DEFENSIVE BACK D.J. HAYDEN PLAYS FOR HIS LIFE – AND WINS – AFTER SUSTAINING A LIFE-THREATENING INJURY DURING PRACTICE

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On Nov. 6, just weeks away from the final game of the University of Houston (UH) Cougars’ football season, something went terribly wrong during practice. In a perfect storm, safety Trevon Stewart and defensive back D.J. Hayden both went up to defend a pass at the same time and Stewart’s knee went full throttle into his teammate’s sternum, rupturing Hayden’s vena cava – the main blood vessel that leads to the heart.

“It was a freak accident,” said UH Cougars coach Tony Levine. “It was as unfortunate a situation on a play as I have ever been a part of.”

22-year-old Hayden – a preseason All-Conference USA selection and defensive captain for the Cougars – was near death and was rushed to Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute, where he underwent emergency surgery to repair the tear. The medical team used 23 units of blood products (red blood cells, plasma and platelets) during the life-saving procedure, which lasted two and a half hours.

“This injury has never been seen or reported in association with a football injury and is more associated with high-speed motor vehicle injuries,” said Walter Lowe, M.D., University of Houston head team physician and chairman of Orthopaedic Surgery at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School. “The type of injury D.J. had is 95 percent fatal in the field and we are all very thankful for the coordinated response from the University of Houston trainers, EMS paramedics and the trauma team at Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute, including trauma surgeon Ron Albarado, M.D., trauma surgeon Phil Adams, M.D., and chief resident Laura Kreiner, M.D.”

Hayden was hospitalized in critical condition following the surgery. During that time, #PRAYFORDJ trended on Twitter and social media as fans and friends sent their prayers and well-wishes.

“Had D.J.’s transfer been delayed by as little as five minutes, he wouldn’t have survived,” said Dr. Albarado.

“Thanks to someone on the field who followed his gut instincts and called an ambulance because something ‘just didn’t seem right’ – a sentiment mirrored by the EMS team who alerted the hospital en route of their concerns – D.J. was given a fighting chance.”

When D.J. was brought in to the operating room, Dr. Albarado maintained temporary control of the bleeding with a single finger, while Dr. Kreiner improved the surgical exposure to the wound to facilitate safe repair. As an additional safeguard, they called in a second trauma surgeon, Dr. Adams.

“Our team made critical preparations, understanding that we only had one chance at successfully repairing the vein without avulsing the (Continued on back page)
For the first time in their 46 years of marriage, Frances Ridenour knew she couldn’t get her husband, Larry, what he wanted most for his birthday. It was a gift that he had never asked for before, but needed this year. Larry’s birthday wish was for the gift of life.

On the morning of September 20, Larry woke Frances up complaining of serious chest pains. She called 911 and he was rushed to a local Texas City hospital where he suffered a heart attack. The physicians knew he was in critical condition and that his heart needed immediate assistance. Therefore, they decided to insert an intra-aortic balloon pump through his femoral artery and into the heart.

No stranger to heart conditions, Larry had a history of heart disease and previously had an angiogram and triple bypass. At the hospital, he was diagnosed with end-stage heart failure—a condition so severe that all treatments, other than a heart transplant, would most likely fail. Larry needed to be transferred to a facility that could offer a higher level of care, so the hospital called the Center for Advanced Heart Failure at Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute–Texas Medical Center.

Larry was transported by Life Flight® and immediately assessed by the Center’s team, which is led by Igor Gregoric, M.D., chief, Surgical division and Biswajit Kar, M.D., chief, Medical division. Pranav Loyalka, M.D., serves as the associate chief, Medical division and Sriram S. Nathan, M.D., is the director of Cardiogenic Shock. Kumudha Ramassubbu, M.D., Medical division, and Manish Patel, M.D., Surgical division, also helped to coordinate his care.

