

SPRING 2025

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A MILLER-KEYSTONE BLOOD CENTER PUBLICATION

RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY HELD FOR NEW BLOODMOBILE

"Bloodhound I" Debuts Thanks to Generous Support from the Fleming Foundation and EnerSys

Miller-Keystone Blood Center (MKBC) recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at its Bethlehem headquarters to introduce its newest bloodmobile, **Bloodhound I**. Named in honor of MKBC's mascot, Half-Pint the Bloodhound, the vehicle will expand the center's ability to collect lifesaving blood donations throughout the region.

According to Rami Nemeh, President & CEO of Hospital Central Services, Inc. and its affiliates including Miller-Keystone Blood Center, the new bloodmobile will begin operations immediately and help to bolster the community blood supply by increasing donations via blood drives.

"Approximately 40% of our community's blood supply comes from donations collected at blood drives hosted by local businesses, high schools, colleges, churches, community centers, and other organizations," shared Nemeh, noting that on average, MKBC conducts about 1,000 blood drives annually.

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MKBC board members and representatives from EnerSys and the Fleming Foundation join Rami Nemeh, President & CEO, HCSC/MKBC, and Half-Pint to cut the ribbon welcoming Bloodhound I.

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MIRACLE BABY, MIRACLE BLOOD – TWICE!

When Claudia Aplicano was five months pregnant with her third child, she developed a condition known as placenta previa which results when the placenta grows in the lowest part of the uterus and covers all or part of the opening to the cervix. Claudia experienced severe bleeding and was put on immediate bedrest in the hospital.

The family was understandably concerned and worried of a miscarriage. She continued to bleed and needed a blood transfusion. After receiving one unit of blood, however, something amazing happened – the bleeding stopped and the placenta returned to its normal position. The family was told she could go home with her husband and two daughters and complete her pregnancy there.

Miraculous? The Aplicano family thinks so. Claudia's husband, Alexis Aplicano, the owner of a hard-wood flooring company in Brooklyn who moved his family to the Lehigh Valley several years ago, was thrilled with the outcome.

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A publication designed to inform our community about the programs and services of the Miller-Keystone Blood Center.

- Rami Nemeh, BS, MT
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Readers are invited to send their comments and letters to us at:

Miller-Keystone Blood Center
Lehigh Valley Corporate Center
1465 Valley Center Parkway
Bethlehem, PA 18017



GIVE US A REVIEW

Have you visited us lately to donate blood? Scan the QR code and let us know how we're doing!

Download the MKBC Donor Mobile App for your Android or Apple device!

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Available on the App Store

RIBBON CUTTING Continued from p. 1

“These organizations are essential in educating the community and creating opportunities for individuals to roll up their sleeves and donate the gift of life,” Nemeh added, confirming that Miller-Keystone Blood Center is currently raising funds to purchase four bloodmobiles, and that the Fleming Foundation and EnerSys, a global leader in energy storage solutions headquartered in Reading, have both generously contributed to funding Bloodhound I. Additional organizations have also made gifts to MKBC’s bloodmobile campaign, and will be recognized on plaques located inside all four vehicles when they are in operation.

“While the primary mission of Miller-Keystone Blood Center is to collect and distribute life-saving blood products to our regional hospitals, our ability to operate efficiently relies on the generous financial support of individuals and organizations within our community,” added Lina Barbieri, Chief Philanthropy Officer, MKBC, noting that the arrival of Bloodhound I enables MKBC to retire at least one of the Blood Center’s older vehicles, which has exceeded its life expectancy.

Kathleen Arnold, Trustee of the Fleming Foundation, emphasized the importance of supporting MKBC’s efforts. “Fleming Foundation is proud to support the Miller-Keystone Blood Center and the critical service they provide to our local and surrounding communities.

The new and modernized bloodmobiles are state-of-the-art and will ensure MKBC can continue to provide first-class comfort and convenience to their valued blood donors for years to come.”

