



**The Outstanding Rural Health Organization of the Year Award** recognizes any community-based group or organization that has improved access to health services and information for rural people through innovative, comprehensive approaches. Factors considered include outreach, preventive health and education, quality and efficiency of care, and strong community support and involvement. The Louisiana Rural Health Association (LRHA) is honored to name **Jackson Parish Hospital** as the 2023 Outstanding Rural Health Organization of the Year award recipient.

Jackson Parish Hospital has served the residents of Jackson Parish since 1962. This Critical Access Hospital (CAH), recognized as a Hospital Service District, is the only hospital in Jackson Parish and provides inpatient, full-service lab, radiology, speech, rehab, physical and occupational therapy, and emergency department services, as well as gastroenterology and oncology services through contract. The hospital also owns three provider-based rural health clinics (RHCs).

In 2017, after many years of ups and downs, Jackson Parish Hospital was facing financial trouble and a damaged reputation. That year, the hospital brought on a new Chief Executive Officer, John Morgan, MBA, BSN, RN, to begin the work of rebuilding community trust and creating a transformational culture. The new era of Jackson Parish Hospital began with the development of a strong, qualified, and skilled executive team of clinical, financial, and information technology professionals.

The hospital's Chief Operating Officer and Chief Information Officer, Dr. Jason Thomas, PhD, is responsible for revolutionizing the hospital with state-of-the-art technology in clinical settings, financial operations, and the patient care experience. Shelley Malsam, RHIT, provides the hospital's revenue cycle direction, prioritizing the clean-up and updating of the hospital's Charge Description Master (CDM) and patient accounting systems to optimize revenue. Chief Financial Officer, Bill Stansbury, CPA, is the executive team member responsible for re-engineering the hospital's accounting and financial reporting. Sunni Bouges, RN was named the Chief Nursing Officer, with improving the quality of patient care and clinical workflows as top priority. This executive team worked collaboratively with clinical and operational department directors and managers to revitalize the hospital.

The accounting system was fine-tuned, a more accurate cost reporting system implemented, the electronic health record system was optimized, and the management of early out and bad debt was improved. Volume was increased in existing service lines and new service lines were added. The hospital went from having only days of cash on hand to a solid financial position, allowing for continued growth, expansion, and modernization of the plant. In early 2019, the hospital undertook a renovation project to fully renovate the space and enlarge the patient rooms. The renovations included incorporating new features into patient rooms to improve patient experience, such as new showers and televisions, as well as new technology, such as full telemetry and telemedicine equipment, to increase clinical capabilities. The hospital now has a 5-Star HCAHPS rating and has had zero percent hospital-acquired infections since 2019.

The medical staff has been enriched through the addition of regionally recognized health care professionals in the Emergency Department, Hospitalist Program, and Rural Health Clinics. A team-based care model is working successfully under the leadership of Dr. Ed Mariana, MD. Food services, now under the direction of Chef John Mayer, have also seen marked improvement, not only decreasing food costs, but also, improving both patient and staff satisfaction with the menu.

Now, six years after their improvement journey began, the hospital is flourishing and serving Jackson Parish and surrounding Parishes with quality care in up-to-date hospital rooms that have state-of-the-art technology with plans to update the Emergency Room and Endoscopy suite area in the near future. The reputation of Jackson Parish Hospital continues to improve as they provide quality and compassionate care to their patients.

In nominating the organization for this award, Patty Harper with InQuiseek Consulting stated, “It is not often as a consultant that I get to witness such a dramatic organizational transformation as I have been privileged to observe in Jackson Parish... Today the organization is thriving, optimizing technology and providing quality care.”

In recognition of their dedication to continuous improvement and their commitment to providing high-quality care to our rural communities, the Louisiana Rural Health Association is honored to recognize Jackson Parish Hospital as the 2023 Outstanding Rural Health Organization of the Year Award Recipient.

