

The St. Joe's Experience



Award-Winning Cardiovascular Program Just Got Better



By Jack Weiner, President and CEO St. Joseph Mercy Oakland

St. Joseph Mercy Oakland's award-winning Cardiology and Cardiovascular services program has been elevated by the addition of a nationally recognized cardiothoracic and vascular surgeon.

We are privileged to welcome to our medical staff Charles F. Schwartz, MD, FACS, from the

New York University (NYU) Medical Center, where he served as Assistant Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery. Dr. Schwartz, who specializes in minimally invasive valve repair and replacement, coronary artery surgery and the surgical correction of thoracic aneurysms, will elevate and expand cardiovascular services at The Elliott M. Estes Heart Institute at our hospital. His additional medical interests include minimally invasive cardiac surgery, minimally invasive thoracic aneurysm surgery, coronary artery bypass surgery, robotic surgery and pacemaker/AICD, devices to correct slow or rapid heartbeats.

Dr. Schwartz has a previous association with Southeast Michigan. He earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Michigan (U-M), received his medical degree from the Wayne State University School of Medicine with honors in Surgery and completed his internship and residency in General Surgery at William Beaumont Hospital. Additionally, Dr. Schwartz was trained in Cardiothoracic Surgery at the NYU Medical Center.



He served as a research fellow in the thoracic surgery myocellular biology research laboratory at the U-M Medical Center and has since participated in numerous research projects and investigations.

Board certified by the American Board of Surgery and the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, Dr. Schwartz completed a fellowship in Cardiothoracic Surgery at the NYU School of Medicine.

Charles F. Schwartz, MD, FACS

Dr. Schwartz has published papers in prestigious peer-reviewed publications and has presented his research before major medical forums, conferences and associations. He also has co-authored numerous book chapters on topics in Cardiovascular Surgery,

including mitral valve repair and mitral valve endocarditis. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Schwartz to our community. The expertise he brings is immeasurable.

For eight consecutive years, St. Joe's Cardiovascular services have been nationally recognized. One of the most comprehensive heart programs in the U.S., the St. Joe's program is distinguished as a Thomson Reuters Top 50 Cardiovascular Hospital® and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network Blue Distinction Center for Cardiac Care. The Greater Detroit Area Health Council continues to rank St. Joe as a top performing hospital.

Our medical team consists of board-certified physicians, highly skilled cardiovascular nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses and clinical staff, who improve the quality of life of our patients with optimal attention to patient safety, quality of care and performance excellence.

DISCOVER  REMARKABLE

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health & wellness

Demystifying Social Anxiety

Jewish family launches foundation to spread awareness for debilitating disorder.

Jackie Headapohl
Managing Editor

Have you ever had to give a speech or a presentation to a room filled with strangers? You know the feeling: Your palms sweat, your mouth dries up, your heart starts to pound and you're filled with a sense of dread.

Imagine feeling that way every day of your life when confronted with a social situation.

That's what happens to those who suffer from Social Anxiety Disorder, a condition that affects more than 15 million Americans. It's far more than shyness and a fear of public speaking. It is an addiction to avoidance and can lead to isolation, substance abuse, depression and even suicide.

Jeff and Patty Kukes, formerly of Bloomfield Hills, who now live in Florida, know this only too well. Their son Andrew, who suffered from Social Anxiety Disorder, took his own life at age 30.

"At first we didn't see the signs," said Jeff. "Yes, he was shy. But he was also athletic, smart and had a lot of friends. It wasn't until his last two years of high school that we realized something was wrong."

Jeff and Patty were determined to get Andy help, "but there were very little resources or help available," said Patty. "We spent many hours looking for a diagnosis. A lot of professionals don't know about it. Help isn't easy to get."

Patty describes social anxiety as an "overwhelming and paralyzing anxiety when faced with social encounters. It's a fear of being judged and scrutinized, and it can continue into adulthood."

Jeff and Patty watched their son suffer for 10 years. After his death in 2009, they were motivated to help others, so they launched the Andrew Kukes Foundation for Social Anxiety.

"They are really quite amazing when you stop to consider the heartache that they have felt and the effort it would take to move in a positive direction," said Lori Blumenstein-Bott, executive director of the foundation. "It was brave and difficult for them to launch the foundation, but their motivation was to

help others and make a difference."

The foundation began by creating a 10-hour video to educate mental health professionals and provide resources to help. That video is available on the foundation's website, www.akfsa.org. Now, the Kukes are turning their attention to raising awareness for Social



Young Andrew Kukes during a visit to Israel

Anxiety Disorder.

The foundation's first public event, "An Evening of Understanding: Demystifying Social Anxiety," takes place Thursday, Sept. 6, at The Shul in West Bloomfield. They want to encourage those who suffer from the disorder as well as parents and educators to come out and learn about one of the most prevalent, and yet most

often misunderstood mental disorders.

Guest speaker will be Jonathan Berent, a social anxiety expert and author of *Beyond Shyness: How to Conquer Social Anxieties* and *Work Makes Me Nervous: Overcome Anxiety and Build the Confidence to Succeed*. Berent's evidence-based clinical work has been proven effective and offers a new approach to working with those trying to cope with social anxiety.

His presentation will discuss how social anxiety affects children, adolescents and adults. Following the presentation, audience members will have a chance to ask questions. Coffee and dessert will be served. The presentation is free, and mental health professionals will earn continuing education credits for attending.

The event is being held in partnership with the Daniel B. Sobel Friendship House and eight other community organizations.

The Kukes hope to fill the seats. "Social anxiety doesn't sound all that serious when you hear about, but it can impact people's lives, as it did Andy's," said Jeff. □

"An Evening of Understanding: Demystifying Social Anxiety"

Thursday, Sept. 6, 7-8:30 p.m.
at The Shul, 6890 W. Maple,
West Bloomfield. To RSVP or
register, visit akfsa.com/invite.