

# *Health First*



## **TAVR Offers Solution For 90-Year-Old Former WWII Paratrooper Arthur Bronzo**

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**Health  
First**

Ordinary People. Extraordinary Stories.

# THROUGH MY EYES...

My name is Larry.  
Visit [HFstories.org](http://HFstories.org)  
to learn more about my journey.



## Health First Gives Back During Holiday Season



ABOVE: Health First partnered with the South Brevard Sharing Center to help fulfill the wish lists of needy children, and at left, Health First associates pen handwritten, personal messages to our overseas soldiers. BELOW: Health First was on the receiving end of a random act of Christmas kindness, compliments of 9-year-old Yerik Cywinkito, a former patient of Health First's Palm Bay Hospital, shown below with hospital COO Judy Gizinski.

### Events Help Kids In Need, Soldiers Serving Overseas

Health First's commitment to giving back to the community is as bright as the holidays themselves. Recent events hosted to help children in need and soldiers stationed overseas are living proof.

Among the charitable efforts were special card-signing stations at various Health First locations. There, associates had the unique opportunity to pen handwritten, personal messages to our overseas soldiers, expressing gratitude for the sacrifices our military continues to make. Thousands of holiday cards were sent to service members – each with the added tasty touch of a candy cane.

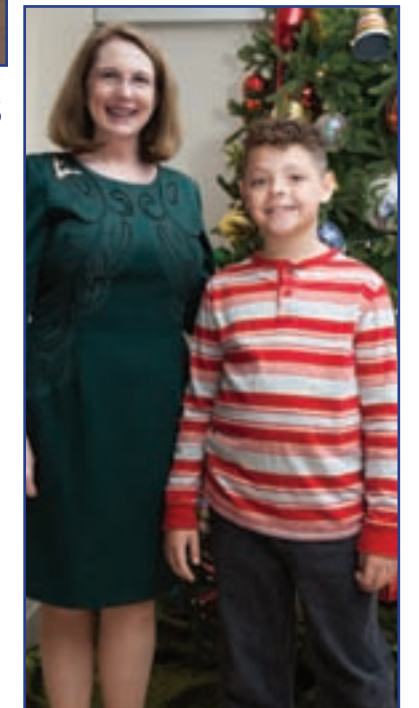
For the fourth year in a row, Health First partnered with the South Brevard Sharing Center to help fulfill wish lists of children who otherwise may not have received gifts for the holidays. Health First associates and South Brevard Sharing Center volunteers purchased gifts for more than 600 children in Brevard County – many of whom are homeless – as part of the Sharing Center's "Children Without Christmas Toy

Drive." Purchased gifts are delivered to the children via a Sharing Center truck before Christmas Day.

But sometimes, it's our associates themselves who inspire the community.

Health First was on the receiving end of a random act of Christmas kindness, compliments of a nine-year-old boy. Yerik Cywinkito, a former patient of Health First's Palm Bay Hospital, recently delivered sandwiches to hospital associates, demonstrating his appreciation for all the hospital's associates do for the people in our community. In return, Health First invited young Yerik to have the honor of lighting Palm Bay Hospital's holiday tree. All of our Health First Hospital holiday tree lighting ceremonies were beautiful, and we appreciate all of the community's support.

The holidays are always special, and Health First is thankful for all of the joy and love our associates, patients and neighbors displayed this season. We are looking forward to happy and healthy 2017.



# Health First Golf Classic Benefits Aging Services

## Foundation Event Supports Care Provided By Dedicated, Talented Interdisciplinary Team

The Health First Foundation is proud to support a wide array of health and wellness initiatives that improve the lives of residents in our community, no matter their stage in life. In January, the Health First Foundation was set to host its annual Health First Golf Classic at Suntime Country Club, with proceeds benefitting Health First Aging Services.

With a mission to improve the health and well-being of older adults in Brevard County, Health First Aging Services offers a dedicated interdisciplinary team that offers the knowledge and skills required to address unique goals for each patient and his or her caregiver.



