



**Mid-Illinois Medical District Biennial Report to the Illinois General Assembly  
Covering Activities and Events for CY 2019 and CY 2020**



Cover photograph courtesy Lincoln Land Community College

# Mid-Illinois Medical District Biennial Report to the Illinois General Assembly

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Covering Activities and Events for CY 2019 and CY 2020



Mid-Illinois  
Medical District

May 2021



Photo courtesy Lincoln Land Community College

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## THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

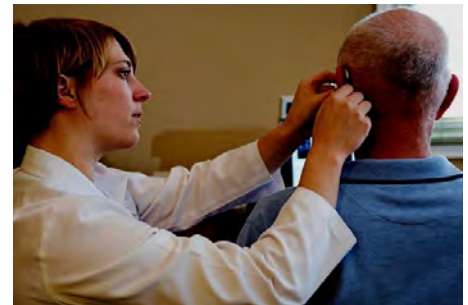
The Mid-Illinois Medical District (MIMD), was established by act of the Illinois General Assembly [70 ILCS 925/, Mid-Illinois Medical District Act] which became effective January 1, 2003. The Act calls for the Commission overseeing the District to submit to the General Assembly a detailed report covering its operations for the two preceding calendar years no later than March 1 of each odd-numbered year, as well as a statement of its program for the next two years [70 ILCS 925/10(f)]. This report is intended to fulfill this obligation.

The 2019-2020 report addresses significant actions during the reporting period, including District growth activities and Commission leadership activities, as well as limitations on its efforts that the Commission has identified. It also addresses what the Commission believes are necessary efforts to be undertaken going forward.

## ABOUT THE DISTRICT

The MIMD, only the second such district to be established by the Illinois General Assembly, was created to achieve a number of ends, including such general goals as attracting and retaining within its bounds academic centers of excellence, viable health care facilities, medical research facilities, and emerging high technology enterprises. In addition, the work of the MIMD's Commission was seen as important in supporting other purposes, including the retention of the various historic residential neighborhoods that are included within the District's bounds.

To achieve these goals, the Act encourages certain specific efforts. This includes calling upon the MIMD Commission to encourage and support maintaining within the area the proper surroundings necessary to attract, stabilize and retain hospitals, clinics, research facilities, educational, and various other facilities in the Act.





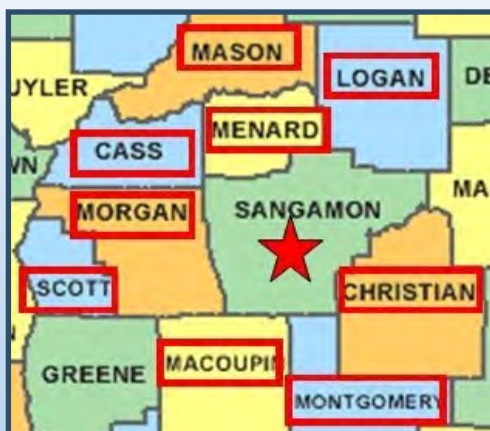
Associated with this is providing for the orderly creation, maintenance, development, and expansion of health care and their ancillary or related facilities, specifically those involved in the study, diagnosis and treatment of both physical and mental human ailments. It also calls for the MIMD and its Commission to promote medical, surgical, and scientific research and the creation of new knowledge consistent with the District's mission. To do this, the Act allows for the MIMD Commission to encourage and support the creation of medical research and high technology parks, along with the necessary lands, buildings, facilities, equipment, and personal property needed to advance their operation.

From the MIMD's inception, the redevelopment of residential areas contained within the District was seen as important to the MIMD's long-term success. This was a lesson learned from the experiences of the Illinois Medical District in Chicago. For this reason the MIMD Act specifically called for the involvement of affected neighborhood organizations in the development and approval of the District's initial plans and addressed the nature of, and restrictions on, MIMD actions in the area.

Of course, neighborhood stability with a residential component is necessary in maintaining the historic character of the area, but it is also necessary if the District is to create places where those receiving services might want to stay, shop and recreate. It is also seen as providing a necessary component in the development of new, affordable housing for those working at the institutions located there.

### Geographic and Population Reach Within the 10 Counties Covered by the MIMD:

- 5,810.1 Square Miles
- 410,758 Residents



Along with requiring a dialogue with the neighborhoods in the District, the Act also specifically calls for the Commission to convene a dialogue among leaders in the public and private sectors on topics and issues associated with training in the delivery of health care services in the District's Training Program Area. This approach is particularly consequential for the MIMD as it results from amendments to the Act effective Nov. 5, 2007.