“When you come to the Center for Advanced Heart Failure, you won’t be seen by just one doctor,” said Dr. Kar. “You will be cared for by an entire team of specialists from the Medical and Surgical division physicians to the heart transplant and ventricular assist device (VAD) coordinators. It requires collaboration across multiple disciplines to produce the best possible outcomes for our patients.”

Shortly after arriving at the hospital, Larry was moved to the cardiovascular intensive care unit and designated as a candidate for a heart transplant. In the meantime, Larry waited in bed, having to keep one leg completely straight to avoid bending the pump’s catheter. Frances elaborated, “That was probably the hardest part for Larry – waiting and keeping still. I didn’t know how much longer he was going to be able to mentally handle that.”

The team continued to monitor him and began to consider inserting a VAD should a heart not become available in the next few days.

On October 30, Larry celebrated his 70th birthday in the hospital with his wife. The very next morning, he was awakened at 4 a.m. with news that they had found a match and his birthday wish had come true—a heart was being flown in at that very moment.

Larry said, “Words truly cannot express how I felt. It was the best birthday gift I ever got—a life-saving birthday gift.”

Dr. Gregoric met with Larry the morning of Oct. 31 to discuss the transplant surgery, which would happen in the next few hours. Larry asked him a routine patient question, “So, how many heart transplants have you done here?”

Dr. Gregoric frankly replied, “Zero.” Both Larry’s and his wife’s eyes darted up in concern. “However, I have done hundreds as a surgeon at another hospital,” Dr. Gregoric added. “You will be the first patient to receive a heart transplant at the newly formed Center for Advanced Heart Failure.”

After Dr.Gregoric left the room, Larry turned to his wife and said, “I don’t know what I’m more excited about—the new heart or that I’m going to be the first one at this place to receive a new heart.”

Hours later, physicians at the Center for Advanced Heart Failure performed the first heart transplant—a milestone for the Center as well as the Campus. The transplant was a success and Larry continues to feel better each day.

“Needless to say, I had a wonderful birthday and look forward to celebrating many more, as a result of the great care provided by the talented physicians and staff at the Center,” said Larry. “This was an experience that has made me forever grateful and one I will never forget.”
Halloween Carnival
On Halloween, employees at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital hosted a carnival for patients and their families. Employees donned costumes, served refreshments and transformed Fondren Park into a fun activity zone with stations ranging from pumpkin decorating to a bean bag toss. The children received a special visit from the entire executive Campus leadership team, who dressed as characters from the Wizard of Oz – including the “yellow brick road” and “Toto.”

Haunted House on 4 Jones
Some very clever and creative employees put together an incredible immersive educational experience for staff – a haunted house on the 4th floor of Jones Pavilion, complete with skeletons, cobwebs and other things that go bump in the night. The haunted house – a runaway hit – was a unique platform to deliver a lesson in the importance of preventing hospital-acquired infections.

Disney on Ice Comes to Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital
Minnie Mouse, representing “Disney on Ice: Treasure Trove,” stopped by to visit patients at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital on Nov. 7. Pediatric patients had their pictures taken with the iconic Disney character and received special gifts from Disney – plush toys of Mickey or Minnie Mouse and an official program from the show.
ASTRONAUTS PREPARE FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES THROUGH UNIQUE HANDS-ON TRAINING PROGRAM AT MEMORIAL HERMANN-TMC

When you’re in outer space, calling 911 isn’t an option. Which is why, for more than a decade, Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center has worked with NASA to provide hands-on training to astronauts for medical events that could occur during a mission.

Through the Field Medical Training (FMT) program, future International Space Station (ISS) crew members learn how to conduct trauma assessments and to treat time-critical injuries – including lacerations, corneal abrasions caused by debris, electrical shock and burns – and to provide emergency medical treatment for other situations that may include allergic reactions and choking. Through the elective course, which is offered to astronauts through an arrangement between NASA and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School, participants also become skilled in splinting, using IVs, conducting ultrasounds and performing bladder catheterizations.

