Josette Armendariz-Batiste, RN, MSN, CCRN, a Nurse Manager in Surgical Intensive Care and Transplant & Transplant Intensive Care, recently shared this story and accompanying photos with us. A portion of this story was adopted from the Galveston County Daily News, originally published in the article, “One grad lived through Depression; another lived,” on June 4, 2011 by T.J. Aulds

Josette wrote: “This is a patient who was on the unit in 2008. He came by to visit yesterday and of course it made our day!!! I know we have all been working very hard and have been stressed at times but when you get the opportunity to meet people whose lives you have impacted in such a positive way it puts everything in perspective and you realize THIS IS THE REASON I DO WHAT I DO!!! I hope Josh’s story makes you feel as good as it made me feel!”

Josh Rivera overcame a near fatal accident three years ago to graduate with the Class of 2011 at Santa Fe High School. Rivera, 20, was installing a lowering kit on his small truck in March 2008 when the jack holding the vehicle up gave way.

“Basically the whole truck was resting on my head,” Rivera said.

He sustained a major brain injury and lost much of his sight. After rehabilitation at Memorial Hermann’s Institute for Rehabilitation and Research and Galveston’s Transitional Learning Center, Rivera insisted on going back to school.

“I told my mom that I have been given this opportunity and I want to graduate,” Rivera said. “I wanted this really bad.”

It wasn’t easy, but in some ways, he said the accident made him a better student.

“I was lazy before,” Rivera said. “I wasn’t really into studying. (The accident) gave me a second chance. I was a lot more open to learning. I got smarter in math too. It knocked some sense into me.”

On June 3, sporting a pair of sunglasses, Rivera too achieved his dream, one his mother Iris called “a miracle.”

“I’m not going to say it was easy,” Rivera said. “It was a big thing to do. I went through a lot of pain, but I didn’t want to give up.”
Satis5ied?
We Hope So.

Satis5ied? Pins are a great conversation starter to explain to our patients what the patient satisfaction initiative is all about:

- Increasing awareness of the Patient Satisfaction Survey conducted for UTMB Health by Press Ganey (received by mail).
- Increasing awareness of UTMB Health’s commitment to provide the highest level of service, Level 5, to every patient, in every area, every day. Understanding that if we should fail to provide Level 5 service, we want the patient to feel comfortable telling us at the time of service, so that we may correct the situation in real time.
- Encouraging patients to watch their mail for the survey and to answer the questions and promptly return the survey – we hope that we will have earned a top rating in every category.
- Understanding that patients’ survey responses help UTMB Health to continually improve quality and service in order to provide a great patient experience.

PROJECT 30:
Thirty Days to a New Beginning
by Jaymee Mayo
Administrative Director, Transplant Services

Teams from the Texas Transplant Center and Division of Nephrology crossed organizational boundaries to work collectively to work wonders, through a collaborative effort known as Project 30.

Project 30 was developed as an initiative to increase listings, decrease the time from referral to actual listing on the waitlist for organ transplant, address backlog issues and improve patient and staff satisfaction. The project also identified inefficiencies, duplicity and lack of tracking capability with the existing processes.

Short term goals were established which included an initial goal of 60 days from referral to listing and a stretch goal of 30 days. Barriers to success were addressed with the establishment of a standardized evaluation process, clarification of staff roles and responsibilities, utilization of an outside chart retrieval company and creation of a Project 30 database to track productivity and progress.

While still a work in progress, Project 30 claims early success with an initial reduction in time to list from greater than 200 to 72 days. These improvements directly attest to the strong efforts demonstrated by the Renal Transplant Team, including transplant surgeons, nephrologists, coordinators, coordinator assistants and renal support staff, to improve patient care.

An additional component of this project involves a pilot program including the assistance of Volunteer Services. Since patients are often overwhelmed by the vastness of our campus, a Transplant Patient Escort is assigned to assist potential transplant candidates in the navigation of the institution by escorting transplant candidates to their evaluation tests and procedures in various departments. Good patient care is as much about the care provided as meeting the patient’s emotional needs, and both patients and escorts have provided positive feedback with this service. As one escort explained, “I held the patient’s hand while she got her labs drawn.”

Congratulations!

- Congratulations to Dr. Anika T. Bell-Gray for being selected to present “UTMB Health Ambulatory Quality Improvement: Phone Call Response Time” at the University HealthSystem Consortium Annual Conference 2011. More than 1,000 leaders are expected to attend.

- Congratulations to Jamie Heffernan and Odette Comeau. They have been asked by Kerry Cheever, editor of Brunner and Suddarth’s Textbook of Medical Surgical Nursing, 13th edition to write a chapter on Burns for the new edition.

- Congratulations to the Environmental Services Department at UTMB Health for outstanding patient satisfaction scores!

- Everyone is doing a great job in score improvement—keep up the great work!

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Dr. Luca Cicalese, Dr. John Badalamenti, Dr. Kristene Gugliuzza, Dr. Kathleen Gamilla-Crudo, Wayne Baudy, Jaymee Mayo and Jay Torres.
Focused Improvement Efforts Positively Affect Patient Satisfaction Scores

Many of our high-performing clinics and units have shared the practices they believe have contributed to their consistently high satisfaction scores.

