoting the bigger issue and helping to represent the underdog. I am surrounded by people like that, and that's how I do it. I have an amazing team.

How do you stay competitive with the myriad of health and fitness facilities that are out there?

We just do what we've always done. Our ability to pivot and to change who we are as an organization is what has kept us in this community for 150 years. But at our core, we are the same organization that we were when brilliant people long before me started a YMCA in this community. We have experts in each field of service, whether

that's health and wellness or youth sports or aquatics. We study the trends, we know what is present on a national level, and we are very intune to community needs from a variety of sources. We collaborate with a lot of other organizations, and we take stock in what those organizations tell us about what this community is missing and needs. We also have a really large workforce, and these front-line staff know what the members want and what the community wants. We go to the source and find the right information, and if we are able to provide that service, we absolutely do.



Angie Sowle, right, reads with Decolbie, a participant in the YMCA Strong Kids after-school program.
PHOTOS COURTESY SPRINGFIELD YMCA

What recent wellness and recreation trends are you noticing?

Virtual fitness options did not go away when COVID-19 dissipated. We still offer many of our group fitness classes through Zoom. There are a certain group of people who don't come in to participate in a group fitness class, and I honestly don't see that going away any time soon. The health risk is kind of over for most of the population, and yet we still see a large number of people participate via Zoom each week. So we're going to continue to do that as long as that is what the community is asking us for.

The Springfield YMCA was recently at the center of a national controversy. How did you balance dealing with that attention while still keeping the facility fully operational for members?

We are governed by a board of directors and a board of trustees that offer a lot of support and advice. Our staff team puts the needs of oth-

ers before themselves. People picked their chins up and came into work every single day, and we continued to do our best to serve the community.

We are aligned with the national YMCA, which is headquartered in Chicago, and we get advice, guidance and information from them that helps us to face adverse situations. It was a national issue, and there was definitely some ugliness surrounding it, but there were also a lot of really good people who came out in support of the YMCA, and we got through it together.

What did you learn while dealing with that national issue?

We are a strong organization. I always knew that, but I'm not sure we had really been tested. I thought COVID-19 was a test for us, and it turned out that we had another test in front of us. But we rose to it, and I never doubted that we had supporters and people who believe in us and what we do. They maybe weren't as loud and boisterous as the others, but they were definitely large in number and really wrapped their arms around us and helped us to face the adversity.

The core of who we are is we treat people respectfully, we treat our community members with decency, we accept individuals for who they are and we just stay true to who we are. That helped guide and lead us.

What advice would you give to young people who may be considering a career in your field?

It's hard work to serve as many people as we do and maintain the hours that we do. I definitely wouldn't undersell it to anybody. But I can't imagine being involved in an organization or a job that is more fulfilling, that helps you to see the best of humanity, a place where you can walk out of your office and be inspired by any one person you come into contact with. You know their story and the role that the Y has played in their life. I don't know where to find that sort of inspiration that lives outside of the Y, so I would encourage anyone to do it. It's a fabulous place to work.

What might people be surprised to learn about you?

I have a goal to become a published author of children's books. I have written a few of them and that is something I'd love to pursue, possibly upon retirement when I have a little bit more time. **SBJ**

A muscular man with a large green and black tattoo on his chest is sitting on a black gym bench. He is wearing blue athletic shorts and white socks. He is looking upwards and to the left with a focused expression. The background is a wall covered in various notices and posters, including one that says "07/25/20" and another that says "B. EMMETT".

When crisis reveals the best life has to offer

By Holly A. Whisler

Chris Schmulbach has been a competitor since he was a boy racing motocross. He liked it so much he turned pro and raced Supercross. After years of risk-taking and sustaining numerous broken bones, he decided to retire from racing and play it safe, especially since he was now a husband and father of two. He opened a CrossFit gym in 2013 and currently owns and operates Fitbodies HIIT Training, 3430 Constitution Dr., a high-intensity interval training program.

Schmulbach has always been dedicated to his workouts and sharing his passion of health and fitness with others; it became clear that this is his life's work. He described opening the gym as a pivotal time in his life. "Running a gym is a grind, and you don't earn much money, but I love it. It's lead me to where I am today," he said.

Unbeknownst to Schmulbach, he would soon have another life-changing moment. On Christmas morning 2014, Schmulbach was enjoying breakfast when he noticed the right side of his tongue and lip were numb. He admitted, "Like a typical guy, I thought maybe I had a tooth problem or sinus infection, and I let it go for a year, believe it or not." Over the next several months, the side of his face became numb, and he began losing his hearing. It was when his workouts became difficult because he was struggling to breathe that he decided to get it checked out.

In late 2015, an MRI revealed a large, rare tumor called an acoustic neuroma that was wrapping itself around Schmulbach's brainstem. Removal of the tumor was urgent and surgery was scheduled for February 2016.

The 11-and-a-half-hour surgery was life-changing. Schmulbach said, "Life is different now. There were lasting side effects following surgery, and there were blessings as well. I'm deaf in my right ear and have tinnitus. I eventually lost sight in my right eye. I've had to learn how to walk with no depth perception. I have no feeling on the right side of my head and



right shoulder. My face is droopy on that side, especially when I'm tired."

Recovery wasn't easy, but Schmulbach is ambitious. After resting for two weeks, he needed a sense of normalcy and he went back to the gym. "I had lost 25 pounds and couldn't lift more than 10 pounds, so I started with some easy exercises," he said. He had competed in area CrossFit competitions in 2013 and was in training at the time the tumor was discovered. Schmulbach said he was not going to let the new normal keep him from competing again.

Schmulbach did compete again, and coaches aware of his health situation encouraged him to compete in CrossFit's adaptive division where modifications are made for athletes with disabilities. Schmulbach admits this was not an easy decision, but after he witnessed these phenomenal athletes compete, he decided to pursue that route.

In 2020, he competed in as many adaptive



neuromuscular divisions as he could. He said, "Now, it's what I do." He feels a responsibility in sharing his story. He said, "It shows that you can do anything you set your mind to. It doesn't matter what holds you back, it can be achieved. My coach has one arm, and he's a world champion three times over."

When Schmulbach hits the wall and considers quitting, his wife and business partner, Kendra, is there to give him a boost. He said, "She's behind me 100%. She was a competitive gymnast and understands the tenacity that's needed to keep going. She's a big reason why I keep doing what I'm doing." He also has four kids and a grandchild who motivate him.

It's in the times when Schmulbach needs to dig deep that he said he tells himself, 'Nobody cares, work harder.' He said, "It's a slogan at the gym, and it's on our T-shirts." But Schmulbach said he begins each day with gratitude for all he has, including the ability to compete as an adaptive athlete. **SBJ**



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Sources: The Physician Groups. DND - Did Not Disclose.
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	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / WEBSITE	PARTNERS/PRINCIPALS	HOURS OF OPERATION	TYPE OF CLINIC	NUMBER OF PHYSICIANS	TOTAL # OF EMPLOYEES	SPECIALTIES	YEAR EST'D
1	Springfield Clinic Main Campus, 1025 S. Sixth St. 800 Bldg, 800 N. First St. 900 Bldg, 900 N. First St. Carpenter, 350 W. Carpenter St. Center for Plastic Surgery, 2901 Greenbrier Dr. Chiropractic, 355 W. Carpenter St., Suite A Dermatology-Monroe, 1100 Centre West Dr. Downtown Drive-Up Lab, 701 S. Sixth St. HSHS St. John's Health Center, 1100 E. Lincolnshire Blvd. HSHS St. John's Pavilion, 800 E. Carpenter St. Jacksonville-MOHA, 1000 W. Morton Ave. Jacksonville, 15 Founders Lane Koke Mill, 901 S. Koke Mill Road MOHA, 775 Engineering Dr. Optical Centre West Wabash, 4525 Wabash Ave. Optical Centre, 1025 S. Sixth St. Orthopedics Walk-In Jacksonville, 15 Founders Lane Orthopedics Walk-In, 800 N. First St. Pediatrics, 3501 Old Jacksonville Road Rehabilitation Services-Sherman, 129 Illini Dr. Rehabilitation Services-Monroe, 2325 W. Monroe St. Rehabilitation Services-West Wabash, 4525 Wabash Ave. Rehabilitation Services, 3020 S. Sixth St. Sherman, 400 St. John's Dr., Sherman Springfield Surgery Center, 1025 S. Sixth St. Taylorville - Cheney, 500 N. Cheney St. Taylorville, 600 N. Main St. Urgent Care - Main, 1025 S. Sixth St. Urgent Care Jacksonville - 1000 W. Morton Ave. Urgent Care Sherman, 400 St. John's Dr. Urgent Care West Wabash, 2200 Wabash Ave. Wabash, 2200 Wabash Ave.	217-528-7541 800-444-7541 SpringfieldClinic.com	Ray Williams, CEO Kenneth Sagins, MD, FAAP, CMO William D. Putman, MD Board Chair	All clinic facilities are open 8am-5pm unless noted below. Orthopedics Walk-In Clinic Springfield, Mon-Thu 7am-6pm, Fri 7am-5pm, Sat-Sun, 8-11am Orthopedics Walk-In Clinic Jacksonville Mon-Thu 8am-4pm Urgent Care Main, 1025 S. Sixth St., Mon-Sun 8am-8pm Urgent Care Jacksonville, West and Sherman Mon-Sun 8am-6pm (excluding major holidays)	Primary and specialty care, ancillary services, ortho walk-in clinic, surgical treatments, urgent care and Telehealth.	383	3,200	Primary care and more than 80 medical specialties and sub-specialties serving 20 counties in central Illinois with services including an ambulatory ssurgery and endoscopy center, bariatric weight loss center, bone health center, breast cancer center, diabetes wellness center, infusion therapy, laboratory, medical spa, optical centre, orthopedics walk-in, pharmacy, radiation therapy, radiology, rehabilitation services, sleep disorders center, sports medicine, telehealth, after-hours telenurse and urgent care.	1939
2	HSHS Medical Group Internal Medicine (Patients 64+), 2801 Mathers Rd. Family Medicine & Pediatrics, 125 E. Plummer Blvd., Suite A, Chatham Family Medicine & Pediatrics, 1745 W. Walnut St., Jacksonville Family Medicine, 300 Sattley St., Rochester Family Medicine, 806 E. Andrew Rd., Sherman Foot & Ankle Specialists - 1745 W. Walnut St., Jacksonville and 2901 Old Jacksonville Rd., Suite C Hospitalist Program, HSHS St. John's, 800 E. Carpenter St. Intensivist Program, HSHS St. John's, 800 E. Carpenter St. Diabetes & Endocrinology, 118 Legacy Pointe Dr. Multispecialty Care and Multispecialty Care Pediatrics, 2901 Old Jacksonville Rd. Multispecialty Care, 1304 W. Burnett Dr., Taylorville Neuroscience Specialty Clinic, 1745 W. Walnut St., Jacksonville Neuroscience Specialty Clinic, 1304 W. Burnett Dr., Taylorville Priority Care, 1836 S. MacArthur Blvd. Pulmonology Specialty Clinic, 1304 W. Burnett Dr., Taylorville	217-321-9292 HSHSMedicalGroup.org	Dr. Kevin Lewis Chief Physician Executive	All offices: 8am-5pm Priority Care: 7 days a week, 8am-8pm Springfield Pediatric Walk-in Clinic: Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm Virtual care at Anytimecare.com: 24/7	Primary and Specialty Care, Ancillary Services, Walk-in Care and 24/7 Virtual Care	296	717	Multispecialty group that offers integrated care, including an advocate to help patients find a primary care doctor, onsite lab and advanced imaging, adult neurology, corporate health and wellness, diabetes and endocrinology, epilepsy, hospitalists, intensivists, occupational health, pediatrics, podiatric medicine, podiatric surgery, primary care, urgent care, virtual care, walk-in care.	2009
2	SIU Medicine Center for Family Medicine, 520 N. Fourth St., 2833 South Grand Ave. East, and 345 W. State St., Jacksonville Ear Nose and Throat Clinic Hearing and Balance Center, 720 N. Bond St. Internal Medicine Clinic, 751 N. Rutledge St. Maternal-Fetal Medicine, 400 N. Ninth St. Neuroscience Institute at SIU, 751 N. Rutledge St. OB-GYN Clinic, 400 N. Ninth St. and 1100 Lincolnshire Blvd. Pediatrics, 400 N. Ninth St. Psychiatry Clinic, 319 E. Madison Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Clinics, 319 E. Madison Simmons Cancer Institute at SIU, 315 W. Carpenter St. Surgery Clinics, 747 N. Rutledge St. Institute for Plastic Surgery at SIU, 747 N. Rutledge St. SIU Cosmetic Clinic, 2201 W. White Oaks Dr. SIU Fertility and IVF Center, 751 N. Rutledge St. Women's Health Center, 610 N. Westgate, Jacksonville Psychiatry, 1600 W. Walnut St., Jacksonville Center for Family Medicine, 345 W. State St., Jacksonville Dale and Deborah Smith Center for Alzheimer's Research and Treatment, 751 N. Rutledge St.	217-545-8000 siumed.org	Jerry Kruse, M.D., CEO Michelle Lynn, R.N., COO Vidhya Prakash, M.D., CMO	Mon-Fri, 8am-4:30pm	Primary care, specialties and subspecialties including surgical treatments.	296	2,301	A variety of health care services including primary care, specialties and sub-specialties. For a list of services, make an appointment or to view provider profiles online, visit siumed.org.	1970









