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# HEALTH CONNECTIONS

BUTLER COUNTY HEALTH



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# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES COMING TO BUTLER COUNTY HEALTH



Butler County Health is pleased to introduce Laura Moravec, PLMHP, as the newest member of the integrated team at Butler County Health. Laura has been a proud resident of this community for over three decades, giving her a deep understanding of the strengths, values, and challenges unique to rural Nebraska.

Introducing behavioral health services marks a significant milestone for the hospital, following years of strategic planning to ensure that Butler County has greater access to high-quality mental health care close to home.

Laura earned her Bachelor of Science in Psychobiology from the University of NE at Kearney and completed her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Doane University in 2025. Laura and her husband Mike have raised six children in the David City community. Her husband Mike is a CPA and Financial Advisor in David City, who has worked in the community for many years.

Laura enjoys working with children, teens and adults, tailoring her approach to the unique aspects of each developmental stage. Her counseling approach is collaborative and strength-focused, integrating Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to help clients identify patterns, build practical skills and actively participate in their own growth. She offers individual therapy, family therapy and couples counseling. Laura will provide support for a wide range of mental health concerns, including: depression, anxiety, grief and loss, trauma-related concerns, substance use challenges, child/teen emotional, behavioral, and developmental challenges.

Mental health concerns continue to affect individuals and families across the country, underscoring the importance of expanding access to care in rural communities. National data shows that over 40% of adults report symptoms of anxiety or depression at some

point in their lives. Depression, anxiety, frequent mental distress, and suicide related concerns are at an all-time high, according to recent national and global data. These statistics reflect a growing demand for compassionate, evidence-based services that address mental health needs early, promote resilience, and improve long-term outcomes for individuals and families.

“All of us face seasons when life feels more challenging than others,” Laura shared, “even short-term counseling can provide skills and strategies for navigating these times when depression, anxiety, and other difficulties can feel overwhelming. Counseling can help by providing people with new ways to understand, process and cope with the difficulties they are facing.” Laura added that one of the benefits of offering counseling services in an integrated health system is that medical and mental health practitioners can work together with an individual to provide a more coordinated care experience. “When everyone is on the same page,” Laura added, “the outcome for the individual tends to be better as well.”

Butler County Health remains deeply committed to strengthening behavioral health support for individuals and families throughout Butler County. By expanding access to counseling services, we strive to ensure that people can receive compassionate high-quality care close to home. As our behavioral health program continues to grow, we remain focused on promoting emotional well-being, reducing barriers to treatment, and supporting the mental health needs of the communities we serve.

**You're invited to the Butler County Health Foundation Annual Benefit Dinner & Auction on Saturday, March 7, 2026, at the Butler County Event Center. Social and Silent Auction start at 5 pm, Dinner at 6:30 followed by Honoring the Past & Live Auction. Prime Rib or Chicken Dinner, \$60 per person. To purchase a ticket, please call Alyssa at 402-367-1370.**

*Your Health. Our Priority.*

# DIANE MORAVEC RETIRES FROM BCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Diane Moravec has retired from the Butler County Health Board of Directors after 18 years of dedicated service. She was appointed to the Board by the Butler County Board of Supervisors in February 2008 and completed three six-year terms. She served two of those terms as Vice Chair.

Diane was instrumental in upgrading the present facility in a cost-effective manner. Some of the major facility construction projects and additions that she has played an active role in planning and promoting include:

- The \$11 million addition, expansion and remodel of the wellness center, physical therapy and surgery departments in 2013.
- The \$2.6 million addition of the Roots to Shoots Pediatric Therapy Clinic and remodeling of the existing therapy department and wellness center in 2018.
- The \$3.8 million project in 2021, that included the construction of the Audiology, Business Office and HIM Building, converting a patient wing to negative pressure for infectious disease safety and upgrades to the pharmacy department.
- The \$23 million addition and remodel project that resulted in a new lobby, admissions, outpatient department, administrative offices and expanded emergency department in 2025.

Diane's leadership has helped ensure BCH operations are self sufficient, and do not require tax dollars from county residents for its renovations.

