Southeastern introduces robot-assisted surgery to its operating room

Five hundred years ago, Leonardo da Vinci was working in Italy as an artist and engineer, drawing amazingly detailed sketches of human anatomy and even designing a number of complex machines.

Today, a robot-assisted surgery system that bears his name is being used by doctors worldwide to repair heart valves, remove gallbladders and perform other procedures.

Southeastern Regional Medical Center is pleased to introduce the da Vinci® Si™ Surgical System to our operating room and to our community. This is a significant arrival because of the value it offers our surgical staff and those in the region we serve. The first surgical case utilizing this technology at Southeastern took place on September 18.

Commenting on the introduction of the da Vinci Si System, Southeastern President and CEO Joann Anderson said, “We believe that the new features of the da Vinci Si System will help us provide the best possible outcomes and is proof of our commitment to provide our community access to the latest advancements in minimally invasive surgery.”

The da Vinci Surgical System consists of two main pieces of equipment: The first is a computer console that contains a viewing monitor, hand controls and foot pedals. This is where the surgeon sits.

The second is a cart that sits beside the patient. The cart holds four robotic arms that have flexible, articulated wrists. One arm holds a miniature camera that transmits a three-dimensional image of the operating area to the console’s monitor. The other three arms can hold a variety of surgical tools.

During surgery, the surgeon sits at the console a few feet from the operating table. A magnified, high-definition image of the operating area appears on the monitor. The surgeon then performs the procedure, using the computerized hand and foot controls to manipulate the robotic arms.

The da Vinci® Si™ has several unique features designed to provide additional clinical benefits and efficiency in the operating room, many of which translate to patient benefits. Here are a few features of the da Vinci® Si™:

- Enhanced 3D, high-definition vision of operative field with up to 10x magnification
- New optional dual console allows second surgeon to provide assistance
- Superior visual clarity of tissue and anatomy
- Surgical dexterity and precision far greater than even the human hand
- Updated and simplified user interface to enhance OR efficiency
- New ergonomic settings for greater surgeon comfort

Together, these technological advancements provide our surgeons with unparalleled precision, dexterity and control that enable a minimally-invasive approach for many complex surgical procedures. da Vinci’s advanced level of technology takes surgery beyond the limits of the human hand. The magnified view of the operating field, combined with the flexibility and precision of the computer-controlled surgical tools, allows for very small incisions during surgery.

Therein lies the key benefit of this system, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Compared with traditional surgery, these smaller incisions potentially result in less blood loss, less pain and a quicker recovery.

The increased precision can mean a lower risk of bleeding and needing a transfusion during surgery. In some procedures, such as removal of the prostate, it can also lessen the amount of time a urinary catheter is needed after surgery.

Gynecologist Dr. John Rozier performed the first robot-assisted surgical procedure at Southeastern Regional Medical Center. Other physicians using this technology include: Drs. Samuel Cummings, Eric Velazquez and Barry Williamson.

John Rozier, M.D.  Samuel Cummings, M.D.  Eric Velazquez, M.D.  Barry Williamson, M.D.
As we strive for Better Health—Starting with You, I would like to encourage all of our employees to enroll in the Healthy Living 4 Life (HL4L) program during open enrollment in November.

Benefits include reduced or zero co-pays on medication purchased in our in-house pharmacy, reduced insurance premium discounts and free lab work (Lipid Panel and A1c) once during the year from the Wellness department. To be fully compliant in this wellness program, you must complete an online, anonymous health risk assessment, and have lab work completed and meet with a wellness specialist once during the year.

Once example of the results we are seeing from the HL4L program is that those who joined the diabetes program after implementation of HL4L saw a decrease in prescription costs of $601, medical costs decreased by $3,584, and total health care costs decreased by $4,185 (decreases are per person per year).

This year, we have set a goal to get a large number of employees and individuals in the community registered on the Extracon website as part of the Health Quest Challenge. Extracon is an online tool to help keep you engaged with your wellness efforts. More information about this initiative can be found in the article below.

