

# Annual Report

## 2024



Together...**Enhancing Life**

## Cherokee Health Systems | Annual Report 2024

*Dear Friends,*

As we begin our 65th year of providing care to the community, we're pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report for Cherokee Health Systems. This year has been marked by significant achievements, unwavering dedication, and a profound commitment to the health and well-being of our community. Our work continued to be guided by the three pillars of our Strategic Plan – Take Care of our Staff, Take Care of our Patients, and Take Care of our Community.

***Taking care of our staff.*** Staff are the backbone of Cherokee Health Systems, and we prioritized their professional development, well-being, and work experience in 2024. We invite you to learn about initiatives such as the Staff Wellness Program and the C.A.R.E. team activities designed to foster a positive and productive work experience.

***Taking Care of Patients.*** Cherokee Health Systems' commitment to comprehensive and high-quality healthcare services remained consistent and strong in the past year. From primary care and behavioral health to dental services and specialty care, our integrated approach ensured that every individual receives the holistic care they deserve. The launch of our new clinic, Get Well Now, has been a significant milestone, offering accessible and affordable healthcare with extended hours and walk-in appointments.

***Caring for Our Community.*** Our commitment to the community extends beyond healthcare. In the wake of Hurricane Helene, we swiftly mobilized resources, set up emergency response units, and provided critical medical care and support to those affected. Our efforts were not just about immediate relief but also about helping our community rebuild and recover in the long term. Additionally, our strong partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and government agencies have enabled us to extend our services, enhance our programs, and address the unique challenges faced by our community. This year, we collaborated with over fifty community partners to launch initiatives such as the "Healthy Kids Program," which focuses on improving child health and nutrition.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in Cherokee Health Systems. We look forward to partnering with you to make a positive impact on the health and well-being of our community.

Sincerely,



**Joe Haniford**  
*Chair, Board of Directors*  
Cherokee Health Systems



**Parinda Khatri, PhD**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
Cherokee Health Systems



# Who We Are

## MISSION

The mission of CHS is to enhance the health and well-being of our community by providing high-quality, integrated, comprehensive, and person-centered healthcare for all.

## VISION

To be recognized as an exemplar center for community health through clinical care, outreach, community engagement, teaching, and translational research.

## HISTORY

Services began as the Mental Health Center of Morristown

Outreach services to primary care began

A primary care office was established in Knoxville

The agency changed its name to Cherokee Health Systems to reflect its comprehensive mission of integrated primary and behavioral health care

A new Sevier County office was constructed

CHS opened a discount pharmacy in Loudon County

CHS held its first Integrated Care Conference with participants from a dozen different states in the U.S.