“We are sincerely grateful to the Fleming Foundation and EnerSys for their generosity toward this first bloodmobile,” said Barbieri.

“Their generosity, coupled with the generosity of other organizations who have made important gifts to this campaign, demonstrates their commitment not only to Miller-Keystone Blood Center but also to the health and well-being of our entire community.”

“At EnerSys, we are committed to making a positive impact in the communities where we live and work,” stated Shannon Thomas, EnerSys Chief Human Resources Officer. “Partnering with Miller-Keystone Blood Center to sponsor their new bloodmobile is an extension

of that commitment, ensuring that life-saving blood donations remain accessible to those in need. Their work is essential to public health, and we are proud to support their mission of providing a reliable blood supply to hospitals and patients in our region.”

For more information on supporting Miller-Keystone Blood Center with a financial gift, or to schedule your lifesaving blood donation, visit [GIVEaPINT.org](#).

“Approximately 40% of our community’s blood supply comes from donations collected at blood drives hosted by local businesses, high schools, colleges, churches, community centers, and other organizations.”

— RAMI NEMEH, President & CEO of Hospital Central Services, Inc. and its affiliates

THANK YOU LEHIGH COUNTY

MKBC was recently presented with a check for \$250,000 from the County of Lehigh. This grant was awarded to underwrite the purchase of a new bloodmobile to serve our community. Thank you to County Executive, Phil Armstrong, and everyone at the County of Lehigh for your generous support of our mission!

MIRACLE BABY, MIRACLE BLOOD Continued from p. 1

Working full time and being a dad to two growing girls while his wife was pregnant with their third is no easy task. And then learning of his wife’s concerning condition was a lot to handle.

“I was so scared for my wife and my children and for my unborn son,” said Aplicano during a visit at his home with his family.

The pregnancy progressed normally at home for several months. When bleeding returned, though, baby David was ready to make his appearance to the world and the beautiful, healthy boy was delivered by C-section. Claudia, on the other hand, was weak and there was fear of hemorrhage. She was tired, fragile and scared.

Time for another blood transfusion of seven units. Almost immediately, Claudia felt stronger and within days was able to go home with her newborn.

The Aplicano family is grateful to her doctors and to the lifesaving blood transfusions she received because of the generosity of Miller-Keystone Blood Center blood donors. David is now a smart, energetic, athletic, soccer-loving seven-year-old. Their two daughters, Andrea and Grace,



The Aplicano family is committed to spreading the word on the importance of blood donation. Pictured (L-R): Claudia, Andrea, David, Grace and Alexis Aplicano.

who were only 10 and 7 at the time of the pregnancy ordeal, remember the time with unease.

“I was pretty young when all this happened both times, but I remember being scared and concerned about my mom,” said Andrea who attends Parkland High School and is fielding college offers to begin her journey to becoming a lawyer.

Andrea helps translate much of the story for her parents. Claudia shared that until she needed it, she had a lot of incorrect information about giving and receiving blood – something that is not uncommon in the Hispanic culture. In fact, Claudia shares that her own misconceptions were disproven because of how immediately she felt better during both bleeding episodes.

Today, the family continues to thrive. Alexis’ business is growing, the girls enjoy their academic and extracurricular activities, David talks about soccer star Renaldo and Claudia is happy and healthy watching her family grow.

The Aplicano family will forever be grateful that MKBC was there for them when they needed a miracle. They express their gratitude by sharing their story & providing support for MKBC.

EAST PENN MANUFACTURING AND D. KIP KUTTNER, D.O., RECOGNIZED BY AMERICA’S BLOOD CENTERS

At this year’s America’s Blood Centers (ABC) annual meeting, Berks County’s East Penn Manufacturing was named as the ABC Corporation of the Year! MKBC proudly nominated the organization for this honor, recognizing their exceptional and unwavering dedication to supporting both the Blood Center and the broader community. In addition to sponsoring 12 on-site blood drives annually, East Penn Manufacturing and the Breidegam Family Foundation (which is closely connected to the company’s leadership) generously present MKBC and other charitable organizations in the region with financial gifts. Their contributions play a vital role in advancing the mission of these organizations and strengthening our entire region.