Dr. Visa Srinivasan

for the senior population. “Dr. Visa” serves as the program’s medical director.

“Health First Aging Services understands the challenges facing the senior population and offers a fully integrated Aging Wellness Program,” said Dr. Visa.

“Our commitment and focus is to provide patient- and family-centered care to enhance the quality of life for



THE HEALTH FIRST GOLF CLASSIC COMMITTEE included, left to right, Percy Cohrs, Robin Rice (Co-Chair), Adrian Moser, Dan Moon (Co-Chair), Anne Moon (Co-Chair), Jeff Pier-sall, Mo Michel, Pam Carman-Hayhurst, Brent Naylor, Keaton Senti and Justin Cook.

our seniors to age well and live well.”

Health First Aging Services takes all aspects of the patient’s medical, social, economic and financial situation into consideration to create a unique care plan.

“Within our Health First Aging Services family, we provide resources, education and complimentary services that focus on the patient and their caregivers to fulfill their critical needs,” said Dr. Visa.

### Inpatient and Outpatient Services

Health First Aging Services includes the East Central Florida Memory Disorder Clinic, a not-for-profit agency funded primarily by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs’ Alzheimer’s Disease Initiative. The clinic provides services to individuals in the community who are concerned about Alzheimer’s disease or related disorders.

Inpatient and outpatient services are also available through Health First’s Senior Behavioral Wellness program, located at Palm Bay Hospital. Many older adults experience unique emotional stresses, which can oftentimes be helped through specialized care.

“Emotional despair and depression do not have to be a normal part of aging,” said Dr. Visa. “From losing a spouse to learning to cope with physical and/or mental limitations, we are dedicated to providing

individualized care and treatment for older adults.”

Referrals for an assessment may come from the patient, physicians and other healthcare providers, as well as a family member, friend or caretaker.

### Support, Hope For Caregivers

Health First Aging Services offers The Center for Family Caregivers, which provides information, support and hope to those who care for elderly patients.

“It takes a village to take care of an elder,” said Dr. Visa. “That is why we use a team approach in our clinic.

“Often, the main caregivers for our patients are seniors or an adult child from the ‘sandwich generation.’ These caregivers are overwhelmed and stressed, trying to navigate the healthcare maze. Our team discusses the care plan with patient and family caregivers. This is gratifying for the patient, family and our team, as this unique approach helps us all be on the same page.”

Ongoing programs include customized information and referrals for all caregiving needs, caregiver training programs, support groups and special social events designed to allow families to enjoy time together. ■

For information about Health First Aging Services, call 321.434.7611. For information about the Health First Foundation, visit HFgive.org.

# Hospice of Health First’s New Home Meets Needs of Staff, Patients and Families

## Bright Star Program, Which Helps Grieving Children and Families, Among Services Provided

After 25 years of serving the community from its original office location, Hospice of Health First has a new home. The Hospice team has moved to a different locale that boasts a variety of benefits, including: energy efficient, well-planned meeting rooms; an open floor plan; and comfortable family counseling spaces. Designed with a focus on community, Hospice of Health First can meet the needs of its staff, patients, survivors and community members. As experts in end-of-life care, the new space will serve as a one-stop shop for information about advanced directives, bereavement support and end-of-life care.

### Bright Star Provides Safe Place

Hospice of Health First’s Bright Star Program helps children and their families by offering facilitator-guided, peer-supported groups for children, teens and adults. Hospice of Health First believes that children who are grieving the loss of a significant person in their lives do not warrant a diagnosis but need a safe place where they are well supported. Bright Star offers:

- Emotional support in a safe and



HEALTH FIRST IS GRATEFUL for the support of donors, whose generosity enables us to provide compassionate care and meaningful programs and services to more people in our community.



