

St. Mary's Good Samaritan Foundation collaborates with community to address growing healthcare needs

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREENSBORO, Ga. – August 3, 2023 – St. Mary's Good Samaritan Foundation Board Chair Becky Smith recently led a meeting with local physicians, community leaders, and representatives from St. Mary's Health Care System and its parent ministry, Trinity Health, to assess the evolving healthcare needs of the community. The gathering aimed to devise strategies for providing quality healthcare while responding effectively to the growing demands of the area.

As the population continues to expand, it has become imperative to analyze the demographic shifts resulting from an influx of new residents and the pre-existing health conditions of long-standing community members.

"We want to continue to provide quality healthcare and respond to our growing area," Smith said. "The collaborative meeting sought to identify and address the pressing healthcare challenges arising from these changes."

Riezl Baker, a key member of the original Foundation Board formed in 2012, shared valuable insights into the demographic shifts she has observed over the past 26 years as both a resident and a Realtor.

"When we moved here in 1997, we were one of the five young couples who lived here full time. The pandemic fueled the migration of many young families into our area that we have a waitlist in our schools," stated Baker. She also highlighted the continued presence of empty-nesters and retirees, citing her brokerage's recent closure of seven homes in a well-known 55-and-over community over the past month and a half.

Dr. Nicholas Chronos, the owner of Cardiology Care and Internal Medicine of Lake Oconee, contributed valuable suggestions regarding Cardiac rehabilitation and MOB (Medical Office Building) facilities. Strengthening primary care facilities was also a significant point of

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discussion, introduced by Dr. Art Torsiglieri, a long-time physician in the area and a member of the hospital foundation Board.

Stonish Pierce, recently appointed as President and CEO of Trinity Health Georgia, which includes St. Mary's Health Care System, expressed enthusiasm for the collaborative efforts and outlined plans for enhancing services.

"We are working on strategic plans to continue to improve our services," Pierce said. "This meeting is a great step, and we want to continue this conversation and work on partnering with local physicians in our area."

St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital, a critical access hospital serving Greater Greene County and areas of East Georgia, provides a comprehensive range of services, including general surgery, inpatient care, swing beds, and a 24-hour emergency department. With a focus on meeting the healthcare needs of a dynamic and evolving community, St. Mary's Good Samaritan Foundation and St. Mary's Health Care System are committed to collaborating and finding innovative solutions to ensure the delivery of quality healthcare to all residents.

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Those attending the meeting included (L-R): Dr. Art Torsiglieri, ENT and Foundation Board member; Mark Haney, retired President of Wellstar Hospital; Becky Smith, Foundation Board Chair; Riezl Baker, co-owner Luxury Lake Oconee Real Estate and former Foundation Board Chair; Jeff Brown, Vice President Operations, St. Mary's Health Care System; Dr. James Parks, Foundation Board member, pediatric cardiologist at Emory; Stonish Pierce, President and CEO of Trinity Health Georgia; John Foos, Good Samaritan Governance board member; Dr. Nicholas Chronos, Cardiology Care and Concierge Medicine of Lake Oconee; Bob Moore, Good Samaritan Governance Board member and former legal counsel for Mayo Clinic. Not pictured: Christopher Helmrath, Board member, Johns Hopkins University.