In addition, MKBC’s Medical Director, D. Kip Kuttner, D.O., was presented with a Distinguished Service Award in recognition for his years of service as the chair of ABC’s SMT (Scientific, Medical and Technical) Committee, and for his many contributions to America’s Blood Centers, the blood bank community, and evidence-based medicine.

Congratulations to both East Penn Manufacturing and Dr. Kuttner on these distinguished and well-deserved honors!



Accepting the award on behalf of East Penn Manufacturing were Jennifer Birch (L) and Laurie Heagy.



Rami Nemeh (R), President & CEO, congratulates our medical director, Dr. Kuttner, on his well-deserved recognition.

THE HEART OF GIVING



Lieselotte (Lotte) Bacho isn't entirely sure what drives her to donate blood so often—it's just something she's always been drawn to do. Maybe it's the powerful family story of her birth, when her mom lost so much blood that her dad saved her life with a transfusion. Or the memory of blood shortages at a time when her mom was fighting lymphoma. It might also be the memory of the many blood transfusions her mother-in-law received while being treated for Multiple Myeloma. Or, it may simply be that Lieselotte is a kind, generous person who knows that giving blood is the right thing to do.

"When you hear stories about blood shortages, it really sticks with you," Lieselotte shares. "Growing up, I was so aware of the need for blood, that donating just became second nature."

Today, Lieselotte is a universal baby blood donor. She works in her family's business, Kitchen Magic – founded by her parents in the 70s. In

the past, Kitchen Magic has been a proud MKBC blood drive sponsor and continues to explore ways to promote blood donation. She notes that she helped organize one of the company's first employee blood drives. These days they generously support Miller-Keystone not only by donating blood, but also by providing financial support as an MKBC Corporate Sponsor.

Not everyone is able to support non-profit organizations such as Miller-Keystone Blood Center on a regular basis. Some will look to donate their time or talent as a way to give back to their community. And others will take the time to learn about an organization's mission, the challenges they are facing, and the best way to work together. In Lieselotte's case, it was doing a little research and learning about the Blood Center's needs.

"We were given more time with my mom and my mother-in-law because of the blood transfusions they both received," Lieselotte says. "Those powerful memories act as a constant reminder for myself and others to donate."

While you may never meet the recipient of your generosity, know that they and their families are very grateful. To schedule your blood donation, visit GIVEaPINT.org.

MKBC ANNOUNCES 2025 BLOOD DONOR MADNESS CHAMPION!

Penn State Lehigh Valley Receives \$10,000 Award To Its Scholarship Fund



Miller-Keystone Blood Center (MKBC) recently announced the winner of the inaugural "MKBC Blood Donor Madness" – a 12-week promotion designed to increase blood donations in the community by creating a fun, friendly competition between the colleges and universities in the Lehigh Valley.

The first annual event was made possible with the generous support of Madness sponsors BSI Corporate Benefits and Capital Blue Cross.

Schools participating in the competition included Cedar Crest College, DeSales University, Lafayette College, Lehigh Carbon Community College, Lehigh University, Moravian University, Muhlenberg College, Northampton Community College, and Penn State Lehigh Valley.



Each participating institution had a blood donation goal of 4% of its student population; schools attaining their goal each received a \$1,000 award for its college scholarship fund. Penn State Lehigh Valley was announced as the 2025 Blood Donor Madness Champion, receiving a \$10,000 award for its scholarship fund. A variety of selected prizes, including gift cards, air pods and sneakers, were randomly awarded to students and/or school faculty donors as well.

"43% of blood donations in our region come from individuals over the age of 55," said Monika Wieggers, Director of Donor Relations, MKBC. "What is concerning is the fact that only 18% of blood donations are from individuals between the ages of 16 and 24."

