

# DEKALB MEDICAL

## HEALTHCARE YOU CAN COUNT ON

How many years does it take to make a tradition? For DeKalb Medical, 50 years is just the beginning of what it believes will be a long “love story” with its local community, according to President and CEO Eric P. Norwood, FACHE.

Few people may remember that just 50 years ago, the 40-acre campus that is now home to DeKalb Medical was nothing more than a lonely berry patch—one budding with potential in the eyes of some local visionaries who led the cause to build a hospital. Today, the fruits of these dynamos’ labor, and their daring to dream big, is evident in the thriving health system that cares for half-a-million patients a year and generates close to \$1 billion for the Georgia economy each year.

### The DeKalb Medical difference

Even more impressive than the positive economic impact DeKalb Medical has had, or the lives it saves, is the way in which its “soul” has wedged itself into the heart of the community. From the North Decatur hospital’s humble beginnings in 1961 as “DeKalb General,” the non-profit has grown into a three-hospital system with a network of more than 800 doctors representing 55 medical specialties.

“DeKalb Medical has meant a lot of things to a lot of people over the years,” says DeKalb Medical Foundation Executive Director **C. Leigh Minter**. “From a newborn’s first breath to managing a medical emergency or a chronic illness, we’ve touched the lives of multiple generations in the past half century.”

In testimony to just how far the system has come and how much the community has grown to count on DeKalb Medical for quality healthcare, hundreds of community members, DeKalb Medical employees, volunteers and retirees flocked to the North Decatur campus to participate in the 50th anniversary celebration of the birth of DeKalb Medical from a berry patch.

“It has been a great privilege for the physicians and staff of DeKalb Medical to bring five decades of advanced technology and excellent care to our local community and far beyond,” says **Robin H. Dretler, M.D.**, chief of the medical staff at DeKalb Medical at North Decatur.

Among the special events that have been held and will continue to be held throughout the year were the unsealing of a time capsule from 1993 and the sealing of one that will be opened in 2021. One retired nurse drove 200 miles and another flew in from Michigan to participate in the activities. Hundreds of others who helped seal the time capsule almost 20 years ago are still working at DeKalb Medical and watched as it was re-opened. Among them were more than 300 staff and retirees who received autographed copies of the DeKalb Medical history book in appreciation of 15 years or more of service to the health system and its patients.

### 50 and gorgeous

With the right mixture of insightful medicine and advanced technology, patients couldn’t be more pleased with the progress of DeKalb Medical. A total transformation has been underway at North Decatur for the past five years with special attention to interiors and atmosphere. Patients are often surprised to find granite countertops at the nursing stations, Wi-Fi, and warm fireplaces in the reception areas, as well as flat-screen TVs in most patient rooms.

Not only is the North Decatur campus “gorgeous,” according to retiree **Mary Hollis, R.N.**, who attended the System’s ongoing golden anniversary salute, “It has such a warm, personal touch that makes you feel right at home.” The campus currently houses a first-rate Heart and Vascular Center that provides emergency and elective cardiac angioplasty, as well as a nationally acclaimed Joint Solutions Center, The Cancer Center, Surgical Weight Loss Center of Excellence, Wellness on Wheels mobile mammography, maternity services and more.

The System, which has hospitals in Lithonia, on North Decatur Road and in downtown Decatur, is enjoying record patient satisfaction, according to Press Ganey opinion polls. In addition, DeKalb Medical’s Joint Solutions Center (JSC), which opened less than two years ago, earned the 2011 Marshall Steele Patient Satisfaction award with a score of 92 percent.

