

SPRINGFIELD **Business** JOURNAL

September 2025

Yolonda Rice to redevelop King's Daughters Home

Q&A with Mandy Eaton,
Memorial Health president and CEO



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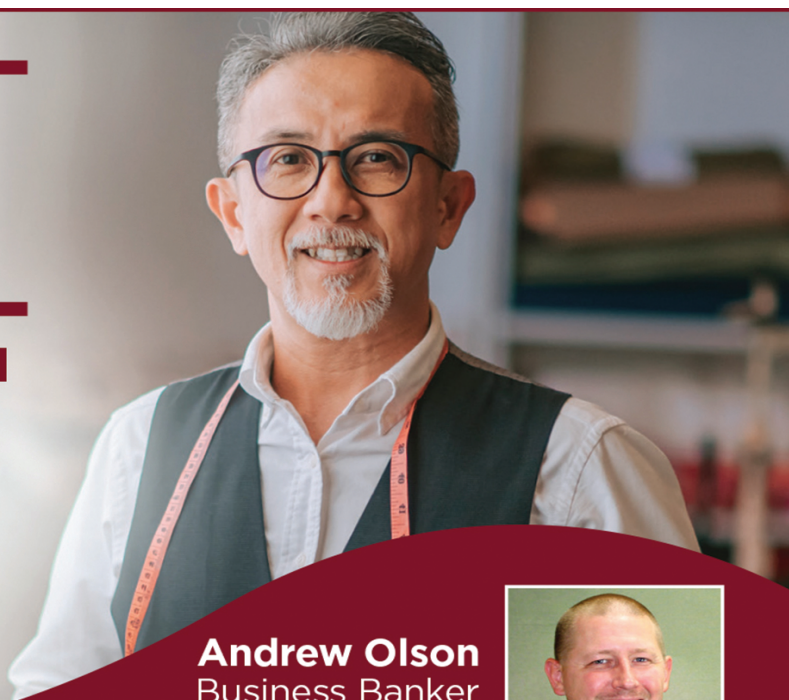
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Addressing health disparities

Last week, I stopped by a pharmacy on my way home to refill a regular prescription, only to be told that it had expired and I'd have to wait for the pharmacist to contact the doctor to authorize a refill. I left empty-handed.

A few days earlier, I had received a letter from my doctor, informing me that she is retiring. After a couple of phone calls, I was able to schedule an appointment with a different provider who would accept my insurance.

Both of these incidents were only minor inconveniences for me, but if I lacked reliable transportation or had to find a new provider who would accept Medicaid, the outcome might have been different. And even as someone with a college education, there are many occasions where I have to make numerous phone calls to my insurance company and providers to try to understand statements that I receive in the mail or clear up billing issues.

More than a decade ago, Dr. David Steward, the now-retired associate dean for community and health service for SIU School of Medicine, called me to propose an idea. At the time, I was president of the Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association, the residential area bounded by SIU and the two hospitals. Despite its proximity to so many medical resources, the residents experienced some of the worst health outcomes in Sangamon County. Steward wanted to launch a community health workers' program that would be jointly funded by the hospitals and overseen by SIU School of Medicine. I assured him that EPNIA would help promote the new program and help identify residents who might benefit from it.

As it turns out, the Access to Care program proved so successful, it was soon replicated in other Springfield neighborhoods and now serves more than 5,000 clients throughout central and southern Illinois. Community health workers assist people in navigating the intricacies of the health system, such as filling out insurance paperwork, finding providers who will accept their insurance and connecting them with specialists when needed, sometimes even taking them to appointments. The CHWs help clients apply for benefits and housing and make them aware of resources that can assist with utilities, groceries and other basic needs. Studies have shown that 80% of a person's health is influenced by "social determinants of health," rather than what happens in a doctor's office or hospital.

This month's issue of SBJ focuses on health care and includes an update on SIU's Office of Community Health Work, now in its 10th year (p. 20). It's been a success not just for the participants, but also for the hospitals who fund the program, since it cuts down on emergency room visits and helps address problems before they spiral out of control. I hope we will see more innovative approaches like this to addressing other ongoing challenges in our community.



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PHOTO COURTESY OF MEMORIAL HEALTH

By David Blanchette

*Q & A
with
Mandy Eaton*

Dr. Mandy Eaton became president and chief executive officer of Memorial Health on April 1, succeeding Ed Curtis following his retirement. She previously served as executive vice president and chief operating officer of Cone Health, a nonprofit health care organization that includes five hospitals and numerous outpatient locations serving a five-county area in North Carolina. Before assuming that role, she was the organization's executive vice president for people and culture and she has also held other human resources roles.

She completed her undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, graduating with a bachelor's degree in public health and a master's degree in health care administration before earning a doctorate degree in leadership studies from North Carolina A&T State University.

A resident of Springfield, Eaton's past civic involvement includes serving on the boards of United Way and Girls on the Run. She was the keynote speaker for the Be-reaved Parents USA national conference in 2024.

Where were you born and raised, and what was your first job?

I was born and raised in upstate New York near Syracuse. My first job closest to health care was working during high school as a unit helper at a nursing home. I got the opportunity to work beside nurses and licensed practical nurses and to interact with the residents. I really loved that and it was one of the things that inspired me to be in health care.

How did you become interested in the Memorial Health position?

Memorial really found me. A recruiter called me one day and said they had this opportunity that matched my strengths and skill set. My first question after they described it was 'Great, but tell me where Springfield, Illinois, is (laughs)?' I found the Memorial organization to have tremendous potential. Its mission is to improve lives and build stronger communities through better health. I joined this system because I saw the opportunity to help align that mission with performance.

How can health systems continue to provide high-quality care in this era of shrinking government support?

It's a systemwide ripple effect that demands our action. The federal shifts in reimbursement and care models are really shaping how we define value. We will use data to identify gaps, strengthen outcomes and align our financial strategy with the needs of our patients. Our payers, providers, vendors and leaders have to be in this together. It is a call to action to redesign, not just revise. We need to stop trying to modernize what was built for a different era and start building what today actually requires.

Do you see any light at the end of the tunnel for declining rural health care?

Rural health care struggles the most with recruiting caregivers and providers that small rural communities need. If we can stop over-engineering systems and create environments where caregivers have the space to be with patients, to do the work they are trained for and are passionate about doing, I think rural health care has a chance. How people in rural areas receive health care looks different than how people receive health care in urban communities.

What needs to be done to ensure that all people, regardless of income or ethnicity, receive equal access to health care?

It's important to understand that there are disparities in health care, and COVID-19 really brought those to light. We need to provide care that meets the needs of communities, meeting people in their communities and building trust and relationships.

How can already overtaxed systems prevent burnout among health care professionals?

When you work hard to build a sustainable and healthy culture, you get the right people with the right mindset. The results for patients will inevitably follow. I look forward to making sure that people come to work every day knowing that they are making a difference for the people they are privileged to serve. When we take really good care of our people, colleagues and clinicians, they're in turn going to take really good care of our patients.

Is there enough personal, human interaction in today's health care system?

People don't know that the quality of care they're receiving is top-notch. What they do know is how they were made to feel and how they were cared for. We're trying to hone in on the strengths that are already here at Memorial, and that manifests a great environment for those connections with patients to take place.



Mandy with her husband, Michael, and dogs Bugsy and Nova.
PHOTO COURTESY OF MEMORIAL HEALTH

What new developments are on the horizon regarding how people receive health care?

We're focusing on access to care, something that people should count on from their health care providers. We're focusing on talent development because the pipeline for talent in health care is slowly drying up, so we are working very hard to retain and recruit those people who truly love this field. We are also upgrading our electronic health records and optimizing technology. These things are central to how health systems better deliver on their commitment to patients.

What is the prognosis for the health care industry in central Illinois?

The prognosis is really good. We are fortunate to have an array of health care in Springfield, the likes of which I've never seen in my 30 years in the industry. For a population this size in central Illinois, the vast array of services is unheard of.

Why is community involvement important for all professionals, regardless of the industry in which they work?

Our communities shape who we are and we shape our communities. It's a symbiotic relationship. No community is worth anything without the people in it, and people working together are always better. Bigger isn't always better, and when communities come together to accomplish something better, they're virtually unstoppable.

What may people be surprised to learn about you?

I love to spend time in nature with my dogs and my husband. We love to hike and enjoy peaceful, quiet surroundings. **SBJ**



Mandy Eaton with Lincoln Memorial Hospital president and CEO Dolan Dalpoas cutting the ribbon at the LMH Market opening. The mission of the market is to provide access to fresh and local produce. PHOTO COURTESY OF MEMORIAL HEALTH

Two health insurers leave central Illinois market

Fewer insurance providers, tax credits raise concern around higher premiums

By Dilpreet Raju

Only two health insurance companies are slated to offer marketplace health plans in central Illinois next year, halving the amount of insurance issuers the region currently has as Aetna and Health Alliance announced they will be exiting the insurance marketplace in 2026. However, Aetna will still offer Medicare plans next year.

In addition, health policy nonprofit KFF estimates the average cost of monthly premiums for central Illinoisans will increase by at least 65% as a result of federal tax credits expiring.

All the while, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois – the only company that covers the entire state – is proposing to raise rates at the highest clip of any health insurer in Illinois.

Health Alliance, which is based in Urbana and issues the second-largest share of all health insurance plans in Springfield, stated it would be discontinuing group health insurance plans next year as it “struggled to achieve operational and financial efficiency” amid rising costs of health care, marking the end of an Illinois insurer that has been in business for nearly 35 years.

Aetna already exited the marketplace once before in 2017, a few years before CVS Health’s \$69 billion purchase of the insurer was finalized. The American Medical Association continuously protested the merger, alleging it would violate federal antitrust law and “likely harm patients.”

The National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals, or NABIP, noted in a May press release this is now “the second time in a decade” Aetna has exited the insurance marketplace “and will leave nearly 1 million enrollees seeking new health insurance options” across the country. Although NABIP acknowledged the decision was a part of “broader market headwinds,” the trade organization “warns of the cascading impact this move could have on health care access.”