“We fly three people in the Soyuz capsule and typically, there isn’t a physician on board,” said Melinda J. Hailey, R.N., space medicine training instructor for Wyle, System Science, Technology & Engineering Group at NASA Johnson Space Center. “Our crew members need to be prepared for anything.”

During a week-long intensive program, astronauts work with residents and shadow physicians at the Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus and dentists at the UTHealth School of Dentistry. During a series of rotations, participants learn basic physical exams, dental care (e.g., how to replace a crown that falls off a tooth) and practice wound repair – initially honing their techniques by working on cadavers. By the end of the program, astronauts will assist physicians in treating actual patients in the Emergency department.

“The Texas Trauma Institute and UTHealth have developed a strong rapport with NASA as a result of the FMT program,” said James McCarthy, M.D., medical director of emergency medical services at Memorial Hermann-TMC.

As a testament to the kinship that has developed between our caregivers and FMT program graduates, astronaut Timothy “TJ” Creamer took the Life Flight® T-shirt he acquired during his rotation in the Emergency Department (ED) on a mission to the International Space Station (ISS). The shirt was launched aboard the Soyuz TMA-19 crew capsule on December 21, 2009 and spent 163 days in space before returning to Earth on June 2, 2010. Creamer returned the T-shirt, along with a certificate from NASA verifying its journey to outer space, to his colleagues in the ED in gratitude for their support.

“We are so grateful for the Texas Trauma Institute’s support of the Field Medical Training program. Our students rave about their ER experiences in every session,” said Hailey. “The relationship affords access to something NASA alone couldn’t provide. The FMT program is a unique learning opportunity and is greatly valued by participating astronauts as they prepare for their missions.”

“It’s an honor to work with the astronauts,” said retired U.S. Army colonel John Holcomb, M.D., director of the Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute. “They’re a great group – highly motivated and highly functional.”

Through the Field Medical Training (FMT) program, offered by NASA in collaboration with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) Medical School and Memorial Hermann Texas Trauma Institute, astronauts receive hands-on training to prepare for medical events that could occur during a mission.

Pictured left to right are students from the March 2012 Field Medical Training course: astronauts Jeannette Epps, Ph.D., and Colonel Mark Vande Hei; Life Flight paramedic Nick Herrington; Ron Albarado, M.D., course facilitator and trauma surgeon at the Texas Trauma Institute; astronauts Serena Auñón, M.D., colonel Mike Hopkins and Kate Rubins, Ph.D.; Julia Wells, instructor at Wyle Integrated Science & Engineering. Trauma surgeon Laura Moore, M.D., (not pictured) also serves as a facilitator for the program.

Integrated Science and Engineering Group; and Melinda Hailey, operations integration manager - Health Maintenance System at Wyle Integrated Science & Engineering.
On Election Day, Nov. 6, patients at Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital were surprised with a very special gift – The Owen Daniels Locker. The locker, launched by Houston Texans tight end Owen Daniels through his Owen Daniels Catching Dreams Foundation and presented by Walmart, contains notebook computers, PlayStation Portables, PSP games, DVD players, DVDs and games to help chronically and critically ill children pass time during treatment and recovery.

“It’s great to team up with Walmart to give these patients an escape from the hospital,” said Daniels. “It not only helps these patients but their families too, who are here together for such long periods of time and need an outlet.”

“Walmart is a proud partner with Owen Daniels to help lift the spirits of patients and families while in the hospital,” said Todd Manley, vice president – regional manager at Walmart. “We know the patients here are fighting for their health, so we want to ease their stress with ways to have fun during recovery.”

The Locker will touch the lives of more than 125,000 patients and their families each year.
To further improve employee safety, an Employee Safety/Safe Patient Handling Committee has been formed and will focus on the prevention of employee injuries due to patient handling, exposure to body fluid and needle sticks—the incidents with the highest levels of occurrence on Campus. Memorial Hermann leadership is committed to protecting employees from work-related hazards as well as promoting their health. As a testament to how important employee safety is to leadership, banners tracking employee safety incidents have been placed throughout the Campus and Employee Safety - Total Incident Case Rate is one of the five metrics of the FY13 Bonus Plan.