The goal of these programs is to assist our employees with the management of specific health issues such as diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer risk, to ensure a healthier life. Better health starts with you, our employees. Join me in making better health a priority.

Joann Anderson, MSN, FACHE
President/CEO

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Health Quest Challenge

Don’t forget to enroll in the upcoming Health Quest -Extracon Challenge. This is a yearlong challenge focusing on stress management, nutrition, cancer prevention and physical activity. The topic for October, November and December will be stress management. There will be many activities such as lunch and learns, laughter yoga and stress breaks. Those who join the challenge and log information into the Extracon website during the month of October will be eligible for a prize. Other prizes will be given throughout the year. Spa packages, I-tunes gift cards, and fitness center memberships are just a few of the wonderful prizes available.

Those who are interested in participating throughout the year should follow the instructions below to register for Extracon:

2. Click “Register” in the upper right corner of the page (even if you used the site before you must re-register at this time)
3. Type in your Unique/Employee ID; this will be your badge number (the one you clock in with) and then your last name in the HR system
4. Click “Submit”
5. At this time, it will verify your information. Please take note of what your user ID will be as this is what you will use to sign in.
6. Type in a password that you will remember.
7. Check the box that you agree to the Terms and Agreements
8. Click “Submit”

You are now a registered user for the website. You may now join a challenge!

For any questions regarding the Health Quest Challenge or help with registration, please contact the Employee Wellness office at 272-1425 or price02@srmc.org.

Southeastern to host community listening tour

Along with Southeastern Regional Medical Center’s (SRMC) new name, Southeastern Health, announced in August, comes a new tagline: Better Health—Starting with You. As a way to jump start this path to better health in our communities, Southeastern will host two community meetings before the end of the year; one in Red Springs and one in Fairmont. The goal of these events is to listen closely to the community and relay the vision and ideas for improving health in our region to SRMC’s board of trustees during a strategic planning meeting in early 2013.

“It is our hope that energetic leaders who are concerned about the health of their communities will attend these events so that we may fully understand the current health status of the communities we serve,” said SRMC President/CEO Joann Anderson. “They are encouraged to bring forth ideas that will begin to move individuals and communities to better health.”

The first community meeting will be held Tuesday, Oct. 30 at Providence Place located at 702 East 3rd Avenue in Red Springs. The second is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 13 at the Fairmont-South Robeson Heritage Center located at 207 South Main Street in Fairmont. Both events will offer refreshments and networking opportunities beginning at 6:30 p.m.; the feedback portion of the meeting will begin at 7 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. Each event will include small group discussions on local health issues as well as a larger group discussion on the impact of health in each community and a review of barriers and unique strengths related to improving health. For more information, call (910) 671-5499.
**BB&T donation supports robot-assisted surgery at SRMC**

Members of the BB&T Lumberton Local Advisory Board presented representatives from the SRMC Foundation with a donation for $100,000. The donation, which was presented on August 30, supports Southeastern Regional Medical Center’s new da Vinci® Si™ surgical system, which is also known as a robot-assisted surgery system.

Pictured at the presentation, from left, are SRMC Foundation Chairman Coble Wilson, BB&T Advisory Board Member Joan Washington, BB&T Vice President Bruce Mullis, BB&T Advisory Board Member Jerry Johnson, SRMC President/CEO Joann Anderson, BB&T Advisory Board Member Loistine DeFreece, BB&T Portfolio Manager David Gane, BB&T Senior Vice President James Gore, SRMC Foundation Director Sissy Grantham, BB&T Vice President Philip Stone, BB&T Local Advisory Board Members Jane Smith, Bob Antone, Doug Mills, Becky Bullard, Eddie Musselwhite and B.G. French. Not pictured are BB&T Advisory Board Members Dr. Charles Beasley, Clif Bullard and John Barker.