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comfortable environment that allows the children and families to grieve while promoting healing

- Support for grieving children through arts, crafts, storytelling, discussion and play
- Programs that are open to the community – Bright Star does not charge a fee
- Evening sessions during the school year for multiple age groups (including tweens and teens)
- One-on-one sessions for family members requesting information about the program



### Grateful For Support

Thanks to generous gifts to Hospice of Health First, the Health First Foundation was able to provide more than \$1 million dollars to help make this new facility a reality. Health First is grateful for the support of donors, whose generosity enables us to provide compassionate care and meaningful programs and services to more people in our community. Because of this generosity, thousands of patients have received care through Hospice of Health First, regardless of their ability to pay. ■

To learn more about Hospice of Health First, visit HFhospice.org.



# TAVR Offers Solution For 90-Year-Old Former WWII Paratrooper

**A**rthur Bronzo is the poster boy for aging gracefully, thanks to a strong constitution and good fortune.

At 90, this member of the Greatest Generation survived the Battle of the Bulge, the WWII campaign in which American forces incurred an exorbitant number of casualties. The former paratrooper also survived after capturing 11 German soldiers, with just the assistance of a fellow GI. Arthur also could have just as easily drowned when the ferry he and his fellow soldiers were sailing in across an icy French river sank.

But through these incidents and more, Arthur emerged victorious.

More than 70 years later, Arthur hasn't slowed down – even retirement didn't affect the work ethic of this electrician from Brooklyn. Now living in Melbourne with Sue, his wife of 65 years, Arthur spends several days a week helping at Ascension Catholic Church's thrift shop. Whenever anyone he knows needs electrical work done, Arthur is happy to offer his expertise after decades in the field.

With his beloved Sue, four children, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, Arthur has plenty to live for. If he can help it, he's not going to allow health problems to get in his way.

## Suffering From Aortic Stenosis

Thirty years ago, doctors placed a stent in Arthur to help his heart work better. With the device's help for three decades, Arthur's big heart pumped away, allowing this soldier to go about his routine for many years. A few months ago, however, Arthur noticed a shortness of breath and swollen legs. His doctor recommended a visit to Health First cardiologist Jim Ronaldson, MD, who discovered that



**At 90, Arthur Bronzo, a member the Greatest Generation and World War II paratrooper, now lives in Melbourne with Sue, his wife of 65 years, and spends several days a week helping at Ascension Catholic Church's thrift shop.**

Arthur's aortic valve, which should normally expand to the size of a quarter, was only opening to the size of a dime.

Arthur was suffering from aortic stenosis, the gradual restriction of the leaflets that allow blood to pump out of the left ventricle. As the leaflets harden, the opening becomes smaller and smaller. This places a greater strain on the heart, which must work harder and harder to keep up the blood flow. Eventually, the heart can fail.

"From onset of any symptom, almost 50 percent of people with aortic stenosis die within two years if untreated," said Matthew Campbell, MD, a Health First thoracic and cardiac surgeon. "There are a number of end-stage cancers with better track records."

Arthur's swollen legs were caused by fluid retention of the kidneys, which is a common reaction with decreased

blood flow.

"Unfortunately, the extra fluid just backs up into the lungs, because the heart is struggling to pump through the diseased valve," explained Dr. Campbell.

Traditional open-heart aortic valve replacement (TAVR) surgery remedies the situation, but at Arthur's age, he was not a good candidate for such a complex procedure.

## Drs. Campbell, Jara To the Rescue

**D**r. Campbell came to the rescue with cardiologist Dr. Cesar Jara. The two joined forces to perform a transcatheter aortic valve replacement (or TAVR), making Arthur one of a few patients in Brevard to undergo this minimally invasive surgery. He may have been among the first, but Arthur certainly will not be the last TAVR patient in Brevard – the procedure can be a lifesaver for many.

"TAVR offers many patients, especially our older, more frail patients, a good solution for their severe symptomatic aortic valve stenosis," said Dr. Campbell.

In traditional AVR, which is performed under general anesthesia and requires a heart-lung machine, the heart surgeon removes the diseased valve and sews in a new one. Although surgeons at Health First's Holmes Regional Medical Center's Heart Center perform minimally invasive AVR (through a small incision between the ribs on the right side of the chest), the procedure is still appropriate only for younger and moderate-risk patients, who typically tolerate the surgery very well.