Diane was also a strong advocate for physician recruitment. During her time on the Board, Butler County Health successfully recruited Dr. Robert Daro, Dr. Joshua Sypal, Rebecca Kouma, PA-C, and Dr. Sidra Akhter.

"Diane leaves the board after 18 years of genuine concern for the well-being of Butler County Health and our community in

general," said Jerry Roh, BCH Board Chair. "She has been a pleasure and joy to work with, and we wish her all the best. Thank you, Diane!"

Diane has been a committed supporter of trustee education while serving on the Board. She attended numerous healthcare conferences through the Nebraska Rural Health Association, Nebraska Hospital Association, Heartland Health Alliance Governance Institute and the Western Regional Trustee Symposium. She participated in the NHA Board of Trustee Education Certification Program when it was available.

In addition to her Board service, Diane has been an active volunteer with the Butler County Health Foundation. She served as a consultant for the development of the BCH Foundation Benefit and generously donated her auctioneer services for the event.

"After 18 years and considerable reflection, I have decided that the time is right for me to step down from the BCH Board of Directors," explains Diane. "Serving on this Board has been a privilege. I am deeply grateful to have been a part of our hospital's growth and long-term vision. We celebrated many special milestones, not only through construction projects, but by implementing additional healthcare services," she adds. "Working together, our Board has strengthened our hospital in ways that I am proud of. I have great confidence in the Board's leadership, the leadership of hospital administration and the quality of care and compassion BCH gives to our community."



# DR. GERALD LUCKEY RECEIVES

## 2025 NMA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO MEDICINE

The Distinguished Service to Medicine is awarded to a long-standing physician leader who has made impactful contributions to the profession of medicine and the NMA. Dr. Gerald Luckey was honored at the Nebraska Medical Association Meeting August 22, 2025.

*By Gerry Luckey, MD, FAAFP, NMA*

I am surprised, humbled, and honored to receive the Distinguished Service to Medicine Award from the NMA.

The NMA is a vital component in improving health care for our patients. Making the practice of medicine less cumbersome, more efficient, adequately reimbursed, and safe are some of the objectives the leadership and staff work on daily. It has been my privilege to have played a small role in that endeavor.

Access to care is vital for a high-functioning health care system. The current resolution to improve access to maternal care in rural areas is an ongoing challenge and opportunity. The Kearney initiative will help, but there are many moving parts and many stakeholders that need to come together to accomplish this goal.

Solutions being addressed include:

- a) Selecting medical students from rural areas.
- b) Educating urban medical students on the many benefits of rural practice.
- c) Loan repayment tied to rural practice.
- d) Adequate maternal care training for family medicine residents.
- e) Enhanced reimbursement for rural maternity care.
- f) Creating obstetrical care teams in rural areas serving more than one hospital.
- g) Collaborating with all stakeholders (NHA, UNMC, Creighton, Nebraska Legislature, etc.).

I have found great value in the independent practice of medicine in a small rural community (David City) for 45 years—particularly the long-term relationships that bind us to our patients, many times for generations. After many years of practice, I realized that patients value how much we care more than how much we know.

It is vital that we understand that the business we are in is a service business—not to ourselves but to our patients. Creating a culture of patient first almost always results in making decisions that are in the best interests of the patients we serve. As leaders in this endeavor, it is vital that we “walk the talk” and set the tone for our staff to follow.

Precepting medical students has been an impactful component of family medicine for me. These students are bright, multi-talented, and eager to learn. I have learned from them. I have asked each of them to enter the exam room, ask questions pertinent to the reason for the visit, listen carefully to the response, and the patient will give you the diagnosis. (Osler’s approach still holds—and it avoids unnecessary testing.)

As we expand our number of medical and PA students, we need engaged preceptors to mentor them and keep them excited about the opportunities and challenges of providing high-quality health care. Please be one of them.

Taking a leadership position in the NMA, your hospital, your specialty society, and certainly your community is vital to making a difference for the people we serve. We also need to do our part to “police ourselves” to keep health care safe.