Tax credits introduced with the Affordable Care Act, which were then expanded and extended by the Biden administration in 2021, are set to expire at the end of 2025. Such credits have been recognized as making marketplace health insurance reasonably affordable for more than 90% of recipients, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Cuts to Medicaid could result in fewer options for care – regardless of a patient’s insurance status – as health care providers that rely on Medicaid reimbursement could cut staff, decrease service hours or even close clinics.

Brokers from the Illinois chapter of the National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals, or NABIP-IL, told Illinois Times that almost 100,000 people would be affected by Aetna and Health Alliance’s exit. They also warned of how people on marketplace insurance plans should expect to pay substantially more for health care next year.

“Everybody is going to see a decrease in their tax credits, drastically,” said Melissa Shepherd, a licensed broker who was recently appointed to an advisory committee for the upcoming state-based marketplace. “Compound that with the fact that carriers are asking for large (rate) increases this year.”

The lack of tax credits means insurance enrollees may feel the brunt of rate hikes for the first time in years. Last year, the average monthly premium that marketplace enrollees in Sangamon County were charged was near \$850 before tax credits brought the average down below \$200.

Health insurance companies filed their initial rates for 2026 with the Department of Insurance last month; half of all submitted insurance plans increase the average premium rate by double digits, including a 30% average increase for Blue Cross plans. Blue Cross also submitted the highest rate increases for next year’s individual and small group plans, though all companies proposed decreasing rates for their lowest-level plans on the individual marketplace.

Rates are finalized after the Department of Insurance reviews filings submitted by insurers.

Keeping in line with the national average, about 90% of central Illinoisans on marketplace insurance plans have government subsidies to help them out, according to KFF, the nonprofit formerly known as Kaiser Family Foundation.

FLOURISH CHART HERE

Shepherd said the tax credits are likely expiring due to “bad actor” insurance agents who, with access to enrollee personal information, switched people over into zero-premium plans, even if they shouldn’t have qualified based on their income level.

Sherri Stewart, a licensed broker at American Central Insurance in Springfield, said Illinois had few zero-premium plans due to state mandates requiring more coverage from health insurers.

“That was an unintended consequence of the tax credits being expanded,” Stewart said. “It did

happen in other states; it was very rampant.” The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services finalized rules last month that aimed to limit federal spending and increase a variety of eligibility checks.

Sara Walker-Hite, a licensed broker and president of NABIP-IL, said while it was not something that happened in Illinois, “we all certainly pay the price.”

Aetna and Health Alliance’s exit may open the market for Blue Cross Blue Shield’s Health Care Service Corporation, which already issues more than half of all health insurance plans in Springfield, according to the American Medical Association, and insures more than 500,000 Illinoisans.

Blue Cross and Springfield Clinic, a provider that claims to serve almost one million patients across nearly 100 locations in central Illinois, had a public standoff during contract negotiations in 2021 that resulted in the insurer removing Springfield Clinic from in-network coverage for almost two years. The two companies eventually struck a five-year deal that categorized Springfield Clinic as an in-network provider through 2028.

This spring, Springfield Clinic laid off almost 70 employees while citing nationwide economic concerns and “insurance reimbursement constraints,” according to an internal memo obtained by IT. SBJ

Dilpreet Raju is a staff writer at Illinois Times and Report for America corps member.

Get Covered Illinois, the state’s health insurance marketplace, has a frequently asked questions webpage about changes to next year’s marketplace. In addition to the department sending out more information in October, Get Covered Illinois plans to have call center representatives available “to help people choose a comparable plan.”

Although open enrollment doesn’t begin until November, Illinois has a network of navigators that can provide free, in-person assistance any time of the year. Springfield has two such navigators: Springfield Urban League and Central Counties Health Centers. Visit getcovered.illinois.gov to schedule an appointment.

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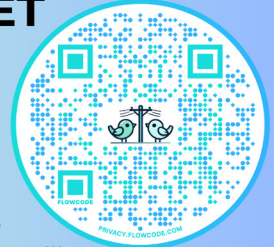
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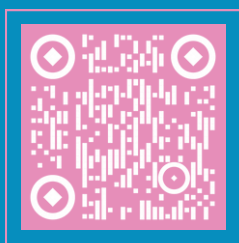
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HOSPITALS

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

	NAME/ADDRESS	PHONE/WEBSITE	NUMBER OF LICENSED HOSPITAL BEDS	INPATIENT ADMISSIONS (2024)	OCCUPANCY RATE	FY 2024 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	21,753	75.4%	\$798.9	3,070	Jay Roszhart 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	442	20,466	76.07%	\$622	2,420	Brian Brennan president and CEO	Hospital Sisters Health System	1875
3	Lincoln Prairie Behavioral Health Center 5230 S. Sixth St. Road Springfield, IL 62703	217-585-1180 lincolnpairiebhc.com	97	2,500	82%	DND	135	Tom DeMarco CEO	Universal Health Services	2008
4	Jacksonville Memorial Hospital 1600 W. Walnut St. Jacksonville, IL 62650	217-245-9541 memorial.health	25	2,022	79.6%	\$28	508	Trevor Huffman, president and CEO	Memorial Health	1875

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ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTERS

Sources: The individual addiction treatment centers.
DND = did not disclose
Listed in alphabetical order

	NAME STREET ADDRESS CITY/ST/ZIP	PHONE WEBSITE/EMAIL	PRINCIPAL	# OF LICENSED THERAPISTS	SUBSTANCE ADDICTION	IMPULSE CONTROL	BEHAVIORAL ADDICTION	INPATIENT	OUTPATIENT	ADULT	ADOLESCENT	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES
1	Family Guidance Center 120 N. 11th St. Springfield, IL 62703 2924 Stanton Ave. Springfield, IL 62703	217-544-9858 217-441-6529 www.fgcinc.org	Robert Thompson	6	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		Family Guidance Centers, Inc.'s Springfield location provides outpatient (OP), intensive outpatient (IOP), residential, residential extended care, Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), community-based prevention, mental health assessments and counseling services to Sangamon and surrounding counties. Patients receive counseling (group and individual) and case management services.
2	Gateway Foundation 2200 Lake Victoria Drive Springfield, IL 62703 2323 Adlai Stevenson Dr. 1300 Lincoln Ave. Jacksonville, IL 62650	Springfield 217-529-9266 Springfield 217-292-1931 Jacksonville 217-280-8682 877-505-HOPE www.gatewayfoundation.org	DND	8	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		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. 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	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	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	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		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 Dr. Springfield, IL 627011	217-670-0654 www.rosemedical.org	Dr. Ernest Rose	2	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		Substance addiction, behavior addiction, outpatient services, medical assisted therapy.

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Federal cuts to impact medical pipeline, research

New federal tax plan limits government loans for medical school

By Dilpreet Raju

Sen. Dick Durbin, joined by members of the Southern Illinois University medical network, warned at a press conference in Springfield of the federal administration's decisions that will impact aspiring doctors, rural hospitals and scientific research.

Discussing provisions within the new federal tax law and the decision to cap federal education loans, Durbin said medical students – who will be subject to maximum loans of \$50,000 per year, \$200,000 total – will have to either abandon their dream of

being a doctor or take out high-interest private loans. Currently, an individual's cost of attendance is the limit of what one can borrow.

"These doctors will have even more medical debt when they come out of medical school," he said. "This is going to have an impact on the number and quality of doctors in the United States of America, at a time when we desperately need more."

On July 25, Durbin and Sen. Tammy Duckworth sent letters to every hospital in Illinois asking administrators how much they expect to be affected by Medicaid cuts.

Illinois is a midwestern hub of medical training programs with almost 1,000 programs across the state for health professionals to enroll in, according to the Health Resources and Services Administration, the fifth most of any state.

Dr. Kari Schwertman, a family physician at SIU Medicine, explained that her unconventional path toward becoming a doctor was made possible by government loans.

"I wasn't always a doctor; I was an elementary school teacher, then a stay-at-home mom," Schwertman said. Eventually, she went to SIU



Dr. Jerry Kruse, dean of SIU School of Medicine and CEO of SIU Medicine, far left, speaks at a press conference July 25. He is joined by several SIU doctors and Sen. Dick Durbin, far right. PHOTO BY ZACH ADAMS

School of Medicine as a first-generation medical student once her oldest child was in preschool. "For a young family, this was extremely challenging, both logistically and absolutely financially. I would not have been able to accomplish this without the assistance of student loans."

Durbin said the move will decrease the diversity of doctors in Springfield and the rest of the state, calling the Trump administration's attack on foreign workers "mindless" and "cruel." He also criticized the decision to cut medical research funding for the National Institutes of Health and limit Medicaid availability.

"When you look at the roster of medical professionals in this community and other communities across our state, you'll notice one thing that's obvious – many of them are newcomers to the United States. They are immigrants to our country who come here because of the great medical schools and they fall in love with America and want to stay here and practice medicine, and thank goodness for us they do," he said.

"This war that this administration has declared on foreign students is mindless. To say to these brilliant, young students, 'Stay away.

government will loan them.

"Changes to the federal student aid program, including the elimination of Direct PLUS loans and the borrowing caps, will significantly impact our students," she said. "Our rural future depends on today's students being able to afford a path to medicine."

SIU School of Medicine has hundreds of medical students, graduate students and resident physicians, according to Dr. Jerry Kruse, dean of SIU School of Medicine and CEO of SIU Medicine.

Kruse raised concern over the Trump administration's desire to limit what the federal government covers for research overhead at 15%, a move that was most recently overturned by a federal judge. He said cutting research funding would dash what inspires so many students and scientists.

"The cut of (facilities and administration costs) to 15% is not enough to support research," Kruse said. "That would be devastating to us, and it would be millions of dollars that we couldn't use to support research." SBJ

We don't trust you, you're from another country; that is a mindless position. It's a mean position, it's cruel," Durbin said.