Better suited to individuals who, like Arthur, may have age working against them, TAVRs are performed without the need for a heart-lung machine and frequently without any incisions at all, but rather catheter sites in the femoral arteries of the groin.

## Hybrid Operating Room

**I**n transcatheter aortic valve replacement, a large stent with functional "leaflets" attached is delivered to the heart. This essentially replaces the diseased stenotic aortic valve and normalizes blood flow out from the heart into the body.

Because there is no long-term data on lifespan of the TAVR valve stent yet, the procedure is restricted to high-risk, "redo" patients or patients older than 75. That, however, may change as more research studies are completed.

"If we get more long-term data on the TAVR valve durability, we will likely expand its uses in the United States," added Dr. Campbell.

With the recent addition of a hybrid operating room at Holmes Regional Medical Center, performing procedures such as TAVR have been made that much easier for the cardiothoracic team at Health First.

"The hybrid room is a large operating room where we can perform the full gamut of traditional and minimally invasive cardiac and vascular surgery but also incorporates state-of-the-art imaging identical in quality to a catheterization suite," said Dr. Campbell.

"More and more procedures are



**ARTHUR BRONZO** survived the Battle of the Bulge, the WWII campaign where American forces incurred an exorbitant number of casualties. The former paratrooper also survived after capturing 11 German soldiers, with just the assistance of a fellow GI. Arthur also could have just as easily drowned when the ferry he and his fellow soldiers were sailing in across an icy French river sank.

becoming hybrids of both approaches, in order to get the best outcome. Even trauma patients can benefit from multi-modality procedures melding open and catheter-based approaches."

An extension of Health First's superior cardiac services, the Health First Valve Clinic is the only center on the Space and Treasure coasts dedicated to offering a comprehensive range of surgical options for heart valve replacements.

As for Arthur, after a two-day hospital stay and a few weeks of R&R at home, he was back to feeling like himself again. For him, Health First's cardiovascular team and technology gave him the opportunity to continue doing what he loves most: enjoying the love of his family, volunteering for his church and making a difference in his community. ■

**For more information about the Health First Valve Clinic, call 321.434.VALV.**



**Health First**  
**Heart & Vascular**  
SERVICES

# Health First Pro-Health & Fitness Centers Here to Help Members Stay on Track



HEALTH FIRST PRO-HEALTH & FITNESS CENTERS are where health and wellness are a way of life. As a member, you have access to four state-of-the-art facilities, each with their own unique feel and special features. With more than 25 years of exceptional experience in health & fitness centers, Pro-Health & Fitness Centers have degreed and certified exercise staff that are dedicated to a well-rounded, total fitness experience.

## Four Facilities in Brevard Offer Diverse Health and Wellness Programs, Services

It happens to the best of us. We decide that we're finally going to get in shape, only to get sidetracked – or we're intimidated to take the first step. While physical fitness isn't always an easy commitment to make, it's an important one.



Jon Williams

With multiple locations in Brevard County, members of Health First's Pro-Health & Fitness Centers experience total convenience. "Exercise positively impacts all systems in your body," said Jon Williams, director of Pro-Health & Fitness, which offers locations in Melbourne, Palm Bay, Merritt Island and Viera.

"Shortly after initiating an exercise program, it is common to notice improvements in lung and heart function, as well as increased muscular strength. Exercise also decreases the risk of ailments and diseases that can shorten your life, including coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and even some cancers."

Health First recommends checking with your doctor before starting a new exercise program. This is especially important if you haven't exercised for a long time or have a chronic health problem, such as heart disease, diabetes or arthritis.

"If you are already experiencing any of these health issues, being active may help you to have better control over them, helping you to feel better and live longer," Williams added.

### SERVICES FOR EVERYONE

Dedicated to the health and well-being of our community, Health First offers diverse health and wellness programs and services at the four Health First Pro-Health & Fitness Centers. There's something for everyone, no matter your age or fitness level.

Start your 2017 with a get-healthy plan. Now's the time to take charge of your health and your future.

