Esteemed Cardiologist Chooses Adventist Heart & Vascular Institute for Surgery

Bruce Ourieff, MD, is an esteemed cardiologist practicing in Santa Maria, California. For decades, he experienced atrial fibrillation (A-Fib)—a condition that causes an irregular heartbeat and can lead to stroke, heart failure and other heart-related complications.

Dr. Ourieff was able to live with A-Fib for over 30 years; then the symptoms became more frequent and started to impact his quality of life. During those years, Dr. Ourieff had several ablations and tried to manage his condition with medication. The symptoms of A-Fib would go away for a while, only to return. That’s when Dr. Ourieff knew he needed to try a different approach to improve his everyday health.

As a cardiologist, Dr. Ourieff knew his next step—and hope—was to have the Hybrid Maze Procedure, a minimally invasive surgery that changes the electrical pattern in the heart to stop A-Fib.

Adventist Heart & Vascular Institute (AHVI) is one of only a handful of medical centers that offer the procedure. He explains his decision to have the procedure at AHVI: “Based on Dr. Gan Dunnington’s stellar experience and training, I knew he had to be the one to trust with my procedure. I understood the depth of his work with A-Fib. He is the only surgeon in the country doing the volume of this unique procedure.”

"I’m honored that Dr. Ourieff trusted the team at AHVI with his care.”

For more information on the Hybrid Maze Procedure, contact AHVI at 707.963.7200.

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A Tradition for the Generations

When giving to others, children, parents and grandparents come together for a common cause. They decide what issues the family values and then work together to make a difference. The act of giving transitions from an impulse to something purposeful.

Here’s How to Start Your Tradition:

- **Begin early:** Encourage small children to donate their toys or participate in a simple charitable activity. As they grow, encourage youth to talk about their interests. Accept that their idea of giving back may differ from yours.

- **Volunteer together:** Participate in family volunteer opportunities in your community. It’s a great way to see firsthand who or what your giving supports. Plus, making a difference together feels good.

- **Craft a family vision:** Encourage family members to talk about their giving goals. Solicit input from everyone. Then, together, decide how, where and why you will give.

- **Create ownership:** Provide younger family members with money to make charitable gifts. When they grow older, match their giving 1:1. Creating this sense of ownership can help instill a giving mindset for life.

- **Gauge your impact:** A few times a year, discuss the impact of your philanthropy. This keeps giving on everyone’s minds and keeps them motivated.

- **Be flexible:** Periodically, review your family vision for philanthropy. Does it still resonate? Does it need a makeover? Adjust your goals to changing priorities.

- **Give again (and again):** After all, the key to tradition is repetition.

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Dr. Ourieff went on to say: “As a medical professional, I know this procedure requires a great deal of skill and training. The procedure is very demanding, and few surgeons are trained in it. I’d say it requires an artist’s touch, which Dr. Dunnington has. This is what he does, and he understands it intimately.”

Says cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Dunnington: “There are so many patients like Dr. Ourieff who would benefit from a hybrid procedure but are not aware that this procedure exists. Their doctors and cardiologists might not know about this option. I’m so glad that he was made aware of his options and found our team to help in his treatment.”

It has been five months since Dr. Ourieff’s procedure, and he is symptom-free. Dr. Dunnington’s team of specialists felt honored to take this case, and Dr. Ourieff is so pleased with the results that he is now referring some of his patients to AHVI for the procedure.

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Make Your Tradition Last

With a planned gift to St. Helena Hospital Foundation, you can extend your tradition of giving beyond your lifetime and set an example for future generations. Learn how at www.FundingWonders.org/leavingalegacy.
Give From Your IRA

An IRA is an appealing way to save for retirement: Make a contribution and enjoy tax savings. But eventually, that tax bill comes due—when you take your annual distributions and again when you leave your assets to heirs. If you want to avoid the tax bite and make an impact on our mission to inspire health, wholeness and hope, then consider a gift to St. Helena Hospital Foundation from your IRA.

Make Your Gift Today
If you’re 70½ or older, you can use the IRA charitable rollover to make a tax-free gift to St. Helena Hospital Foundation. This law allows you to transfer any amount up to $100,000 annually directly to a qualified charitable organization without paying income tax on the distribution. Additional benefits include:

• You’ll see the difference you’re making today.
• You pay no income taxes on the gift. The transfer doesn’t generate taxable income or a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you don’t itemize your tax deductions.
• Your gift can satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution.

Magnify Your Impact After Your Lifetime
Regardless of your age, you can give from your IRA by naming us as a beneficiary of your account. This is a great option for extending support from your IRA beyond your lifetime.

Here’s how:
1. Decide what percentage (1–100) you would like us to receive.
2. Contact your IRA administrator for a change-of-beneficiary form, or simply download a form from your provider’s website.
3. Name St. Helena Hospital Foundation and the gift percentage on the form.
4. Return the form to your IRA administrator.
5. Let us know about your plans so we can thank you.

Whether you make your impact at St. Helena Hospital today or after your lifetime, your gift matters. Please contact Susan Dix Lyons at Dixlyosl@ah.org or 707.963.6208 to discuss your plans.

Your Estate Planning Tools
Fill out and return the enclosed survey to request your Digital Estate Protection Kit and our new guide Build Your Best Will Planning Team. These guides provide the tools you need to get started planning your estate, and help you keep your personal and financial information protected.
Twenty percent of people age 55 years or older experience some type of mental health matter. Adventist Health St. Helena (AHSH) is addressing this important issue in its inpatient Senior Behavioral Health unit. AHSH is privileged to have one of only a few such facilities in the state of California. The unit, with 12 beds housing patients aged 55 and over, serves seniors from 49 counties in California. The average stay to wellness is 10 to 14 days.

Heather Lewerenz, MD, board certified in psychiatry and neurology, heads up the geriatric psych unit with a dedicated team of nurses, social workers and occupational therapists. They work diligently to provide a light, safe and supportive environment for patients and their families.

Dr. Lewerenz says, “Our goal is to treat the whole person, so it is especially beneficial to have the hospital on-site to deal with any other health needs. We also have amazing social workers who work diligently to make sure patients are safe upon discharge.”

She goes on to explain, “In general, the U.S. has an aging population with a dire need for health services and mental health specifically. I am passionate about working with the geriatric population and find it rewarding to see how much better our patients get after staying with us.”

The Senior Behavioral Unit at AHSH works with patients with mental health conditions that may present as depression, suicidal thoughts, anxiety or schizophrenia. The caregivers create a unique treatment program that meets the needs of these individuals. For more information, call 707.592.3937.

“We meet the specialized needs of our geriatric population in a safe, caring and cheerful environment.”

—Dr. Heather Lewerenz