Dr. Haneme Idrizi, a pediatrician and dean for student affairs at SIU School of Medicine, echoed the concerns of cost for families that moved to America, as her parents once did. She said she "would not have been able to go to medical school without access to federal loans."

Idrizi now has concern for SIU medical students who will experience limits on what the

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PHYSICIAN GROUPS

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
1	Springfield Clinic Main Campus, 1025 S. Sixth St. 800 Bldg, 800 N. First St. 900 Bldg, 900 N. First St. Carpenter, 401 E. Carpenter St. Cath Lab, 1025 S. Sixth St. Center for Plastic Surgery, 2901 Greenbriar Dr. Chiropractic, 355 W. Carpenter St., Suite A Dermatology-Monroe, 1100 Centre West Dr. Downtown Drive-Up Lab, 1351 S. Eighth 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. Urgent Care Plus, 350 W. Carpenter St.	217-528-7541 800-444-7541 SpringfieldClinic.com	Jen Boyer, CEO Kenneth Sagins, MD, FAAP, CMO Christopher Wottowa, MD Board Chair	All clinic facilities are open 8am-5pm unless noted below. Orthopedics Walk-In Clinic Springfield, Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, Sat 8-11am Orthopedics Walk-In Clinic Jacksonville Mon-Fri 8am-4pm Urgent Care Main, 1025 S. Sixth St., Mon-Sun 8am-6pm Urgent Care Jacksonville, West and Sherman Mon-Sun 8am-6pm (excluding major holidays) Urgent Care Plus Mon-Sun 7am-6pm	Primary and specialty care, ancillary services, ortho walk-in clinic, surgical treatments, cath lab, urgent care, urgent care plus and Telehealth.	367	3,200	Proudly serving 20 counties across central Illinois, from everyday primary care to 80-plus specialties, walk-in orthopedics, sports medicine and rehab, bariatric, diabetes, breast cancer and bone health centers, Urgent Care Plus for advanced same-day needs, cardiac cath lab with leading-edge treatment, virtual visits and after-hours TeleNurse line, on-site pharmacy, optical center and medical spa. Exceptional care. Close to home.	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. Hospitalist 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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PHYSICIAN GROUPS

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 HSBS Senior Vice President & Chief Clinical Officer	Mon-Fri 8am-5pm	Cardiac and Vascular Diagnosis and Treatment	100	354	Interventional Cardiology, Electrophysiology, Peripheral Vascular Intervention, Nuclear Cardiology, Transesophageal Echocardiography, Congenital Cardiology, Congestive 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 N. Atlanta St. South Sixth - 2950 S. Sixth St. Behavioral Health & Psychiatry, 3225 Hedley Rd. Wound Center, 901 N. First St. Pain Center, 501 N. First St. Wellness Center in Springfield, 320 E. Carpenter St. Wellness Center in Jacksonville, 1600 W. Walnut St., Jacksonville	memorial.health	Memorial Health	Visit Memorial. health for hours.	Primary Care, Specialty Care, Ancillary Services and Virtual Care	93 Physicians 92 Advanced Practice Providers	770	Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Cardiology, Pulmonology, Infectious Disease, Nephrology, ENT and Allergy, Gastroenterology, General Surgery, Neurosurgery, Plastic Surgery, Neurology, Behavioral Health and Psychiatry, Wellness, Pain and Wound.	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 BOTOX Cosmetic and Dysport injections.	1970
6	Orthopedic Center of Illinois 1301 S. Koke Mill Road	217-547-9100 orthocenterillinois.com	Gordon Allan, MD Dane Church, MD Christopher Graves, MD Barry Mulshine, MD Varun Sharma, MD Timothy VanFleet, MD	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: 2200 Schale St. Taylorville - 1141 N. Cheney St.	217-788-2300 (Springfield main) 217-788-2380 (Dental Clinic Seventh Street) 217-287-7477 (Taylorville)	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	Gailey Eye Clinic 1401 S. Koke Mill Road	217-529-3937 gaileyeyeclinic.com	Angela Oberreiter, O.D. Joseph Harman, M.D. Julie Hendricks, O.D.	Mon-Fri 8am-5pm Sat. by appt. only	Ophthalmology, Optometry, Optical Boutique	3	25	Vitreous Surgery, Cataract Surgery, Lasik.	1941
9	Memorial Care Urgent 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. Morton - 901 W. Morton Ave., Jacksonville	memorial.health	Memorial Health	All locations 8am-8pm daily	Walk-In, Ancillary Services, Virtual Care	2 Physicians 58 Advanced Practice Providers	173	Urgent Care Services	1999

WOMEN'S EVENT CALENDAR

The Illinois Women in Leadership Women's Symposium will be held Friday, Sept. 19, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Crowne Plaza, 3000 S. Dirksen Pkwy. The day will deliver inspiration, motivation and actionable tips for professional and personal fulfillment. Best-selling author, renowned speaker and comedian Andrea Flack-Wetherald will be the keynote speaker. Wetherald is the founder and president of The Center for Brave Communication, where brave communication is defined as the foundation of trust, and where clients turn when experiencing seasons of change, rapid growth and leadership transition. Wetherald will teach a framework for initiating, engaging in and recovering from conflict and disagreement.

Attendees will choose from a variety of breakout sessions for the remainder of the day, and a networking reception will bring the day to a close.

Registration for members is \$125 and \$149 for non-members. Join IWIL and register as a member by visiting www.iwil.biz/join-iwil. Once your membership is processed, look for an email within one to two business days granting access to member login. To buy five tickets and get one free or for assistance purchasing more than six tickets contact Symposium@iwil.biz. Registration will close Friday, Sept. 12.

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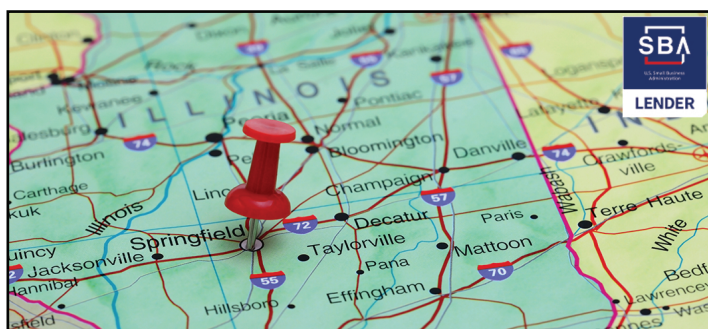
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Community health workers help address disparities

By Dean Olsen



Springfield resident Willie Taylor, right, credits Derek Rimelspach, a community health worker standing next to him outside a Southern Illinois University School of Medicine outpatient clinic building, with helping Taylor stabilize his life after an apartment fire two years ago. PHOTO BY DEAN OLSEN

An apartment fire put Willie Taylor out of his home two years ago on Springfield's east side and threw his life into chaos.

A survivor of two strokes who deals with high blood pressure and other health problems, Taylor, 71, is on more stable footing these days. He attributes the improvement to Derek Rimelspach, a community health worker based in a primary care clinic at Springfield's Southern Illinois University School of Medicine.

"If it wasn't for that guy, I don't know what I would have done," Taylor said of Rimelspach, 46, who helped him find temporary housing and get a new Social Security card and birth certificate.

Rimelspach also helped Taylor, a retired former cook, fill out forms and applications that resulted in him moving into his current home, a subsidized apartment in Capitol Plaza, 1210 E.

Washington St., also on the east side.

About 5,200 clients in Sangamon County and elsewhere in central and southern Illinois – including Springfield, Taylorville, Lincoln, Jacksonville, Carbondale, Decatur and Quincy – receive a variety of non-medical services from SIU community health workers each year.

The 10-year-old program is supported by a mix of \$1.5 million in annual grants, contracts and federal funding, according to Molly Williams, a health care administrator in SIU's Office of Community Health Work. Included is a \$500,000, three-year total commitment of funding split equally between Springfield Memorial Hospital and HSHS St. John's Hospital, and \$135,000 over a three-year period from the United Way of Central Illinois. Donors also provide support through the SIU Foundation.

Erin Jones, SIU's director of community

health, said the program helps to reduce the health disparities people face because of poverty, emotional trauma and other disadvantages by addressing what are known as the "social drivers of health."

Studies document that 80% of a person's health is influenced by factors outside of what happens inside a doctor's office or hospital, Jones said. Those factors can include the quality and stability of their housing, food insecurity, neighborhood and family violence, and income. Income disparities can be stark in Springfield, and the long-term effect of those disparities can be seen in life expectancy.

Dr. Shreepada Tripathy, a pediatrician and data strategist in SIU's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, made a presentation on the topic this year to members of the Massey Commission, which is examining ways of reducing racial and

economic disparities in the community in the wake of the July 2024 killing of Sonya Massey.

Tripathy examined a national database of death records and other data and found that life expectancy in certain census tracts in Springfield's north and east sides can be 10 to 20 years shorter than in census tracts in more affluent areas, including parts of the west and south sides near Lake Springfield.

The variation includes life expectancies as low as 62 to 65 years in certain parts of inner-city Springfield and more than 80 years in other parts of the city, its suburbs and in rural Sangamon County.

The differences corresponded with income levels, Tripathy said.

When looking at data by ZIP code – a different geographic identifier that can include a wider variety of income levels – Tripathy found that the ZIP codes 62702 and 62703 had the shortest life expectancy (72 to 74 years) of any ZIP codes in the county. Life expectancy in the United States currently is 77. People in ZIP codes with higher income levels enjoyed some of the longest life expectancies – more than 80 years in 62711, for example.

Illinois Times found that the Springfield area posts some of the highest economic disparities by race in the United States. In particular, the newspaper found that based on Census data,

the Springfield metro area posted the highest Black poverty rate in Illinois in 2023 – 40.3% – and the fourth-highest Black poverty rate among more than 240 other metro areas in the United States with 10,000 or more Black residents.

