What fuels your healthy habits?

Larry Schumacher

“We all impact patient care.”

A publication about the team that cares for our patients.

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How did you get your start in healthcare administration?

I’m a nurse by training and education, and I came up through the ranks first as a staff nurse, nurse manager, and then became a director of critical care in medical nursing. From there, I’ve worked as a vice president of nursing and chief nursing officer before becoming a COO and CEO. My initial plan was to be a nurse anesthetist, but my dad’s influence as a CEO in leadership and management helped guide me down a different path.

I felt the call of nursing, particularly in a Catholic hospital, because of my own family’s experiences. I grew up Catholic, and working in a Catholic facility fit well with my values. I liked making an impact on people’s physical, social and spiritual health.

How have your experiences impacted you in your role as CEO?

Coming up through the ranks helped me understand that every person who works in this health system impacts patient care. Whether or not you have direct patient contact, everything you do makes a difference for our patients and physicians. No matter what, our day begins and ends with patient care and it’s the reason we exist.

As a provider of healthcare and having also been on the receiving end with my family, it’s important to me that our care is exactly like you would expect for yourself or your loved one. If we aren’t confident that our care is good enough, we’re not meeting the mark. Our work makes a difference, and we need to do it right every time.

What areas of service or philanthropy are important to you personally?

I’ve always been interested in developing hospital programs and raising money to support end-of-life care because it’s one of the most important things we need to embrace and improve as a society. My mom had cancer when I was growing up,
Larry Schumacher has been married to his wife, Casey, for 33 years. Together they have four sons, with the youngest still in college. His first grandson, Riley James, was born this March. Larry hails from Minnesota, but moved to Missouri before finishing high school. There he completed his undergraduate degree from Missouri State University, and he attended graduate school at Indiana University. Larry’s first job in healthcare was serving as an orderly.

A lover of college sports, his favorites include basketball and football, which he follows closely. Larry and his family love the water and being on the lake, going to the symphony, traveling, and reading. As summer approaches, he’s ready for Chattanooga Lookouts baseball and live summer music.

In your short time as CEO, what have you observed about CHI Memorial that stands out?

This is a noticeably service-oriented organization, and people are very friendly. They greet you with a smile and say hello. I see that the medical and clinical staffs are engaged in improving quality and making our hospital a safe environment. The quality of the medical staff is remarkable, and Chattanooga is fortunate to have this number of experts providing care. The number of board certified nurses is phenomenal, bringing great expertise to the bedside. CHI Memorial is also well regarded and supported in the community, and that’s a solid foundation for us to become even stronger.

What is your vision for CHI Memorial?

I want all the settings where CHI Memorial provides services to be the best place for people to receive care in this region—to be known for offering the best physicians, clinicians and practitioners, as well as services and programs. We need to draw people to us through excellence and find ways to serve them as they connect with our mission, vision and values. There’s a tremendous legacy of great work that’s been done here. My job is to determine how to build on that legacy as we move forward and expand our reach to the people who need us most. The healthcare industry and CHI Memorial are transforming, and I want CHI Memorial to provide the best care in all our settings in collaboration with all people that need care and provide care.
Phyllis, special events and development specialist with CHI Memorial Foundation, has struggled with being overweight all her life. A self-proclaimed stress eater, she turned to food when she was overwhelmed or had a busy week at work.

What finally “tipped the scales” was her diagnosis of atrial fibrillation, an irregular, often rapid heart rate that commonly causes poor blood flow. She was fortunate to not have had a heart attack or stroke, and she didn’t have diabetes. But developing these conditions was only a matter of time.

“Phyllis was very motivated to do what she could proactively to lose weight but with a body mass index (BMI) of 58, she was at increased risk of diabetes and sleep apnea, not to mention degenerative joint disease that leads to hip and knee problems,” says David Wendt, M.D., cardiologist at The Chattanooga Heart Institute at CHI Memorial. “With a BMI over 40, the likelihood of weight-loss success without some type of intervention is less than one percent.”