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Sources: The Physician Groups. DND - Did Not Disclose.
Ranked by total number of physicians.

	NAME/ADDRESS	PHONE /WEBSITE	PARTNERS/PRINCIPALS	HOURS OF OPERATION	TYPE OF CLINIC	NUMBER OF PHYSICIANS	TOTAL # OF EMPLOYEES	SPECIALTIES	YEAR EST'D
3	Prairie Cardiovascular Consultants 619 E. Mason St.	217-788-0706 prairieheart.org	Dr. Kevin Lewis Chief Physician Executive	Mon-Fri 8am-5pm	Cardiac and Vascular Diagnosis and Treatment	119	401	Interventional Cardiology, Electrophysiology, Peripheral Vascular Intervention, Nuclear Cardiology, Transesophageal Echocardiography, Congenital Heart Failure, Percutaneous Valvuloplasty, Hypertension Management, Non-Invasive Vascular Diagnosis, Vascular Medicine.	1979
4	Memorial Care Springfield Memorial Hospital 701 N. First St. (corporate office) 101 E. Plummer, Chatham Concordia - 4101 W. Iles Ave. 15 Founders Lane, Suite 100, Jacksonville Koke Mill - 3132 Old Jacksonville Road MacArthur Walk-in Clinic - 2215 S. MacArthur Blvd. North Dirksen - 3220 Atlanta St. Vine Street - 3225 Hedley Road	Memorial.health	Memorial Health	Visit Memorial.health for hours.	Primary Care	50	396	Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Medical Imaging, Outpatient Laboratory, Pediatrics.	1994
5	Prairie Eye and LASIK Center 2020 W. Iles Ave., Springfield 2000 W. Morton Ave., Jacksonville	217-698-3030 prairieeyecenter.com	Sandra Yeh, M.D. medical director	Mon-Fri 8am-5pm may vary by site	Ophthalmology, Optometry, Optical Center, Spa	16	95	LASIK and Refractive Surgery, Cataract Surgery, Retina, General Ophthalmology, Oculoplastics, Optometry and massage.	1970
6	Orthopedic Center of Illinois 1301 S. Koke Mill Road	217-547-9100 orthocenterillinois.com	Gordon Allan, M.D., Frank Bender, M.D., Dane Church, M.D., Christopher Graves, M.D., Rodney Herrin, M.D., O.B., Idusuyi, M.D., Christopher Maender, M.D., Barry Mulshine, M.D., Kari Senica, M.D., Varun Sharma, M.D., Timothy VanFleet, M.D., John Watson, M.D.	Mon-Fri 8am-5pm Sat 8am-12pm	Orthopedics, Imaging, Physical Therapy, Medicine, Walk-in Clinic	12	125	Joint Reconstruction, Spine Surgery, Fracture and Injuries, Foot/Ankles, Upper Extremities, Sports Medicine, Interventional Pain Management, Imaging, Physical Therapy, Minimally Invasive Surgery.	1972
7	Central Counties Health Centers 2239 E. Cook St. 700 N. Seventh St. (dental only) Clinic for the homeless: 1023 E. Washington St.	217-788-2300 (Springfield main) 217-788-2380 (Seventh Street dental clinic)	Heather Burton, President and CEO	Hours vary according to site. Call 788-2300 for specific site hours.	Primary Care Dental Care Behavioral Health	8	100	Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Dental, Behavioral Health. On-site laboratory.	1999
8	Memorial Care Koke Mill - 3132 Old Jacksonville Road North Dirksen - 3220 N. Atlanta St. Chatham - 101 E. Plummer Blvd. Respiratory Clinic South Sixth - 2950 S. Sixth St.	Memorial.health	Memorial Health	All locations 8am-8pm daily	Urgent care, Walk-In Care	7	212	Urgent care for all ages. Out-patient laboratory and medical imaging (X-ray). Walk-in appointments with on-site physicians and advanced practice providers.	1999
9	Gailey Eye Clinic 1401 S. Koke Mill Road	217-529-3937 gaileyeyeclinic.com	Angela Oberreiter, O.D. Joseph Harman, M.D.	Mon-Fri 8am-5pm	Ophthalmology, Optometry, Optical Boutique	2	15	Vitreous Surgery, Cataract Surgery, iLasik.	1941



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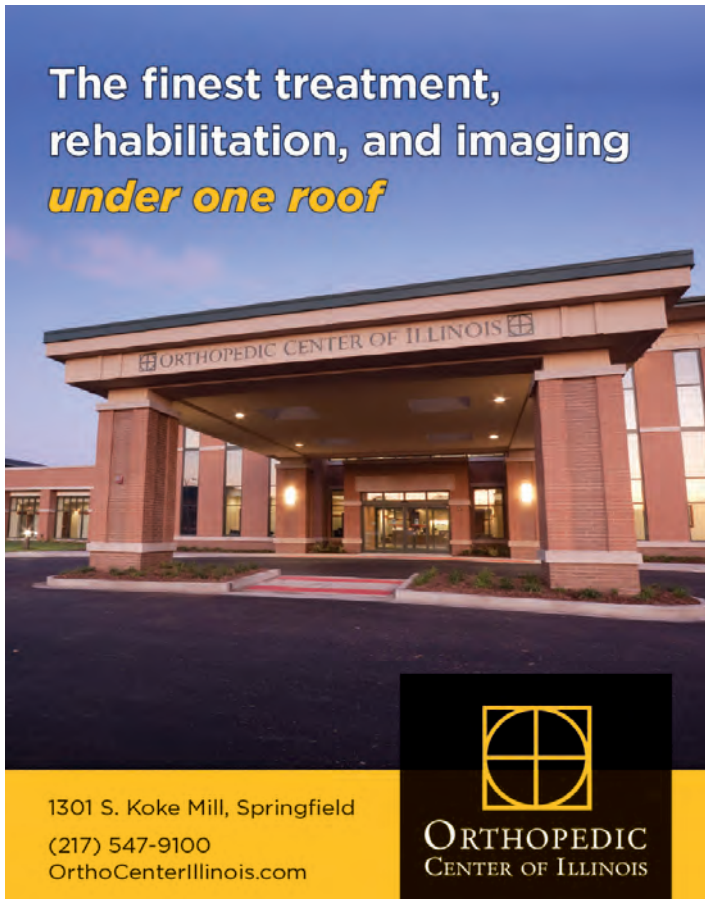
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HOSPITALS

Sources: The hospitals.
Ranked by number of inpatient admissions.


	NAME/ADDRESS	PHONE/WEBSITE	NUMBER OF LICENSED HOSPITAL BEDS	INPATIENT ADMISSIONS (2022)	OCCUPANCY RATE	FY 2019 OPERATING BUDGET (MILLIONS)	TOTAL STAFF (FULL TIME EQUIVALENT)	ADMINISTRATOR	AFFILIATION	YEAR EST'D
1	Springfield Memorial Hospital 701 N. First St. Springfield, IL 62781-0001	217-788-3000 memorial.health	500	20,708	70.4%	\$721.6	DND	Charles D. Callahan president and CEO	Memorial Health	1897
2	HSHS St. John's Hospital 800 E. Carpenter St. Springfield, IL 62769	217-544-6464 st-johns.org	422	20,356	76.07%	\$622	2,598	Matthew Fry president and CEO	Hospital Sisters Health System	1875
3	Jacksonville Memorial Hospital 1600 W. Walnut St. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-9541 memorial.health	40	2,388	27%	\$93.7	DND	Trevor Huffman, M.D. president and CEO	Memorial Health	1875
4	Lincoln Prairie Behavioral Health Center 5230 S. Sixth St. Road Springfield, IL 62703	217-585-1180 lincolnpairiebhc.com	97	2,500	82%	DND	135	James Flynn CEO	Universal Health Services	2008

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October 15th - December 7th, 2023*

AgeLinc will schedule Medicare Open Enrollment appointments starting October 2nd at 8:00 am. Appointments can be provided in person or remotely. For more information on appointment options, please call the provider listed below, which corresponds to the county in which you live. We will begin accepting appointments in Springfield starting October 2, 2023.