**SRMC and Life Line Screening partner to promote healthier communities**

Southeastern Regional Medical Center is partnering with Life Line Screening, the nation’s largest provider of preventive screenings, to stop stroke and hip fractures in their tracks. Screening can identify risk factors that lead to stroke or fractures before these disabling or deadly events occur.

“Screening tests can be very helpful in diagnosing serious health problems, such as abnormal heart rhythms, stroke or aneurysms, which may not have warning symptoms associated with them, said Cardiologist Dr. Robert Everhart of Duke Cardiology of Lumberton. “This is particularly true for individuals who are at risk and do not have regular medical contact.”

These diseases are considered “silent killers” that strike with no previous symptoms or only subtle ones. In fact, half of all stroke victims are asymptomatic. A simple screening may prevent death or disability.

**Free valet parking begins Oct. 15**

For the convenience of our patients and visitors, Southeastern Regional Medical Center will begin offering free valet parking at the hospital’s main entrance on October 15. The service is provided by The Gift Shop at SRMC and the SRMC Foundation.

“The Gift Shop is thrilled to be able to provide a service to our organization’s patients, visitors and family members,” said Gift Shop Coordinator Bonnie Biggs. “Even though the gift shop is not a clinical area, we are proud to support the guests of SRMC by providing the revenue from the gift shop to support valet parking. This will make a huge difference for our guests who are coming into our facility together and not having to search for a parking spot.”

- How to use valet parking- On the main campus, go directly to the circle drive at the main entrance. A valet parking attendant will give you a claim ticket and park your vehicle in a reserved space on the hospital campus.
- Where to get your car - Show your claim ticket to the parking attendant at the main entrance and the attendant will retrieve your car. To retrieve your keys after 3 p.m., present your claim ticket to the attendant at the information desk in the main lobby. Those leaving the facility after 9 p.m. should call 671-5449 to retrieve their keys. Those claiming keys after 3 p.m. will be responsible for retrieving their own vehicles from the valet parking area.
- When valet service is available - Our valet parking service will be available Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., excluding holidays.
Friends, family and colleagues gathered at Southeastern Regional Medical Center on September 26 to celebrate Dr. Dixon Gerber’s 21 years of service as an orthopaedic surgeon and member of the medical staff of Southeastern Regional Medical Center.

During the retirement event, SRMC Board of Trustees Chairman Faye Caton presented Dr. Gerber with a crystal tower engraved with his years of service to the medical staff, 1991-2012.

SRMC President/CEO Joann Anderson announced the establishment of the Dr. Dixon W. Gerber Patient Emergency Fund in Gerber’s honor which will be administered by the SRMC Foundation.

“Dr. Gerber has dedicated his life and practice to serving this community through the care he delivered and the connection he has made with those under his care,” said Anderson. “He has left a legacy of caring and compassion. The medical community will miss his leadership. I am sure he will continue to ‘serve’ his community while spending time with his family.”

A native of Dayton, Ohio, Dr. Gerber earned his undergraduate degree from Ohio State University. After four years of service as an officer in the U.S. Navy, he returned to Ohio and received his medical degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine in 1974. He completed an internship in general surgery and his residency training in orthopaedic surgery at the University of Cincinnati.


During his 21 years of practice in Lumberton, he has been associated, most recently, with The Orthopaedic Center, an affiliate of Southeastern Regional Medical Center. Before that, he practiced with Coastal Plain Orthopedic Clinic and Robeson Orthopaedic Center.

“I have enjoyed living and practicing in Robeson County,” said Dr. Gerber. “The Medical Staff and SRMC provided an excellent professional environment.”

Dr. Gerber lives in Lumberton with his wife, Elizabeth. They have three grown children, sons, David and Patrick, and daughter, Ann, and 10 grandchildren.

