

# MAKING CONNECTIONS

5TH ANNUAL PEDIATRIC  
BRAIN INJURY CONFERENCE  
& RESOURCE FAIR

OCTOBER 23, 2021



Supporting Kids After Brain Injury

## Keynote Speakers

Dr. Brandon Crawford

Dr. Paul Harch

Dr. Kenneth Proefrock

**Thank you for joining us!**



Our mission is to enrich the lives of children with a brain injury and give hope to their families through support and education. At the heart of our services is the conviction that the health and well-being of our children can improve over time if families have access to educational materials, therapeutic services and adaptive equipment for their children.

## Special Thanks to our Platinum Sponsors



# Welcome

Thank you for attending our Making Connections 5th Annual Pediatric Brain Injury Conference & Resource Fair. Our hope is that through attending Making Connections you will find helpful resources and have the opportunity to network with others on a similar journey. Each of our presenters will provide informative sessions for you. We are sure they will offer something new for you to put in your toolbox of knowledge.

We had a number of sponsors step forward to help us make this conference happen. We are particularly thankful to Woodlawn Baptist Church for supporting our conference by providing a fabulous space.

Special thanks to our Keynote Speakers and all our presenters! We are so grateful for each of them.

Please stop by each of the vendor's booths and see what ideas and resources they may offer.

Team Luke Hope for Minds is here to offer guidance and support. Please let us know how we can support you!

Sincerely,  
Tim Siegel & Ronda Johnson  
Team Luke Hope for Minds

# Schedule

8:00 - Registration Begins

8:00-9:00 - Breakfast/Resource Fair

9:00 - 9:15 - Welcome by Tim Siegel & Ronda Johnson

9:15-10:15- Keynote Speaker - Dr. Crawford

- *Navigating Pediatric Brain Injury - Worship Center*

10:15 - 10:30 - Resource Fair/Break

10:30 - 11:15 - Session 1 Breakout Groups

-*Shoulders, Elbows, Knees, and Toes...& Everything in Between: The Orthopedic Management of Brain Injury Patients - Worship Center*

-*Neurotransmitter Testing & Supporting Brain Health-M103*

-*Therapeutic Benefits of Whole Body Vibration Plates -M105*

11:15 - 11:30 - Resource Fair/Break

11:30 - 12:15 - Session 2 Breakout Groups

-*Tools for Managing Traumatic Stress - Worship Center*

-*Postural Considerations After Brain Injury - M103*

-*Strategies for Managing Challenging Behaviors in Children with Brain Injury - M105*

12:15 - 1:00 - Lunch - Fellowship Hall & West Hall

1:00 - 2:00 - Keynote Speaker - Dr. Harch

-*Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Facilitates Stem Cell Implantation: Yet Another Beneficial Effect of HBOT - Worship Center*

2:00 - 2:30 - Resource Fair/ Break

2:30 - 3:15 - Session 3 Breakout Groups

-*What's all that buzz about MNRI? - Worship Center*

-*Vision Recovery After Brain Injury - M103*

-*Navigating Life after 18 - M105*

3:15 - 3:30 - Break

3:30 - 4:30 - Keynote Speaker - Dr. Proefrock

-*Current Trends in the Naturopathic Treatment of Pediatric Neurological Injury - Worship Center*

4:30 - 5:15 - Panel Discussion with Keynote Speakers

5:15 - 5:30 - Closing

# **Keynote Presentations**

**Dr. Brandon Crawford, DC  
FIBFN-CND**

## **Navigating Pediatric Brain Injury**

No brain injury is easy, they all affect the family unit and require a tribe. In this presentation, Dr. Crawford's objective is to help educate loved ones and caregivers about what is going on inside the head of a brain injured child and offer some strategies to help and support them.

