

# **Alton Memorial Cuts the Ribbon on Expanded Women's Health and Childbirth Center**

by Dave Whaley  
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Jessica Mossman, manager of the Women's Health and Childbirth Center at Alton Memorial Hospital, cuts the ribbon on the expanded department during an April 16 open house. Also in the group, left to right, are Dr. Geoffrey Turner, OB/GYN; Art Williams, vice chairman of the Alton Memorial Health Services Foundation board; Joanne Adams of the AMHSF board; AMH President Dave Braasch; Rusty Ingram, director of Business Development at AMH; Steve Thompson, chairman of the AMH board of directors; Gay Bryant of the AMHSF board; Alton Mayor Brant Walker; Brad Goacher, vice president of Administration at AMH; Monica Bristow of the River Bend Growth Association; and Marlene Lewis, manager of the AMH Development office.

Alton Memorial Hospital celebrated with a ribbon cutting and open house showing off its renovated and expanded Women's Health and Childbirth Center on April 16. More than 5,000 additional square feet includes new labor/delivery and recovery/post-partum rooms, three new private triage rooms, a private and secure entrance, and a new waiting area.

"We are exceptionally proud of our renovated and expanded space, and the equipment and technology that we are able to provide our patients," Jessica Mossman, manager of the center, said before the ribbon was cut. "It's because we're big on patient satisfaction.

"As I was preparing for what I would say today, I had an e-mail from a patient for whom we had cared. It was a 'thank you' – not for the rare circumstances, but for the care we deliver here every day. It made me think about the last year and what this renovation will allow us to accomplish every day."

Mossman said that 700 families delivered their babies at Alton Memorial last year. They received the most up-to-date and consistent information in newborn care and infant feeding practices, thanks to a partnership with Baby Friendly USA and a grant from the Illinois chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. They also each received a sleep sack donated by the hospital's White Cross Auxiliary.

"Seven hundred families chose to grow with us," Mossman said. "This project allows us to give the same exceptional care to even more families -- those who trust us enough to celebrate their newest addition with them."

Dave Braasch, president of Alton Memorial, thanked the Alton Memorial Health Services Foundation and BJC HealthCare. The \$2 million project was made possible through funding from both.

"Our deliveries have jumped from 360 five years ago to more than 700 last year," Braasch said. "That's not because there are more babies being born in the area. It's because more families are choosing Alton Memorial Hospital as the place to deliver. And that's a tribute to Jessica and her excellent staff."

Braasch thanked Perry Hartwick and Ronnie Greenwood from the AMH Plant Operations staff, Shawn Gillam from BJC, Tom Barr from the Lawrence Group, Helmkamp Construction, Wegman Electric, Johnson Controls, Murphy Mechanical and Kane Mechanical for all of the work that went into the construction project during the past nine months

Also recognized were the many pieces of beautiful artwork on the walls of the Women's Health and Childbirth Center, donated through the Pictures With Purpose project. Local

photographer Jeff Vaughn took many of the photos, and several of the donors also attended.

“I echo all of Dave’s words of thanks, and I am very excited that we have the capacity to do more,” Mossman said. “We are also proud of belonging to BJC, and our partnerships with both St. Louis Children’s Hospital and Washington University. We love having the SLCH transport team located at AMH. We had 28 babies delivered last year that needed a higher level of care. The team was either here for the delivery or was called shortly thereafter, and we were able to transition the care of that infant.”

Mossman also said that 175 families attended childbirth classes last year. Thanks to the Dorothy Roper Fund, the White Cross Auxiliary and the Polly Wetzstein Education fund, families will be able to attend those classes in a newly renovated and furnished classroom.

“It all just gives us more room to grow,” Mossman said.

To learn more about the amenities and services offered at the AMH Women’s Health and Childbirth center, please call 618-463-7455.