Ricotta joins Southeastern Wound Healing Center panel

Podiatrist Dr. Patrick Ricotta has joined Southeastern Wound Healing Center as a panel physician. He will periodically treat patients at the center, which specializes in the treatment of chronic wounds and non-responsive conditions and offers hospital-based outpatient wound care and hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

Dr. Ricotta earned his doctorate degree from Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine in Cleveland and completed residency training in foot and ankle surgery at the Podiatry Hospital of Pittsburgh in 1996. He is associated in private practice with The Foot & Ankle Institute located at 815 Wesley Pines Road in Lumberton.

Ricotta is joining the following existing wound center panel physicians: Donald Morando, D.O.; Barry Williamson, M.D.; Samuel Britt, M.D.; Madhur Gupta, M.D.; Karl Moo Young, D.O.; Andrea Simmons, M.D.; Dennis Stuart, M.D.; James “Brownie” McLeod, M.D.; Matthew Thompson, D.P.M.; Joseph Roberts, M.D; Obiefuna Okoye, M.D., and Richard Woerndle, D.O.

Southeastern Wound Healing Center is an affiliate of Southeastern Regional Medical Center in partnership with Healogics. The center is located at 103 W. 27th Street in Lumberton. To schedule an appointment, call (910) 738-3836. For more information about the center, logon to www.srmc.org/woundhealing.
Podiatrist joins SRMC medical staff

Dr. Millicent B. Brown recently joined the medical staff of Southeastern Regional Medical Center specializing in podiatric surgery. She joins Dr. Patrick Ricotta at The Foot and Ankle Institute and is available for surgical consultations at their Lumberton and Laurinburg offices.

Dr. Brown earned her medical degree from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine in Philadelphia, Pa., in 2009 and completed her surgical residency at Providence Hospital and Medical Center in Southfield, Mich., earlier this year. She is board qualified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery and treats a variety of foot and ankle problems such as ankle sprains, bunions, hammertoes, in-grown toenails, diabetic wounds, heel pain, broken foot and ankle bones, and flat feet.

Although originally from New York, Brown has always considered North Carolina her second home. “My mother is originally from North Carolina and currently resides in Durham,” said Brown. “I am happy to finally be practicing in North Carolina so I can be closer to my family members that live throughout various parts of the state.”

“I am excited to be serving Lumberton and the surrounding community,” added Brown. “It is important for people to have timely access to health care. We understand that when your feet hurt, you want them to be treated as soon as possible. By joining Dr. Ricotta at The Foot and Ankle Institute, we can get people into the office quicker to take care of their foot and ankle problems.”

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Brown at the Lumberton office, which is located at 815 Wesley Pines Road, call 737-6600.

Chavis joins Southeastern Mobile Medical

Family Nurse Practitioner Nantachie M. Chavis has joined Southeastern Regional Medical Center as the lead medical provider for Southeastern Mobile Medical, service of Southeastern which is supported by the Golden LEAF Foundation.

A Lumberton native, Chavis earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing from UNC Greensboro in 2008 and a master’s degree with family nurse practitioner training from Winston Salem State University in May 2012.

“I am glad to be back and to be offering rural health care throughout my home county,” said Chavis, who lives in Lumberton with her husband, Larry, and their two-year-old daughter, Maya.

Southeastern Mobile Medical travels to locations within Robeson County to provide primary care services, including wellness screenings and immunizations. The mobile unit operates from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. at each site. While cash is not accepted due to security reasons, patients may present insurance information (private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid), money orders or personal checks. Appointments are not required but may be scheduled by calling (910) 674-6144.

Jacobs joins Lumberton Urology; to treat women and children in early 2013

Family Nurse Practitioner Heather J. Jacobs has joined the staff of Lumberton Urology, an affiliate of Southeastern Regional Medical Center. After completing specialized training, she will begin treating women and children at the clinic in January 2013.

A native of Pembroke, Jacobs completed a master’s degree in nursing education at Duke University School of Nursing in 2007. She completed family nurse practitioner training there in May 2012.