We are trying to spread those effective practices to help boost satisfaction in other clinics. Most recently, we have seen how focused improvement efforts can positively improve patient satisfaction scores.

While health care providers often appraise whether the process of care meets standards based on clinical outcomes, patients’ experiences are often greatly influenced by the ease of making an appointment, the accessibility of the facility, and the way that staff and care providers interact with them. In addition to providing good health care, remaining aware of all these factors can make it all the more challenging to remain attentive to the patient’s perspective.

The Department of Labor & Delivery (L&D) has begun focusing on improving the patient’s experience related to staff response to patient concerns/complaints, emotional needs and reduce noise complaints. They did this by implementing the following initiatives:

- Increasing awareness of Press Ganey survey results by discussing patient satisfaction at every staff meeting and reviewing patient comments with staff.

- Conducting hourly rounding on visitors in waiting rooms and focusing on concerns/complaints of families and visitors and addressing their needs.

- Implementing a “Thank You” card signed by everyone involved in the patient’s care, thanking them for choosing UTMB Health for their healthcare needs. It also expresses the department’s goal to provide very good care and notes that they will receive a survey in the mail.

- Hardwiring AIDET: Five Steps to Achieving Satisfaction.

- Taking a picture of the baby at birth and placing it in a scrapbook frame for the parents.
Shout Outs!

“This letter is to praise Dr. Mostafa Borahay (Gyn Onc) for the care that I received during the months of February and March of this year. Dr. Borahay showed genuine concern for my health as well as being professional and courteous. If the situation arises in the future, I would not hesitate to make appointments with him and would recommend him to others. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Ob-Gyn staff and front desk personnel for their caring personalities.”

To the staff of the 9th floor and SICU: “You have a caring, professional staff—everyone was wonderful. That includes Felix, Morgan, Denise, Jason, Meagan and Ryan. When my husband would feel down, they would try to cheer him up and they never seemed too busy to help us. Even the housekeeping staff was wonderful. They would leave me extra towels so I could shower and wouldn’t have to leave him…”

“Dr. Susannah Perkins was excellent. She is likeable and extremely knowledgeable. I liked her very much and was very impressed…I walked in [to the clinic], they took me right away. I was so impressed with the courtesy, professionalism and humor as well as the caring personalities displayed by everyone at the CBC Dickinson Family Health Clinic.”

Patients referred to the nurses in Ante/Post Partum repeatedly as excellent, sweet and helpful. Several patients also mentioned they would let others know about their wonderful experience at UTMB. Norma Delpin and Shakuntala Singh were mentioned by name.

Nurses in CT/Vascular Surgery “were on point and made [the patient’s] stay very comfortable...Tameka Scott is outstanding.”

“Joann Aubin (Cardiology) on the 4th floor ICU was the best. What a nurse! And Whitney Hollis (Cardiology) on the 8th floor was excellent—such caring people. Y’all are lucky to have them. They make a difference. Thanks!”

“Just a note to tell you how wonderful the staff is at the Day Surgery Unit of Victory Lakes…I was signed in and taken back very quickly. Janet greeted me at the front desk with her usual smile and hello, Tamila greeted me in the clinic and said someone would be with me very soon and was very personable and right on. My pre-op nurse, Jessica made me very comfortable and we had some laughs, which helped keep me calm. Leah & Janet in the OR were wonderful and caring and Ashley, my PACU was great. Dr. Lin, my knight in shining armor, came by prior to the procedure to be sure I was comfortable and ready and to see if I had any questions, along with the resident that was working with him that day, and then came back by before I left. All in all it was a wonderful experience considering what I was there for.

I would also like to compliment the Pain Clinic in Friendswood. The staff there is always upbeat and helpful and treat me as if I were really special, as it appears they do all who enter there.”

The following individuals also received positive mentions:
Minnie Richards and Concepcion Figuerora in Environmental Services; Karen Kislingbury in CT/Vascular Surgery; Dr. Taylor Riall and Dr. Sam Kilic in Surgery; Elizabeth Cooper in Ante/Post Partum; and Dr. Erin Hommel in the ACE Unit.

Leadership Rounding—You spoke, We listened

One of the top issues received from the You Count! survey was lack of communication. Part of our action plan to help increase dialogue throughout the institution is to increase executive leadership’s time with our most valuable asset—you!

We hope the face-to-face time will increase your confidence to openly share your ideas of how things are going in your work area; how we can further improve communication and the type of information you’d like to hear more of.

Donna Sollenberger, Executive Vice President and CEO for the UTMB Health System, recently made rounds in the Health Information Management (HIM) and Medical Staff Office areas.

Mrs. Sollenberger has plans to visit areas throughout the institution and those sites that are located off-campus and off-Island.

Pictured from left to right from the Medical Staff Office: Margaret Foreman, Dr. Eric Nolen, Christina O’Neill, Roslyn Leigh, Patricia Henderson and Donna Sollenberger

Pictured from top left to right from HIM, row 1: Cynthia Thomas; Row 2: Bin Wu, Donna Sollenberger and Tony Nino; Dr. Mark Kirschbaum and Mrs. Sollenberger with Melinda Garland; Row 3: Lucy Moreno with Mrs. Sollenberger; Dr. Kirschbaum and Mrs Sollenberger with Suzi Castro.