Medicare Open Enrollment is available at these Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) locations:

AgeLinc (217-787-9234) Serving Cass, Christian, Greene, Jersey, Logan, Macoupin, Mason, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Sangamon, Scott
CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation (217-342-2193) Serving - Christian, Morgan
Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation (217-839-4431) Serving - Greene, Jersey, Macoupin
Menard County Board (217-632-4412) Serving Menard
Montgomery County Health Department (800-721-7734) Serving Christian, Montgomery
Macoupin Prairie Council on Aging - Cass, Greene, Jersey, Morgan, Scott
Senior Citizens of Christian County (217-824-4263) Serving Christian
Senior Citizens of Logan County (217-732-6132) Serving Logan
Springfield Center for Independent Living (800-447-4221) Serving Christian, Logan, Menard, Montgomery, Sangamon
Senior Services of Central Illinois (217-528-4035) Serving Logan, Mason, Menard, Sangamon

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Tech meets government

The legal tug of war in health care staffing apps

By Michael Vallante

In the fast-paced realm of technology and invention, a relentless push and pull exist between the tech industry and government. Tech ventures forth, boldly embracing innovation, often outpacing the bounds of current legal structures, and navigating the uncertainties they bring. It is on a mission to identify inefficiencies, tackle challenges and enhance existing systems. Yet, as it speeds ahead, it sometimes skirts the edges of established legal confines.

Meanwhile, the government stands sentinel. Quick to act when tech appears to threaten security, privacy or public interests, it responds with regulations or even outright bans.

While tech champions innovation and agility, there is a watchful eye for governance bound by laws and regulations. Every technological marvel, no matter how groundbreaking, must ultimately adhere to the dictates of policymakers and courts.

Enter the digital age's latest game-changer: staffing apps. These platforms act as bridges, connecting businesses with potential hires and presenting an agile solution to workforce demands. Particularly during worker shortages, they're a game-changer. However, they're not without pitfalls, especially regarding worker classification.

Health care staffing apps epitomize this trend, allowing health care professionals to upload qualifications, which are then matched to health care facilities' needs. Like a job "dating" app, health care workers peruse available shifts, swiping to signify interest.

Illinois passed HB 4666 in 2022 to address concerns over worker misclassification, targeting the booming health care staffing app industry. Backed by vast venture capital, these app companies are spreading like wildfire across the U.S.

Fast forward to 2023, health care staffing

agencies in Illinois must now provide detailed quarterly reports to the state's Department of Labor. These reports delve into financials, spotlighting amounts charged to health care facilities, payments made to workers and various labor costs, from taxes to insurance.

While union groups herald HB 4666 as a triumphant shift, the issue of worker misclassification resonates nationwide, as the U.S. and State labor secretaries and attorneys general have started to regulate this area of the health care industry more aggressively.

In 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor launched a nationwide effort within its Wage and Hour Division to focus on improving compliance by residential care, nursing facilities and home health services.

The DOL reported that since 2021, it has completed more than 1,600 investigations and identified violations in 80% of its reviews. These investigations recovered over \$28.6 million in back wages and damages for nearly 25,000 workers. The most common violations were for "misclassifying employees as independent contractors."

MedCity News reporter Katie Adams wrote that "the Department of Labor recently sued Comprehensive Healthcare Management Services (CHMS), a Pennsylvania-based operator of skilled nursing facilities, for an alleged \$19 million owed as a result of unpaid overtime. A large number of CHMS' workers came from Clipboard and other agencies providing 1099 workers."

In California, health care app-based staffing company CareRev was sued for misclassifying its workers as contractors. In September 2022, the California Labor Commissioner's Office cited another health care placement agency for nearly \$2 million for misclassifying 66 workers. In March

2023, the Commissioner's Office fined a therapy provider more than \$9 million for misclassifying 1,280 speech, physical and occupational therapists as independent contractors.

This month, Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul and the state Department of Labor announced the settlement of an investigation involving a medical staffing company, GrapeTree, that resulted in \$950,000 in back wages for 3,000 current and former employees. According to its website, "GrapeTree is a medical staffing company that provides health care professionals to work in long-term care and assisted living facilities in 12 states. Employees manage their own schedules by signing up for shifts through an online system."

While at the Small Business Administration, I witnessed firsthand the struggles of small businesses, particularly the threat of liabilities and legal actions. Misclassifying workers often becomes a goldmine for lawyers.

It is important to remember that as technology hurdles forward, it remains tethered to the decisions of our elected officials and the judiciary. Regardless of personal opinions, understanding these rules is paramount; otherwise, the omnipresent reach of the law is poised to intervene – the Labor commissioners and attorneys general are paying attention. **SBJ**

Michael Vallante provides consulting and strategic communications services for small businesses and nonprofits around the country. From 2017-2020, Vallante was the US Small Business Administration's associate administrator for the Office of Field Operations, overseeing the 68 district offices around the country and the management of SBA's capital, contracting and counseling programs serving small businesses.

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INDEPENDENT INSURANCE AGENCIES

Sources: The individual insurance agencies.
Ranked by number of local producers.

	NAME/ADDRESS	PHONE/WEBSITE/EMAIL	NUMBER OF LOCAL PRODUCERS	NUMBER OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES	MANAGERS/OWNERS	SPECIALTIES	YEAR EST'D
1	TROXELL 214 South Grand Ave. West Springfield, IL 62704	217-528-7533 troxellins.com info@troxellins.com	34	52	John Eck, Jr., Todd Sowle Dave White Chris Leming Jennifer Cail	Commercial Insurance, Personal Insurance, Employee Benefits, Life/Health, Workers Comp, Bonds, HR Solutions, Financial Services	1887
2	Insurance Partners, Inc. 901 S. Spring St. Springfield, IL 62704	217-544-8644 best-coverage.com info@best-coverage.com	13	4	Doug Ryherd Bryan Ryherd Ryan Williams Bonnie Ford	Home, Auto, Commercial, Life, Health, Worker's Comp, Bonds, Annuities, Senior Products, Business Auto and General Liability	1999
3	Forsyth Insurance Group, Inc. 430 E. Vine St., P.O. Box 2229 Springfield, IL 62705	217-525-9500 217-528-1526 forsyth-ins.com dblankenship@forsyth-ins.com	11	17	Gregory A. Cannedy president	Personal Insurance, Commercial Insurance, Life, Health and Group and Financial Services	1946
4	American Central Insurance Services 3300 Hedley Road Springfield, IL 62711	217-698-9000 americancentralinsurance.com andrew @americancentralins.com	10	20	Stan Travelstead Jeremy Travelstead Andrew Novaria Dennis Lister	Employee Benefits, HR Consulting, ACA Reporting, ERISA Compliance, Cafeteria Plans, Business Insurance, Personal Insurance	1987
4	Goodenow Insurance Agency, Inc. 719 North Grand Ave. East Springfield, IL 62702	217-523-5443 goodenowinsurance.com goodenow@goodenowinsurance.com	10	11	Donald Goodenow	Home, Auto, Life, Commercial, Health and Medicare health plans	1998
5	Gallagher/Nicoud (Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.) 3200 Pleasant Run, Suite C Springfield, IL 62711	217-546-6900 ajg.com	6	12	Jim Hillestad Tim Nicoud, Jr.	Commercial Insurance and Risk Management, Benefits and HR Consult- ing, TPA Services, Captives, Claims Management, International Solutions, Risk Control Services	1927
5	Snyder Insurance/Ascend Benefits Springfield, IL 62711	217-793-6000 309-664-1800 insurewithsnnyder.com info@insurewithsnnyder.com	6	4	Charles Farner, owner	Employee Benefits, Home, Auto, Life, Business, Bonds	1906
5	Lee/O'Keefe Insurance Agency Inc. 2501 Chatham Road, Suite 100 Springfield, IL 62704	217-528-5679 leeokeefe.com info@leeokeefe.com	6	9	Glenda Richards Brian Blough	Business, Personal, Life/Health Insurance Bonds	1934
6	Denton-Merritt-Dycus Insurance Agency 2800 S. Sixth St. P.O. Box 1179 Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-0408 dentoninsurance.com dmerritt@dentoninsurance.com	4	4	David R. Merritt John C. Merritt	Personal Lines and Small Commercial	1930
6	Bailey Family Insurance 1625 S. Sixth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-441-2342 baileyfamilyinsurance.com info@baileyfamilyinsurance.com	4	6	Christine and Mark Bailey	Home, Auto, Life, Commercial REI	2017
6	Formea Insurance Group, Inc. 512 S. Church St. Chatham, IL 62629	Phone/website/email 217-483-1536 www.formeainsurance.com tformea@formeainsurance.com	4	5	Tracy Formea	Personal Insurance, Commercial Insurance, Bonds and Life Insurance	2003

INDEPENDENT INSURANCE AGENCIES

Sources: The individual insurance agencies.
Ranked by number of local producers.