CHS opened an integrated primary care/behavioral health clinic in Chattanooga

CHS began offering optometry services

Construction began for the new health center in Lenoir City

**1959**

Agency founded by the Women's Club of Morristown

**1975**

Satellite clinics were opened in Tazewell and Newport

**1984**

The first primary care clinic was established in Blaine

**1993**

The Talbott office opened

**1997**

Construction began on a new Maynardville office

**2000**

A behavioral health office was opened in Blount County

**2006**

CHS opened a new facility in Knoxville on Western Avenue

**2010**

CHS opened an office in East Knoxville

**2014**

CHS opened an integrated primary care/behavioral health clinic in Clinton

**2022**

CHS opened the Cherokee Mills office in Knoxville

**2024**

CHS opened its first walk-in clinic in North Knoxville, Get Well Now

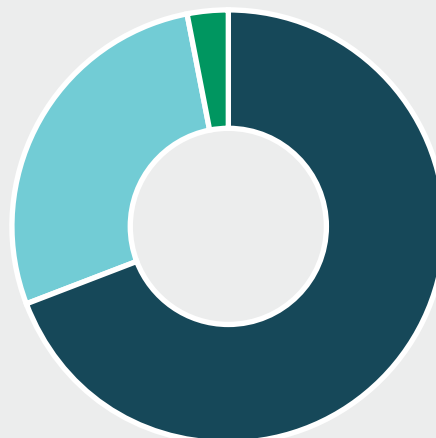


# Financials

*Our annual budget was **\$77 million dollars**.*

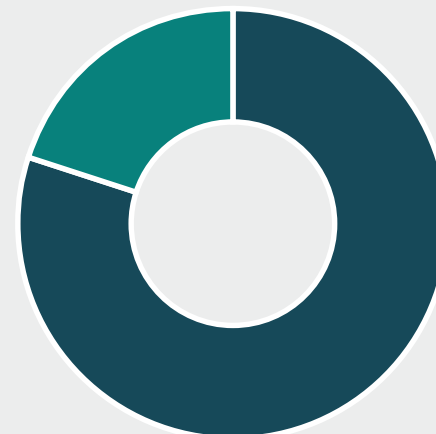
*Cherokee Health Systems provided nearly **\$14 million in uncompensated care** in 2024.*

- 70% Clinical Services Revenue
- 28% Grant Revenue
- 2% Other Revenue



## 2024 Expenses

- 80% Program Expenses
- 20% Administrative Expenses



## 2024 Payor Mix

- 22% Commercial
- 13% Medicare
- 25% Uninsured
- 40% Medicaid





# Value and Impact Analysis

Cherokee Health Systems partnered with Capital Link, a non-profit organization that strengthens Federally Qualified Health Centers financial and operational sustainability by providing customized support in capital planning and financial management. One of the services they provided for CHS is the Value and Impact Analysis.

## Economic Stimulus, Savings to the System and Care for Vulnerable Populations

Cherokee Health Systems provides tremendous value and impact to the communities they serve through economic stimulus, the health center creates jobs, supports local businesses, and drives economic growth through direct and indirect spending. By offering cost-effective care, it reduces the financial burden on the healthcare system. The health center fosters a healthier, more resilient community while contributing to a sustainable economy. Here is a detailed analysis of 2024 savings and contributions across all counties within our service area in Tennessee.

828	\$144.5 million	\$16.9 million
Health Center & Additional Jobs	Direct Healthcare Spending & Community Spending	Local, State & Federal Tax Revenues