# Keynote Presentations

## Dr. Paul Harch, MD

### **Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Facilitates Stem Cell Implantation: Yet Another Beneficial Effect of HBOT**

For 347 years HBOT has been thought to be a treatment for specific diseases. In fact, it is a treatment for the disease processes that underlie these diseases. Because these disease processes are shared by all diseases, HBOT is effective for a wide range of diseases/conditions. In addition to these disease processes, there are thousands of other targets in the human body that HBOT acts upon. In particular in the cells that line all of the smallest blood vessels in our body, endothelial cells, 8,101 genes of our 19,000 genes are responsive to changes in pressure and oxygen. Because of the vast array of HBOT-responsive targets HBOT is considered a foundation biological treatment. In the past 15 years research is suggesting another exciting effect of HBOT, it's effect on stem cells. In this talk Dr. Harch will review the information that is showing that HBOT releases stem cells from the bone marrow into our circulation, stimulates stem cells at the site of injury in our body, including the brain, facilitates implantation of stem cells injected into the human body, and most recently, stimulates proliferation of stem cells in our fatty tissue that can then be harvested for use.

# Keynote Presentations

## Dr. Kenneth Proefrock

### **Current Trends in the Naturopathic Treatment of Pediatric Neurological Injury**

Neurological injury is the leading cause of death and disability in children the world over. The pathophysiology of traumatic brain injury includes blood-brain barrier breakdown, widespread neuroinflammation, diffuse axonal injury, and subsequent neurodegeneration. The past three decades have seen exciting treatment options emerging for pediatric brain injury patients that include hyperbaric oxygen therapy, noninvasive brain stimulation, task-oriented functional electrical stimulation, and numerous behavioral/physical therapies. Some of these emerging treatment options entail the use of autologous therapies, harvesting a tissue like blood or fat in order for it to be re-allocated to another area of the body for neuro-regeneration and repair. Autologous tissue transplantation has been shown to increase endogenous cellular proliferation and promote immature neural differentiation in the injured regions of the brain. In this presentation, we will go into some depth about the development and clinical utility of Autologous Transplant techniques with Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP), and fractions of cellular material from stromal vascular tissue (SVF) using hyaluronic acid scaffolding. We will also be discussing the use of the enzyme hyaluronidase as an adjunctive therapy for patients with dystonia, and the clinical utility of liposome based dietary supplements for children with cerebral damage.

# Session 1 Information

10:30-11:15 am

## **Shoulders, Elbows, Knees, and Toes...& Everything in Between: The Orthopedic Management of Brain Injury Patients by Brian Kaufman**

The orthopedic manifestations of brain injury are many and can affect all portions of the musculoskeletal system. While the brain injury may be static, many of the bony and muscular deformities that occur after brain injury are progressive. This presentation will focus on the non-operative and operative management of deformities of the arms, legs, and spine.

## **Neurotransmitter Testing & Supporting Brain Health by Nikki Drummond, CCN**

Brain Injury is a pervasive problem in the US and worldwide, and has been called the “silent epidemic” of modern times. Customized clinical nutrition techniques can offer patients tools and resources for using targeted nutrients to support some of the most common symptoms following a brain injury such as headaches, depression, anxiety, insomnia and cognitive decline. Neurotransmitter testing is one of these tools that can be useful in helping to identify the individual nutrient needs, and it can be done from the comfort of home. I invite you to learn about neurotransmitter testing and targeted nutrient support options that are available for patients, and have been used for over two decades with great success to aid in the recovery process of a brain injury.

# **Session 1 Information**

**10:30-11:15 am**

## **Therapeutic Benefits of Whole Body**

### **Vibration Plates**

**by Erin Stranahan, OT**

Whole body vibration has been shown to benefit children with Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Spinal Cord Injuries, Autism and others by improving muscle tone, strength, postural control, and much more. Using different frequency zones, or speed of vibration, along with different exercises and positions, it can provide different effects to the muscles depending on a child's needs. It can be a helpful tool for getting faster results when used in conjunction with activities within the clinic as well as with home exercise programs! Come find out how you could start using one within your child's daily routine!

# **Session 2 Information**

**11:30 am -12:15 pm**

## **Tools for Managing Traumatic Stress by Dr. Jeri LaVigne**

Traumatic experiences and other forms of traumatic stress can make life incredibly difficult and unpredictable. Using strategies like avoidance and denial as your only strategies can cause more problems than they attempt to solve. These symptoms can't be avoided all the time, and trying to avoid them may cause you to close yourself off to opportunities, create anxiety or feel even more restrained by your traumatic experience. It may also be harmful to only have one method of coping because it may not help you every time. Rather it's better to have an abundance of tools at the ready for when you're feeling the scary reach of traumatic stress. So, here are some diverse coping methods to add to your toolbox.

