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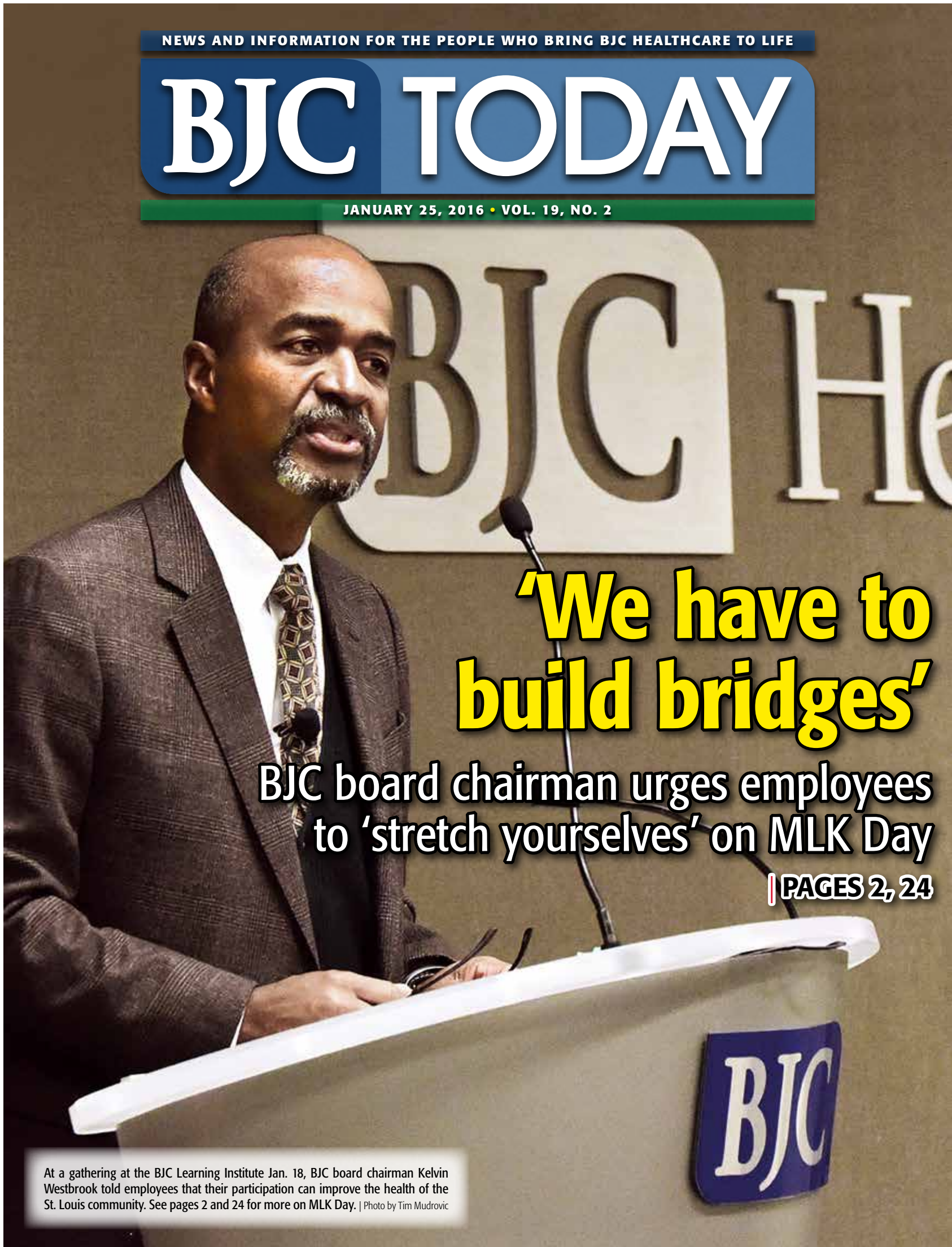
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NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE WHO BRING BJC HEALTHCARE TO LIFE

# BJC TODAY

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## 'We have to build bridges'

### BJC board chairman urges employees to 'stretch yourselves' on MLK Day

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At a gathering at the BJC Learning Institute Jan. 18, BJC board chairman Kelvin Westbrook told employees that their participation can improve the health of the St. Louis community. See pages 2 and 24 for more on MLK Day. | Photo by Tim Mudrovic



# Recognizing 25 years of serving school-age youth

BJC School Outreach and Youth Development celebrates 'Silver' anniversary

**BJC** ■ *"I enjoyed the experiments and the lessons. Some things I learned about are the mouth, stomach, intestines and the esophagus. I also learned ways to keep your heart healthy."*

*"Because of this program, I realized I want to figure out more about myself and work on who I am before I begin a relationship."*

*"You helped me realize how to handle real-life situations."*



Diana Wilhold

These are just a few examples of the ways BJC School Outreach and Youth Development has helped local youth. Over the past 25 years, the department has touched the lives of nearly 1 million school-age youth.