Black residents in Sangamon County are concentrated in neighborhoods on the city of Springfield's east and north sides, where they make up between one-third and three-fourths of residents in some census tracts. Those neighborhoods have some of Sangamon County's highest poverty rates – between 30% and 50%.

The connection among poverty, income and life expectancy is logical, Tripathy said. If someone is struggling to afford "bare necessities," he or she often will prioritize rent and food over medicine and doctor visits to check and treat high blood pressure and diabetes, Tripathy said.

Community health workers can help improve life expectancy as well as day-to-day living, Jones said. She wasn't surprised by the differences that Tripathy found by Census tract and ZIP code.

Community health workers can help intervene in the trends by assisting clients with access to income support services, housing, mental health counseling and medicine, Jones said. They also can help clients establish a medical home with a primary care provider, bring them to appointments and avoid unnecessary visits to the emergency room, Jones said.

"I do know that they have a harder time accessing care," she said. "They have a harder time with transportation. ... and it interrupts their health care."

SIU's 38 community health workers come from a variety of backgrounds, Jones said. Some are based in medical clinics. Some are stationed at Washington Street Mission and Helping Hands of Springfield. Many have direct ties to the neighborhoods they serve, which can help break down the mistrust in the medical community that many people harbor, she said.

Without a doubt, their assistance has improved and saved lives, she said.

"They know they are making a difference," Jones said. "They have hard days when things are not going their way, but there are those days when they see a patient just thrive, whether they are finally getting a test they needed or maybe the surgery they needed or maybe getting housing."

Rimelspach, the community health worker who helped Willie Taylor, said, "We see a lot of sad situations and people in tough spots. We meet people where they're at."

SBJ

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

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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-4p7Sat., 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 3631 S. Sixth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-787-8348 fitclub.net nathan@fitclub.net	80	6,496	24-hour access	Justin Angel, Sherry Carigan, Carmine Gauding, 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, CycleFit, Wi-Fi, locker rental, swim lessons, towel service.	1999
3	FitClub West 2811 W. Lawrence Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-787-1111 fitclub.net nathan@fitclub.net	60	4,253	24-hour access	Justin Angel, Sherry Carigan, Carmine Gauding, 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	Springfield Racquet & Fitness Center 3725 Chatham Road Springfield, IL 62704	217-787-2460 springfieldracquetandfitness.com srfc62704@gmail.com	18	1,800	5:45am-10pm Mon.-Thu., 5:45am-9pm Fri., 7am-7pm Sat., 7am-7pm Sun.	Ross Graham	Indoor sports courts, 6 indoor pickleball courts, 3 pickleball courts in the gym, group and private pickleball lessons, unlimited pickleball membership includes court fees, drop-in pickleball cardio equipment, resistance equipment, free weight areas, professional tennis lessons, clinics/drills by certified instructors - USTA designated, youth tennis excellence training center, adult and junior in-house/travel tennis teams.	2010
5	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 Gauding, 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
6	Bob Freenes 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
7	Powerworks Fitness 347 Williams Lane Chatham, IL 62629	217-697-8727 www.pwfcchatham.com pwfcchatham@gmail.com	20	1,100	9 am-noon & 3-6pm Mon.-Fri.	Brittany Bisch Libby Anderson	Free weights, cardio equipment, locker rooms, group exercise classes including a state of the art cycle studio, HIT studio, yoga studio, Power Pilates studio, kickboxing, two gyms, TRX and an Athletic Development training center.	2011
7	Anytime Fitness West 4307 Yucan Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-679-2490 anytimefitness.com Facebook: Anytime Fitness West springfieldil2@anytimefitness.com	2	1,100	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
8	Rocket Fitness 326 Sattley Rochester, IL 62563	217-498-1175 rocketfitnesscenter.com rocketfitness@yahoo.com	5	1,000	24-hour access	Tracy Rogers	24-hour facility, unlimited classes with membership, basketball court, free weights, cardio, cycling studio, no long-term contracts - pay as you go option, guest passes and class packages available - no membership required, SilverSneakers accepted. Gym Master app allows you to check schedules, book classes easily and manage your membership right from your phone.	2014
9	Snap Fitness 650 E. Jackson St. Auburn, IL 62615	217-483-4348 Auburn@Snapfitness.com www.snapfitness.com/us/gyms/auburn-il	3	730	24-hour access	Bella Moser	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
9	Snap Fitness 24/7 1061 Jason Place Chatham, IL 62629	217-483-5701 chatham@snapfitness.com www.snapfitness.com/us/gyms/chatham-il	3	730	24-hour access	Hunter Tapscott	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
10	Snap Fitness 24/7 1362 Toronto Road Springfield, IL 62712	217-679-0081 springfield@snapfitness.com www.snapfitness.com/us/gyms/springfield-il	3	540	24-hour access	Hunter Tapscott	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
11	Snap Fitness 24/7 131 Illini Blvd. Sherman, IL 62684	217-381-4951 snapfitness.com/sherman	3	480	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
12	Orangetheory Fitness 2450 W. Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-953-0054 orangetheoryfitness.com Studio0805@orangetheoryfitness.com	8	430	Open 7 days a week	Hannah Goss	Studio fitness, small group personal training.	2017
12	Anytime Fitness 2705 N. Dirksen Parkway Springfield, IL 62702	217-523-1541 anytimefitness.com	3	430	24-hour access	TBD	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/paramont circuit line, modular cable cross over system, private men's and women's shower/bathroom, personal training, rowing machine, squat racks.	2010

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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	Achieve Fit 24/7 3041 S. Dirksen Pkwy. Springfield, IL 62703	217-670-2420 achievefit247@outlook.com	1	242	24-hour access	Kirk Withers	Cardio equipment with TV screens for your own viewing. Treadmills, ellipticals, crosstrainers, adaptive motion trainers, recumbent bikes, stair-climber, free weights, Hammer Strength plate-loaded machines, 5-120 lb dumbbells, Smith machine Olympic bench, Precor equipment, Paramount circuit line, modular cable cross over system, private men's and women's showers and bathrooms, personal training, rowing machine, squat racks.	
14	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. Nutritional coaching.	
15	Instinct Fitness and Wellness 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 Rowers, 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
16	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
17	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	Bonnie Carter	Cardio machines, weight resistance machines, instruction included with membership, tanning, massage beds, total body enhancement.	2013
17	Planet Fitness 1879 E. Sangamon Ave. Springfield, IL 62702	217-408-4878 planetfitness.com info@planetfitness.com	12	DND	24 hours Mon.-Thu., 12am-10pm Fri., 7am-7pm Sat., 7am-12am Sun	Brad Miller	Cardio machines, weight resistance machines, instruction included with membership, tanning, massage beds, total body enhancement.	2024
17	LA Fitness 2501 Wabash Ave. Springfield, IL 62704	217-801-9007 lafitness.com contact@fitnessintl.com	11	DND	Mon.-Thu. 5am-9pm Fri. 5am-8pm Sat. and Sun. 8am-2pm	Carmen	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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Sustainability In Action.

A throwback to the days of small, independent pharmacies

Potter Drug has locations in Petersburg, Rochester and now Springfield

By Lynn Whalen

Potter Drug, which opened on the west side of Springfield last year, is a throwback to when people knew and could talk to the pharmacist who owned the local drugstore.

Even its logo is “an homage to what a pharmacy was 20 to 30 years ago as far as service,” said Tim Gleason, Potter Drug pharmacist, owner and logo designer.

Currently the only family-owned pharmacy in Springfield, Potter Drug is busy.

“We’ve had over 2,000 people switch to us in the first year, so that’s a definite sign that we’re doing something right, and there is a demand for what we offer,” said Gleason. “The support from the Springfield community has been incredible. We’ve met so many great people who have told us how much they appreciate our caring and personal attention. It’s really rewarding to build those relationships.”

Potter Drug is located at 3251 Ginger Creek Drive on the south end of a newer strip mall and caters to those who want a personal relationship with their pharmacy. “Most of the people who’ve switched to us said they were tired of the service they were getting from a big chain pharmacy or feeling like a number,” Gleason said.

He credits Potter’s quick growth in part to word-of-mouth marketing. “Someone will have a good experience and then tell their friends and family.”

Gleason said customers appreciate Potter’s free delivery service, especially those with mobility issues. A drive-through window is convenient for customers on the go. Others just appreciate the ability to talk to someone at a pharmacy who answers the phone.

“Our niche is to provide great service and make it easy for people to get prescriptions from us,” said Gleason. He added that Potter Drug uses the same drug wholesaler as big pharmacy chains and so has the same access to medicines. “If we don’t have something in stock, we can usually get it the next day.”

Potter Drug first opened in Petersburg in 1977. Gleason, who earned his doctor of phar-



Tim Gleason at the Springfield Potter Drug location, the third store for the independently owned pharmacy. PHOTO BY LYNN WHALEN

macy degree from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in 1911, bought the business in 2015, expanded with a Rochester location three years later and added the Springfield store in August 2024. In addition to prescription drugs, the stores sell allergy, cough and cold medicines and basic over-the-counter remedies. The Springfield and Petersburg locations also offer a selection of gifts, greeting cards, candles, personal care items and toys.

“Our front-end drug business is our bread and butter, but we have a nice selection of gifts and toys if people are looking for something quick to get for somebody,” said Gleason.

Vaccines are also administered on a walk-in basis, including flu (regular and high dose), COVID-19, respiratory syncytial virus or RSV, shingles, pneumonia and Tdap or tetanus, diphtheria and

acellular pertussis vaccine.

The closures of several Springfield CVS and Walgreens pharmacies in the last few years, and more recently County Market pharmacies, have had a disruptive impact on customers.

“County Market provided great service and some of their customers didn’t want to switch to a big chain,” said Gleason. “We’re grateful and thankful to the ones who came to us for the same level of service as County Market provided.”