	NAME/ADDRESS	PHONE/WEBSITE/EMAIL	NUMBER OF LOCAL PRODUCERS	NUMBER OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES	MANAGERS/OWNERS	SPECIALTIES	YEAR EST'D
7	Godfrey Insurance Agency 3261 Meadowbrook Road, Suite 300 Springfield, IL 62711	217-679-5442 godfreyinsuranceagency.com rustin@godfreyinsuranceagency.com	3	4	Rustin Godfrey Lisa Godfrey	Crop Insurance	2002
7	Dimond Brothers Insurance Agency 3931 Wood Duck Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-793-6655 dimondbros.com	3	5	Mark Donaldson, CIO	Commercial Lines, Personal Lines, Employee Benefits, Farm	1867
8	Preston Insurance Agency, Inc. 3307 Robbins Road Springfield, IL 62704	217-529-9711 prestoninsurance.co prestonins83@yahoo.com	2	2	Bill and Angie Preston	Auto, Home, Life, Business, Health, Medicare Supplements	2000
8	The Group Insurance Agency, LLC 7000 Piper Glen Dr., Suite E Springfield, IL 62711	217-787-7447 thegroupinsuranceagency.com service@thegroupinsuranceagency.com	2	4	Jason Dolby	Commercial Insurance, Personal Insurance, Life Insurance, Bonds	2008
9	Boehler Insurance Agency, Inc. 1012 W. Iles Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-546-5546 boehlerinsurance.com jesse@boehlerinsurance.com	2	4	Jesse Boehler	Personal lines and commercial lines	2022
9	Jumper Insurance 1800 N. Wolfe St. Springfield, IL 62702	217-303-3842 jumperins.com mjumper1969@gmail.com	1	1	Marilyn Jumper	Senior health plans, supplemental and advantage plans. Cancer, heart attack and stroke insurance, dental, recovery care, hospital indemnity, life.	2020

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FITNESS CENTERS

Sources: The Fitness Centers. DND - Did Not Disclose.
Ranked by number of members.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / WEBSITE / EMAIL	# OF EMPLOYEES	# OF MEMBERS	HOURS OF OPERATION	MANAGER(S)	AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT / AMENITIES	YEAR EST'D
1	YMCA of Springfield Gus and Flora Kerasotes 4550 W. Iles Ave. Springfield, IL 62711	217-679-1625 springfieldymca.org asowle@springfieldymca.org kprimus@springfieldymca.org jgreenwood@springfieldymca.org	200	20,000	5am-9pm Mon.-Thu., 5am-8pm Fri., 10am-4p Sat., 8am-12pm Sun.	Angie Sowle Kenzi Primus	Free child care, basketball courts, outdoor playground, sauna, steam room, y-cycling, lockers, Wi-Fi, free parking, TRX, weight training, cardio training, group fitness, personal training, warm water instructional pool, lap swimming, swim lessons, senior/Silver Sneakers fitness programs, kids' sports leagues for soccer, basketball, softball, tee-ball, sports clinics, before and after school child care, summer camp programs.	2011
1	YMCA of Springfield-Downtown 601 N. Fourth St. Springfield, IL 62702	217-544-9846 springfieldymca.org asowle@springfieldymca.org	200	20,000	5am-9pm Mon.-Thu., 5am-8pm Fri., 7am-4pm Sat., 1-5pm Sun.	Angie Sowle Joey Greenwood	Free child care, basketball courts, racquetball, pickle ball, TRX, sauna, steam room, y-cycling, lockers, Wi-Fi, free parking, weight training, cardio training, group fitness, personal training, martial arts, gymnastics, indoor track, lap swimming, recreational pool, swim lessons, senior/Silver Sneakers fitness programs, kids' sports leagues for soccer, basketball, softball, tee-ball, sports clinics, before and after school child care, summer camp programs.	1962
2	FitClub South 2811 E. Sixth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-787-8348 fitclub.net nathan@fitclub.net	80	6,496	24-hour access	Justin Angel, Sherry Carigan, Carmine Gaulding, Jason Hernandez, Mike Purdy	Free child care, cardiovascular equipment, free weights, lap pools, whirlpool, steam room, sauna, warm water hydro therapy, Capitol Chiropractic Health Center, HSHS Rehabilitation Services, NASM certified personal trainers, nutritional coaching with our registered dietitian, senior exercise programs, group personal training, aquatic classes and group exercise classes, massage, CycleFit, Wi-Fi, locker rental, swim lessons, towel service.	1999
3	FitClub West 2701 E. Sangamon Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-787-1111 fitclub.net nathan@fitclub.net	60	4,253	24-hour access	Justin Angel, Sherry Carigan, Carmine Gaulding, Jason Hernandez, Mike Purdy	Free child care, cardiovascular equipment, free weights, NASM certified personal trainers, senior exercise programs, group personal training, aquatic classes, group exercise classes, nutritional coaching with our registered dietitian, lap pools, whirlpool, sauna, CycleFit, Wi-Fi, locker rental, towel service.	1999
4	FitClub North 2701 E. Sangamon Ave. Springfield, IL 62702	217-788-8250 fitclub.net nathan@fitclub.net	20	1,733	24-hour access	Justin Angel, Sherry Carigan, Carmine Gaulding, Jason Hernandez, Mike Purdy	Free child care, cardiovascular equipment, free weights, NASM certified personal trainers, senior exercise programs, group personal training, group exercise classes, nutritional coaching with our registered dietitian, Wi-Fi, locker rental and towel service.	1999
5	Bob Freesen YMCA 1000 Sherwood Eddy Lane Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-2141 www.jacksonvilleymca.org	70	1,397	6am-8pm Mon-Fri., 7am-2pm Sat.	Mary Rowe Henry, Jared Maggart	Gymnasium, outdoor playground, outdoor tennis/pickleball courts, fitness center, baseball fields, soccer/football field, spinning room, racquetball room, free-weight room, six-lane swimming pool with Red Cross-certified lifeguards, lap swim times, water fitness classes, swim team and swim lessons, a registered Master's swim team membership, child watch, afterschool care, summer day camps, fitness classes, Pilates machine, senior fitness classes, monthly senior potluck, sauna, Wi-Fi, free parking, Redbird CrossFit facility, 1-mile walking trail with new StoryWalk® for families, Parkinson's class, Rock Steady Boxing.	1968
6	Springfield Racquet & Fitness Center 3725 Chatham Road Springfield, IL 62704	217-787-2460 springfieldracquetandfitness.com srfc62704@gmail.com	10	1,375	6am-10pm Mon-Fri., 7am-7pm Sat., 7am-7pm Sun.	Ross Graham	Air conditioned indoor sports courts, 30ft rock wall, cardio equipment, resistance equipment, free weight areas, group fitness classes, individual workout programs, certified personal training, professional tennis lessons, clinics/drills by certified instructors - USTA designated, youth tennis excellence training center, adult and junior in-house/travel tennis teams.	2010
7	Powerworks Fitness 347 Williams Lane Chatham, IL 62629	217-697-8727 www.pwfchatham.com pwfchatham@gmail.com	20	1,100	8:30am-noon Mon.-Fri. Gym open 24 hours	Brittany Bisch Libby Anderson	Free weights, cardio equipment, locker rooms, group exercise classes including a state of the art cycle studio, HIIT studio, yoga studio, Power Pilates studio, kickboxing, two gyms, TRX and an Athletic Development training center.	2011
8	Rocket Fitness 326 Sattley Rochester, IL 62563	217-498-1175 rocketfitnesscenter.com rocketfitness@yahoo.com	5	1,000	24-hour access	Tracy Rogers	Full service gym, Hoist and Vision equipment, freeweights, basketball league, volleyball court, showers, group fitness classes included in membership.	2014
9	Anytime Fitness West 4307 Yucan Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-679-2490 anytimefitness.com Facebook: Anytime Fitness West springfieldil2@anytimefitness.com	2	850	24-hour access	Dan Ishmael, owner	Stepmill, rowing machine, fully equipped free weight area including cables and squat racks. Treadmills, ellipticals, bikes with own TV viewing, free weights, TRX bands, selectorized equipment, cable crossover.	2012
10	Snap Fitness 650 E. Jackson St. Auburn, IL 62615	217-483-4348 snapfitness.com/Auburn	3	730	24-hour access	Eli Maynard	Free weights, strength, cardio and functional training. Personal training, young athlete training and nutrition coaching. Heart rate technology. Included with membership is Snap App which includes workout programming and virtual classes.	2005
10	Snap Fitness 24/7 1061 Jason Place Chatham, IL 62629	217-483-5701 chatham@snapfitness.com	2	730	24-hour access	Graham Cripe	Free weights, strength, cardio and functional training. Personal training, young athlete training and nutrition coaching. Heart rate technology. Included with membership is Snapp App, which includes workout programming and virtual classes.	2005
11	Anytime Fitness 3045 S. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62703	217-670-2420 springfieldil3@anytimefitness.com	1	639	24-hour access	Kirk Withers	Cardio - each piece features its own TV viewing screen, treadmills, ellipticals, crosstrainers, adaptive motion trainers, recumbent bikes, stairclimber, free weights- hammer strength plate loaded, 5-120 lb dumbbells, smith machine, olympic bench, pecor/paramont circuit line, modular cable cross over system, private men's and women's shower/bathroom, personal training, rowing machine, squat racks.	2012
12	Snap Fitness 24/7 1362 Toronto Road Springfield, IL 62712	217-679-0081 snapfitness.com springfield@snapfitness.com	2	540	24-hour access	Ashlee Hanson	Free weights, strength, cardio and functional training. Personal training, young athlete training and nutrition coaching. Heart rate technology. Included with membership is Snap App which includes workout programming and virtual classes.	2005

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FITNESS CENTERS

Sources: The Fitness Centers. DND - Did Not Disclose.
Ranked by number of members.