After working with Dr. Wendt to lose weight and control her heart condition with limited success, she was referred to Jack F. Rutledge, M.D., bariatric surgeon with CHI Memorial Metabolic and Bariatric Care. She began a medically supervised weight loss program that helped her make better food choices, understand her stress eating and taught her how to think about food differently. By her surgery date, Phyllis had already lost 30 pounds.

“In the beginning, I was very frustrated that I would have to work with two counselors at CHI Memorial’s Weight Management Center for six months and lose 30 pounds before I could have surgery,” says Phyllis. “But in hindsight, it gave me time to prepare myself mentally and adjust to a totally different lifestyle.”

Understanding the Procedure
Gastric bypass is a minimally invasive, laparoscopic procedure that helps you lose weight by changing how your stomach and small intestine handle...
**JACK F. RUTLEDGE, M.D.,** director of CHI Memorial Metabolic and Bariatric Care and co-director of CHI Memorial’s Surgical Weight Management Program is dedicated to helping his patients experience better health through weight loss. He’s helped Phyllis, and many others like her, understand the complex biochemical aspect of metabolism as it relates to weight loss.

Before and after surgery, his team coordinates your weight loss treatment by partnering with CHI Memorial’s Weight Management Program. There you’ll also have the support of licensed clinical social workers, registered dietitians and educators who are dedicated to your success.

**READY TO GET STARTED? Call (423) 495-2501 to learn more about weight loss through metabolic surgery.**

Phyllis’ surgery required six tiny scars and a one-night stay in the hospital. When she went home, she had help for a few days. Thankfully, even though pain medication was prescribed, she didn’t need it. In a few short weeks, Phyllis was back to work.

“Those weeks at home are important because you’re learning a new way to eat and how your body responds differently to food,” says Phyllis.

**Getting the Most Out of Life**

After surgery, Phyllis began the next phase of her life. She credits her success to the preparation prior to surgery and the support she received from family, friends and the new people who’ve come into her life post-surgery. She exercises daily—whether it’s walking, running or lifting weights. She’s run two 5K races and has plans to increase her distance running. She’s also more in tune with her body’s physical and mental needs.

“My energy level is so high compared to what it was, but I’m also more conscious of prioritizing my health by eating properly and getting the rest I need,” says Phyllis. “These are skills I didn’t have before, and now I’m able to do things I never imagined or dreamed were possible. I can run a race. I can wear an evening gown. I can do anything I set my mind to do.”

Even though her entire lifestyle has changed, Phyllis is thankful she decided to have surgery. She’s off almost all of her previous heart medications and is working with Dr. Wendt to stop those altogether. She also has plans to have plastic surgery in the future to help complete her transformation. Her only regret is that she didn’t pursue the surgery five years sooner.

“If anyone is considering this surgery, I would encourage them to do it now because of how dramatically it has changed my life,” says Phyllis. “I’m free to go and do more things I didn’t think were possible. You have to be prepared to do the work, but it’s totally worth it.”

Phyllis is excited about starting the next chapter of her life as she retires from CHI Memorial at the end of May.
Being active has always been part of our relationship, and we’re very focused on eating well and moving every day,” says Allan, MS, FAACVPR, manager of cardiopulmonary rehabilitation at CHI Memorial. “Maintaining our lifestyle and developing a strong social network is important, and we love being active together.”

Allan and Lissa have always exercised as a couple. As newlyweds who couldn’t afford a gym membership, they set up a small home gym and took their kids for runs in a stroller. They made exercise a priority, but they also made it fun.

“We loved doing things together like camping and hiking at Cloudland Canyon. Living near a playground gave the kids plenty of chances to move,” says Lissa. “Even though they’re grown, we still take trips to the beach to play volleyball and swim and look for ways to be active together.”

Still Going Strong
These days after work Allan likes to go for a run, and Lissa hops on her bike for a quick ride. They also take classes at the local YMCA and do strength-training exercises each week. Lissa is always looking for a chance to go dancing, her favorite aerobic activity. “I work hard just to keep up with her,” quips Allan.

Get Started Today
If you’re ready to make a change to better your health, the right time is now. “It’s fun exercising together, but even if your partner doesn’t want to make exercising and eating healthy a priority, don’t give up,” says Lissa. “Find a friend—someone who’s also motivated to make positive changes—and start making them together. Not only will it make a difference in your health, it might inspire your partner to get active too.”