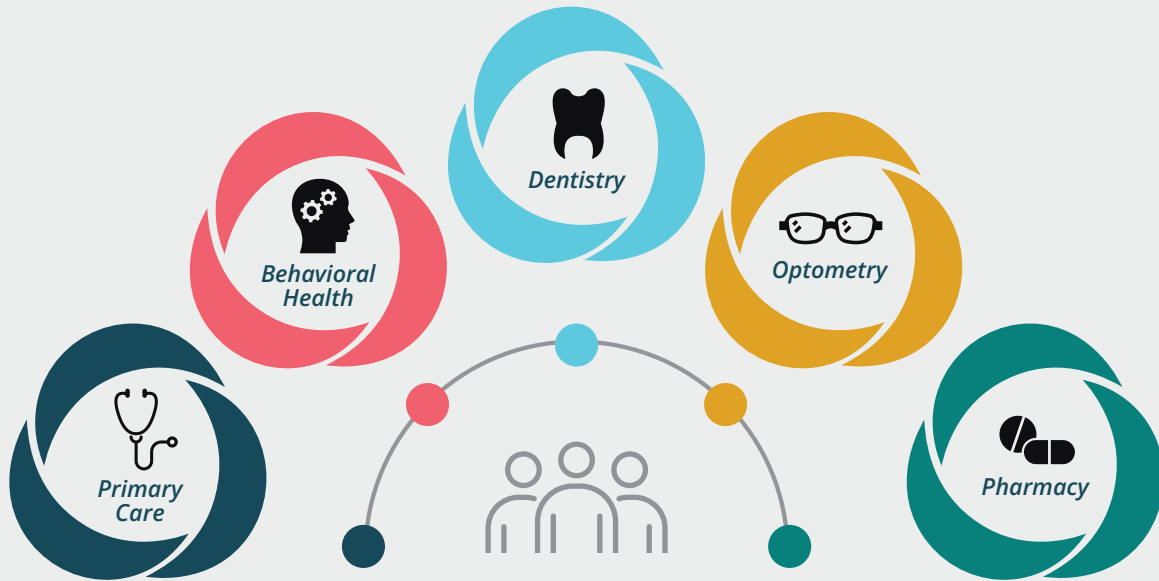
### Savings to the System

24%	\$60.8 million	\$112.8 million
Lower Costs for Health Center Medicaid Patients	Savings to Medicaid	Savings to the Overall Health System

### Care for Vulnerable Populations

390,506	29%	92%	7,610
Total Visits	Children and Teens	Low Income Persons	Unhoused Individuals Served

# Care We Provide



Cherokee Health Systems serves East Tennessee and its surrounding counties through 20 health centers, telehealth services, and mobile units.



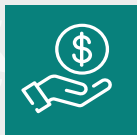
## Age

Children seen: **18,973**  
Adults (18+) seen: **47,793**  
Seniors (65+) seen: **6,399**

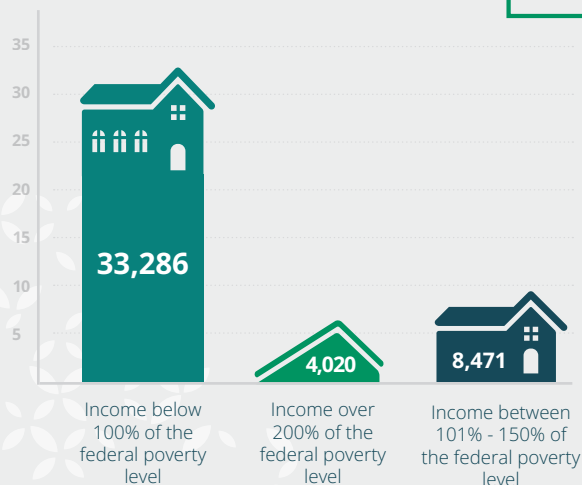


## Insurance

Patients on TennCare: **25,657**  
Patients on Medicare: **8,644**  
Uninsured: **16,633**



## Income



**PATIENTS SEEN: 66,766 - 1.2% YOY INCREASE**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF SERVICES: 365,106**

**PRIMARY CARE SERVICES: 187,068**

**PEDIATRIC VISITS: 36,620**

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH VISITS: 169,851**

**DENTAL VISITS: 5,050**

**OPTOMETRY VISITS: 2,800**

**PRESCRIPTIONS FILLED: OVER 88,000**

**TELEHEALTH VISITS: 79,722**





## 2024 Patient Survey Results

After each appointment, patients are encouraged to complete an internal survey about how their visit went. At the end of the surveys, patients are asked to rate their experience with CHS. Below you will find the results for the 2024 surveys.

### Promoters



84.24%

### Passives



9.29%

### Detractors



6.47%

*"I have been with CHS for many years. The amazing providers always give me lots of tools to help me with everyday life. The staff are always ready to help anytime I call."*  
– CHS patient

*"My doctor knows me when he comes in the room. He is very gentle and knowledgeable about my health issues. He knows the steps to help make me better."*  
– CHS patient



### Clinton Expansion

In October 2024, we expanded our Clinton Health Center to be able to care for more people in Anderson County.