	NAME / ADDRESS	PHONE / WEBSITE / EMAIL	# OF EMPLOYEES	# OF MEMBERS	HOURS OF OPERATION	MANAGER(S)	AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT / AMENITIES	YEAR EST'D
13	Snap Fitness 24/7 131 Illini Blvd. Sherman, IL 62684	217-381-4951 snapfitness.com/sherman	3	520	24-hour access	Nic Anderson	Free weights, strength, cardio and functional training. Personal training, young athlete training and nutrition coaching. Heart rate technology. Included with membership is Snap App which includes workout programming and virtual classes.	2005
14	Orangetheory Fitness 2450 W. Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-953-0054 oranjefitness.com Studio0805@oranjefitness.com	8	500	Open 7 days a week	Hannah Goss	Studio fitness, small group personal training.	2017
15	Anytime Fitness 2705 N. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62702	217-523-1541 anytimefitness.com	3	400	24-hour access	Jamal Everette	Cardio - each piece features its own TV viewing screen, treadmills, ellipticals, crosstrainers, adaptive motion trainers, recumbent bikes, stairclimber, free weights- hammer strength plate loaded, 5-120 lb dumbbells, smith machine, olympic bench, precor/paramount circuit line, modular cable cross over system, private men's and women's shower/bathroom, personal training, rowing machine, squat racks.	2010
16	Fitbodies 3430 Constitution Drive, Suite 116 Springfield, IL 62711	217-899-4127 See Facebook page fitbodies@yahoo.com	2	194	Classes at 5am, 6am, 7am, 9am, noon, 4:30pm, 5:30pm and 6:30 pm. Mon.-Fri, 9am Sat.	Chris and Kendra Schmulbach	Small group classes. High intensity interval training (HIIT). Nutritional coaching.	
17	CrossFit Instinct 301 South Grand Ave. West Springfield, IL 62704	217-414-8260 crossfitinstinct.com crossfitinstinctmolly@gmail.com	10	120	5am-6:30pm	Tim Hahn Molly Hahn	Barbells, bumper plates, dumbbells, kettlebells, medicine balls, pull-up bars, reverse hyper, GHDs, yoke, rings, Assault Bikes, C2 Rovers, farmers carry bars, logs, plyometric boxes, climbing ropes, jump ropes, sleds, benches, squat racks, bench press station, tires, sledgehammers, treadmill, SkiErg. Front desk bar area, kids' room, main workout floor, secondary workout floor, yoga studio, private office, locker rooms, showers, restrooms, large outdoor spaces, community garden, large parking lot, kitchen.	2010
18	Pure Performance Center 320 S. Fourth St. Springfield, IL 62701	217-891-0691 pureperformanceFC@gmail.com	1	100	24-hour access	Jeremy Ferry	Treadmills, ellipticals, recumbent bike, dumbbells, leg extension/leg curl, side lateral machine, calf raise, half rack, 2 0-90 benches, cable crossover with lat pulldown, seated cable row, plate-loaded lat pulldown, adjustable flat decline and incline bench press, leg press machine, functional trainer, assisted chin-up and dip machine, GHD, Concept 2 rower, battle ropes, medicine balls, yoga mats, semi-private personal training and gym membership.	2016
19	Planet Fitness 1756 Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-546-4910 planetfitness.com info@planetfitness.com	12	DND	24 hours Mon.-Thu., 12am-10pm Fri., 7am-7pm Sat., 7am-12am Sun	Brody Elder	Cardio machines, weight resistance machines, instruction included with membership, tanning, massage beds, total body enhancement.	2013
19	LA Fitness 2501 Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-801-9007 lafitness.com contact@fitnessintl.com	40	DND	5am-10pm Mon.-Thu., 5am-9pm Fri., 8am-7pm Sat. and Sun.	Bailey C., Cornelius H.	State-of-the-art equipment, free weights, indoor basketball, cycling, variety of group fitness classes, indoor pool, sauna, whirlpool spa, personal training.	2013

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Restoring faith in medical science

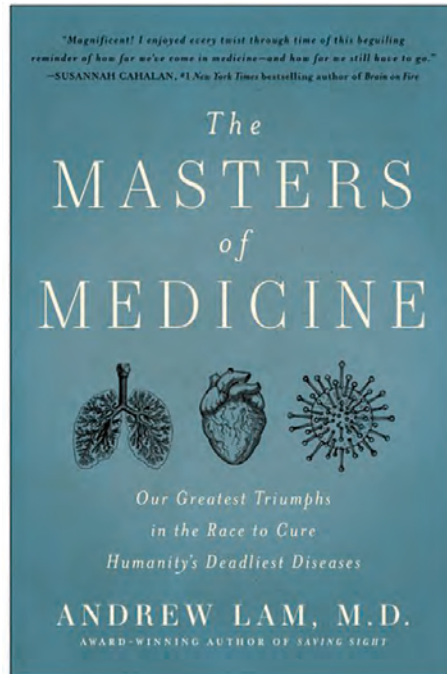
Author, physician and Springfield native sets the record straight. Science saves lives.

By Stuart Shiffman

The COVID pandemic of 2019 was exacerbated by an increasing loss of trust in science and medicine. Many factors led to undermining the public view of confronting the disease, including political polarization, mixed messaging from political leaders and a great deal of misinformation and attacks upon scientific agencies and methodology. Even four years after the deadly virus swept across the world, we are uncertain how and whether we should treat the disease and what future actions need to be taken. Confidence levels in medicine, health care and science are declining. Andrew Lam's *The Masters of Medicine* is a timely and consequential work of science and history that might serve as an unintended consequence for many readers, restoring their faith in the ability of medicine to treat disease and increase life expectancy worldwide.

Andrew Lam is a retinal physician practicing in Massachusetts and a product of Springfield School District 186. He grew up in Springfield, graduating from Springfield High School in 1994. He majored in history at Yale University and after graduation attended the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. He currently serves as an assistant professor of ophthalmology at the University of Massachusetts. Before publishing his current book, he authored two works of fiction, *Two Sons of China* and *Repentance*.

Do not be worried that *The Masters of Medicine* will be a scientific journal of boring jargon. The writing is lively, and the book reads far more like a fast-paced novel than a factual account of some of the most important scientific work of our lifetime. Lam's historical account also serves as a reminder to all of us that scientific exploration often is accompanied by large audiences of doubters and doomsayers. In the 1950s the polio virus attacked America. In November 1953, a vaccine trial for the Salk vaccine commenced. Seven million volunteers helped conduct trials at 14,000 schools in 44 states and Canada. More than 600,000 schoolchildren received three shots over a three-month period. Some parents refused to participate and on April 4, 1954, Walter Winchell, a radio celebrity, went on the air to suggest that the polio vaccine could actually transmit the disease to children. But science won. On April 12,



The Masters of Medicine: Our Greatest Triumphs in the Race to Cure Humanity's Deadliest Diseases, by Andrew Lam, M.D. 368 pages, BenBella Books, 2023.

1955, the study results were released. The first three words told an anxious nation what they needed to know, "The Vaccine works."

There are seven chapters in *Masters of Medicine* recounting discoveries and the long arc of medical progress that produced advances in treatment of heart disease, diabetes, infectious diseases, cancer, trauma and childbirth. Each chapter includes stories of scientists and doctors who often overcame professional pettiness and jealousy as well as errors in judgment and mistakes. Their work would sometimes be aided by luck mixed with courage. One result of these medical accomplishments is that life expectancy in the United States rose from 48 years in 1900 to the current figure of 76 years. In other countries of the world, life expectancy now exceeds 80 years.

Lam presents numerous stories that will have readers shaking their heads in wonderment. There are also some warnings along the

way. In discussing infectious diseases, Lam observes that those diseases remain responsible for two-thirds of child deaths worldwide and one-quarter to one-third of all deaths in the developing world. He warns that history has shown that roughly every 10 years a novel infection causes a regional epidemic and that a global pandemic occurs about once every century.

The final chapter of *The Masters of Medicine* is devoted to childbirth. While childbirth is not a disease, historically it has often resulted in death. Worldwide about 300,000 women die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth each year, with most of the deaths occurring in Africa. In the developed world, maternal death in childbirth has only become rare in the last 70 years. Medical advancements relating to childbirth faced opposition from both the medical and religious community. Some doctors opposed anesthesia in childbirth as dangerous and unnecessary. After all, having babies was a normal physiological part of life, not a disease. Some religious leaders opposed anesthesia in childbirth because the Bible said that women were to experience pain in childbirth. As in most religious arguments, the Bible was quoted by both sides of the debate. After all, God had anesthetized Adam when his rib was taken to create Eve. It was not until the mid-19th century that an English physician began to develop chloroform as a drug to assist women in childbirth. Queen Victoria was one of his successes, as she delivered her eighth child, Prince Leopold, in April of 1853, with chloroform being administered during her labor.

The Masters of Medicine ends on an optimistic note. Andrew Lam observes that there are those among us with the potential to make breathtaking intellectual leaps, the courage to take astounding risks, and the fortitude to withstand ridicule and ostracism for their beliefs. At a time in our history when science is scorned by many, it is good to know that there are many scientists who are still seeking solutions for some of nature's most perplexing problems. SBJ

Stuart Shiffman of Springfield reviews books for Illinois Times.

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Diversity among doctors

SIU School of Medicine adjusts application process following U.S. Supreme Court ruling

By Dean Olsen

Springfield's medical school does better than about 90% of its peer institutions across the United States and Canada when it comes to the share of graduates who are Black and members of other underrepresented groups. But the dean and provost of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine said medical schools in the United States and Canada have a long way to go to reflect the diversity of their patients.

The recent 6-3 ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court in June striking down affirmative action in higher education enrollment decisions could make the task more difficult, Dr. Jerry Kruse said.

"In some ways, it takes the emphasis off of us thinking about issues related to inequity that have been systemically built," he said.

The court's conservative majority, in a decision written by Chief Justice John Roberts Jr., said the use of race in diversifying student bodies in higher education is unconstitutional and violates the "equal protection" clause of the 14th Amendment.

The ruling focused on policies at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina, but its impact will be felt throughout higher education, including at U.S. medical schools, Kruse said.

Because of the ruling, the Association of American Medical Colleges, which assists SIU and other medical schools in the selection process, no longer will ask applicants whether they are members of groups underrepresented in the ranks of doctors.

Going forward, schools can only ask whether applicants are a member of a group that is "socially and economically disadvantaged," Kruse said.

The other change SIU made is in an essay question for applicants.

"We previously asked them to address how they would add to the diversity of our program," Kruse said. That instruction was replaced with two new questions that ask them about the barriers to medical school they have experienced and the "lived experience that they've had that will aid them as a medical professional," he said.

"They can answer those questions in any way they want," Kruse said, adding that applicants can voluntarily disclose their race in essays.

SIU uses a "holistic admissions process" that was "validated" by the Supreme Court ruling, he



Soon-to-be graduates of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine gathered in March for Residency Match Day, the annual announcement when medical students across the United States learn where they have been selected to attend multi-year training programs in various medical specialties. PHOTO COURTESY SIU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

said. "We have faculty who are socially conscious and dedicated to our region" of central and southern Illinois, he said.

SIU's internal committee that evaluates applications, interviews candidates and decides who will receive offers to attend the medical school has begun to incorporate the changes for applicants who would begin their first year of medical school in summer 2024, he said.

Kruse said the dean doesn't take part in the selections.

"In essence now, the questions don't ask about diversity," he said. "That's the major change. We don't think it's substantive."

A statement the medical school issued in response to the Supreme Court decision said: "We join our colleagues in academic medicine across the country in stating that today's court ruling has the potential to decrease diversity in health professions and is contrary to efforts to provide better health for all. The SIU School of Medicine remains committed to strengthening

the diversity of the medical student body and will work within all legal limits to ensure racial and ethnic diversity in the health professions."