## **Postural Considerations After Brain Injury by Natasha Johnson, PT, MSPT**

The session will provide an overview of common postural presentations after brain injury, postural considerations in wheelchair positioning, recommendations on sleeping postures for optimal alignment and decreasing pain. A general overview on how neck positions influence visual function, cervicogenic symptoms/disorientation, and energy conservation and general stretches and techniques to stretch/relax muscles commonly tight following brain injury.

# **Session 2 Information**

**11:30 am -12:15 pm**

## **Strategies for Managing Challenging Behaviors in Children with Brain Injury by Cullen Gibbs**

This presentation will include an introduction to basic behavioral principles that support effective behavior modification strategies. Participants will learn fundamental principles for behavior management including models of behavioral reinforcement and differential attention. The presentation will emphasize learning how to use behavioral strategies within everyday situations. Instruction will include case studies, videos, and other interactive activities.

# **Session 3 Information**

**2:30 pm - 3:15 pm**

## **What's all that buzz about MNRI?**

**by Laurie Longest, PT**

MNRI® has been referred to as “The Missing Link” for neurologically based challenges by addressing brain stem level skills instead of using the traditional therapy cortical approach. With the end goal being integration of the primary reflex patterns, MNRI® also addresses regulation of the sensory system, regulation of muscle tone, the auditory/visual/vestibular systems, oral motor coordination, and trauma recovery as parallel challenges. This presentation will introduce you to the amazing tasks of primary reflexes as a basis for protection & survival, neuroplasticity, and neurodevelopment including the creation of the nerve net system, myelination of neurons, and overall functionality of the body-brain system. The lecture will continue with an explanation of how MNRI® can pattern, or repattern, primary reflexes to achieve overall development (or redevelopment after a trauma) in motor abilities, feeding, language, cognition, and social skills. The presentation will conclude with a few case studies. Come find out how to achieve your goals by awakening your natural genetic intelligence!

# **Session 3 Information**

**2:30 pm - 3:15 pm**

## **Vision Recovery After Brain Injury**

**by Dr. Briana Larson**

Vision makes up 80% of the sensory input to the brain and is processed in every lobe of the brain. Learn how Brain Injury affects vision and the impacts of visual dysfunction on quality of life, potential and recovery. Key visual systems and skills will be reviewed including eye tracking, teaming, focusing, visual-balance, visual-motor, and visual memory. See how visual rehabilitation can improve visual skills and visual integration after brain injury and significantly improve signs and symptoms of double vision, blurred vision, headaches, dizziness, light sensitivity, decreased depth perception, reduced peripheral vision, poor memory, reduced stamina, poor reading and writing skills. Learn how treating visual deficiencies can improve academic potential, sports skills, activities of daily living, and overall function.

## **Navigating Life after 18**

**by Barbara Bush**

What parents need to consider when your special needs child turns 18. Guardianship vs Supported Decision Making Agreement; SSI before and after age 18; SSI-Medicaid; RSDI-Medicare; Making sure your disabled adult child will receive part of their parents Social Security retirement benefit. You will learn about these topics and more.

# Presenters

## **Barbara Bush**

Barbara is a National Social Security Advisor and a Certified Senior Advisor, which brings a broad base of experience in planning for and meeting the needs of adults with special needs and their families. Having worked for many years as a legal assistance for law firms specializing estate planning and probate, Barbara applies extensive knowledge of both legal and long-term planning for the family. Prior to starting Solutions for Special Needs Families, Barbara was the Director of Admissions, at Marbridge Foundation in Austin for eight years. At Solutions for Special Needs Families, we listen to families concerns for their loved ones current and future needs, discuss the family's immediate needs and the long-term goals.