As older blood donors tend to become those in need of blood transfusions, or to be deferred due to medication or health-related issues, younger individuals are not donating blood at the same rate, potentially leading to longer and greater incidents of blood shortages in the region, she noted.

"Blood is perishable and it cannot be manufactured," she explained. "It can only be given through the generosity of volunteer blood donors who make time in their busy schedules to visit a donor center or blood drive to give the gift of life."

For more information on the inaugural Blood Donor Madness competition, visit GIVEaPINT.org.



Congratulations to Penn State Lehigh Valley, the 2025 MKBC Blood Donor Madness champion!



MILLER-KEYSTONE BLOOD CENTER WELCOMES NEW VP OF OPERATIONS

BRIAN FANNING, MBA, recently joined MKBC as Vice President of Operations. In this role, he will oversee the operations of our Donor Relations, Marketing, Donor Collections, Laboratory and Hospital Services departments. He will also work closely with the Quality Assurance, Medical and Finance teams to support the Blood Center's mission and growth.

"I'm excited to join Miller-Keystone Blood Center and be part of its important work in our community," said Mr. Fanning. "I look forward to working alongside our local hospitals, blood drive sponsors, our dedicated staff, and, most importantly, our incredible blood donors to help ensure patients get the lifesaving transfusions they need."

Fanning has more than 20 years of experience in the healthcare sector, with expertise in finance, marketing and operations. He most recently served as Vice President of Patient Experience at HNL Lab Medicine.

A graduate of Muhlenberg College (Allentown, PA) with a Bachelors Degree in Accounting and Economics, Fanning also holds an MBA in Marketing from Lehigh University (Bethlehem, PA). A dedicated blood donor himself, he resides in Bethlehem Township with his wife and two sons.

A FATHER'S EXAMPLE



From an early age, Bethlehem resident Grant H. was taught by his family the importance of blood donation and supporting one's community. At 16-years of age, he eagerly took the opportunity to donate for the first time at his high school's blood drive. Over the years, Grant, now a senior computer consultant, has remained committed to this lifesaving cause, proudly donating more than 12 gallons of blood throughout his lifetime.

Grant also encouraged his two children to consider becoming blood donors. After a brief medical-related pause in his own donations, he planned a visit to MKBC while his daughter was home from college. Coinciding with MKBC's "Bring a Friend" promotion, his daughter accompanied him to the Blood Center, where she made her very first blood donation—continuing the family's tradition of giving.

Shortly afterward, Grant received an email he initially assumed was an auto-generated message from MKBC—until a conversation with his daughter suggested otherwise. When she mentioned that she had not received a similar message, Grant revisited the email discovered it was a "thank you" from someone who received his blood. In fact, the 1,000th message sent through MKBC's "Thank the Donor" program:

"I just wanted to say thank you so much for taking the time to donate blood. I received 2 liters today. I have stage 4 ovarian cancer and chemo makes my platelets decrease ... so your kindness allows me to continue to receive chemo. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart."

When someone donates blood, they understand they are making a difference. However, as Grant's recent experience highlights, every donation directly impacts someone in need. By donating with MKBC, individuals help ensure that the transfusion needs of our local community are met. Thank you, Grant, for your generosity and for being a true community hero.

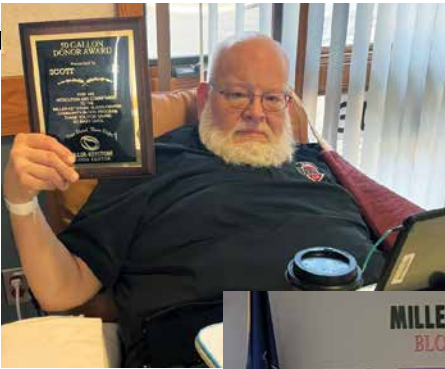
Miller-Keystone Blood Center's THANK THE DONOR PROGRAM allows transfusion recipients to anonymously connect to their blood donors via email, enabling the recipient to thank the donor for their lifesaving generosity.

HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR MKBC CHALLENGE COIN?

It is always a privilege for our staff to present blood donors with an MKBC Challenge Coin in recognition of their military service!



We were honored to recently participate in the 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemoration Ceremony on March 31st at DeSales University. During the event, our friend and blood donor, Ron Jacobs, a Vietnam-era Navy veteran shared his thoughts on why it is so important to donate blood, and encouraged those who haven't already to visit us and receive their MKBC Challenge Coin!



< Congratulations to donor Scott D. for recently achieving the 50-gallon donation mark. Thank you for your lifesaving generosity!



> We recently celebrated another blood donor achieving the 50-gallon mark! Thank you, Rich B., for your lifesaving support of our mission!

CONGRATULATIONS GALLON DONORS!

Don't Forget to visit the **PROMOTIONS & GIVEAWAYS PAGE** on our website for a full list of current and upcoming donor promotions, giveaways and events!



^ Congrats to blood donor Mary W., who entered our January promotional event and won complimentary tickets to see Sebastian Maniscalco at the PPL Center!

For the most up-to-date listing of MKBC's promotions and giveaways, scan the QR code or visit GIVEaPINT.org!



OUT&ABOUT



^ Thank you to Northampton County Council for presenting us with a proclamation recognizing January as National Blood Donor Month! Pictured (L-R) are MKBC's Pat O., council members Jeff W. and Kelly K., and MKBC's Stephanie B. Jeff and Kelly are both dedicated blood donors, and Jeff also serves on MKBC's Marketing & Development Committee.



^ We were pleased to host representatives from America's Blood Centers (ABC), who recently visited MKBC for a tour! Pictured (L-R) are Lori Ofner-Kline, Vice President of Human Resources, HCSC/MKBC; Rami Nemeh, President & CEO, HCSC/MKBC; ABC's Kate Fry, CEO, and Jeff Gohringer, Director of Strategic Communications and National Partnerships; and Brian Fanning, Vice President of Operations, MKBC.

THANK YOU iHEART RADIO!



^ Our partner iHeart Radio generously sponsors three onsite remotes annually, including the "Love of Life" blood drive in February!



< One of our platelet warriors recently fulfilled their pledge to donate 12 times over the past year, and received his/her special gift!



^ Thank you to Geisinger St. Luke's employees, Jenilee and Pam, both members of our Platelet Warrior Club, who visit our Reading Donor Center regularly for their donations!



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Miller-Keystone Blood Center is proud to provide blood products and services to the following healthcare systems:

IN PA:

St. Luke's Hospitals

- St. Luke's University Hospital – Bethlehem Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Allentown Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Anderson Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Carbon Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Easton Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Lehighton Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Miners Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Monroe Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Sacred Heart Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Upper Bucks Campus
- Geisinger St. Luke's Hospital

Geisinger Hospitals

- Geisinger Bloomsburg Hospital
- Geisinger Community Medical Center
- Geisinger Jersey Shore Hospital
- Geisinger Lewistown Hospital
- Geisinger Medical Center
- Geisinger Medical Center – Muncy
- Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center

Grand View Health

Tower Health

- Reading Hospital
- Pottstown Hospital
- Phoenixville Hospital

Temple Health

- Chestnut Hill Hospital

Lehigh Valley Health Network

- LVHN Carbon
- LVHN Cedar Crest
- LVHN Dickson City
- LVHN 17th Street
- LVHN Hazleton
- LVHN Hecktown Oaks
- LVHN Muhlenberg
- LVHN Schuylkill East Norwegian

IN NJ:

- Hunterdon Health
- St. Luke's Hospital – Warren Campus
- Summit Health – Florham Park
- Summit Health – Berkeley Heights

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FREQUENT LIFESAVER CLUB

For details on MKBC's Platelet Warrior Club, Universal Hero Club or Frequent Lifesaver Rewards Club, scan the QR code or visit GIVEaPINT.org!