A large sign outside Potter Drug offers assistance to former County Market pharmacy customers, and Gleason hired a former County Market pharmacy technician. “That has really helped with the transition, for their customers to see a familiar face or hear a familiar voice on the phone at our store.” Other signs on Potter Drug’s exterior glass walls target Springfield School District 186 employees, advertising that Potter now accepts SmithRX, the district’s pharmacy benefit manager.

Gleason said the biggest challenges facing Potter Drug – and all pharmacies – right now are rising drug costs, insurance restrictions and the amount of red tape that can slow things down.

“The difference is, we work really hard to fight through that red tape for our patients, whether that’s finding a cheaper alternative, helping with prior authorization or just making sure they don’t get lost in the process,” he said.

With 14 employees at the three Potter Drug locations, which are all “busier than ever,” Potter said he has his hands full and no immediate plans to expand further. He’s proud of the distinction of owning Springfield’s only hometown, independent drugstore. **SBJ**

Lynn Whalen has a background in broadcast journalism and higher education public relations, most recently as chief communications officer at Lincoln Land Community College.

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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	35	57	John Eck, Jr., Todd Sowle Dave White Chris Leming Jennifer Call	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	Home, Auto, Commercial, Life, Health, Worker's Comp, Bonds, Annuities, Senior Products, Business Auto and General Liability	1999
2	Goodenow Insurance Agency, Inc. 719 North Grand Ave. East Springfield, IL 62702	217-523-5443 goodenowinsurance.com goodenow@goodenowinsurance.com	13	10	Donald Goodenow	Home, Auto, Life, Commercial, Health and Medicare health plans	1998
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
5	Lee/O'Keefe Insurance Agency Inc. 2501 Chatham Road, Suite 100 Springfield, IL 62704	217-528-5679 leeokeefe.com info@leeokeefe.com	6	6	Glenda Richards Brian Blough	Business, Personal, Life/Health Insurance Bonds	1934
5	Gallagher/Nicoud (Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.) 3200 Pleasant Run, Suite C Springfield, IL 62711	217-546-6900 ajg.com	9	15	Tim Nicoud, Jr. Tom Kavanagh	Commercial Insurance and Risk Management, Benefits and HR Consult- ing, TPA Services, Captives, Claims Management, International Solutions, Risk Control Services	1927
5	Bailey Family Insurance 1625 S. Sixth St. Springfield, IL 62703	217-441-2342 baileyfamilyinsurance.com info@baileyfamilyinsurance.com	6	9	Christine and Mark Bailey	Home, Auto, Life, Commercial REI	2017
6	Formea Insurance Group, Inc. 512 S. Church St. Chatham, IL 62629	217-483-1536 www.formeainsurance.com tformea@formeainsurance.com	4	6	Tracy Formea	Personal Insurance, Commercial Insurance, Bonds and Life Insurance	2003
7	Snyder Insurance/Ascend Benefits 3931 Wood Duck Drive Springfield, IL 62711	217-793-6655 309-664-1800 insurewithsnyder.com info@insurewithsnyder.com	3	3	Mark Donaldson, CIO	Employee Benefits, Home, Auto, Life, Business, Bonds	1906
7	Denton-Merritt-Dycus Insurance Agency 2800 S. Sixth St. P.O. Box 1179 Springfield, IL 62703	217-528-0408 dentoninsurance.com dmerritt@dentoninsurance.com	3	3	David R. Merritt John C. Merritt	Personal Lines and Small Commercial	1930

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	3	Mark Donaldson, CIO	Commercial Lines, Personal Lines, Employee Benefits, Farm	1867
7	CLP Insurance Solutions 3050 Montvale Drive, Suite C. Springfield, IL, 6204	217-535-9500 clpinsurancesolutions.com cplummer@clpinsurancesolutions.com	3	4	Cheri Plummer	Commercial and personal insurance and bonds	2024
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
8	Boehler Insurance Agency, Inc. P.O. Box 9017 Springfield, IL 62791	217-546-5546 boehlerinsurance.com jesse@boehlerinsurance.com	2	2	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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Former King's Daughters Home to house nurses

\$6.7 million project planned to convert historic building

By Cinda Ackerman Klickna

Yolanda Rice, a Springfield investor and entrepreneur, plans to purchase the former King's Daughters Home and create apartments for nursing students and traveling nurses.

"This has been a long journey," Rice said, "but I have been met with great support from the city, the Historic Sites Commission and many others to make this a reality."

At the Aug. 19 Springfield City Council meeting, she was awarded a \$942,000 TIF grant to help purchase and renovate the property at 541 Black Ave. The TIF assistance represents 14% of the total project cost of \$6,728,925 and will be paid out in installments over the next seven years.

Rice was already familiar with the historic building since she had been the property manager for Peoples Capitol, the owners of the property, several years ago. The East Coast-based investment firm acquired the property following the closure of Benedictine University, which had used it for a dormitory. But the building is still often referred to as King's Daughters Home, the name it operated under for 110 years before the senior living facility closed in 2006, citing the cost to maintain the historic property and increased competition from newer, modern facilities.

Peoples Capitol's idea to once again turn the home that had housed seniors back into the same use was nixed due to the renovation costs to comply with state regulations dictating requirements for senior living space. Rice began to consider other uses, and with the realization that an influx of traveling nurses came to Springfield during the pandemic, she explored the idea of making the house a place where both traveling nurses and student nurses could live. The building is located just a few blocks north of the Mid-Illinois Medical District.

"Nursing students and traveling nurses have to find their own housing," Rice said. "Many come from outside of Springfield; some are married with children. So, we determined with some remodeling we could make both two-bedroom/two-bath and one-bedroom/one-bath units."



Yolanda Rice in front of the former King's Daughters Home at 541 E. Black Ave., which she plans to convert into furnished apartments for traveling nurses and nursing students. PHOTO BY ZACH ADAMS

Rice said the units will be fully furnished and available for nine or 12-month leases. "We're reducing the total number of units from 26 to 18 to give them more space," she told the City Council during a July 29 presentation and noted that no zoning changes would be required.

Bob Immel, the chair of the landmark committee of the city's Historic Sites Commission, heard Rice speak about the idea and helped write the application for naming the house a historic landmark. That designation was approved earlier this month by the Springfield City Council. Rice told the council that one of her future goals is to get the property added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The home across from the former Benedictine University campus was owned by Charles Rollin and Carolyn (Carrie) Post from 1872 to 1888. Their oldest son, Charles W. Post, was the creator of Postum and Grape-Nuts cereal and

the founder of the Postum Cereal Co. C.W.'s only child, Marjorie Merriweather Post, was born in the house on March 15, 1887. Marjorie became the owner of the Postum Cereal Co. upon the death of her father in 1914. Along with her second husband, E.F. Hutton, she expanded the company, which became General Foods Corp. in 1929.

C.W. Post contributed toward rebuilding the King's Daughters Home after a fire in 1902 and donated to the Home's endowment fund in memory of his mother, Carrie Post. Marjorie Merriweather Post also contributed to the Home over the years, including a contribution for an addition to the Home in 1921. In 1953, in recognition of the Post family ties to the Home, the King's Daughters Home for Women legally changed its name to the Carrie Post King's Daughters Home for Women.

Rice said, "I didn't even know the connection to Marjorie Merriweather Post until Bob Immel shared that with me. I am now a member of King's Daughters and in the Marjorie Post Circle."

Now that the City Council has approved her TIF request, Rice can move forward with purchasing the property and begin renovations. The city of Springfield's building and zoning team's review of the property concluded that a driveway must be added to the back. Plans have been drawn up that will need approval from the city.

"We need to stabilize the building, make sure security is addressed, review the plans by the architects and engineers and finalize floor plans," Rice said. That will take time, but she hopes to have the building ready for occupancy within nine months.

Rice also continues to seek other funding for long-range planning and development. She said, "I had so much support for this idea; it is wonderful to see a historic home saved and that it can be used for a good cause."

Cinda Ackerman Klickna has previously written about King's Daughters and Marjorie Merriweather Post.

Springfield's Hilst Agency Named #1 American Family Agency in Illinois— *Here's How He's Changing the Industry*

Springfield, IL —

In less than a year, David Hilst has gone from launching a one-man insurance agency to running the #1 American Family Insurance agency in Illinois and ranking #5 nationally out of nearly 3,000 agents. Behind those numbers is a bigger story: one of mission, momentum, and a mindset rooted in service and strength.

Since opening the Hilst Agency in November 2024, David has built a powerhouse team—growing from a solo venture to a 7-person office, including four licensed insurance producers and two client service representatives. His approach? Clear: People first. Always. “We put people before profits—every single time,” says Hilst. “Our goal isn't to sell insurance. It's to protect lives, build trust, and make sure every family or business we work with walks away feeling supported, understood, and empowered.”

And it's working. In May 2025, the agency was named Agent of the Month for growth. Just a month later, it was declared #1 in the state of Illinois and #5 nationwide for American Family, driven by exceptional client service, aggressive growth, and a commitment to doing things differently.

A Personalized, Smarter Way to Insure

At the heart of Hilst Agency's success is client education. Every policy is customized line-by-line to ensure customers get what they need—and nothing they don't. “Too many people are overpaying because their policy includes fluff,” David explains. “We tailor policies for each client—whether it's adding the right water endorsements, ensuring the deductible aligns with their budget, or helping them qualify for smart discounts.”

From new roof and safe driver discounts to Ring doorbell, low mileage, bundling, and first-time homeowner discounts, the agency is relentless in maximizing value. “We get you more coverage, for less money—because we know how to build a smarter policy.”

Rapid Expansion With Purpose

In July 2025, Hilst signed a lease to take over the front unit at 3460

Wabash Avenue, doubling his office footprint. Renovations are currently underway and expected to be completed by September, giving the growing team more space and tools to serve clients at scale. But it's not just about growth for growth's sake. David sees the expansion as a way to create jobs, develop local talent, and fuel a mission bigger than insurance. “This is about building something meaningful in Springfield. We hire locally. We train hard. We lead with heart. And we're just getting started.”