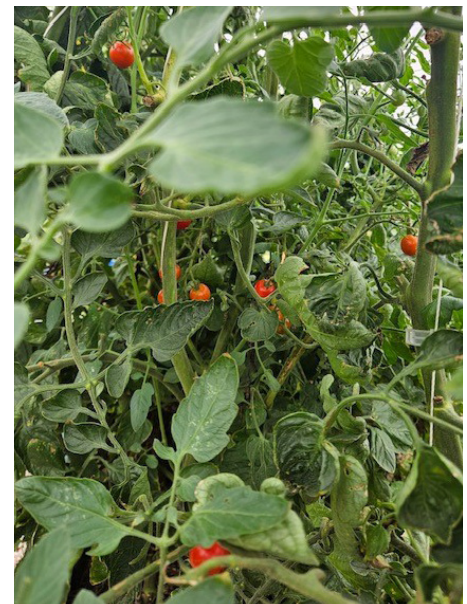
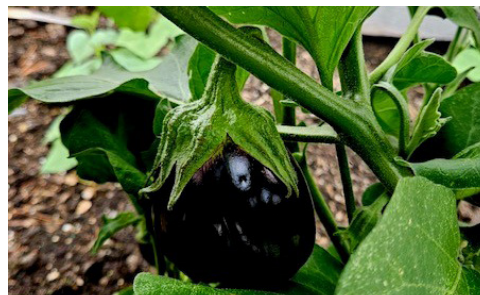
***Project Details:***

- Primary care exam rooms pre-construction – 4
- Primary care exam rooms post-construction - 9
- Behavioral health rooms pre-construction - 1
- Behavioral health rooms post-construction - 5

*CHS hosted a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony on Oct. 22nd, 2024, to debut the upgrades to the community.*



### Dennis Freeman Legacy Gardens



In 2024 CHS continued to grow the Dennis Freeman Legacy Gardens at Alcoa, Maynardville and New Tazewell. A variety of fruits and vegetables were harvested including beets, broccoli, cabbages, carrots, potatoes, radishes, snap peas and strawberries. It was Dr. Freeman's request that CHS begin this venture to address the chronic need for fresh food in the food deserts surrounding some clinics.



# Patient Success Story

For 8 years, Marianne Smith has trusted Cherokee Health Systems to provide her with high-quality primary and behavioral health services.

"I feel like they know me personally. When I walk through the door, the receptionists know me. My providers know me by my first name. I feel like a family member," she said.

Thanks to CHS' Integrated Care Model, Marianne can take better care of her health.

Integrated care at CHS means primary care and behavioral health providers work alongside each other to construct a personalized treatment plan for their patients. CHS is a nationally known leader for this specific care model.

"My hypertension was inherited, and my anxiety and depression can be debilitating," said Smith.

Not only does Marianne work with providers on a consistent basis to manage her health conditions, but she also has access to CHS' in-house pharmacy in Knoxville, which provides an extra layer of support.

"They have been immeasurably helpful to me. They stagger my appointments so I can see Anna and Matt back-to-back. It takes me an hour to get to the clinic, but I love it because they have my best interest at heart," she added. "I can't even describe the role they play in my life. I don't know where I would have been at this point. They made me feel so comfortable."



*Marianne's health has improved tremendously thanks to the dedication of her care team. She has been so pleased with her health results that she has entrusted CHS to care for her two children.*

Disclaimer: CHS changed Marianne's last name in this story to protect her identity.

# Caring for Our Patients

## Get Well *now*

A Cherokee Health Walk-in Clinic

In September 2024, Cherokee Health Systems announced the launch of its newest service, a walk-in clinic located on the historic campus of the former St. Mary's Medical Center in Oakwood, North Knoxville. The new Get Well Now service offering is designed to provide high-quality, convenient care to all community members, regardless of their insurance status.

The Get Well Now clinic reflects Cherokee Health Systems' ongoing commitment to evolving primary care services to meet the needs of modern patients, particularly younger generations who value quick access to healthcare without the need for appointments. The clinic offers care for illness, non-emergency primary care, and chronic disease management, all in a welcoming, community-centered environment.