## **Dr. Brandon Crawford, DC FIBFN-CND**

Dr. Brandon Crawford, DC FIBFN-CND is a fellow of the International Board of Functional Neurology with a specialty in Childhood Neurodevelopmental Disorders. He founded and leads care at the Austin Center for Developing Minds in Cedar Park, TX. Brandon is also the founder and CEO of NeuroSolution, who's focus is selling laser therapy devices and educating doctors, therapists and lay people on various topics in healthcare. Dr. Crawford is also a managing partner of Legendary DC Consulting where he helps other practitioners achieve more optimal results by utilizing developmental functional neurology within their practice. Brandon is a managing partner for the NeuroSolution Center of

# Presenters

Dubai and a similar clinic in the UK. Dr. Crawford serves on the medical advisory board for SNA Technologies and BrainTap. Dr. Crawford enjoys educating practitioners and has done this in various ways; most recently he has been a part of the Childhood Neurodevelopmental Disorders Courses led by Dr. Robert Melillo and is now involved in launching the NeuroSolution conferences across the nation. Dr. Brandon Crawford is dedicated to spreading the developmental functional neuroscience profession in order to achieve a larger impact on humanity. Currently Brandon's main focus is on severe pediatric brain injuries and neurodevelopmental disorders. He is also an expert in laser and light therapy, specifically how to apply these modalities to the brain and nervous system. Brandon continues to develop new treatment strategies for various conditions to achieve a deeper level of healing for people all over the globe.

# Presenters

## **Nikki Drummond,CCN**

Austin native Nikki Drummond is a Certified Clinical Nutritionist (CCN) specializing in the field of neuroscience. As the Founder of NeuroFit Nutrition™, she is known for her expertise in the field of clinical nutrition and neurochemical physiology. Since 1998, Nikki has become known as a speaker, instructor and educational writer in the healthcare field. She has held various leadership roles teaching the public, patients, professionals and physicians how to utilize leading-edge nutritional techniques in the treatment and prevention of various conditions that originate at the cellular level. Her philosophy is to be a proactive advocate for wellness through nutrition and lifestyle modification, relying on long-term pharmaceutical drug therapies only as a last resort.

## **M. Cullen Gibbs, Ph.D**

For the past 11 years Dr. Gibbs has worked at TIRR Memorial Hermann performing neuropsychological evaluations, cognitive rehabilitation, and clinical research with persons who have brain injury. He received an award for an investigation of progressive cardiovascular intervention for the treatment of persistent physical and neurocognitive symptoms in adolescents with sports concussion. He is Pediatric Service Line Leader for outpatient rehabilitation. Dr. Gibbs has been an investigator on two NIH funded studies. His clinical and research interests include cognitive rehabilitation and the neurocognitive and neurobehavioral correlates of traumatic brain injury, stroke, sports concussion, and neurodevelopmental disorders.

# Presenters

## **Dr. Paul Harch, MD**

Paul G. Harch, M.D. is an emergency medicine and hyperbaric medicine clinician who is Clinical Professor of Medicine, Section of Emergency Medicine, at LSU School of Medicine, New Orleans, and former director of the University Medical Center Hyperbaric Medicine Department and LSU Hyperbaric Medicine Fellowship. Dr. Harch initiated and maintains a private practice that has resulted in the largest case experience in neurological hyperbaric medicine in the world. In this practice he adapted the concepts of conventional hyperbaric oxygen therapy to wounds in the central nervous system that spawned the subsequent academic and research practice. Beginning with brain injured divers and boxers in 1989, he applied his protocol to the first HBOT-treated cerebral palsy (1992) and autistic children (1996-2000) in this country and multiple other cerebral disorders, including most recently the first PET documented Alzheimer's case (1/2019) and a subacute drowned child (Medical Gas Research 3/2017). This drowning case was the first demonstration of global regrowth of brain tissue in humans. He has now treated the largest series of drowned children in the world, over 100 children. In addition, He has successfully treated U.S. servicemen with TBI and PTSD, publishing the first case in 2009, a case series in 2012, a case-controlled series in 2019, and in March, 2020 a randomized controlled trial in civilians and veterans with mild traumatic brain injury. This human work was buttressed by application of the human protocol to animals in 2007 that stands as the first and only improvement of chronic brain injury in

# Presenters

animals in the history of science. Dr. Harch's work and perspective on hyperbaric oxygen therapy was published in his book, *The Oxygen Revolution*, where HBOT is explained as an epigenetic therapy with expected revolutionary effects on medicine and neurology. In March, 2020 he proposed the application of HBOT to COVID-19 pneumonia based on the successful use of hyperbaric treatment for dying Spanish Flu patients in 1918 and has now successfully treated patients with COVID-19 Long-Haulers Syndrome.