Jacobs lives in Red Springs with her husband, Gregory, and their two children, son, Carter, 7, and daughter, Emery, 3.
On the edge of darkness

In the middle of the journey of our life
I found myself within a dark woods
where the straight way was lost. - Dante

writing, creative and leadership skills. They also shared something else in common. All suffered serious bouts of
depression. Some escaped the painful vacuum by taking their own lives.

October is National Depression Education and Awareness Month. Depression (“beyond the blues”) is the
number one mental health problem in the world. Over an estimated 18 million people – one in ten adults – suffer from
depression. Of that number, about 10 million have major or clinical depression.

While 80 to 90 percent of depressed patients who seek help get relief through earlier and better detection and by using a combination of psychotherapy and psychiatric drugs, it is estimated that nearly two thirds do not get the help they need because their depression goes unrecognized and/or unreported. This may be especially true of men.

The Wakefield Questionnaire below can assist you in measuring the frequency and intensity of symptoms often associated with depression. Some high scores may be attained by individuals with other emotional or physical illnesses. The test is best used as a guide.

Add up the circled number for all twelve questions. If your score is 15 or higher, please contact the EAP office for a visit and/or some literature on depression and possible referral. Without proper diagnosis and treatment, depression can be deadly. The vicious nature of the illness slowly leads to hopelessness and saps one’s energy and motivation to seek help. Don’t delay! Calls and visits by employees and household members to EAP are totally confidential. Call 671-5067 today for assistance in making the darkness visible.

And so we came forth, and once again beheld the stars. – Dante
Britt named director of behavioral health

Janine Britt has been named director of behavioral health for Southeastern Regional Medical Center. In this newly created role with the medical center, Britt oversees inpatient/outpatient psychiatry services as well as Southeastern Recovery Alternatives, a treatment program for alcohol and drug dependency.

Britt, a native of Columbus County, earned a bachelor’s degree in social work with a minor in sociology from UNC Pembroke in 1988 and a master’s degree in social work from East Carolina University in 1997. She is a licensed clinical social worker, employed with Southeastern Regional Mental Health for seven years and Family Alternatives for 17 years prior to joining SRMC in July.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to serve the behavioral health community in my new role with SRMC,” said Britt. “Having worked in the mental health field for many years, I am familiar with the issues and challenges faced by the patients and the service providers. I look forward to working with a highly skilled team of professionals at SRMC to offer excellent care for our patients as well as to the expansion of quality behavioral health services for our community.”

Britt lives in Lumberton with her husband, Craig, and has two children, a son, Chandler, 14, and daughter, Courtney, 12.

Promotions

Jason P. Godaire (Behavioral Health) Manager
Michael Jimenez (Fitness Services) Manager

Erica Locklear (Medical Imaging) – Supervisor, radiology nurses
Bonnie West (Fitness Services) – Supervisor
Estella Rose Strickland (Educational Services) – Nurse educator
Patricia Ford (Central Sterile R) – Sterile processing tech II
Frankie McAllister (Central Sterile R) – Sterile processing tech II
Cynthia Culbreth (3-Tower) – Staff RN
Chelse Barnes (Float) – Secretary
Ressie Steele (Patient Account) – Patient account rep.
Jessica Whitted (Patient Account) – Patient account rep.

Southeastern Hospice’s 27th Festival of Trees
A Holiday to Remember

Holiday tree display | Unique Boutique crafts
Townsend Bldg. - Osterneck Auditorium, 102 N. Chestnut St., Lumberton, NC
(across from the Robeson County Public library)

Schedule
Sunday, December 2
1 until 5 p.m.
Monday – Tuesday, December 3-4
9:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Admission fees
$3.00 Adults
$2.00 Senior citizens and children
(under 12 admitted free)
PrivilegesPlus members may present card for free admission.