Whether the changes will decrease diversity at SIU remains an open question, Kruse said.

"In some ways, the greater focus on this issue might spur some institutions to develop policies that are allowed under this ruling to actually have a greater positive effect, by starting the dialogue," he said.

Kruse, who disagreed with the court ruling, said greater diversity in health professions is necessary to help address health care inequities for patients and variations in treatments and lifespan that vary by race and ethnicity.

"Obviously, health inequities abound," he said. "There is inequity in access to care because of the large percentage of our population that is still uninsured, because of the great mistrust that a large portion of the general public has, and because of the dramatically small percentage of African American and Black men who are in

medicine. It's percentage-wise less than it was in the 1970s."

Black students make up 11% of medical students in the United States, a country where 16% of the population is Black, SIU officials said.

"While there has been an increase in the percentage of Black women in medical school, Black men have not fared so well," SIU's statement said. "In 1979, 3.1% of U.S. medical students were Black men; 40 years later in 2019, Black men made up only 2.9% of medical students. In 2019, only 4% of faculty members of medical schools were Black. Similar statistical trends hold true for Latino and Native American populations."

Kruse said the disturbing trend for Black men was the result of institutional racism. Dr. Christopher Smyre, a Black family medicine physician at SIU, said "over-policing and criminalization of Black men" plays a particular role.

At SIU, 15.4% of medical students, or 49 students, were Black in the 2022-2023 academic year, spokesperson Rikeesha Phelon said, a number that includes both male and female students.

SIU medical students spend their first year at the Carbondale campus, and most medical students in the second, third and fourth years are based at the Springfield campus.

Contributing to SIU's better-than-most performance on diversity of the student body may be SIU's history of producing doctors who end up in primary care specialties and the fact that most SIU medical students are required to come from Illinois, Kruse said.

Doctors from diverse backgrounds can help ease patients' concerns and educate other doctors and make them more sensitive to cultural differences, according to Smyre, director of research and innovation in the SIU School of Medicine's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

"I was very saddened to hear the ruling," he said.

Promoting diversity in medicine is more than an academic exercise, he said, because patients are the ones most affected.

"We're talking about human beings and their lives," he said.

The two programs that SIU runs for students aspiring to become doctors aren't affected by the court ruling, Kruse said. They are the Carbondale-based Medical/Dental Education Preparatory Program for sociologically disadvantaged college students, and the McNeese Preparatory Pathway Program for Springfield-area high

school students.

Medical residency and fellowship programs offered by the medical school aren't affected by the ruling, either, and are barred by law from taking race into account in admission and hiring decisions, Kruse said.

He said it was interesting that Justice Roberts, in a footnote on page 22 of the 40-page ruling, exempted America's military academies from the Supreme Court decision.

Roberts wrote in the footnote that the exemption for those higher education institutions, allowing them to keep using race in admissions decisions, was "in light of the potentially distinct interests that military academies may present." The U.S. government filed documents in the case arguing that race-based admissions programs "further compelling interests at our nation's military academies," he said.

But Kruse said, "If they make this exclusion for military academies, they clearly should make this exclusion for health education professional institutions." **SBJ**

Dean Olsen is a senior staff writer at Illinois Times. He can be reached at dolsen@illinoistimes.com, 217-679-7810 or twitter.com/DeanOlsenIT.

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Sources: The individual addiction treatment centers.
DND = did not disclose
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2	Gateway Foundation 2200 Lake Victoria Drive Springfield, IL 62703 1300 Lincoln Ave. Jacksonville, IL 62650	Springfield 217-529-9266 Jacksonville 217-280-8682 877-505-HOPE www.gatewayfoundation.org	Kerry Henry, executive director	6	○	○	○	○	○	○	The Springfield facility offers residential and all levels of outpatient substance use treatment services for adults. The Jacksonville facility offers residential, recovery home (male) and all levels of outpatient substance use treatment services for adults. DUI services. Partial Hospitalization Program. Detox program (five to 10 days). Available for free phone consultations every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
3	Hopewell Clinical 801 E. Lawrence Ave. Springfield, IL 62705	217-223-0170 www.hopewellclinical.com	Steve Evans	3	○	○	○		○	○	Hopewell Clinic offers assessments/evaluations, treatment classifications/recommendations, DUI treatment service and general substance abuse programs, adolescent treatment, license reinstatement process and employee assistance program.
4	MedMark Treatment Centers 1227 S. Ninth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-679-1406 medmark.com jackie.morton@medmark.com	Jackie Morton	0	○	○	○		○	○	Individual and family counseling, medication-assisted treatment, case management services, referrals for community services such as mental health, biomedical services, anger management, pregnancy, domestic violence, housing and employment training.
5	Rose Medical Association, Inc. 3535 Mayflower Blvd. Springfield, IL 627011	217-670-0654 www.rosemedical.org	Dr. Ernest Rose	2	○		○		○	○	Substance addiction, behavior addiction, outpatient services, medical assisted therapy.
6	Thrive Center for Wellness 435 W. Washington St. Springfield, IL 62702	217-203-6600 thrivecenterforwellness.com	David Vail	4	○		○		○	○	Intensive outpatient and individual treatment.



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Long-term care

By Sarah Delano Pavlik

A common concern for older people is how to pay for long-term care, particularly nursing home care. Medicare, the federal insurance program that is available at age 65, does not cover nursing home costs, except for a limited period usually involving rehabilitation.

Medicaid is a federal program administered by the states that is based on need. Medicaid will pay for long-term nursing home costs if you qualify. Qualification is based on what you own (a resources test) and what you earn (an income test).

The resources test can be complicated. When applying for Medicaid, you will be required to complete a detailed application regarding your assets and your income. A single person is allowed to own certain assets and still qualify for Medicaid, including: (1) \$2,000 in cash or other nonexempt property; (2) equity in a home up to \$688,000 (Although your home is exempt while you are alive and while your spouse is alive, it is not exempt after your death. While you are alive, the state of Illinois may place a lien on the home that must be satisfied after your death.); (3) one motor vehicle if necessary for work, transportation for medical needs or otherwise; (4) life insurance or a revocable burial fund of up to \$1,500, and (5) an irrevocable prepaid funeral plan.

Assets that are counted in determining eligibility include retirement plans, assets held in revocable trusts such as living trusts and assets held in irrevocable trusts, depending upon the terms of the trust agreement.

Your spouse's resources are also counted in determining Medicaid eligibility. However, the spouse who is not in a nursing home (referred to as the community spouse) is allowed to keep up to \$120,780 in nonexempt property and up to \$3,715.50 in monthly income.

If you do not meet the resources test, you must use your own assets to pay for your nursing home costs until you do meet the resources test. This is called spend-down.

There are various strategies to help someone qualify for Medicaid. It is acceptable for the spouse who needs nursing home care to transfer assets to his spouse before applying for Medicaid. For example, if a husband and wife's only assets are a home and cash of \$100,000, and the husband needs nursing home care, they can put all of the cash in an account in the wife's name. The husband will



now qualify for Medicaid because he has non-exempt assets worth less than \$2,000, and his wife has assets worth less than \$120,780.

This strategy can be used with retirement accounts, but it will cause income tax to be payable on the account. For example, assume the husband and wife's only assets are a home and an IRA in the husband's name worth \$150,000. If husband wants to transfer his IRA to his wife, he will have to withdraw the \$150,000 and pay income tax on the entire distribution. He can then transfer the net amount to wife.

Another strategy is to transfer assets to your children or other family members. Because Medicaid is only intended for those who cannot pay for themselves, there is a look-back period of 60 months if you give your assets to others. The Medicaid application asks if you have made any transfers. You must sign the application under penalty of perjury, and making false statements on the application is fraud. In addition, the application requires you to submit supporting documentation of your assets, both currently and in prior years.

Once you qualify and Medicaid is paying your nursing home costs, you are entitled to

a monthly personal needs allowance of \$30 per month, which, of course, will not pay for a cellphone, haircuts, clothes, etc. If you are younger than 65, it is possible to set aside some of your assets in a self-settled special needs trust and use those assets to pay for extra expenses. However, any assets remaining in such a trust must be paid to the state at your death.

Many people do not consider long-term care until they need it. By then, there are not many options. If you are concerned about long-term care, now is the time to plan for it. You may not qualify for Medicaid or you may simply feel more secure relying on your own long-term care plan. Your plan may include long-term care insurance, annuities, old-fashioned savings or other options. If you need care, you should also talk to a professional. Medicaid qualification is a complicated area, and there may be options available that you do not know. Either way, talk to your advisers to determine the best plan for you. **SBJ**

This article is for informational and educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice.

WOMEN'S EVENT CALENDAR

Join Women Entrepreneurs – Central Illinois on Wednesday, Sept. 13, for a “power dinner” event from 5:30-8:30 p.m. The theme will be “Winning the Business Game” and focus on taking care of your physical and mental health. This catered dinner will feature two excellent speakers and will be hosted by corporate partner Denney Jewelers, 2901 Wabash Ave.

Jill Rubenaker, health coach and owner of Snap Fitness, will speak about keeping your body strong and feeling great. Sherri Leopold, owner of Option Creators inc. and leader of the Stop Self Bullying Movement, will speak on being mentally resilient.

Advance registration is required. The cost is \$20 for members or member guests and \$28 for non-members. Visit wecispringfield.org to register.

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Molina Healthcare of Illinois reaches patients where they live

By Janet Seitz

Molina Healthcare of Illinois has been providing government-funded, quality health care since 2013. It is also providing community support through various efforts. The company has established the MolinaCares Accord, which “oversees a community investment platform created to improve the health and well-being of disadvantaged populations. We do this by funding meaningful, measurable, innovative programs and solutions that improve health, life and living where it matters most: in our local communities,” according to the MolinaCares website.

Through its employee volunteer time-off program, MolinaCares VTO, teams organize volunteer activities and work with hundreds of nonprofits across the country. The program also organizes quarterly donation drives, allowing employees to donate items that will directly help people in need.

Last September Molina donated \$40,000 in support of the Community Access Project at South Town Social Innovation Hub Center, also known as the CAP 1908 Project. The center, located at 1100 South Grand Ave. East, operates as a business incubator, accelerator and co-working space to provide small business services to east Springfield’s minority population. It also includes an emphasis on minority-owned, women-owned and veteran-owned businesses.