## **Natasha Johnson, PT, MSPT**

Natasha Johnson, has lived in Austin, Texas for approximately 20 years. Received undergraduate degree from University of Texas at San Antonio, Magna Cum Laude in Bachelor's of Science in Biology, 2001. Received Master's Degree in Master's of Science in Physical Therapy, 2003. Certified Competent in the Evaluation and Treatment of Vestibular Disorders from Emory University. Certified from Concussion Health in the Evaluation and Treatment of Vision and Vestibular Dysfunction in the Mild Traumatic Brain Injury/Post Concussion Syndrome Population. Currently, involved in completing the last portion of studies & criteria to become a Fellow of the Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association (NORA). St. David's Medical Center Mentor Program Coordinator and Neal Kocurek Scholarship Program Mentor. I have worked as a Senior Physical Therapist, I believe one of my God given gifts, at St. David's Rehabilitation for approximately 18 years, treating Neurological, Vestibular, & Visual Dysfunction clients.

# Presenters

## **Brian E. Kaufman, M.D.**

A native of New Jersey, Dr. Kaufman and his wife, Shelby, were happy to leave winter behind and are now proud to call Austin their home. Dr. Kaufman's medical training began in Washington, D.C. where he enjoyed thirteen years in our nation's capital. While a resident, Dr. Kaufman focused on advanced spinal surgery techniques and the specialized care of pediatric patients at The Children's National Medical Center. After his residency training, Dr. Kaufman accepted a clinical fellowship at the Nemours/Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Delaware. During his fellowship, Dr. Kaufman received extensive training from world renowned surgeons in the management of scoliosis, complex spinal deformities, neuromuscular disorders, skeletal dysplasia, and hip dysplasia. Dr. Kaufman now serves as the Chief of Orthopaedic Surgery at Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas. His clinical practice focuses on the management of spinal disorders in children and adolescents with a special focus on the neuromuscular and brain injury populations. Dr. Kaufman has an academic appointment at the Dell Medical School at the University of Texas at Austin where he serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Surgery and Perioperative Care.

# Presenters

## **Dr. Briana Larson, OD, FCOVD, FAAO, FNORA**

Dr. Briana Larson, a developmental optometrist is COVD board certified in vision development and therapy. She completed a post-doctorate clinical residency in vision therapy and rehabilitation with emphasis in pediatric optometry; a credential achieved by less than 1% of optometrists nationwide. In 2012, The American Academy of Optometry inducted her as a Fellow of the Academy. The Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association (NORA) inducted Dr. Briana Larson as a Fellow (FNORA) during its 2014 Annual Conference at North Carolina. A Fellow (FNORA) designation is recognition of a professional's highest level of competence in clinical abilities and scientific knowledge in the field of Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation. Dr. Larson has the distinction of being the lone practicing optometrist in the state of Texas with this exclusive set of Credentials.

## **Jeri LaVigne, EdD, PhD**

Jeri LaVigne, Ed.D., Ph.D. is an educational psychologist who is most interested in the health of your brain. She also holds a Diplomate in Functional Neurology She has been working in the field of brain health for more than 30 years helping children and adults reach their goals and dreams by teaching them how to better process information and create optimal brain performance. Dr. LaVigne is an Irlen Director, certified in the Irlen Method and is a Neurofeedback practitioner. Because every brain is

# Presenters

different, she offers several therapies that aid in brain balancing including cold laser, kinesiology, and sound and light therapies. She specializes in trauma, both physical and emotional. She is an International workshop facilitator and conference speaker, most recently addressing the 2019 Louisiana School Nurse's Conference, The Women's Professional Development Network, and the 2019 Irlen International Conference in Manchester, England. She is also a graduate of Edwene Gaines' Masters School and is a prosperity teacher specializing in goal setting, forgiveness, and meditation. She is also a certified Fire Walk Instructor. She has assisted in creating several non-profit organizations, such as Anatta World Health and Education and the Roosevelt Ashley Foundation, providing medical and educational programs and supplies to children in need around the world.