"This marks an important milestone for Cherokee Health Systems and the residents of Knoxville," said Dr. Parinda Khatri, CEO of Cherokee Health Systems. "With Get Well Now, we are not only bringing compassionate, high-quality care back to the heart of the community but also addressing the evolving healthcare needs of younger generations who seek accessible, on-demand service."



Knoxville City Mayor Indya Kincannon and Cherokee's CEO Dr. Parinda Khatri led a community ceremony to celebrate the new service.



**[Cherokee Health Systems hosting 'Get Well Now' walk-in medical clinic | wbir.com](https://www.wbir.com)**



# Improving Access to Care

## Pharmacy Delivery Services

Improving the way we provide care to our growing community is an institutional priority at CHS. That's why we decided to launch pharmacy delivery services. We understand that sometimes it can be difficult for patients to travel and pick up their medications. Through our delivery service, patients can get prescriptions delivered straight to their home. Delivery services are free and available only in East Tennessee. If staff can't drive it to the patients, we can ship it. We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to the United Health Foundation for providing us with a grant to fund this service.



## Morristown Pharmacy

CHS announced the opening of its renovated Morristown pharmacy in August 2024. The new 560 square-foot, full-service pharmacy allows patients to access their medication immediately after their primary care and/or behavioral health appointments. CHS hosted a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony on Friday, Aug. 2nd, 2024, to unveil the upgraded service to community partners. The service is located within CHS' Morristown Health Center. The pharmacy team will assist in filling prescriptions, giving medication consultations, providing Medication Therapy Management, and more.

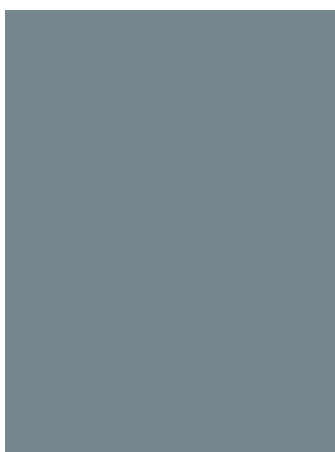
"This pharmacy improves the way we provide care to the community! Prior to opening, we've only been able to provide telepharmacy services in Morristown. Now, patients have access to more medication resources and an on-site pharmacist, specializing in providing individualized care," said CHS' Stacy White, PharmD, director of pharmacy.

# Mobile Care



## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

- CHS served 614 patients on the mobile unit.
- CHS welcomed its second mobile unit to the fleet, expanding its reach in East Tennessee.
- CHS established new mobile event partners.



## Hurricane Helene Relief

***We are stronger... TOGETHER!***

In September 2024, Cherokee Health Systems came together to provide health services and resources to those impacted by Hurricane Helene in and near East Tennessee.

"CHS was at the front lines of the community response to Hurricane Helene, and we're committed to supporting recovery and rebuilding efforts in the affected areas through our clinical care, mobile health clinic, and outreach services." – CEO Dr. Parinda Khatri

***Because of the generosity of our staff, partners, and the community, we've distributed the following to people in need:***

- Over 500 cases of water
- Over 9,500 hygiene items
- Over 650 packs of food and drinks
- Over 12,000 baby diapers
- Over 14,950 medical supplies



# Mobile Care



Additionally, we were able to give Emergency Responder Kits to each Volunteer Fire Department in Hamblen and Cocke County and public safety groups in Cocke County.

## News Story

**Mobile health clinic serving flood victims in Cocke County | WATE 6 On Your Side**





# Partnerships



Members of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, Nu Zeta Chapter, partnered with Cherokee Health Systems in the winter to prepare warm weather, wellness, and hygiene kits for patients. These kits included sleeping bags, blankets, socks, underwear, hats, menstrual products, laundry care, wound care products, diabetic supplies, blood pressure monitors, thermometers, bottles, diapers, formula, books, toys... and more!