During the project’s ribbon-cutting event, Matt Wolf, president of Molina Healthcare of Illinois, said, “At Molina, we are dedicated to ensuring access to resources that enable those in our community to not only improve their lives and well-being but to thrive. We are proud to join with valued community organizations in support of this innovative project.”

In July, Molina awarded a total of \$100,000 to 10 students in Illinois through the MolinaCares

2023 Community Service Scholarship Program.

“MolinaCares is proud to sponsor a program that supports community service, while also rewarding local students who give back to their neighbors in Illinois,” said Wolf. The scholarship program was open to students in Illinois who demonstrated financial need and are actively serving their community. Winners were selected based on their creative responses to the following questions:

- What does community mean to you?
- How has your community service made an impact on the community?
- What have you learned and how has it impacted you?

Kenya Apongule of Springfield is one of those scholarship recipients. “I am a rising senior majoring in health science with a pre-med concentration at Spelman College, located in Atlanta, Georgia,” she said. She holds the position of president in the Commuter Student Association on campus and proudly serves on the executive board of various organizations including the Healthcareers Club, Campus Plus (an organization dedicated to empowering plus-size women on campus) and the NAACP. “As I approach the end of my undergraduate journey, I look forward to continuing my pursuit of excellence in the fields of health science and medicine, and I am determined to make a positive impact in these areas.”

Apongule credited Erica Austin, a District 186 school board member, for directing her to the scholarship. “The Molina Scholarship has truly transformed my life, as I heavily rely on external scholarships to alleviate the financial burden of attending Spelman. Being recognized for my service to the community has been an extraordinary opportunity, especially considering that it is my community’s constant support that empowers me

to thrive.” She added, “I aspire to be a physician who understands equitable health care and considers how socio-economic positions affect the health outcomes of various communities.”

Thrive is a theme behind Molina’s newly launched Molina Mobile Health Center vehicle, which was in Springfield earlier this summer. The 39-foot, fully-equipped mobile unit will make 20 stops this year in Illinois. It contains two exam rooms, a restroom, a waiting and intake area and other medical stations and will be staffed with medical personnel. “It is our hope that it will encourage Illinois residents to obtain preventative care,” Wolf said. “Connecting underserved communities to the services and resources they need is an important commitment and one we take very seriously.”

Molina recently partnered with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Illinois for a series of wellness events to kick off the first six weeks of the mobile unit’s tour. As the program grows, the Molina Mobile Health Center vehicle will travel throughout Illinois to host clinic days and community events.

Deann French, director of marketing, communications and resource development at BGC-CI, said her organization is “stronger through our many community partnerships. The more we can partner with different entities, the stronger our organization becomes and the broader our outreach throughout the communities we serve. We know it is vital that our club families feel fully supported. This means going beyond just providing an after-school program, it means supporting the entire family, providing goods and services to which they may not otherwise have access. It means being a resource for all aspects of their lives.” **SBJ**



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SIU employee and breast cancer survivor to model at NYC Fashion Week



Community activist, Springfield District 186 school board member and SIU Medicine deputy director Erica Austin will model at this year's New York Fashion Week in September at the (R)Evolution fashion show. Austin, who recently underwent breast cancer surgery, will walk the runway for Dana Donofree, a breast cancer survivor and the designer and founder of AnaOno, an international intimates clothing line for women with breast cancer. (R)Evolution features models who are patients with a breast cancer diagnosis. Since 2017, these shows have raised more than \$280,000 for metastatic breast cancer research.

"I'm grateful to be able to turn my story into something positive to help other women," says Austin of her upcoming modeling debut. "Early detection and research to find a cure are critical, especially for Black women who have a higher mortality rate." Austin is the deputy director of SIU School of Medicine's Office of External Relations. Approximately 1 in 8 women will

be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer during their lifetimes, and the mortality rate for Black women is 40% higher than for white women, according to the American Cancer Society.

Austin has received numerous awards for her dedication and advocacy in the Springfield community. She founded a nonprofit for youth, The L.Y.N.C. (Leading Youth, Networking Communities); serves on several boards, including Springfield District 186 School Board, and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. In 2020, Austin was instrumental in the implementation of COVID-19 testing centers in Springfield.

Past SIU Medicine models in the fashion show include, Susan Danenberger, owner of Danenberger Family Vineyards, and Tami Russell, Springfield Police officer and president of Police Benevolent and Protective Association Unit 5. Dannenberger will walk the runway again this year.

The fashion show is part of the Plastic Surgery Foundation's 12th annual Breast

Reconstruction Awareness (BRA) Day, which aims to raise awareness and educate women about their post-mastectomy breast cancer care options. Breast reconstruction surgery after breast cancer is considered a reconstructive procedure and is covered by health insurance, regardless of when a woman chooses to undergo reconstructive surgery.

"Many women aren't aware of the options for breast reconstruction after mastectomy, or that insurance must cover the cost of reconstruction," said Dr. Nicole Sommer, a plastic surgeon at SIU Medicine who specializes in breast reconstruction. "BRA Day inspires women to educate themselves on care options and make the decision that is right for them."

BRA Day is a collaboration between the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the Plastic Surgery Foundation, plastic surgeons specializing in breast surgery, corporate partners and breast cancer support groups.

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Spilling the tea (or the wine) about conflict resolution in the workplace

By Kelly Gust

In early 2006, I was the new employee at a company happy hour, trying hard to make a good first impression with a vice president who was three levels my senior on the org chart. Being the klutz I am, I reached for an appetizer and spilled red wine all over Mr. Important's pants... a potentially career-limiting move, to say the least. Guess how I responded:

- A. Ignored it as if nothing happened.
- B. Argued about why it was actually his fault.
- C. Asked a witness to decide who was to blame.
- D. Apologized, helped clean up and offered to pay for his dry cleaning.
- E. Disappeared Harry Potter-style.

While E was wishful thinking, I hope you answered D. (If you answered A, B or C, refer to my previous article about talented terrors at work.) Most people would apologize, feeling embarrassed about contributing to someone else's discomfort. It's easy for us to put ourselves in the other person's shoes, imagining their experience of being wet, cold and highly inconvenienced. Saying "I'm sorry" in this case conveys simple regret and a bit of penitence at having caused someone else's misfortune.

Unfortunately, in many workplaces, we seem to have forgotten our manners. Saying "I'm sorry" has come to convey liability, fault and sometimes even criminal intent. But the reality is that workplace conflict is inevitable and there are straightforward solutions to a little spilled wine.

As individuals with diverse backgrounds, opinions and objectives come together in the workplace, clashes of ideas and interests are bound to occur. In fact, according to a 2022

study by the Myers-Briggs Co., employees and managers spend an average of 4.3 hours weekly dealing with conflict. Metaphorically speaking, we frequently spill wine in the form of unclear duties, unfulfilled commitments and even unintentional foot-in-mouth moments where we say something that we didn't realize might be hurtful to another person. But it seems that saying, "I'm sorry I'm late on that project," or "I'm sorry I made an assumption about you," is even more difficult than saying, "I'm sorry about the spilled wine."

The key to a successful and thriving organization lies in how it manages and resolves these deeper, more nuanced conflicts. When handled effectively, conflicts can lead to increased empathy and improved personal relationships. Here's how to handle conflict more effectively:

Act quickly

Address the matter at the time of conflict. Tensions tend to build when conflict is not addressed in a timely manner. Allow a brief cooling off period if things are especially tense, but don't sweep conflict under the rug. Get everyone together to discuss the situation. You wouldn't wait a week to apologize for spilling wine.

Encourage open communication

Encourage employees to express opinions and concerns face to face, without fear of retribution. Leaders and team members alike should listen empathetically without interrupting, as this demonstrates respect and creates a safe space for dialogue. Team meetings, one-on-one discussions and feedback sessions pro-

mote transparency and reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings.

Focus on the situation, not the person

Rather than accusing the vice president of causing the wine spill, or him calling me a clumsy oaf, we focused on the situation: Apology, clean up and remediation in the form of a dry-cleaning reimbursement. Stay focused on the facts, not interpersonal qualities.

Emphasize collaboration

Shift the perspective from winning the conflict to finding a mutually beneficial resolution. Encourage parties to find common ground and reach a compromise that benefits everyone. Maybe both parties need to apologize: "I'm sorry I spilled the wine," met with the vice president responding, "I'm sorry I didn't see you there."

Follow-up and follow-through

Finally, if you're a manager, follow up with all involved to confirm what was discussed and the steps to be taken. It's easy to say you'll fix something. Actually doing it is a much more difficult thing. Ensure you and your team hold themselves accountable. Conflict is a natural part of work, and life, but its effective management is crucial for a strong and productive team. By creating opportunities for personal connection, open communication, active listening and a collaborative mindset, businesses can transform conflicts into opportunities for growth, innovation and stronger personal connections. The wine will inevitably get spilled, but how we respond will determine whether the damage can be repaired or create a permanent stain on your organizational culture. **SBJ**