## **Laurie Longest, PT**

Laurie Longest is a developmental pediatric physical therapist. She began her MNRI® training in early 2010 and is an MNRI® core specialist, instructor, and lectures regularly for The Masgutova Integrative NeuroDevelopmental Sciences Group. She is currently researching the effects of MNRI® post NFD with Dr. Masgutova, and organizes the MNRI family conferences for NFD and HIE clients.

# Presenters

## **Dr. Kenneth Proefrock**

Dr. Kenneth Proefrock graduated from Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine in 1996 with his doctorate in medicine and specialty training in sports medicine. Prior to naturopathic medical school, he received degrees in Chemistry and Zoology from Northern Arizona University and worked as a Research and Development/Quality Assurance Chemist for Procter & Gamble. For the past 25 years, he has conducted a very busy, Naturopathic medical practice in Surprise, Arizona and, for the past 14 of those years, he has been focused on the clinical aspects of neurologic injury and the development of innovative and customizable interventions using autologously derived materials. He is also the current president for the North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners (NABNE), the chairperson for the biochemistry portion of the Naturopathic Physician's Licensing Exam (NPLEX), and co-founder and current President of the Naturopathic Oncology Research Institute (NORI).

# Presenters

## **Erin Stranahan, OT**

Erin Stranahan is an occupational therapist at NAPA Center, Austin. She began her career with NAPA in their Los Angeles facility in 2012 and moved to Texas when NAPA opened their Austin location in September of 2020. Her interest in occupational therapy began while volunteering in the NICU at John Muir Medical Center throughout high school and became passionate about supporting children and their families. She completed her undergraduate studies in child development and received her Master of Arts in Occupational Therapy from the University of Southern California in 2010. She utilizes various modalities and techniques in her practice including: dynamic movement intervention, neurodevelopmental treatment, sensory integration, and the Neurosuit. She frequently integrates the Galileo whole body vibration plate into her treatment sessions and is excited to discuss the improvements she has seen while utilizing this tool.

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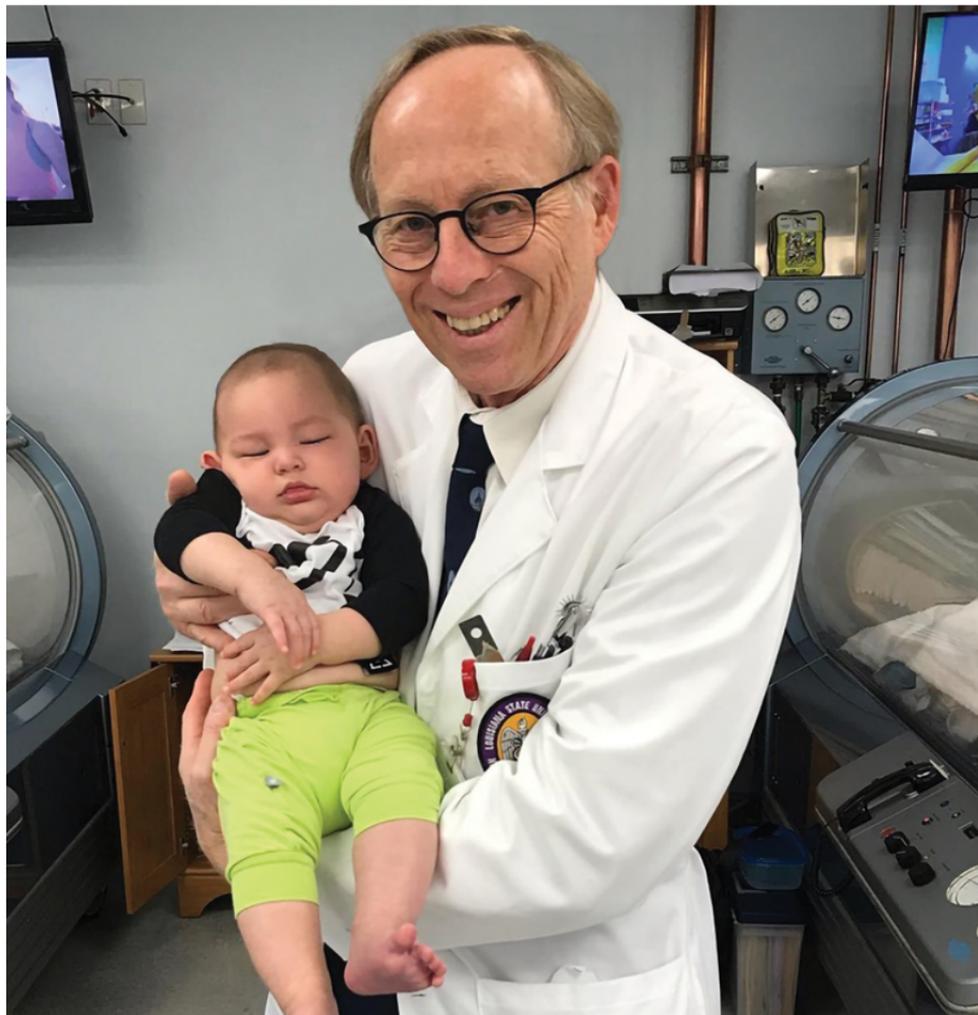