A Deeper Mission: Giving Back Where It Counts

As his agency grows, so does David's impact in the community. In 2025, the Hilst Agency pledged \$10,000 to the United Way and has partnered for two upcoming charity events to support local families in need.

That's in addition to his existing work with the Big Brother/Big Sister, Boys & Girls Club, Ball Chatham Educational Foundation, Compass for Kids, and other local youth-focused organizations. “Success means nothing if you're not lifting others up along the way,” David says. “Giving back isn't a side project. It's part of our business model.”

A Culture of Strength, Accountability, and Positivity

What sets Hilst apart isn't just numbers or growth. It's how he leads. Every day starts with energy, gratitude, and a relentless drive to build people up. Inside the agency, accountability, respect, and positive culture are non-negotiables. Sales reps are trained not just to sell—but to serve, to educate, and to protect. “I don't believe in pressure selling. We serve first. We win trust. And we earn our clients' business through real relationships and results.”

Final Word

If you're tired of insurance companies that feel cold, confusing, or overpriced—it's time to experience something different. Whether you're buying your first home, protecting your growing business, or simply want to know what you're actually paying for—David Hilst and his team are here to help.



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Memorial Health names senior vice president



Dr. Ted Clark

PHOTO COURTESY OF MEMORIAL HEALTH

Dr. Ted Clark has been named Memorial Health's senior vice president and chief clinical officer, effective Aug. 4.

In his new role, Clark will oversee Memorial Medical Group, Memorial Behavioral Health and the health system's quality and safety teams and its home health services.

Clark has served as Decatur Memorial Hospital's chief medical officer since 2020 and previously led the hospital's Emergency Department from 2017 to 2020. He has been a practicing emergency medicine physician

since 2009. He is a graduate of the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and holds a bachelor's degree from SIU and a master's in public policy from Duke University.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Clark into this important leadership role," said Dr. Mandy Eaton, president and CEO of Memorial Health. "His expertise, compassion, and dedication to our mission make him the ideal choice to help lead Memorial Health into the future as we continue to build a culture where people matter, and care comes first."

Mennonite College of Nursing Springfield graduates inaugural class

Illinois State University Mennonite College of Nursing has graduated 25 students in its first cohort of nursing students in Springfield. More than 30% of the graduating class have signed on with Memorial Health.

"This momentous occasion is the culmination of a great deal of planning and collaboration between our two organizations," said Dr. Marsha Prater, CNO Emeritus, Memorial Health. "Memorial Health is proud to have been a strong partner in establishing the MCN Springfield campus in 2023 and is committed to continuing to support this exceptional nursing education program for many years to come. Having the opportunity to add these highly skilled nurses to our workforce will enable us to address the growing healthcare needs of individuals in this region and fulfill our mission to improve the health of the communities we serve."

"We celebrate not only the accomplishments of our students, but also the beginning of a legacy here in Springfield," said Dr. Judy Neubrander, Dean Emeritus, Mennonite College of Nursing. "Our Springfield nursing



Mennonite College of Nursing Springfield's inaugural graduating class.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY MENNONITE COLLEGE OF NURSING

graduates are equipped with the knowledge, compassion, and skills to make a meaningful difference in the lives of their patients and communities."

Throughout their education at MCN, students engaged in the same rigorous academic coursework as the Normal campus and had hands-on clinical experiences at Memorial Health's hospitals and clinics. Many graduates have already secured positions and will provide care to patients in central Illinois.

"We were thrilled to provide opportunities for these students to gain experience at

Springfield Memorial Hospital (SMH) and our Memorial Care clinics," said Jennifer Bond, vice president and chief nursing officer for SMH. "This partnership with the Mennonite College of Nursing through Illinois State University allows us to expand the capacity of nursing education opportunities within our region. It's already benefitting our region as several in this first graduating class will begin work at Memorial Health."

After experiencing clinicals and working at Decatur Memorial Hospital, I found myself drawn to the supportive and friendly environment provided by staff,"

said Eddie Trauscht, BSN, one of Springfield's inaugural students. "This led to my decision to accept a full time ICU RN position. As my career continues, I hope to return to school and begin my journey to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist."

MCN has a 100-plus-year history and joined Illinois State in 1999. The college enrolls a first-year class of about 260 each fall, around 60 transfer students in Normal, and around 30 transfer students in Springfield.

Sick of absenteeism?

Diagnosing causes and solutions

By Kelly Gust



Absenteeism isn't just a human resources headache. It's often a larger symptom of an unhealthy organization. When it gets out of hand it can become a business problem: chronic, unplanned or prolonged absences hurt morale, slow productivity, damage customer relationships and can hurt your bottom line. But how can you address it without making problems worse, running afoul of potential Family and Medical Leave Act or Americans with Disabilities Act claims or driving up turnover? Successful companies respond by addressing root causes with data-driven insight and smart policies that balance compassion with clarity.

1. Create fair and legally compliant policies

Generic, no-fault policies that penalize employees with points or other disciplinary measures without consideration of the context or reasons behind the absence are risky. Such policies can violate the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act, FMLA, ADA or other legal protections around medical or disability-related absenteeism. To ensure your policy is clear yet fair:

- Define what constitutes excessive or problematic absenteeism
- Exempt legally protected leaves such as PLAWA, ADA-related medical appointments or FMLA-protected leave (for organizations with more than 50 employees).
- Train managers thoroughly on how to communicate the policy, where the legal boundaries

lie and when to escalate concerns to human resources or senior leadership.

• When requesting documentation, particularly for protected leave, tread carefully to avoid privacy issues. Documentation should go to a central, trusted source that is usually not the direct supervisor.

Sound policies, with consistent application and candid communication, not only help avoid legal missteps but they build trust with employees by creating clarity.

2. Diagnose and act on attendance patterns

Make it easy for employees to request time off and report absences. Modern attendance software solutions offer real-time visibility and instant employee reporting, reducing surprises like no-shows and miscommunications about time off. Such tools can be integrated with payroll, benefits and performance systems to handle complexity and centralize data. Further, software solutions make it easy to spot data trends like Friday or Monday absenteeism or departmental spikes. These patterns often signal burnout or deeper cultural issues.

3. Hire for job fit and keep good employees happy

Attendance software can tell what and who, but only conversations with employees can help you understand why. Misalignment between people and roles, conflict or lack of engagement often

drives voluntary absences.

Consider using engagement surveys, stay interviews or behavioral assessments to understand what's going on in your organization. Offer meaningful feedback and support to employees through the following:

- Facilitate team-building sessions to build trust between coworkers and reduce conflict.
- Train managers on essential supervisory skills, including how to have effective one-on-one conversations and how to clarify expectations and responsibilities so employees know where they stand.
- Invest in organizational wellness by supporting employee mental and physical health.
- Offer flexible schedules or remote/hybrid options when possible to accommodate diverse needs.

Having clear policies and procedures for handling absences creates consistency and transparency, which builds trust between employees and the organization. Adding a dose of compassion and flexibility helps employees navigate individual situations and creates loyalty. Combined, your organization will have a prescription for success. **SBJ**



Kelly Gust is the CEO of HR Full Circle, a Springfield-based consulting firm that provides talent management and human resources consulting to organizations of all sizes and stages. She also serves as president of Women Entrepreneurs of Central Illinois.

TOP LAWYERS

SPRINGFIELD AREA

BASED UPON A SURVEY OF THEIR PEERS



These LEADING LAWYERS have been recommended by their peers to be among the TOP LAWYERS in Illinois.

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Bernard G. Segatto III	Barber Segatto Hoffee Wilke & Cate LLP	217.544.4868	Close/Private Held Business; Commercial Litigation; Land Use/Zoning; RE: Commercial
Randall W. Segatto	Barber Segatto Hoffee Wilke & Cate LLP	217.544.4868	Close/Private Held Business; Elder; Real Estate: Commercial
Brittany Kink Toigo	Barber Segatto Hoffee Wilke & Cate LLP	217.544.4868	Family; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Barry Hines	Barry Hines — Attorney at Law	217.953.4051	Agriculture; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate
Michael Glenn Barton	Bellatti Barton Cochran & White LLC	217.793.9300	Agriculture; Close/Private Held Bus; RE: Commercial; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Mark S. Cochran	Bellatti Barton Cochran & White LLC	217.793.9300	Agriculture; Environmental; Public Utilities; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate
Andrew G. White	Bellatti Barton Cochran & White LLC	217.793.9300	Agriculture; Energy; Real Estate: Commercial; Real Estate: Residential; Trust/Will/Estate
Robert A. Stuart Jr.	Brown Hay & Stephens LLP	217.544.8491	Association/Non-Profit; Trust/Will/Estate
Joseph N. Rupcich	Cassiday Schade LLP	217.993.5644	Civil Rights/Constitutional; Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Def: General
Sarah Delano Pavlik	Delano Law Offices LLC	217.544.2703	Close/Private Held Business; Trust/Will/Estate
Thomas Chester Pavlik Jr.	Delano Law Offices LLC	217.544.2703	Close/Private Held; Comm Lit; Cred Rights/Comm Collect; RE: Comm; Secured Transact
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Carl R. Draper	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Civil Rights/Constitutional; Employment: Employee; False Claims Act/Whistle Blower
Howard W. Feldman	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Construction; Family; ADR: Family
Kelli Ellen Gordon	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Family
Stuart H. Shiffman	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Civil Appellate; Criminal Appellate; Criminal Defense: Felonies/Misdemeanors
Stanley N. Wasser	FeldmanWasser	217.544.3403	Construction
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Gordon W. Gates	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Bankrupt/Workout: Comm; Close/Private Held; Comm Lit; Land Use/Zoning; RE: Comm
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Frederick J. Schlosser	Gates Wise Schlosser & Goebel	217.522.9010	Criminal Defense: DUI; Criminal Defense: Felonies/Misdemeanors
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William J. Harrington	Kanoski Bresney	217.523.7742	Personal Injury: General
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Kathy A. Olivero	Kanoski Bresney	217.523.7742	Workers' Compensation
John J. Waldman	Kanoski Bresney	217.523.7742	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Jonathan T. Nessler	Law Offices of Frederick W Nessler & Assoc	217.698.0202	Nursing Home Negligence; Personal Injury: General
Stephen Scott Morrill	Morrill & Fiedler LLC	217.789.5411	Governmental/Municipal/Lobbying/Administrative
James E. Neville	Neville Richards Zittel & Siegel LLC	618.277.0900	Medical Malpractice Def; PI Def: General; Prod Liab Def; Transport Def; Toxic Torts Def
Timothy S. Richards	Neville Richards Zittel & Siegel LLC	618.277.0900	Medical Malpractice Defense; PI Def: General; Products Liability Def; Toxic Torts Def
Cheryl S. Neal	PNC Private Bank	217.753.7130	Trust/Will/Estate
James A. Borland	Quinn Johnston	217.753.1133	Personal Injury Defense: General; Products Liability Defense