Formed 25 years ago this month at the former Barnes Hospital, the department brings health education, prevention programs and career exploration experiences to students in their classrooms, in BJC's hospitals and in community settings.

During its 25th anniversary year, BJC School Outreach and Youth Development has much to be proud of and much to celebrate, says Diana Wilhold, the department's director and founder. Recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as having "model programs that deliver promising practices," the department also is consistently recognized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Missouri and Illinois for fulfilling each state's health academic standards.

## Department has roots at former Barnes Hospital

Before starting BJC School Outreach and Youth Development, Wilhold taught regular and special education classes for K–12th grade students and worked as the educational service liaison in a child and adolescent psychiatric center. "As the educational service liaison, I had to build relationships with school leaders and other referral sources to help the youth succeed, once they were discharged from the center," she says. "I created transitional and educational plans, once students returned to their school environment, and worked with teachers to help them implement the suggested strategies. I learned early on that trust, keeping your expectations for success high and building meaningful relationships were critical components in getting people to work together to create the desired change."

Wilhold says these characteristics were crucial to the successful launch of the School Outreach and Youth Development department. "As the only school representative at Barnes Hospital at the time, the leaders allowed me to design a strong business foundation for the department, aligning the work of health care with the educational system," Wilhold says. "I was given a blank canvas and the autonomy to learn what diseases were being seen within our facilities, as well as the time to work with educational leaders and nurses in the school-community environment to develop programs that Barnes had the expertise to address."

Wilhold sought to identify preventable adult diseases and design a program to prevent those diseases by providing education and health information to youth. "Truly focusing on prevention was completely new 25 years ago," she says. "Barnes Hospital was at the forefront of educating young people on preventing disease — and the programs took off like wildfire. Each presentation showcased health science issues, bringing health information and expertise into the classroom."

Wilhold remembers beginning with a list of 75 elementary and secondary schools — public, parochial and private — throughout the metro area. Her first request was for a presentation on alcohol, tobacco and other drugs at a local high school. Nutrition, stress management and careers in health care were other popular topics. "I was confident in delivering the drug and stress management presentation, but I reached out to experts within the hospital to deliver the nutrition and specific careers information."

## A department grows

Through the merger of Barnes and Jewish hospitals and the formation of BJC, very little change occurred in the work Wilhold was developing and implementing. She continued establishing partnerships — with the Jewish College of Nursing, Mallinckrodt School of Radiology, St. Louis College of Pharmacy and Washington University School of Medicine — for career presentations and hospital tours. She began partnering with external institutions to write grants and offer support in preventing diseases and educating youth on the dangers of making unhealthy lifestyle choices.

Over the past 25 years, the department has generated nearly \$5 million in revenue through grants, fee-for-service deliveries, local and state school contracts, professional development workshops and trainings, and other relationships and shared resources.

In 1999, the department officially became BJC School Outreach and Youth Development and is one of several shared services departments within the organization. "No other health system has a department like BJC School Outreach and Youth Development," Wilhold says. "I'm proud of the work that's being conducted today by 18 very talented, high-energy and creative individuals.



BJC HealthCare

And I'm forever grateful to my team for taking the ideas of one and, on an annual basis, developing, implementing and evaluating a full-service, comprehensive health education department for school-age youth."

## The best kept secret within BJC

Today, the department focuses on six high-risk health behaviors and offers career exploration opportunities to young people interested in health careers. "We measure our effectiveness through a robust program evaluation and data collection process for all long-term programs," Wilhold says. "Annually, we review and assess the questions asked and determine if the content implemented still aligns with the academic requirements for Missouri and Illinois."

Each year, the department reaches 60,000 youth and professionals who serve youth on health issues like nutrition, physical activity, tobacco use, substance abuse, sexual health and safety.

"We are often considered the best kept secret within BJC," Wilhold says. "And this year we're hoping to change that with the help of BJC employees in bringing our work to their child's classroom and spreading the word about our work."

Over the next 12 months, *BJC TODAY* will highlight the work BJC School Outreach and Youth Development provides in more than 400 St. Louis Metro-area schools. You'll learn how to get a program brought into your child's school, discover how your seventh- or eighth-grade child can take part in a weeklong health care camp in July, and other department initiatives. Help the department celebrate 25 years by liking BJC School Outreach on Facebook, following BJC School Outreach on Twitter, visiting [bjcschooloutreach.org](http://bjcschooloutreach.org), or calling the BJC School Program Line, 314-286-0460. ■



## Making a difference for youth

BJC School Outreach and Youth Development offers dozens of programs in the following areas:

- sexual behaviors
- nutrition
- tobacco
- safety
- physical activity
- substance abuse
- career exploration