The future of health care in Nebraska is bright. With the help of the talented NMA staff and board leadership, Nebraska is a great place to be a physician and a better place to be a patient. We all need to do our part to make it even better.

*Bio: Dr. Luckey grew up on a farm in the rural Columbus area and graduated from Columbus High. He earned his undergraduate degree at UNL and his medical degree from UNMC in 1973. He was board certified in Family Medicine and Geriatrics and practiced full-scope family medicine in David City for 45 years.*

*His primary interests have been quality care and access to care in rural Nebraska. He started the South East Rural Physician Alliance (SERPA) along with NMA members Dr. Darroll Loschen and*

*Dr. Roger Meyer. He was instrumental in evolving and expanding this into the SERPA-ACO in 2012. He remains a strong advocate for the independent practice of medicine.*

*He has taken leadership roles in the NMA and NAFP, serving on their boards, foundations, and numerous committees. Medical education has been a priority, and he has mentored more than 200 medical and PA students. Emphasis on disease prevention has led to the formation of an alliance with the Dean of the College of Public Health to promote public health initiatives in primary care.*

*Since retirement, Dr. Luckey has maintained an interest in quality care and access to care, taking a lead role in the NMA's Maternal and Primary Care Task Force. He continues to serve as the Quality Assurance chair for Butler County Health and conducts peer review for SERPA-ACO. His interests, outside of medicine, include family time, exercising, landscaping, farming, and serving on a number of boards.*



Pictured are Dr. David Ingvoldstad, Past President of the NMA and Dr. Luckey.

## 2026 CARING KIND RECIPIENT

### SANDRA BURWELL, RD

The Nebraska Hospital Association Caring Kind Award has been given to Nebraska's most caring and compassionate hospital employees for 46 years. The award honors outstanding health care employees who have demonstrated compassion for patients, cooperation with co-workers and dedication to excellence in their job responsibilities.

Hospitals throughout the state actively participate in this annual tradition by nominating one exceptional individual from within their ranks. These nominees, representing the heart and soul of their respective institutions, exemplify the qualities that define the Caring Kind award. The selection process involves a careful consideration of the nominee's demonstration of compassion towards patients, collaboration with co-workers, and unwavering dedication to excellence in their professional responsibilities.

Butler County Health is proud to honor Sandra Burwell as a 2025 Caring Kind recipient. Sandra joined Butler County Health in 2018 as a Registered Dietitian. Her dietary staff speak highly of her attentive listening, unwavering support and willingness to step in and cover shifts whenever needed. Sandra is known for her calm, compassionate approach and sincere commitment to helping others improve their health. Beyond her daily responsibilities, she has played a key role in launching several community-focused initiatives, including the community

garden, youth cooking classes, healthy holiday cooking classes and living well with diabetes programs. Sandra's kindness toward her colleagues, her dedication to patient well-being and her ongoing commitment to Butler County Health exemplifies a Caring Kind.

"I am very thankful for being chosen for this award. So many of my coworkers at BCH are equally deserving – that is what makes it such a great place to work," said Sandra.



Pictured are Sandra Burwell and Don Naiberk, CEO at the Annual Caring Kind Luncheon.

# DR. LARRY RUDOLPH MEDICAL FUND

## TOGETHER WE STRENGTHEN LOCAL HEALTHCARE



The Butler County Health Foundation is proud to share that the Dr. Larry Rudolph Medical Recruitment Fund has now been fully utilized, and thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, it has made a lasting impact on the

future of healthcare in Butler County.

Through the support of individuals, families, local businesses, and organizations, the fund made it possible to recruit four new medical providers for one of our local clinics and the hospital. These professionals bring fresh energy, new expertise, and a shared commitment to caring for our families, neighbors, and friends close to home.

Dr. Robert Daro and Dr. Joshua Sypal began providing services in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Physician Assistant Rebecca Kouma also joined our healthcare community and began serving patients in 2024. Daro, Sypal, and Kouma are all lifelong residents of Butler County. Most recently, we welcomed Dr. Sidra Akhter to our medical team, expanding access to family medicine and women's health services. Together, our providers continue to strengthen the high-quality, patient-centered care, ensuring residents receive the medical attention they need close to home.