### BENEFITS OF REGULAR EXERCISE

- Boosts Energy
- Promotes weight loss
- Helps fight health conditions and diseases
- Improves mood
- Aids in improved sleep
- Encourages social activity
- Reduces stress
- Enhances flexibility

Visit [myPHF.org](http://myPHF.org) for more information.

# GET IT DONE!

LIFE WILL WAIT FOR YOU



For more information on our member services, visit [myPHF.org](http://myPHF.org)

**Hours:**  
Monday - Thursday: 5 am to 10 pm  
Friday: 5 am to 9 pm  
Saturday: 8 am to 5 pm  
Sunday: 8 am to 5 pm



**Pro-Health**  
& FITNESS CENTER

MELBOURNE ■ MERRITT ISLAND ■ PALM BAY ■ VIERA



LEFT TO RIGHT:  
Dr. Ulfur Gudjonsson,  
Dr. Matthew Campbell  
and Dr. Tamim Antaki.

COMPASSIONATE, EXPERIENCED AND ADEPT with the most advanced equipment and procedures, the team of cardiothoracic surgeons and staff at Heart and Vascular Services combine their formidable knowledge to keep the hearts of Brevard beating happily.

## It Takes Heart and Soul To Deliver Health First's Heart and Vascular Services' High Level of Care

It takes heart and soul – along with the highest level of expertise and most-up-to-date technology – to deliver the high level of care that is the hallmark of Health First's Heart and Vascular Services.

With Health First's Holmes Regional Medical Center serving as its headquarters, Brevard's only Heart Valve Clinic was the site of Brevard's first transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) surgery. Already, Health First's Heart and Vascular Services has made heart history in the Space Coast.

The program offers a comprehensive range of treatment options, which include:

- Open heart surgery (including bloodless surgery), plus robotic lung cancer surgery and video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery (VATS)
- Minimally invasive valve surgery for mitral, aortic and tricuspid valves
- MAZE surgery, a surgical ablation treatment for atrial fibrillation that uses microwave or ultrasound energy, which creates

scar tissue that blocks the abnormal electrical signals causing the arrhythmia.

■ Coronary artery bypass, including off-pump or “beating heart” surgery, which avoids the possible complications of using a heart-lung machine

■ Hybrid arch/thoracic endovascular aortic repair (TEVAR). The procedure involves the placement of an expandable stent graft within the aorta to treat aortic disease without operating directly on the aorta.

■ Thoracic aortic aneurysm repair

### POWERHOUSE TRIO

Compassionate, experienced and adept with the most advanced equipment and procedures, the team of cardiothoracic surgeons and staff at Heart and Vascular Services combine their formidable knowledge to keep the hearts of Brevard beating happily. At the helm of this outstanding, close-to-home care is the “heart team” of Tamim Antaki, MD, Matthew

Campbell, MD, and Ulfur Gudjonsson, MD, a powerhouse trio of specialists any major metropolitan areas would be proud to call their own.

### ■ Dr. Tamim Antaki

Dr. Antaki received his medical degree from Aleppo University Faculty of Medicine in Aleppo, Syria. He completed his residency in general surgery at New York Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, as well as research and clinical fellowships in cardiothoracic surgery at the University of Arkansas.

Board certified by the American Board of Thoracic Surgery and the American Board of Surgery, Dr.



Dr. Tamim Antaki

Antaki served as a surgeon with Union Hospital Medical Group in Terre Haute, Indiana, and ran his own private practice, Arkansas Heart

and Lung, in Little Rock. He was also chief of the division of cardiothoracic surgery at the University of Arkansas.

Dr. Antaki has contributed his medical expertise to various medical publications and is a popular speaker in his field, both nationally and internationally. He is also a fellow with the American College of Chest Physicians and the American College of Surgeons.

His special interests include: mitral and aortic valve repair; robotic-assisted cardiac and thoracic surgery; minimally invasive mitral surgery; cardiac pacemaker and defibrillator surgery; endovascular aortic aneurysm repair and carotid surgery; and aortic and peripheral vascular surgery.