For Allan Lewis and Lissa Dearing, physical activity and maintaining good health is a priority. It’s more than just a passing fad; it’s a lifestyle choice that has kept their bodies—and their 30-year marriage—healthy and going strong.

Quick Tips for Mindful Living

1. **MOVE EVERY SINGLE DAY!** Start small with a short walk or bike ride. Aim for 30 minutes because it adds up!
2. **DRINK WATER.** Replacing sodas and other sugary drinks can help maintain a healthy weight.
3. **FILL UP ON FRUITS AND VEGGIES.** Also cooking at home can give you better control over your foods.
4. **GET SOME ZZZZS.** A good night’s rest will help you make better food choices and increase energy.
EMPLOYEE FITNESS CENTER
OPEN FOR EXERCISE
Monday through Friday
5 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The new employee fitness center has card access, so full- and part-time employees, who have completed orientation can workout even when the gym isn’t staffed. Membership is $5 per pay period and will be automatically deducted. Membership is free for employees who earn $12 per hour or less. Check Mnet for a list of upcoming orientation dates.

GROUP CLASSES & PERSONAL TRAINING
The gym offers a range of group exercise classes based on demand, including:
• Spin
• Cardio fitness
• Strength training (like P90X)
• Yoga and balance
• Zumba and other dance classes
If you’d like a professional to show you the basics, or if you’re ready to take your physical fitness to a new level, personal training for employees is also available for an additional fee.

Ready, Set, Exercise!

It’s a great time to be an employee at CHI Memorial! The much-anticipated employee fitness center is open, and employees can now take advantage of this convenient and inexpensive healthy lifestyle resource.

“We wanted employees to have access to the tools that make it more convenient and less expensive to incorporate exercise into their daily lives,” says Allan. “It’s been my dream to offer a facility like this to employees—and this one has the full range of advanced equipment, classes and personal support in place that’s needed to make it a success.”

A First in Class Exercise Facility
The bright and open facility includes state-of-the-art cardio equipment like treadmills, recumbent bikes and lateral elliptical trainers designed to minimize impact on major joints while training hip and leg muscles sometimes missed by other machines. Cardio theater is also available, allowing people to listen to music or watch their favorite show during a workout.

For strength training, the gym includes stacked weight machines, an expanded range of free weights, and exercise and stability balls that help improve core strength, which build up the muscles people use in their everyday lives to twist, bend and keep their balance. The new TRX suspension training system delivers a total body workout that can be adapted to all fitness levels. A variety of group classes will also be available.

The fitness center is outfitted with a locker room that has shower access with shampoo, soap and towels included. Employees are responsible for providing their own locks to secure their belongings.

“Regular exercise is good for the body, and is also one of the best ways to relieve stress, improve memory, sleep better and boost overall mood,” says Allan. “We’ve always focused on support and education for the patients we serve, and now this is a great opportunity to bring our staff together, engage and strengthen our workforce, and help each person achieve a healthy body, mind and spirit.”

WHAT MAKES A WORKOUT FUN?

Todd
REEVES
Personal Trainer // 1 month
Employee Fitness Center

FUN FACT
Plays the guitar, is a vegetarian and teaches self defense
**Look Inside:**

**DISCOVER THE VOICES AT CHI MEMORIAL.**

Share in the everyday stories that make our collective commitments unique. Find out who we are and how we are inspired by you, and your team. Read about your friends and colleagues and hear their stories.

When you commit to working at CHI Memorial, you commit to your own mission and calling. We invite you to share your experiences with Our Voice.

Let’s continue the conversation →

**DID YOU KNOW?**

*By sharing your own story, you help inspire others to do the same. Get to know your colleagues. Ask them to share their stories and their commitments. Uncover their connection to their passion, their community and their colleagues.*

**ASK YOURSELF. START A CONVERSATION.** Begin by listening and sharing your own experiences. Ask yourself what makes CHI Memorial different, special and amazing. What does it mean to be memorable?

CHI Memorial is different because you are different. You are our team, and you are our family. You are committed—we see that every day and we honor your commitment with our own. We’re here to share Our Voice and ask you to do the same.