Pamela E. Hart	Scott & Scott PC	217.753.8200	Elder; Family; Real Estate: Residential; Trust/Will/Estate
Gregory A. Scott	Scott & Scott PC	217.753.8200	Adoption/Reproductive Technology; Family Appellate; Family; Trust/Will/Estate
Jared M. Scott	Scott & Scott PC	217.753.8200	Family; Trust/Will/Estate
R. Stephen Scott	Scott & Scott PC	217.753.8200	Bankruptcy/Workout: Comm; Close/Private Held; Tax: Bus; Tax: Indiv; Trust/Will/Estate
Michael M. Durr	Sgro Hanrahan Durr Rabin & Reinbold LLP	217.789.1200	Close/Private Held; Commercial Litigation; RE: Assoc/Condo; RE: Comm; RE: Residential
Alex B. Rabin	Sgro Hanrahan Durr Rabin & Reinbold LLP	217.789.1200	Close/Private Held Bus; Gov't/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Personal Injury: General; Work Comp
Jeana Kim Reinbold	Sgro Hanrahan Durr Rabin & Reinbold LLP	217.789.1200	Bankruptcy: Individual; Bankruptcy/Workout: Commercial; Creditor Rights/Comm Collect
Gregory P. Sgro	Sgro Hanrahan Durr Rabin & Reinbold LLP	217.789.1200	Land Use/Zoning/Condemn; Pl: General; RE: Commercial; RE: Finance; Trust/Will/Estate
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Nicholas T. Williams	Shay & Associates Law Firm LLC	217.523.5900	Personal Injury: General
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James G. Fahey	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Civil Appellate; Employment: Management; Personal Injury Defense: General
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Stephen F. Hedinger	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Animal; Environmental; Mineral/Natural Resource
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Joshua J. Watson	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Family
Matthew A. Brewer	Stephen P Kelly Attorney at Law	217.544.8000	Workers' Compensation

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Jackson B. Fredman	Giffin Winning Cohen & Bodewes PC	217.525.1571	Civil Appellate; Family Appellate; Family; Governmental/Municipal/Lobbying/Admin
Gina Couri-Cyphers	Kanoski Bresney	217.523.7742	Civil Appellate; Personal Injury: General
Benjamin M. Sgro	Sgro Hanrahan Durr Rabin & Reinbold LLP	217.789.1200	Personal Injury: General; RE: Commercial; RE: Residential; Workers' Compensation
Stephanie I. Shay-Williams	Shay & Associates Law Firm LLC	217.523.5900	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Aaron D. Evans	Sorling Northrup	217.544.1144	Close/Private Held Bus; RE: Commercial; RE: Residential; RE: Finance; Trust/Will/Estate

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The Big Beautiful Bill

Tax changes that affect individuals and businesses

By Sarah Delano Pavlik

Politicians have some significant differences, but they all seem to have one thing in common – most of what they say isn't true, or isn't quite true. What you think "no taxes on tips," "no taxes on Social Security benefits" and "no taxes on overtime" mean might not be what those things mean in the Big Beautiful Bill. So, what exactly is in the BBB?

"No taxes on Social Security"

Benefits will continue to be taxed as they were before the BBB. If your combined income is greater than \$25,000 for an individual or \$32,000 for a married couple filing jointly, you could pay income tax on up to 85% of your social security benefits. However, the BBB gives a new deduction of \$6,000 to taxpayers who are least 65 years of age. Taxpayers receive the deduction whether or not they are collecting Social Security benefits. The deduction expires in 2028.

"No taxes on tips and no taxes on overtime"

Like Social Security benefits, tips and overtime will not be excluded from income, but the BBB provides a new above-the-line deduction of up to \$25,000 for tip income reported on a tax return. This deduction begins to phase out when a taxpayer's modified adjusted gross income exceeds \$150,000 for single taxpayers (\$300,000 for married filing jointly). It applies only to tips in industries where tipping is customary and does not apply to those earned in specific service trades or businesses (e.g., accounting, law, health).

Both deductions are available starting in 2025, regardless of whether the taxpayer itemizes deductions.

Change to other individual deductions include:

- Miscellaneous itemized deductions are eliminated.
- State and local taxes, which had been limited

to \$10,000 (whether married or single) are increased to \$40,000 for five years and then revert to \$10,000. That amount will be indexed for inflation. The increase is phased out for taxpayers with adjusted gross income over \$500,000 but not below \$10,000.

- The mortgage interest deduction is limited to loans of up to \$750,000. This amount will not be indexed for inflation.
- Interest of up to \$10,000 on a loan for a new car with final assembly in the U.S. is now deductible. This deduction is phased out starting at adjusted gross income of \$100,000 for a single filer and \$200,000 for married filing jointly.
- Beginning in 2026, there is a charitable deduction up to \$1,000 for single filers (\$2,000 for joint) even if the taxpayer does not itemize deductions.

The estate and gift tax exemption amount put in place in 2016 has been made permanent. For 2026, the estate tax exemption will be \$15,000,000, indexed for inflation.

Generous deductions for businesses:

- A new 100% bonus depreciation for "qualified production property" if construction begins after Dec. 31, 2024, and the property is placed in service before Jan. 1, 2034. "Qualified production property" is nonresidential real property used in the manufacturing, production or refining of tangible personal property.
- The BBB permanently reinstates the 100% bonus depreciation provisions by allowing the 100% first-year depreciation deduction for qualified property acquired or placed in service on or after Jan. 19, 2025.
- The Section 199A qualified business income deduction is expanded. The 20% qualified business income deduction is made permanent.
- The maximum Section 179 deduction for small businesses increases to \$2.5 million, with a phase-out threshold increased to \$4 million.
- The BBB allows a partial exclusion from gross income for gains on qualified small business

stock acquired after July 4, 2025. The exclusion applies to 50% of the gain for stock held at least three years, 75% for stock held at least four years and 100% for stock held at least five years. The maximum gain exclusion per shareholder is increased to the greater of \$15 million or 10 times the shareholder's basis and the gross asset limit increases to \$75 million. Both limits are indexed for inflation starting in 2027.

Other provisions include:

- "Trump accounts," which are individual retirement accounts for minors and a pilot program where the government will contribute \$1,000 to this account for each child with a valid Social Security number born between Dec. 1, 2025, and Dec. 31, 2028. Like a Section 529 plan, the earnings grow tax-deferred. Each year, the account may receive up to \$5,000 in contributions (increasing annually for inflation). Contributions to the accounts are not tax deductible by the donor. An employer may contribute up to \$2,500 to its employees' children's Trump accounts, but those contributions count towards the \$5,000 contribution limit. The account must be invested in a stock index fund. No distributions may be made before the child turns 18. After 18, the child can withdraw the funds for "qualified purposes" including paying for college, starting a business or buying a first home. Distributions are taxable.
- Capital gains tax on the sale of qualified farmland can be paid over four years.
- Beginning in 2026, 1099-MISC forms will only be required on payment of \$2,000 or more, which will be indexed for inflation.

There are many more provisions in the BBB. You should consult a tax adviser to determine if there are any provisions that you can use to reduce your personal or business taxes.

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



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Jennifer has been the manager at Star 66 Café for 20 years. Behind her is the wall where someone drove into the restaurant July 27. PHOTOS BY ZACH ADAMS

By Thomas C. Pavlik

Springfield drivers have a growing tendency to crash into buildings, which has been well-documented on social media. One of the more recent incidents involved Star 66 Café, where a driver crashed into the seating area, pushing booths into the counter. Thankfully the injuries were only superficial, but the physical damage is still evident. Since it took one on the chin, I figured it was time to give the place a review.

When I think back on childhood road trips, the memories often come bundled with less-than-stellar meals at truck stops. Those places were rarely about good food; they were more about convenience. I can still remember learning the phrase “choke and puke” as a less-than-flattering nickname for the greasy spoons that dotted the interstate exits.

So, when I first considered visiting Star 66

Café, a restaurant tucked inside a truck stop on Camp Butler Road just off Interstate 55, I was hesitant. Could this really be the kind of place worth bringing clients? It seemed unlikely. But then the buzz started building. Friends from all corners – business associates, retirees and even a few self-proclaimed foodies – began raving about it. The consensus was so consistent that curiosity finally got the better of me. Since then, I’ve been a regular patron.

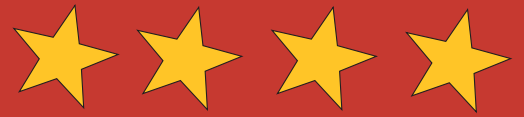
Walking in, other than the damage from the crash, one’s first impression is that Star 66 Café doesn’t try to dress itself up as anything other than what it is: a simple roadside café. There’s no elaborate theme or polished décor. Instead, the place has a sort of functional charm. The cash register greets you right at the entrance, with the kitchen visible behind it, creating the sense

that you’re stepping into the beating heart of the operation. A short counter seats fewer than a dozen, and the rest of the restaurant is lined with booths and tables. It’s more practical than pretty, but it feels comfortable and welcoming in its own way.