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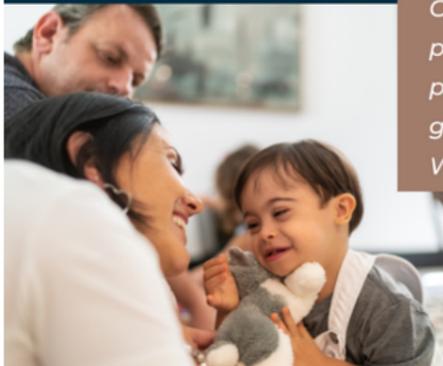
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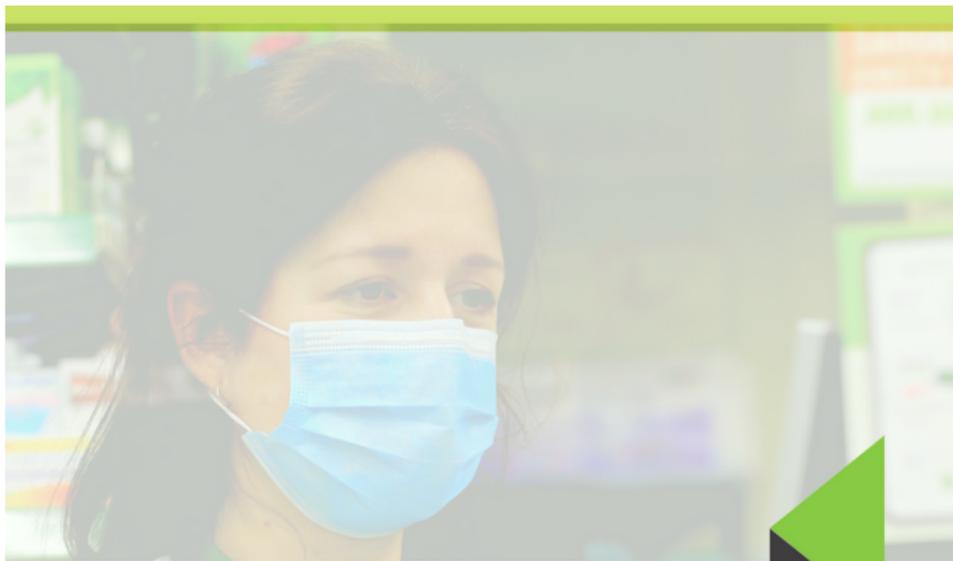


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Resource Fair

Restroom

Worship Center

Sessions

West Hall  
Lunch tables

Fellowship Center

Resource Fair & Lunch

Restroom

M-102  
Dr. Crawford

M-100  
Dr. Harch

Resource Fair

M-103  
Sessions

M-105  
Sessions

Registration

Entrance

Coffee/  
Breakfast