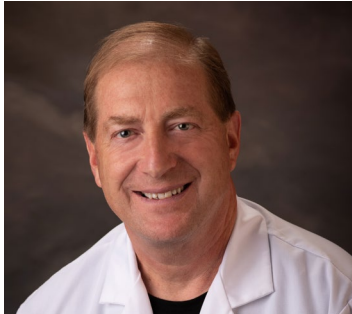




June 2020

## FROM THE DESKS OF...



**Dr. Brad Auffarth**

measures that have affected almost every aspect of our lives. Yet, no matter how overwhelming it may seem, we come back to two words: **THANK YOU.**

Thank you for helping us navigate these unpredictable waters with grace and dedication. Your care and compassion for our patients and our team have never been more clear.



**Dr. Marti Gibbs**

The task for us, as providers, has not changed. We are still committed to providing the absolute best healthcare for our patients. And while the circumstances surrounding that care may change, with extra precautions a necessity, that will not deter us from our mission.

Despite an overall 41% drop in productivity (with a range from 75% to 25%) during the peak, our numbers have started to rebound. All of our locations are open, and we are encouraging the community to not delay necessary medical care, including preventive care, any longer. Read more about this on page 4.



**Mimi Collins, CEO**

Longstreet Clinic was not caught off-guard by COVID-19. In early March, we established a task force that included representatives across all areas of Longstreet Clinic in order to formulate a plan for dealing with this public health emergency. That group helped implement a robust and evolving COVID-19 response plan following CDC recommendations around screenings, triage, use of personal protective equipment, and creating the safest environment for our patients, our staff and our providers. We are thankful to our COVID task force for their hard work in meeting these goals over the past few

months. Our Governing Board has also been meeting routinely to provide guidance.

In the midst of all of this, **Dr. Brad Auffarth** concluded his two-year term as president of Longstreet Clinic. We are grateful for his solid leadership during an eventful two years that began with the decision to adopt EPIC and ended in the midst of the pandemic. We were fortunate to have his guidance and steady hand each step of the way.

**Dr. Marti Gibbs** has been nominated and elected as chairman of the board and president of the Clinic for the next two years. She has the distinction of being the first female president of Longstreet Clinic. We are certain her leadership and discernment will serve us well as we move forward.

Thank you to our entire team who had to follow that mission and ensure the overall health of this community in these trying times. Thank you for joining the front lines of the fight against this pandemic on a daily basis and for the sacrifices you've made.

We could not be more confident in what the future holds for Longstreet Clinic, and we are proud to have served you and played a small role in its development.

Thank you to all who work so hard – despite the circumstances.

How many times have you heard someone say we are living in unique times, with unique challenges? Well, that has never been more true than now.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been confronted with unprecedented precautionary

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LONGSTREET BEAT

# AROUND THE CLINIC

## Employee Spotlight



**Stephanie Brown**  
Lab Services Manager

Stephanie has carved out an accomplished, 20-year career here at Longstreet Clinic. She began her career as a lab technician in our Pediatrics department, returned to school to earn her bachelor's degree and has worked her way up to her recent promotion as our Lab Services Manager.

Over the past 12 months, in addition to her regular workload, Stephanie has worked tirelessly to develop workflows for Longstreet's new Epic electronic medical records platform. It was not an easy task, and we are very thankful for those efforts. She has also been instrumental in the implementation and success of our

COVID-19 testing program and was even featured in *The Times* for her efforts.

Stephanie's co-workers describe her as caring, passionate and always striving to be the best she can be. And those traits, combined with her dedication to her job, led her to be named this year's Outstanding Allied Health Professional, at the Healthy Hall Awards presentation by the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce (see page 3).

**Thank you, Stephanie, for your tireless work and dedication to Longstreet Clinic and our patients!**

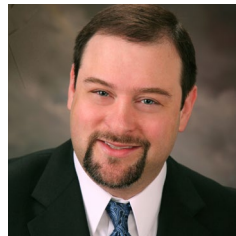
# GENETIC COUNSELING PROGRAM BEGINS

Longtime oncology nurse practitioners **Mark Clark, FNP-BC, AOCNP**, and **Jennifer Butler, FNP-C, AOCNP**, are excited to announce the initiation of a Genetic Counseling Program at Longstreet Clinic.

Part of Longstreet Clinic's innovative and Quality Practice Initiative-certified (QOPI) Cancer Center, Genetic Counseling will provide patients with an in-depth, personalized consultation designed to fully inform them of their relevant genetic cancer links and assess familial cancer risk. The detailed clinical data produced will answer questions, dispel myths and

give patients a complete and clear look at their genetic cancer risks.

Utilizing small blood and saliva samples, Clark and Butler will evaluate each patient's genetic make-up based on recommendations of that patient's obtained



history. Genetic Counseling details three generations of familial genetics in order to obtain a clear and complete picture.

Following analysis, counselors meet with each patient to discuss findings, provide a complete look at their health in relation to genetics and offer recommendations.

Patients with a family history of cancer, may be recommended for genetic counseling. Patients may also request an appointment on their own by contacting the cancer center at **770-297-5700**.