## Cherokee Health Systems Implements New Health Program to Support Mothers After Birth



Cherokee Health Systems (CHS) has launched a Newborn Supply Kit program to help improve maternal mental health outcomes and provide support to mothers after birth. The Newborn Supply Kits are part of a new partnership project between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Baby2Baby, a national nonprofit organization. The free kits, containing essential health supplies for mothers and babies, are currently being distributed to patients in their last trimester of pregnancy at CHS' Talbott and Cherokee Mills Health Centers. Products within the kits include nursing pads, postpartum pads, diapers, baby wipes, a thermometer and nasal aspirator, baby clothes, blankets, and a book.

*Pictured L-R: Anita Swiney, Dr. Sarah Beth Eriksen, Jamie Covington*



## Literacy Program



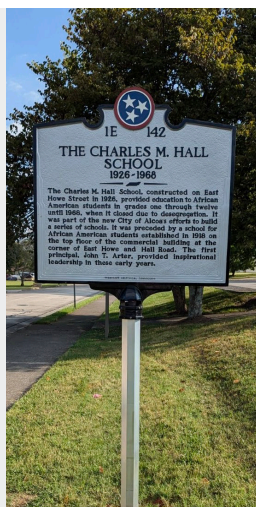
In 2024, Cherokee Health Systems (CHS) expanded its Brush, Book, Bed program to reach more rural and urban communities in East Tennessee. The program, which started as a partnership between CHS and Friends of Literacy (FOL) in June 2023, provides resource bags to CHS' pediatric patients, ages six months to 12 years, after every well-child checkup. The bags are filled with a toothbrush, toothpaste, a book, and health education handouts for the child's parent or guardian. Last year, CHS received a donation of over 7,000 brush kits from Delta Dental of Tennessee's Smile 180 Foundation, allowing the organization to offer the program at five additional health centers.

"The Smile 180 Foundation is proud to partner with Cherokee Health and Friends of Literacy to help expand this program in the East Tennessee region. Getting parents and children together at bedtime for the simple routine of brushing teeth and reading a book at a regular time can help build a lifetime of healthy habits," said Dr. Phil Wenk, executive director and chief executive officer of the Smile180 Foundation.

The program has been implemented at CHS' Alcoa, Center City, and Cherokee Mills Health Centers. The new brush kits will allow CHS to provide toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss to its Lenoir City, Lonsdale, Seymour, Talbott, and Washburn Health Centers, along with other learning materials. CHS hopes to eventually offer this program at all 20 health centers.



CHS' partnership with Friends of Literacy (FOL) has been successfully encouraging a foundation of learning in children. Since the Brush, Book, Bed program started, over 4,000 books have been donated to children by FOL, a literacy resource for adults, children, and families in East Tennessee.



## Alcoa Sign Dedication

CHS, alongside members of the Charles M. Hall Alumni Association and city leaders, gathered on Oct. 15th, 2024, to dedicate a historical marker outside of CHS' Alcoa Health Center. The sign honors the legacy of Charles M. Hall School and its tradition of service to the community.

***Pictured L-R: Alcoa City Mayor Tanya Martin, Dr. Parinda Khatri, and Judy Knight***





## 2024 Community Partnership Awards

In honor of National Health Center Week, we give annual recognition to community partners who have been instrumental in advancing our mission during the year. Our 2024 Community Partnership Awards were given to Hola Lakeway in Morristown and the AIM Center in Chattanooga. Members from each organization received a gift and enjoyed an intimate luncheon with CHS leadership.



*Members of Hola Lakeway and  
CHS' CEO Dr. Parinda Khatri*



*Members of the AIM Center and  
CHS' CEO Dr. Parinda Khatri*

## The University of Tennessee and CHS gain funding to improve research-practice partnership

As a result of the 2024 Institutional Challenge Grant competition, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and Cherokee Health Systems received \$650,000 to grow their unique research-practice partnership — and to learn how to implement community-engaged scholarship that results in ongoing positive outcomes.