### ■ Dr. Matthew Campbell

Board certified in thoracic surgery, general surgery, cardiac and vascular surgery, Dr. Campbell is fellowship-trained in vascular and thoracic surgery. His professional interests and focuses include: aortic valve replacement; minimally invasive approaches for mitral and tricuspid repair/replacement and aortic valve replacement; aortic aneurysm surgery, both endovascular and open; coronary artery bypass surgery;



Dr. Matthew Campbell

robotic lung and mediastinal tumor resections; and open and endovascular surgery. A graduate of the Hahnemann University School of Medicine in Philadelphia, Dr. Campbell completed his residency in general surgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk. He completed his fellowships in vascular surgery from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and thoracic surgery from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

Dr. Campbell lists Health First's Valve Center and technology such as the daVinci robotic systems as among the tools that help optimize patient outcomes.

“The Valve Center is a multidisciplinary entity that



COMPLEMENTING HEART AND VASCULAR SERVICES is the soon-to-open Cardiac and Rehabilitation Wellness Program, made possible by funds from the 2016 Health First Foundation's Grape Escape, a charitable event that raised more than \$425,000 for this comprehensive program for Heart and Vascular Services patients.

specializes in the triage and treatment of patients with severe valve disease,” said Dr. Campbell. “In our practice, robotic technology is utilized to perform minimally invasive thoracic procedures. It is a powerful tool with state-of-the-art 3D vision.”

### ■ Dr. Ulfur Gudjonsson

In partnership with Drs. Antaki and Campbell through Health First's Heart and Vascular Services is Dr. Gudjonsson, board certified in surgery with specialty certification in thoracic and cardiac surgery. He earned his medical degree from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

“I was fortunate enough to receive a Navy scholarship,” he said. “I received a lot of training on care of battlefield injuries that steered me towards the surgical side of medicine.”

Part of Dr. Gudjonsson's on-the-job medical experience was gained through the military, where his duties included serving as the ship surgeon aboard the USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier. He also was the surgical department head at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Keflavik, Iceland.



Dr. Ulfur Gudjonsson

Dr. Gudjonsson completed his surgery internship and general surgery residency at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego and his

cardiothoracic surgery residence with IUSM in Indianapolis.

He was a cardiothoracic surgeon with Indiana University Health Bloomington Hospital. He also served as chief of cardiothoracic surgery for South Georgia Medical Center in Valdosta, as well as surgeon and assistant professor for Athens Regional Medical Center/Emory University.

### CUTTING EDGE PROGRAMS

Complementing Heart and Vascular Services is the soon-to-open Cardiac and Rehabilitation Wellness Program, made possible by funds from the 2016 Health First Foundation's Grape Escape, a charitable event that raised more than \$425,000 for this comprehensive program for Heart and Vascular Services patients.

Through screenings, education and rehabilitation, the program will help patients dealing with cardiovascular disease to improve their health by managing risk factors and adopting lifestyle changes. The rehabilitation clinic is currently under construction at Health First's Pro-Health and Fitness facility in Melbourne.

With cutting-edge programs and an expert medical team, Health First's Heart and Vascular Services is ready to do battle against heart disease, an insidious killer that is the primary cause of death in the United States. ■

For more information, visit [visit HFheart.org](http://visit HFheart.org)

# YOUR HEART TEAM FOR CARDIAC SURGERY



Ulfur Gudjonsson, MD, Matthew Campbell, MD, FACS and Tamim Antaki, MD, FACS

At Health First Heart & Vascular Services, you will find the most up-to-date technology, highly skilled physicians and a dedicated clinical team providing all of your cardiac needs, including specialized heart care.

Our team of board certified cardiothoracic surgeons are located close to home, right here in Brevard County. We offer state-of-the-art cardiac and thoracic surgical services, including Brevard's only Valve Clinic with TAVR and minimally invasive valve surgery.

**HOLMES REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**

1350 S. Hickory Street, Melbourne

**321.434.3455**

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SERVICES

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