By 11:30 a.m. on a weekday, the café was already bustling, with half the seats taken. Contrary to what one might expect, the dining room wasn’t filled with truckers alone, though a few were certainly present. Instead, the crowd represented a cross section of the community: construction workers grabbing lunch, retirees enjoying a leisurely meal and even a handful of business people who may have had the same initial doubts I did. The mix of diners was an early clue that this wasn’t your average truck stop pit stop.



The club sandwich is available in several varieties and served with soup or salad and fries.
PHOTOS BY ZACH ADAMS



But the real surprise of the day came in the form of soup. The offering that day was chicken noodle and Wisconsin cheese. Although I opted for salad (classic iceberg lettuce), my guests went with the soup. Hearty, rich and brimming with chunks of tender chicken and tasty noodles, the chicken noodle soup tasted homemade in the truest sense. Each spoonful was deeply flavorful and comforting. It's rare for soup to steal the spotlight in a meal like this, but here it did.

The service throughout our meal was excellent. Our server was friendly, attentive and efficient and what really stood out was the teamwork. Both the owner and manager weren't shy about jumping in to refill drinks or clear tables. That hands-on approach created a sense of energy and attentiveness that you don't always see elsewhere. It wasn't frantic or rushed, more like a steady rhythm aimed at keeping everything running smoothly.

At the end of the day, Star 66 Café isn't trying to be a fine-dining destination, and that's precisely its charm. What it offers instead is straightforward food made with quality ingredients, served in hearty portions and delivered with a sense of pride. You don't leave dazzled by fancy presentation; you leave satisfied, full and genuinely happy. And really, isn't that what good dining – truck stop or otherwise – should be about?

Address: I-55 and Camp Butler Road (inside the Pilot Truck Stop at exit 100A)
Phone: 217-523-0611
Hours: 24/7
Website: star66cafe.com

Then came the menu. To say it's extensive would be an understatement. Burgers, sandwiches, steaks, pork chops, seafood, pasta, salads and family-style classics such as meatloaf and chopped sirloin fill the pages. Breakfast is served all day, and the sheer number of options could easily overwhelm. Normally, I'm skeptical of restaurants that try to cover so much ground. In my experience, when a menu stretches too wide, quality suffers. But Star 66 Café works hard to prove that assumption wrong.

For our meal, we sampled a few of the staples: a club sandwich (available in several varieties, served with soup or salad and fries), a plate of pork chops (served with applesauce, soup or salad and a choice of potato) and the deluxe double cheeseburger (which also comes with soup and fries).

The pork chops were an immediate standout. The wall menu advertised nearly a dozen different preparations, though my guest opted for the straightforward grilled version. What arrived at the table was impressive – juicy, tender meat that was cooked perfectly. Alongside it came a mountain of fries, and I do mean mountain. The portions were generous, easily some of the largest fries I've seen in Springfield.

The club sandwich and the burger both lived up to their billing as well. The club was stacked

high with fresh ingredients, though I personally would have liked the bread a little more toasted. That small quibble aside, it was excellent. The burger was equally satisfying, boasting a thick patty, crisp toppings and a toasted bun that held everything together without falling apart. In terms of execution, both dishes ranked near the top of what you'd expect from a classic American diner.

The deluxe double cheeseburger had a thick patty, crisp toppings and a toasted bun holding everything together.
PHOTOS BY ZACH ADAMS



New businesses

Sangamon County new business registrations, July 16 – August 15, 2025

Green Glow Essence, 2436 Griffiths Ave. 217-819-2935. Robert Clinton Hansen.

Portrait Perfect by Rob, 7 Candletree Drive, No. 1, Jerome. 217-502-0968. Rob P. Staff.

Sive Star Snacks, 1115 S. MacArthur Blvd. 217-299-1892. Chloe Crawford.

John Chernis, 5 Pine Drive, Sherman. 217-303-6020. John Chernis.

Hoodlum Productions, 948 N. 19th St. 217-899-9143. Seth T. Hood.

Weatherford's Lawn Care, 1047 N. Edmond St., Lot 7. 217-801-7436. Austin Michael Weatherford.

Homeschool Academy, 1480 N. Fifth St. 507-279-9178. Dream Center.

Forevery Moments & More, 121 Vicar Drive, Spaulding. 217-971-9505. Betty Jo Ireland.

PENViro Health Global, 6308 Cherylwood Drive, Apt. 7. 217-719-0028. Bassey Emayak Sunday.

Fammor Enterprises, 108 E. Maple St., Loami. 217-693-8582. Noemi Morales.

Treehouse Yoga, 301 South Grand Ave. W. 217-725-0756. Derek Stephens, Lisa Kording.

Real Property Management Division, 700 South Grand Ave. W., 217-789-1541. Darren Volle.

ANT GFX, 4001 Oakview Drive. 217-725-1066. Elijah G. Ommen.

Faith First Homeschool Academy, 1016 N. 19th St. 217-220-5404. Trasi Hutchens.

MC Freight Agency, 4 Candlelight Drive, Apt. 10. 217-303-2003. Mike Manzingo Akuda.

Ribbles Audio Video Sales & More, 6955 Canadian Cross Road. 217-529-0962. Terry H. Ribble, Bonnie E. Ribble.

Savage Tee Society, 3218 S. Palmer St. 217-691-8261. Sharon J. Nelch.

Oak Grove Investments, 5970 Long Creek Drive, Rochester. 217-725-8559. Mark Charles Pettyjohn.

Stevie's Lawn Care Service, 623 E. Ridgely Ave. 447-901-0458. Stevie Scott.

Favors Foods Inc. LLC, 419 N. 17th St. 447-226-9734. Linda D. Favors.

Happy Scalez LLC, 122 S. Fourth St. 217-441-4100. Sonya Rose Andrew, Robert Joseph Andrew

KING MENTALITIES LLC, 2052 N. 22nd St. 217-371-4047. Jason King.

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Finding fulfillment through service

By Janet Seitz

David Hilst's family struggled when he was a child. His father had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, and died when Hilst was only 8 years old. In spite of medical bills making finances tight and having a brother with Down syndrome, Hilst said, "My mom raised three boys with grit and grace. So things were pretty tough, and we were lucky to have help from those around us. The Springfield community was there for us. Now that I'm in a position to give back, I feel like it's not just a choice – it's a responsibility. It's also what makes me happiest. I truly believe you don't find fulfillment through money – you find it through service."

Early this year, Hilst, the owner of an American Family Insurance office in Springfield, decided to do something significant. "I've lived in Springfield my whole life. I care deeply about this city, and I saw firsthand that donations were down for a lot of local charities. I knew if I wanted to be the kind of business leader I could be proud of, I had to give more than just lip service."

Saying that he wanted to be an example, not just a supporter, Hilst decided to challenge himself and his small team to donate \$1,000 a day to a local charity for 30 straight days.

"It was about doing our part and showing what it looks like when local business leaders step up in a real way," he said. "The goal was to bring attention to local charities doing great work in our community and to inspire other local businesses to give."

Hilst and his team posted their challenge on Facebook and requested charity nominations. "People from every corner of Springfield and the surrounding area wrote in," said Hilst, "nominating causes close to their hearts and sharing stories of hardship, hope and resilience. We heard from teachers, parents, pastors, social workers and even kids. It reminded me how connected people are to these local missions and how badly they want to see them thrive. This wasn't just a business initiative – it was community-powered from day one."

Once they got started the momentum became too powerful to ignore, said Hilst. Every day they heard from more people and more



Jean Bruner Jachino and Marne Fauser of United Way of Central Illinois, left, accept a check from Hilst Agency office manager Destiny Taylor and agent David Hilst as part of his agency's 30-day challenge to donate \$1,000 a day.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID HILST

causes. They ended up donating \$37,000 in the initial 30-day period and continued finding ways to give even after the initial challenge ended.

"Truthfully, once you start donating, talking and working with these organizations, you realize they need more than you can give. At this point, we've given \$55,000 and expanded the list well beyond that initial 30 charities," he said.

Hilst and his team also wanted to do more than donate funds. They served dinner at Compass for Kids, attended events, volunteered, shared platforms and built partnerships with organizations.

"David has been so helpful for our community," said Jean Bruner Jachino, director of strategic partnerships with United Way of Central Illinois. "We are grateful to have a partner who truly understands the importance of giving back. David doesn't just give money. He volunteers time and talents to local organizations. His commitment to making our community stronger is inspiring."

United Way is benefiting from a sponsorship for its Escape Room Challenge, set to

open in September, which is an interactive exercise that shows how United Way serves families after a devastating natural disaster. Additionally, Hilst and his team are making sure backpacks for local children who are in foster care get filled before school starts.

Brian Ganz of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Illinois recalled Hilst reaching out to them. "He talked about his passion for our program and the Springfield community in general. He knows the Springfield community is better when Big Brothers Big Sisters is growing and healthy."

Aside from sponsoring a recent golf fundraising event, Hilst is helping connect BBBS "with people who he knows have a passion for helping the youth of Springfield reach their full potential through one-on-one mentoring," said Ganz. "We are trying to build up our network of volunteers that can help grow our fundraising and recruitment efforts. He is helping connect us to the right people."

For Hilst, philanthropic efforts are rewarding both in big and small ways. "We were able to donate a good portion of money to provide the training

for a golden retriever to become a service dog," Hilst said. "This service dog went to a young boy in a wheelchair who writes to us and sends us pictures. Knowing that a child now has more confidence, more independence and a best friend because of a donation we made – that's powerful!"

"I believe Springfield is a beautiful place with strong people," Hilst added. "But we need more action. Business owners have to do more. If every business committed to giving what they could, to building up their people and serving their community, we'd have a different city in five years. My challenge to others: don't just build a business – build something that makes your city better." **SBJ**

Janet Seitz is a local communications professional, writer and artist. To share your story, contact her at janetseitz1@gmail.com.

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