*Read the full story here: [news.utk.edu](https://news.utk.edu) - **William T. Grant Foundation Announces Funding for UT, Cherokee Health Systems for Research-Practice Partnership - News***



*Dr. Kristi Gordon and Dr. Parinda Khatri*

# Education

## AHEC Scholars Program

The Area Health Education Centers Program is an inter-professional training opportunity designed to prepare students from a variety of healthcare disciplines to provide care that is culturally competent, trauma-informed, patient-centered, and integrates behavioral health and primary care services. The program involves a two-year commitment. In each year, scholars receive 40 hours of team-based, inter-professional clinical exposure and participate in 40 hours of didactic learning.

### **2023-2025 East TN AHEC cohort includes:**

- 10 nutrition students
- 4 psychology students
- 1 nursing student
- 4 medical students
- 1 master of social work student

### **2024-2026 East TN AHEC cohort includes:**

- 6 nutrition students
- 2 medical students
- 1 psychology student
- 1 public health student
- 2 social work students
- 2 physical therapy students
- 2 master of social work students
- 3 master of public health students

*"I have thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from the scholar program over the past two years. The knowledge, skills, and experience I gained during this time have been invaluable, and I believe they will significantly contribute to my future endeavors."*

*– AHEC scholar*



## 2024 Trainees

Psychology Trainees  
**26**

Psychology Post-Docs  
**4**

Social Workers  
**9**

Nutrition Students  
**32**

Nursing Trainees  
**21**

Medical Assistants  
**17**

Physicians  
**13**

Medical Residents  
**6**

Public Health Trainees  
**4**

Physical Therapy Trainees  
**1**

Billing & Administration Trainee  
**1**

Behavioral Health  
Nurse Practitioners  
**2**



# Caring for Our Staff



## Cherokee Health Systems Launches Program for Returning Healthcare Professionals

Cherokee Health Systems (CHS) is committed to strengthening the healthcare workforce through its Returnship Program. This paid internship opportunity aims to help people successfully re-enter the workforce after taking a break from employment. During the 10-week program, participants will learn vital interviewing and resume building skills as well as hands-on job training in any career path that exists within CHS.

Whether someone is interested in interning in operations, information technology, human resources, finance, maintenance, pharmacy, social work, behavioral health, or in clinical roles, CHS' team is ready to invest in their skill set by providing them with a customized program plan. This opportunity is available to anyone who has a 6-month gap in employment, with priority given to those with gaps of employment over 1 year. Previous healthcare experience is preferred for acceptance into the program, but it is not required.



*Tennessee Primary Care Association awarded Dr. Brad Carter with Outstanding Practitioner of the Year! The award recognized a clinical practitioner whose work has demonstrated outstanding leadership, community involvement, and dedication to patient care.*



## Cherokee Health Systems | Annual Report 2024

*CHS' Psychological Services Coordinator, Stella Melton, was awarded the prestigious 2024 Dorothea Dix Professional Service Award at Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations - TAMHO's Annual Conference in 2024. We're incredibly proud of the work she does to support outstanding professionalism in the field of behavioral health. Our Individual Placement and Support program, designed to help behavioral health patients secure employment, has benefited significantly from Stella and her team's leadership.*



*"I am so glad I joined the Wellness Program! Every month is a new challenge & way to grow personally, and I feel like I have learned so much about my health and well-being. I love the monthly newsletter, personalized goal trackers, and the encouragements and check-ins I receive from Katherine and the HR team! It is such a great way to foster our work culture here at Cherokee. I'm excited to earn more pins, challenge myself, and learn more about healthy living!"*

*-Julianna Gregory*

*Our teams across East Tennessee were proudly wearing purple during Paint the Town Purple Week 2024, which serves as an additional opportunity to raise awareness about Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.*



*Our Wellness Program kicked off in 2024 with 266 employees enrolled. Staff who participated learned about 11 topics to enhance their wellbeing.*





**Cherokee**  
HEALTH SYSTEMS

Together...**Enhancing Life**