Proceeds benefit Southeastern Hospice and Camp Care

Call 671-5577 for more information.
Bear Team customer service excellence winners

Organizational Manager Jennifer Altman (Patient Care Services) was recognized as Southeastern Regional Medical Center’s (SRMC) Bear of Excellence for the month of August. This award is presented to employees who exceed expectations.

Altman was recognized for maintaining professional relationships with co-workers; exemplifying “I am” what customers see and hear; and committing to SRMC’s mission statement and core values.

While traveling to dinner with her family recently, Altman encountered a mother in medical crisis traveling with her daughter from out of state. Altman, a registered nurse and rescue squad volunteer, assisted the mother until the ambulance arrived. She traveled in the ambulance with the mother and later helped her secure a local motel room.

“When I see someone in need, it is second nature for me to provide them with any assistance they might need, especially someone who is not familiar with their surroundings and having a medical problem,” said Altman, who has worked for Southeastern Regional Medical Center for seven years. “My sister, Kelly Wiggins, a nurse in the emergency department at Southeastern, was with me at the time and assisted with this family, so I would like for her to be recognized as well,” added Altman. Altman lives in St. Pauls with her husband, Brice, and two children, Jenna, 4, and Henry, 3.

Registered Nurse Linda Bennett (Surgical Services) was recognized as Southeastern Regional Medical Center’s (SRMC) Bear of Excellence for the month of September.

Bennett was recognized for maintaining professional relationships with co-workers; exemplifying “I am” what customers see and hear; and committing to SRMC’s mission statement and core values.

She was acknowledged with this award because of the compassion and concern she conveyed for a co-worker who was having health problems. Her consistency and commitment to this employee’s well-being most likely prevented them from experiencing a life-threatening medical crisis.

When asked what makes Southeastern a great company to work for, Bennett replied, “It is like family. SRMC is there for their employees.”

Bennett is married and lives in Lumberton. She has worked for Southeastern Regional Medical Center for 17 years.

Speakers Bureau

Joann Anderson spoke to the Bladenboro Rotary Club on Aug. 13 on What’s new at Southeastern. Anderson also spoke at Campbell University on Aug. 15 at an event marking funding for the university’s new School of Osteopathic Medicine.

Jack Crain (Human Resources) spoke to Southeastern Hospice volunteers on June 25 on Forgiveness and on Aug. 27 on Depression. Crain also spoke to Gibson Cancer Center’s Cancer Support Group on Sept. 6 on Stress and illness.

FNP Nantachie Chavis and Dean Ruth (Physician Services) spoke to the Lumberton Rotary Club on Aug. 28 on Southeastern Mobile Medical.

Kathy Hansen (Southeastern Wound Healing Center) spoke to the Diabetes Support Group on Sept. 4 on Diabetic ulcers.

Audrey Cox (Patient Care Services) spoke to Robeson Community College nursing students on Sept. 4 on Nursing informatics: roles and responsibilities.

Justin Emanuel and Mary Lee Wadrose (Fitness Services) were guests of the “Community Connection” Fairmont radio program on Sept. 8 on Senior fitness classes.

Michael Trout (Southeastern Recovery Alternatives) spoke to the residents of Woodville Apartments in Fairmont on Sept. 19 and Substance abuse and treatment. CNM Michelle Cox (Southeastern Women’s Healthcare) spoke there on Oct. 10 on Women’s health and breast cancer awareness.

The following employees presented to PrivilegesPlus members: Dr. Matthew Cummings (Duke Cardiology of Lumberton) on August 23 on Heart health; Bonnie West and Julia Kratz (Fitness Services) on August 28 on Benefits of exercise and Silver Sneakers; and Amanda Price-Roberts (Employee Wellness) on September 19 on Laughter yoga.

Achievements

Mary Black and Gladys Paul (Diabetes Community Center) completed re-certification as Diabetes Educators.

Durham White (Human Resources) was awarded the Dr. Stanley A. Richardson Award for Workforce Development Board Member of the Year by the Lumber River Workforce Development Board on Sept. 13. This is the third time White has been honored with this award.