# HUGHES NAMED TO LEADERSHIP HALL CLASS

Congratulations to **Nichol Hughes, RT(R)(CT)(QM)**, Clinical Coordinator at Longstreet Clinic Imaging and Breast Center, for being named to the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce's 39th Leadership Hall County class. This program offers current and potential

leaders the opportunity to learn about various facets of Gainesville-Hall County. Participants develop knowledge of the community through a series of sessions covering subjects from education and economic development to health and government affairs.



# LONGSTREET TAKES HOME MULTIPLE 'HEALTHY HALL' AWARDS

Since its founding, Longstreet Clinic has dedicated itself to improving the health of its surrounding community. On Feb. 25, that community showed its thanks, once again, for those efforts.

Four Longstreet Clinic providers and staff members, as well as a retired Longstreet pediatrician, were honored at the third annual Healthy Hall Awards of Excellence luncheon presented by the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce.

Longstreet's honors represented almost half of the awards presented at the event, which spotlights those in the healthcare industry making a significant impact on quality of life through excellence in health and wellness.



## Longstreet Clinic staff took home awards for:

### **Outstanding Allied Health Professional**

**Stephanie Brown, MLS (ASCP)**

Longstreet Clinic  
*Manager, Central Laboratory*

Stephanie is our lab services manager and is also our employee spotlight in this edition of the Longstreet Beat.

### **Outstanding Healthcare Professional**

**Heather Burke-Cody, FNP-C**

Longstreet Clinic  
*Obstetrics & Gynecology*

Creator and owner of her own nonprofit, called The Everyday Good, Heather is considered "one of the best" by her Longstreet colleagues.

### **Healthcare Education**

**Cheryl Williams, RN, CDE**

Longstreet Clinic  
*Program Director & Diabetes Education Coordinator*

Cheryl initiated the healthy food box

program for the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia and is a member of the Association of Diabetes Care.

### **Physician Specialist of the Year**

**Betsy Grunch, M.D., FACS, FAANS**

Longstreet Clinic  
*Neurosurgery*

The area's only female neurosurgeon, Betsy was inspired to work hard by her mother, who was critically injured in the line of duty as a Hall County Sheriff's deputy.

### **Lifetime Achievement Award**

**Buddy Langston, M.D., Retired**

Northeast Georgia Health System & Longstreet Clinic  
*Pediatrics*

One of the area's most respected and revered doctors, Langston is still active and works his garden with the same passion he brought to health care.

Longstreet Clinic staff also included six more Healthy Hall awards finalists:

**Amanda Driskell, CNM**

*(Obstetrics & Gynecology)*

**Christy Payne**

*(Administration)*

**John Range, M.D.**

*(Family Medicine)*

**Andrew Reisman, M.D.**

*(Family Medicine)*

**Jeanine Stover**

*(Administration)*

**W. Rhett Weaver, M.D.**

*(Internal Medicine)*



**Please be sure to congratulate all the nominees and winners when you see them!**

# DON'T DELAY NECESSARY & PREVENTIVE CARE

All of Longstreet Clinic's locations are open and welcoming patients, as well as taking CDC-recommended precautionary measures to ensure the safest possible environment for care. That includes the resumption of mammograms and colonoscopies, as well as routine physicals and wellness exams.

As the novel coronavirus pandemic spread across the country in March and residents heeded stay-at-home and social distancing recommendations throughout April, it is no surprise that routine screenings, including those for cancer, saw a steep decline.

On May 4, 2020, the Epic Health Research Network (EHRN) published data taken from 2.7 million patient records across 23 states that showed an abrupt and drastic drop – between 86% and 94% – in preventive screenings for breast cancer, colon cancer and cervical cancer when compared to similar periods in 2017-2019. The data has prompted alarm from medical professionals who warn that cancer cases could go undiagnosed or be

diagnosed at later stages, which impacts treatment options and health outcomes.

For example, when it comes to colorectal cancer, early stage diagnosis of the disease yields a five-year overall survival rate of over 90 percent. However, survival rates from diagnoses of advanced or late-stage colorectal cancers is as low as 10-15 percent.

“It's important to get screened and catch it before it's too late,” said **Dr. Fernando Aycinena**, a board-certified colorectal surgeon at Longstreet Clinic. “Your chances of being cured are much better in the early stage. And just because you feel fine doesn't mean you're in the clear.” Similarly, screening can prevent most cervical cancers by detecting abnormal cell changes so they can be treated before turning into cancers.

And we know that early detection saves lives when it comes to breast cancer, with the 5-year survival rate for an early stage, localized diagnosis at 99% (American Cancer Society). On May 19 EHRN published additional data

showing that pediatric immunizations had dropped 42% in the spring of 2020 when compared to previous years. Immunizations play a critical role in pediatric preventive care by providing individual protection for children as well as overall herd immunity.

In addition, we are encouraging the community not to ignore their medical symptoms and delay care out of fear of COVID-19. Your safety is our priority, and our team is happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have. When appropriate, telehealth options remain available.

Our **Urgent Care** in Gainesville is open to the community. We have resumed normal hours (open until 9 p.m. weekdays and 3 p.m. on weekends). Our large, spacious waiting area makes it possible to practice social distancing, and we continue thorough cleaning practices of exam areas between patients.

**Why delay?** Get the care you need today.

*Thank you  
Dr. Auffarth!*

We are grateful for your dedication and leadership over the past two years!



president &  
chairman  
2018-2020



**LONGSTREETCLINIC**  
Your Health. Our Specialty.