The success of this recruitment fund is a direct result of the community coming together with a shared goal: to ensure that quality healthcare remains strong and accessible in our rural area. From those who supported the Foundation's fundraising dinners and auctions, to those who pledged through payroll contributions or made personal donations, every gift mattered, and every dollar worked toward building a healthier future for all of us.

The fund was first established in 2014 in memory of Dr. Larry Rudolph, whose vision for rural medicine inspired generations of physicians to serve this community. Between 1972 and 1974, while Dr. Kaufman still operated his medical clinic, Dr. Rudolph went from working at a clinic with three physicians to running one with only himself and a full office staff. In addition to managing the clinic, he took on all the obstetrics cases and most of the emergency care, all while handling a patient load that had previously been shared by three doctors.

"In trying his best to see all the patients that wanted to see him, Doc began working very long days- he was usually seeing patients from 8 am to 8 pm, six or seven days a week, with no breaks. I visited the Lincoln residency program and UNMC and was generally able to find a doctor who would come to David City and work weekends at the clinic so Doc could get some rest. But he pushed himself extremely hard and did so without complaint," said John Klosterman, former BCH Board Chair, in an interview in April 2014.

It quickly became clear that the community needed more physicians to meet the growing demand for care, which resulted in the recruitment of Dr. Gerald Luckey and Dr. Victor Thoendel. More than 50 years have past since our community has had a physician shortage issue. The success of the Dr. Larry Rudolph Medical Recruitment Fund belongs to you — the people, businesses, and organizations who answered the call to support local healthcare.

As we continue building for the future, the proceeds from this year's annual Butler County Health Foundation Benefit Dinner and Auction will be used to help replenish the Fund, ensuring that the Foundation can ensure the future of healthcare.

From the Butler County Health Foundation, thank you for your generosity and investment in meeting the growing healthcare needs of our area. Together, we have not only honored a legacy but ensured that quality care will continue right here at home for years to come.

*With heartfelt gratitude,  
The Butler County Health Foundation*

# KLAY KASIK

## JOINS BUTLER COUNTY HEALTH FOUNDATION BOARD



Butler County Health Foundation is pleased to welcome Klay Kasik to its Board of Directors. Klay is a Senior Project Manager at Hausmann Construction, where he has led numerous commercial projects across Nebraska & neighboring

Klay brings 15 years of construction experience overall, including 12 years focused in commercial construction.

“I’m honored to join the board and support the health and well being of the Butler County community,” Klay said. “Local healthcare is a vital resource, and I look forward to contributing my experience to help Butler County Health continue to grow and serve our neighbors.”

Klay and his wife, Ashley (a David City native), live in David City and have two sons, Waylon (6) and Grayson (4), who attend David City Public Schools. Klay grew up in Schuyler, Nebraska. He is a member of St. Luke’s Methodist Church and volunteers with the David City Youth Wrestling Club.

states. He also serves on the company’s Strategic Planning Committee.

## *The Picture of hope*

While things have been a little uncertain lately, **there are steps we can take to bring certainty to our lives.** Together, we can create a beautiful picture for the future.

A charitable gift annuity with us is an outstanding way to bring some **predictable, confident good news** for you today and tomorrow.



With a gift annuity, you receive payments back at a fixed rate for as long as you live. You also receive:

- Possible income tax benefits.
- Possible capital gains tax benefits.
- Steady, dependable payments in the same amount, no matter what the economy does.

If the idea of predictable, steady income for life—paired with meaningful tax benefits—appeals to you, we’d love to hear from you. Call or email us to learn your rate and explore all the advantages. A gift annuity creates many moments of hope and joy as each payment arrives. When the annuity ends, any remaining funds further our mission, honoring your generosity with a lifetime of happy memories for you—and many more created in your name.



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Administrator/CEO  
Butler County Health

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