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“Excellent nursing care is part of the rich history of University Hospitals,” said Pat Simpson, RN, Head Nurse Manager of Women’s Oncology at University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center. “We are collaborators and proud to be part of a bigger vision.”

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Discover how your work as a University Hospitals employee makes us one of the finest healthcare organizations in the nation. Stories.UHhospitals.org
Reverend Sally Wile, Spiritual Care Coordinator at University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center feels fortunate to be among those at University Hospitals who dedicate their efforts to meeting the spiritual needs of our patients. “I’m a listener,” Sally said. “I listen for sources of meaning, purpose and strength. My role is not to fix things, but to be present — to just be with patients.”

There is no typical day for Sally. She’ll meet patients in treatment centers, at doctor’s appointments, even in their own homes — anywhere necessary to let them and their families know they are not alone.

“My vocation is to pay attention to people, to listen to what makes them tick,” Sally said. “I want to assure them of their worth, no matter what.” A self-described extrovert, Sally’s role allows her to connect with patients in meaningful way — and to be herself. “It’s in the hospital that I feel most alive,” she says. “I feel extremely fortunate to be here sharing my gifts.”

Sally joined the UH spiritual care team five years ago. At first, she could hardly believe how passionate, committed and patient-centered her UH colleagues were. Today, she’s a believer.

“A friend of mine once told me, ‘It’s a blessing to do what you’re meant to be doing in the place you’re meant to be doing it,’” Sally said. “And that’s exactly how I feel here.”

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Dr. Reuben Gobezie, Chief of the Division of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery at University Hospitals Case Medical Center, made the decision to become a surgeon when he was 10 years old.

It was at this young age that Dr. Gobezie began going on rounds with his father, a noted gastroenterologist and chief of staff at California’s Barstow Community Hospital. There he met a group of orthopaedic specialists who would inspire him to make their life’s work his own.

Three decades later, Dr. Gobezie is nationally renowned for his work performing shoulder and elbow procedures. “My patients are the best part of my job,” Dr. Gobezie said. And the beauty of his specialty, he said, is that “you connect with a patient, you fix a mechanical problem and they get better.”

But Dr. Gobezie has an extra sense of purpose, too. At least once a year, he travels to the African coast to serve as a surgeon with Mercy Ships. Each voyage provides him the chance to correct orthopaedic conditions in some of the world’s poorest children. And nearly every Saturday, Dr. Gobezie, his wife, Courtney, and their three children, volunteer at several Cleveland homeless shelters, providing food and comfort to those in need.

According to Dr. Gobezie, the opportunity to create relationships with those he serves — at UH and in the community — is what gives him the greatest satisfaction. “When you can connect with someone on a human to human level, even if it’s only just to listen to them and sympathize with them — that’s where the value is.”

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The moment someone steps into the hospital, they experience his work. “I keep the environment clean, the glass sparkling,” Jacques said. “When you see the place is clean, automatically you know that everything else will fall in place, too.”

Jacques has worked at University Hospitals for the past 22 years and the UH Case Medical Center campus is a point of pride for him. “I’m proud to work here,” he said. “You stick your chest out a bit when you say, ‘I work at UH.’”

Jacques is also proud to have won the first UH Idol contest. “I sang For the Good Times by Al Green,” he said. “It was really exciting when I won. I love to sing.”

Jacques is a native of Cleveland, so like most UH physicians and employees, the people he serves aren’t only patients to him — they’re neighbors, friends, sometimes even family. Jacques knows that a clean hospital goes a long way in making them feel safe, at home and cared for.

“Tha’s the bottom line,” he said. “It’s about caring for one another.”
An extra sense of purpose

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Healing body, healing spirit

A hospital is a place that heals the body. For the patients of University Hospitals, it is also a place that heals the spirit.

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Angels among us

Pat will never forget the young woman who came to UH years ago suffering from end-stage cervical cancer. Any physical contact caused her extreme pain, so the nurses found creative ways to care for her — daily lifting her frail body up by holding the four sheet corners to make her bed underneath her. Weeks after the young woman passed, the patient’s family presented Pat and her fellow nurses this statue of an angel. “While our daughter was alive, she was our angel,” her parents explained. “At the end of her life, you became angels to her.”