U.S. Navy Visits Memorial Hermann-TMC to Talk Medicine

During Navy Week in October, our Campus was honored to host members of the U.S. Navy, including Rear Admiral William Roberts, commandant of the Medical Education and Training Campus (METC) at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. During their visit, the admiral spoke with leadership on Navy Medicine’s role in medicine and maritime strategy. Pictured from left to right are Rear Admiral William Roberts; Capt. Saleem Khan, M.D., critical care surgeon at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center and a Navy reservist; Lt. Commander James Quick, aide to William Roberts; and Jesse Dick, mass communications specialist 2nd class. Rear Adm. Williams was Dr. Khan’s commanding officer at Camp Pendleton.

Upcoming Events – December

Schwartz Center Rounds
Thursday, Dec. 6
Join Campus leadership in the Hermann Conference Center for the next Schwartz Center Rounds, entitled “Two Lives Lost in the Blink of an Eye,” at noon Thursday, Dec. 6. The session will focus on the caregiver experience during a tragedy that resulted in the death of a pregnant woman and her baby, which was delivered by C-section after the mother was struck by a car outside our hospital on her way to work at Rice University. A complimentary lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. and the program will begin at noon. To register, call 713.704.4160.

Movie Matinee – “The Polar Express”
Monday, December 10
A special movie matinee for guests and visitors featuring “The Polar Express” will take place in the Hermann Conference Center from 1-3 p.m. Complimentary refreshments and popcorn will be served.

Annual Employee Holiday Party
Thursday, Dec. 20
Celebrate the joy of the season! Join your colleagues for refreshments in the Hermann Conference Center from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 9 p.m. to midnight.
vein completely from the heart,” said Dr. Albarado. “Repair of his vein was like attempting to suture pieces of wet toilet paper together. Too much force – even the slightest misstep – would further damage the vein and result in a rapid death.”

Hayden made it through the surgery and intensive care. Only six days later, he was discharged.

“Looking at the whole course of events and the severity of the injury, D.J. has progressed remarkably well and was out a lot sooner than expected,” said Dr. Lowe, medical director of the Memorial Hermann Ironman Sports Medicine Institute. “He’s got a lot of healing left to do as the procedure to repair the inferior vena cava is much like a heart transplant. The sternum should take around three months to heal and D.J. is expected to be able to resume normal activities without contact in three to four months.”

Though Hayden missed the remainder of the season – his senior year – he counts his blessings.

“I have a lot to be thankful for – thankful that I’m alive and I made it through the surgery,” said Hayden. “Not to mention, the incredible amount of support I’ve received since the accident.”

On Nov. 24, UH’s Senior Day, Hayden rejoined his teammates as he and his fellow seniors were honored at Robertson Stadium. In a heartfelt tribute to their injured teammate, all the players on the Houston Cougars football team wore Hayden’s name on the backs of their jerseys.

“I love all of them,” said Hayden. “What they did meant a lot to me. There are no words.”

“We are very fortunate to have some of the nation’s top physicians and medical facilities just minutes away from our campus and I would like to extend our appreciation to the caregivers at Texas Trauma Institute for their efforts in saving D.J.’s life,” said Coach Levine. “He is a tremendous young man and has been a great asset to our program, both on and off the field. I ask that everyone continue to keep D.J. and his family in their thoughts and prayers.”

Fans wishing to send well-wishes to D.J. Hayden are encouraged to do so at the Houston Athletics Facebook Page or via email at uhcougarsdotcom@gmail.com.

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*Gateways* is a publication for employees of the Memorial Hermann-TMC Campus, a leading healthcare facility that proudly stands at the gateway to the world-renowned Texas Medical Center.

We welcome your suggestions and comments. If you have news to share, concerns to address or questions you’d like answered, please send an email to medicalcentercommunications@memorialhermann.org or call 713.704.1222.