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# IS 50

## Years *and counting!*

*Pushing Beyond since 1961*



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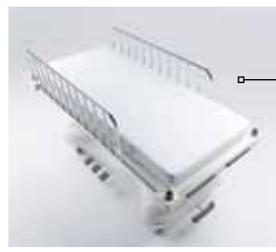


DeKalb General Hospital opens (320 beds)



Emergency Room opens

1955 1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 **1961** 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 **1971** 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 **1978** 1979 1980



Hospital expands and doubles in size (640 beds)



Neonatal Intensive Care (NICU) opens



DEKALB MEDICAL IS

50  
Years

*and counting!*

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To its credit, patients say DeKalb Medical has been able to preserve its community spirit and “small town” service approach even while expanding and investing in the latest medical advances. The continuous flow of new medical technology includes system-wide electronic medical records that put health information at a physician’s fingertips for rapid response and treatment success and safety. DeKalb Medical also offers its patients better experiences and outcomes with the addition of a da Vinci® Surgical System robot (that performs surgery quicker than the human hand, with smaller incisions and less recovery time), as well as new RapidArc radiotherapy that can deliver life-saving treatments to cancer patients in sessions that take less than five minutes.

### Top Atlanta workplace

Named a 2011 Top Ten Workplace by the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, DeKalb Medical is a rare hospital in that many of its employees like to call it their “second home.” Among them is **Mattie “Louise” Hinesley**, who is the longest-active employee at DeKalb Medical with 48 total years of service. Ms. Hinesley, who is an office clerk, received a standing ovation at the opening ceremonies of the 50th Anniversary celebration.

Currently, DeKalb Medical employs close to 4,000 people who seem to share a connection that goes beyond cooperative work.



1981 1982 1983 1984 **1985** 1986 1987 1988



Wellness Center opens

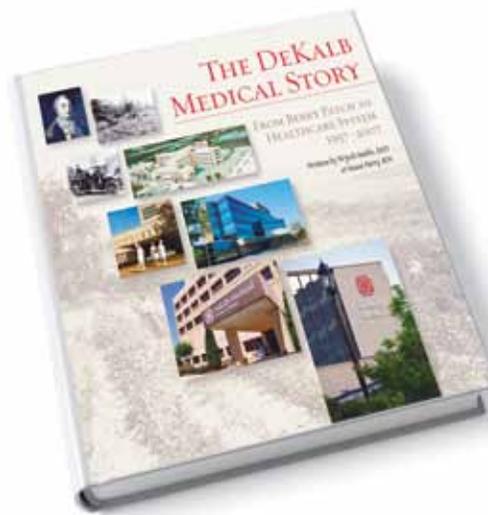
“When you work for DeKalb Medical, it’s not just a job and a paycheck, it’s a family,” explains Hinesley, whose coworkers include many who have been with the health system for 20, 30, 40 years or more. It’s a shared attitude that shows in how DeKalb Medical cares for its patients and their families.

### Keeping the DeKalb Medical dream alive

From DeKalb Medical’s first days, “A large factor in our long-term success has been the strength of the support we receive from our combined community,” explains Leigh Minter. The DeKalb Medical Foundation has raised more than \$22 million through private donations for medical advancements, equipment and ongoing community outreach since its inception in 1991. In fact, many hospital patrons have shown their support with tax-deductible donations of \$50, \$500 and \$5,000 in recognition of the hospital’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Most of the donations are being made in honor or memory of the community members’ favorite physicians, healthcare professionals, nurses, volunteers or loved ones. Donations can be made by contacting the Foundation at 404.501.5956 or online at [www.dekalbmedical.org/foundation](http://www.dekalbmedical.org/foundation).

“It’s been an incredible journey,” says Minter.

Happy Birthday DeKalb Medical! Here’s to 50 more years of helping people live better with an uncompromising commitment to quality.



The DeKalb Medical Story—from Berry Patch to Healthcare System, 1957–2007, tells the story of the many heroes responsible for today’s healthcare system. The book is authored by Wytch Stubbs, M.D., retired director of medical affairs, and Susan Parry, M.S., R.N., retired vice president of patient care services, after many years of dedicated research and writing. The book can be purchased in the Gift Shop of the hospital or by calling 404.501.5956.



Laparoscopic surgery starts



Long Term Acute Care hospital at Downtown Decatur opens



PET/CT scanning services offered



da Vinci robotic surgery system offered



DeKalb Medical at Hillandale opens



Heart and Vascular Center opens

50-year anniversary

1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017



Maternity/Surgery Center opens



Wellness on Wheels mobile health van hits the road



New Women’s & Surgery Center opens



Joint Solutions Center opens