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Cheers!
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**Jefferson Einstein
Montgomery Hospital**
enhances its ability to
safeguard the
community's cardiac
health through expert
surgical personnel,
innovative technology,
and expanded services.

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The Beat Goes On

Given the evolution of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Department at Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital in East Norriton, residents of the Philadelphia suburbs who need advanced heart surgery can be assured of receiving state-of-the-art care close to home.

“We have a beautiful facility staffed by a team of surgeons, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other care providers who work collaboratively,” says Raymond L. Singer, M.D., chief of cardiac surgery at Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital. “We also have access to all the latest technology. We’re able to do many procedures in minimally invasive fashion, but when incisions are required, they’re kinder and gentler now. It’s nothing like it was 15 years ago.”

Dr. Singer came to the East Norriton campus in March 2019, after a 27-year tenure at Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown. His arrival marked a homecoming in more ways than one. He grew up in nearby Cheltenham, so he cherishes the opportunity to “give back to the community where I

grew up.” Also, at the outset of his career, he completed his general surgery and cardiothoracic residencies at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

“Being here has afforded me the opportunity to be a real doctor again, not just a surgeon,” he says. “I tell people I’m a family doctor on the inside and a surgeon on the outside. I recently treated a patient in his early 60s who came in with severe chest pain, and he ended up needing a triple bypass. We probably extended his life by 20 or 30 years. It’s amazing to be able to tell someone like that, ‘You’re OK,’ or to tell their family, ‘You’re husband, wife, dad, or mom is going to be OK.’”

Dr. Singer credits his kind-hearted approach to his upbringing. Rather than coming from a family of doctors, he likes to say he came from a family of patients. Both of his parents—tavern owners and military veterans—went through surgery and chemotherapy to treat cancer.

“Those experiences made me realize the importance of being on time and available, treating others with courtesy, and doing a

Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital enhances its ability to safeguard the community’s cardiac health through expert surgical personnel, innovative technology, and expanded services.

by **BILL DONAHUE** | photos by **JODY ROBINSON**



Dr. Raymond L. Singer

good job,” he says. “So when I say I treat every patient as if they’re my own family, it’s not a cliché.”

One of Dr. Singer’s areas of specialty is mitral valve repair. He cites a device called MitraClip™ to treat patients who have symptoms associated with mitral valve regurgitation—shortness of breath, fatigue, rapid heartbeat, etc. By attaching the device to the patient’s mitral valve, he can restore the proper flow of blood between the left atrium and the left ventricle, curing their symptoms in the process.

The expertise of Dr. Singer and his fellow board-certified cardiothoracic surgeons—namely, Alexandra Tuluca, M.D., and Louis E. Samuels, M.D.—enable Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital to offer the full gamut of cardiac surgical services. While each surgeon has precise areas of specialty, the surgical team can provide aortic valve surgery, atrial fibrillation surgery, cardiac tumor resection, congenital heart surgery, coronary artery bypass, and heart failure and heart valve surgery, as well as minimally invasive cardiothoracic surgical procedures.

“This team is unlike any I’ve ever worked with,” Dr. Singer. “Drs. Samuels, Tuluca, and I are like the Three Amigos, and we work very well together. We are like a family. ... I can tell you that when I need heart surgery, Drs. Tuluca and Samuels will be doing it for me.”

As part of Jefferson Health, Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital boasts the latest advances in cardiac intervention. This includes everything from implantable devices for heart-failure patients, to longer-lasting replacement valves, to minimally invasive procedures such as transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) for the treatment of advanced aortic stenosis, or the narrowing of the aortic valve.

For cases that require more advanced care than is readily available, the Montgomery campus recently opened a helipad to enable prompt patient transportation to and from the hospital.

“I love everything about the work we do here, especially the fact that we can intervene and make an immediate impact,” says Dr. Tuluca, associate chief of cardiac surgery and vice chair of the department of surgery for Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital and Jefferson Einstein Hospital in Philadelphia. “We have an incredibly cohesive team, with so many people coming together to get patients through something that can be quite challenging.”

Dr. Tuluca has been impressed by how the heart program has flourished at the Montgomery campus, not only in terms of clinical expertise and capa-

bilities, but also in terms of its blossoming reputation.

“This isn’t just a little community hospital,” she says. “We’ve been doing heart surgery here since we opened our doors [in September 2012], and it has grown into a very comprehensive program. Short of advanced heart failure, transplants, and ventricular assist devices, we truly offer any surgical cardiac solution there is. We also have a proven track record of good outcomes.”

For example, the hospital earned a Healthgrades “America’s 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery Award” for superior clinical outcomes in heart bypass surgery and heart valve surgery. In addition, benchmarking data from entities such as the Society of Thoracic Surgeons suggest the hospital’s cardiac patient outcomes are superior to those of many of their peer hospitals across the region and around the country.

“These are exciting times, and we’re not done yet,” adds Dr. Samuels, chief of cardiac surgery for Jefferson Einstein Hospital in Philadelphia. In other words, patients can expect increasingly innovative cardiac care from Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital.

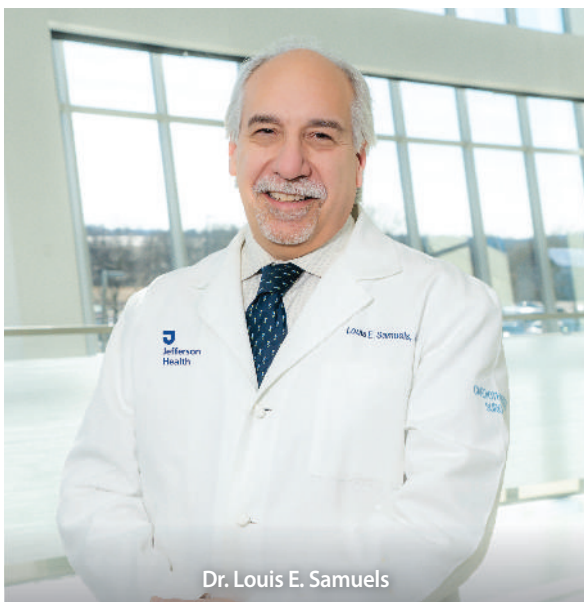
“Jefferson Health has invested a lot of resources into the Montgomery campus, and that has translated into infrastructure growth,” he says. “The community has expectations for a very high quality of service, and we have been responsive to those needs. We’re able to offer sophisticated, high-quality, state-of-the-art cardiac surgery and cardiac care that is only going to grow and expand.”

As for Dr. Singer, in March he celebrates his five-year anniversary of coming to Jefferson Einstein Montgomery Hospital. He looks forward to facilitating the heart program’s continued evolution over the next five years, with a patient-first culture that blends cutting-edge technology and personalized care.

“We have the type of program that delivers health care the way it’s supposed to be,” he says. “I give out my cell number to all my patients; it’s printed right on my business card. That’s the kind of care I like to give, and that’s the level of attention patients can expect when they come here.” ■



Dr. Alexandra Tuluca



Dr. Louis E. Samuels



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