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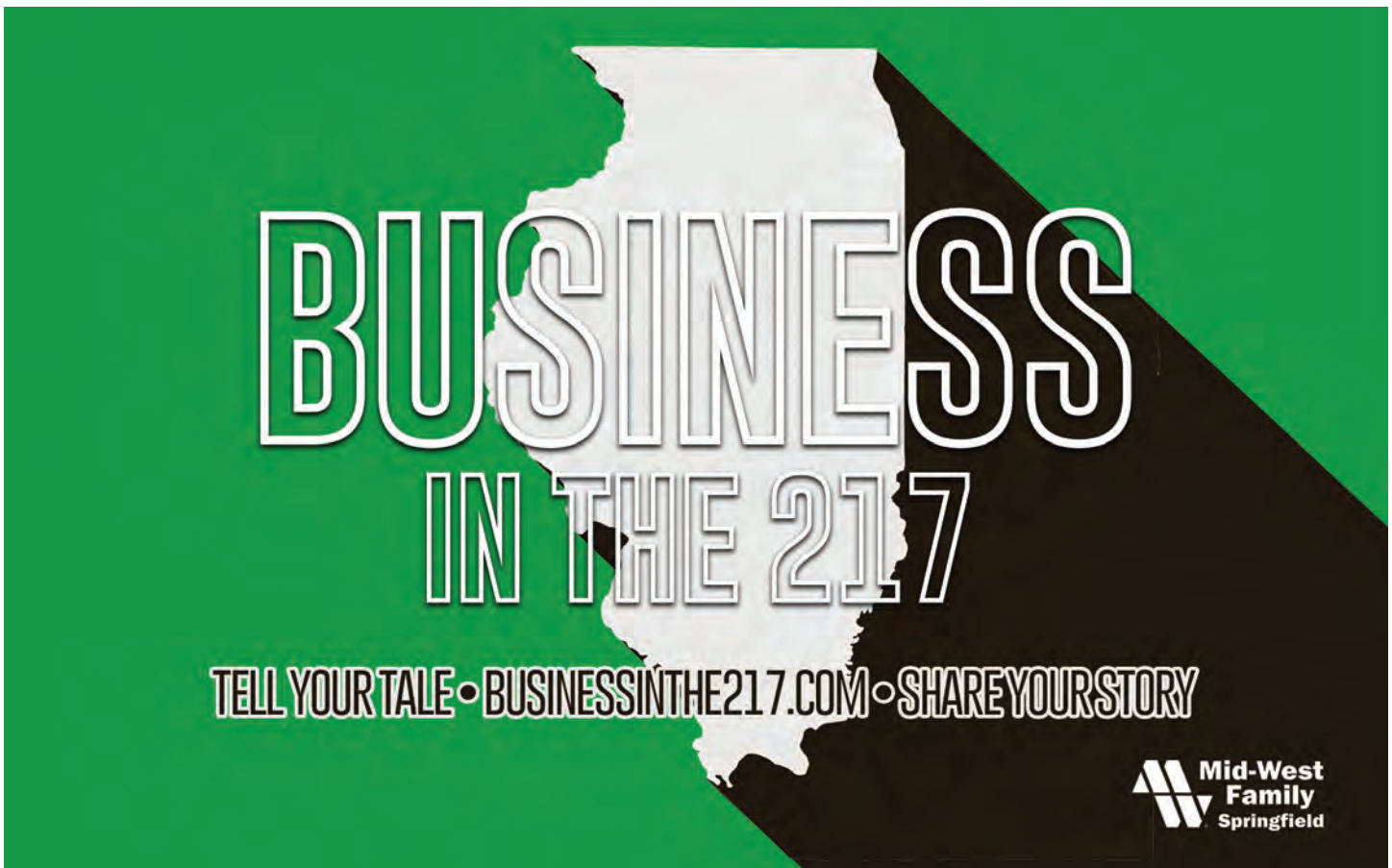
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By Thomas C. Pavlik

With all due respect to the fine people of Thayer, it's not a location that's top of mind for a nice dinner out. But that may be because they haven't heard of Mick and Mary's.

Micky and Mary's has had different owners over the years, and the place has ebbed and flowed. My personal favorite was when the restaurant included a hot tub. That's long gone now (thankfully), and Mick and Mary's is definitely in the flow state.

The restaurant is only open for dinner Wednesday through Sunday. The place is not fancy, but it's clean and has nice lighting. There's a bar – which is quite popular and includes video gaming – and banquet space that's available for events.

We visited on a Saturday night without reservations. That was a mistake. Mick and Mary's was packed, but the wait was only 15 minutes. We enjoyed a cocktail while we waited. The owner was hands-on and proud of his establishment and staff.

Once seated we refreshed our drinks and nibbled on some crackers while deciding what to start with. We ordered chicken gizzards but were tempted by the catfish fritters, livers and the breaded pork bites. It was a generous helping of gizzards; a few were on the tough side, but we were pleased overall.

With a large banquet going on in the back and every table occupied, we imagined the kitchen was slammed. Although it took a little longer than usual for our appetizer to come out, we weren't bothered at all and we didn't have to rush our conversation.

One of the things I love about Mick and Mary's is that you'll never go hungry. All entrees come with a well-sized dinner salad, a choice between cottage cheese or applesauce, and a choice between potato or spaghetti (corn was available for our visit). Couple that with generously-sized entrée portions, and the table was laden for three of us. We ended up with a few to-go boxes.

Mick and Mary's prices are quite reasonable for what you get. Entrees run between \$12.95 (spaghetti plate) to \$24.75 (shrimp dinner). With rising food prices on so many items, we speculated that Mick and Mary's priced some items (like the ribeye and filet) at market price because the menu would have to be updated as each item rose in cost.

Mick and Mary's



Fried chicken, pork chops, steaks and a variety of seafood make up most of the menu. There's also a stream of weekend specials posted on the Facebook page. Recent specials included a wagyu ribeye, steak and shrimp and oysters on the half shell or Rockefeller-style. The night we visited, one special was the Sinatra Steak, a 10-12 ounce bacon-wrapped filet, with mashed potatoes and asparagus, topped with a steamed lobster tail and covered with lobster cream sauce. Decadence personified. Of course, this being central Illinois, there's also a ponyshoe and horseshoe. The gizzard and lizard shoes caught our eye and is something we might try on our next visit. It's the first time I've ever seen those options on a menu. Good

for you, Mick and Mary's.

For entrees, we went with the whole catfish, the fried chicken and the two-pork chop dinner. But first a word on sides. I'm a big fan of the spaghetti. As an analogy, think of it as the equivalent of tavern chili – a little grease makes everything better. The cottage cheese and applesauce were reported as just fine. Still, it's hard to really elevate those dishes. The hand-cut fries nearly filled an entrée plate and the baked potatoes were also generously sized.

I'm a sucker for pork chops. Mine were well-seasoned and juicy, but with a nice crust. I'd come back just for those. The whole catfish was golden brown and reported as well-seasoned and not dry with a nicely breaded coating. So,

too, with the fried chicken. My friend got dark meat. I could hear the crunch of the crust, and it was also readily apparent that the meat was good and juicy. He went with the mashed potatoes and corn to complete the theme of a good country meal.

All in all, Mick and Mary's delivers solid food that tastes good in a friendly setting. There needs to be more places like this. So, give Thayer a chance and visit Mick and Mary's and let us know what you think. **SBJ**

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New businesses

Sangamon County new business registrations, July 16 – August 15, 2023

Dog Dreams Music Publishing, 1209 White Birch Drive, Chatham. 415-2150. Jonah Aaron Pollock.

Dog Dreams Records, 1209 White Birch Drive, Chatham, 415-2150. Jonah Aaron Pollock.

818 Stitch Co., 3704 Kerry Blvd. 606-9788. McKenzie Stalter.

Precious Moments, 1816 S. Perkins Court. 691-5202. Chester Faine.

Chris's Auto Repair, 1314 N. Rutledge St. 469-952-7496. Christopher James Long.

Weathproof Roofing Solutions LLC, 748 N. MacArthur Blvd. Kyle Angeli. 494-1005.

Taproots Massage Therapy, 901 W. Jefferson St. Dustin Bailey. 899-7272.

Dent's Auto Body Repair & Detailing, 2843 Ridge Ave. James Dent. 381-9060.

Makeover Dental, 687 E. Linton Ave. Jorge E. Mosquera Castrillon, Angelica Gallego and David Gallego. 718-909-2550.

Jake Ray and Sons Sewer and Excavating, 1529 Carolina Ave. Jacob A. Ray. 953-6270.

1010 Computing Solutions, 1524 Winston Drive. John Boykin. 202-2917.

Carson's Janitorial Service and Carpet Cleaning, 7872 Rolling Oaks Drive, Riverton. Jerry Carson. 299-0959.

Sunflower Spa, 1056 North Grand Ave. W. Meng Shu Xiang. 312-998-3355.

Marv's Harvest, 1059 N. Walnut St. Amanda Lee Cook. 685-7624.

Rick Ray and Sons Sewer and Excavation, 2195 J. David Jones Parkway, Suite 2. 679-3763. Rhonda Ramshaw.

Washem Clean, 2047 E. Lawrence Ave. Katrell B. Morris. 691-8388.

D & J Detail, 3000 S. 11th St. James O. Perkins. 691-0532.

Fresh Brewed Solutions, 5113 Mountain View Drive. Tim Kapinus. 691-8084.

Memories Kept Digital Conversion and Organizing, 2621 S. College St. James C. Suttie. 816-3566.

Marcia's Place, 1405 Stevenson Drive. Wendy Morris and Mandy Morris. 502-2261.

ZEEZ Publishing, 308 E. Southwind Road. John J. Crouch. 529-6939.

Mystic Help Desk LLC, 1709 Spartan Lane, Chatham. Macie Smith. 689-1013.

Bardic Flair Sensory Adventures, 318 E. Walnut St., Chatham. Benjamin A. Rand. 501-516-0157.

Neuman Trucking, 3851 Richland Elevator Road, Pleasant Plains. Jacob M. Neuman. 801-1633.



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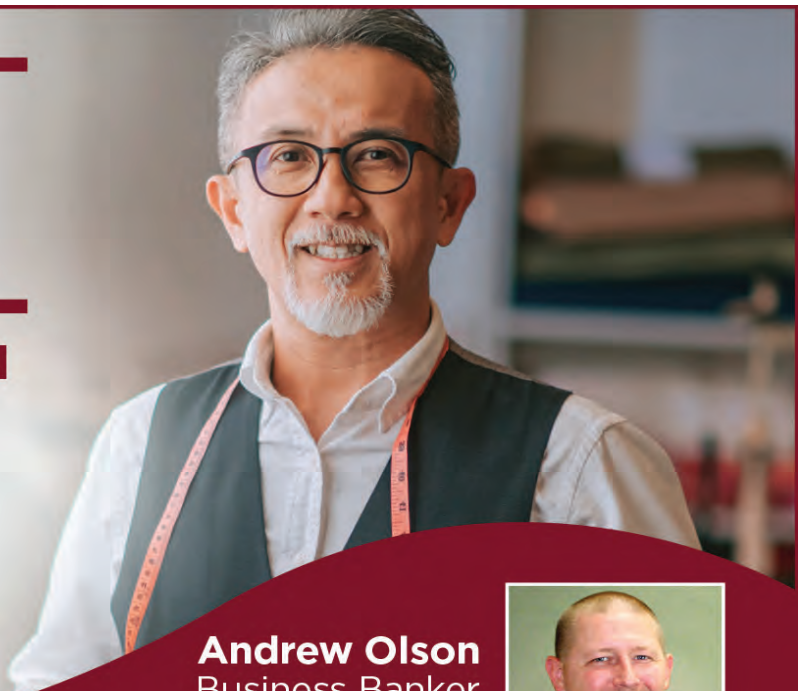
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