As originally planned, the District was seen as serving only the medical and economic interests of residents of Springfield and Sangamon County. But upon further reflection, it was determined that the impact of the institutions, facilities, and jobs located in the district, as well as those that were anticipated to grow there, had much greater geographic range. The educational and training opportunities associated with the MIMD were particularly of note in considering its additional geographic reach. For this reason participation in it was broadened by the changes made to the Act in 2007 to include Cass, Christian, Logan, Macoupin, Mason, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, and Scott counties in addition to Sangamon.



It is with these charges and changes in mind that the Commission continued to work during CY 2019-2020 to not necessarily be the “doer” of all activities in the District, but instead to be a supporter, champion, and facilitator in six key areas addressed by the Act: **Academic Centers of Excellence; Viable Health Care Facilities; Medical Research Facilities; Emerging High Technology Enterprises; Historic Residential Neighborhoods;** and **Proper Surroundings**. These areas will be addressed further below.

The approach adopted by the Commission is particularly relevant in light of the limited financial and staff resources the Commission has had since its inception. The Commission has therefore endeavored to work with and through a number of significant partners to advance its agenda during CY 2019-2020.

These partners included:

- The **major patient care providers** located in the District: HSHS St. John’s Hospital, Memorial Medical Center, the Springfield Clinic, and SIU Medicine.
- The **various institutions providing education and training** in medicine and related fields: the Lincoln Land Community College Capital City Training Center, St. John’s School of Nursing, the University of Illinois-Springfield’s Nursing program, Southern Illinois University’s School of Medicine, and the Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation. This last institution was specifically designed to foster communication, education, collaboration and innovation across the healthcare workforce.
- The District’s primary **medical research and development resource**: The Southern Illinois University School of Medicine (SIUM) is a critical component in this area. SIUM is not only a well-respected educational facility located within the District, but one with a very active knowledge creation mission driving its research and technology transfer activities.
- Two vital **neighborhood organizations**: Downtown Springfield, Inc. (DSI), which works to enhance the adjacent Springfield center city, and the Enos Park Neighborhood Association (EPNA), which covers the historic neighborhood making up the District’s eastern half. While the Commission considers the interests and needs of all residents living in or adjacent to the MIMD as it goes about its work, these two organizations have become active partners in the area’s planned development.
- The primary **professional association** serving the physicians in the District: the Sangamon County Medical Society.
- The District’s **principal governmental partners**: the State of Illinois and its various agencies, the City of Springfield and its Public Works and Planning

**“A high concentration of innovative health care providers and proven community support make the Springfield and Sangamon County region fertile territory for the development of medical technology and devices”.**

**“The area’s tech scene is growing, thanks to a supportive business environment and the strong regional talent pool filled by thousands of students developing valuable skill-sets at colleges and universities like the University of Illinois Springfield, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Lincoln Land Community College and Midwest Technical Institute”.**

*Springfield Sangamon  
Growth Alliance*



and Economic Development departments, and Sangamon County and its Department of Public Health. During the reporting year the potential for increased regional community support for the economic development work of the MIMD Commission was increased with the establishment of the Land of Lincoln Economic Development Corporation in CY 2017 and the hiring of its first Executive Director in CY 2018. Following some changes in the management of this organization in 2020, it was renamed the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance.

Two of the Growth Alliance's target industries are particularly relevant to the work of the MIMD; *Health and Life Sciences* and *Technology*.

Actions by these various partners resulted in the District benefiting from over \$600 million in capital investment over the past decade, hosting over 4.7 million square feet of medical facilities, as well as being ranked first in clinical care in Illinois.

The Commission also makes note of the fact that according to the *Springfield Business Journal*, by June of 2018, four of the top 10 employers in Sangamon County were residents of the MIMD. More recently (2020) the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance has noted such major employment in the district as: Memorial Health System, with 5,238 employees; Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS), 4,434 employees; Springfield Clinic, 2,449 employees; and SIU School of Medicine, 1,470 employees. To provide some context, if employment by the State of Illinois (using the most recent data available for Sangamon County, a June 2018 estimate of 17,800 employees) is removed, the total employment of the other nine employers in the top ten accounted for 20,345 workers. Of this amount, 13,591 were employed by the four MIMD partners noted above. This represents almost 65% of the employment by top Sangamon County based employers with State of Illinois employment removed. To show how consequential medicine related employment is to the region, during the reporting period medically-related employment in Sangamon County continued to exceed direct State of Illinois employment.

And the economic influence of the medical community is seen in other ways as well.

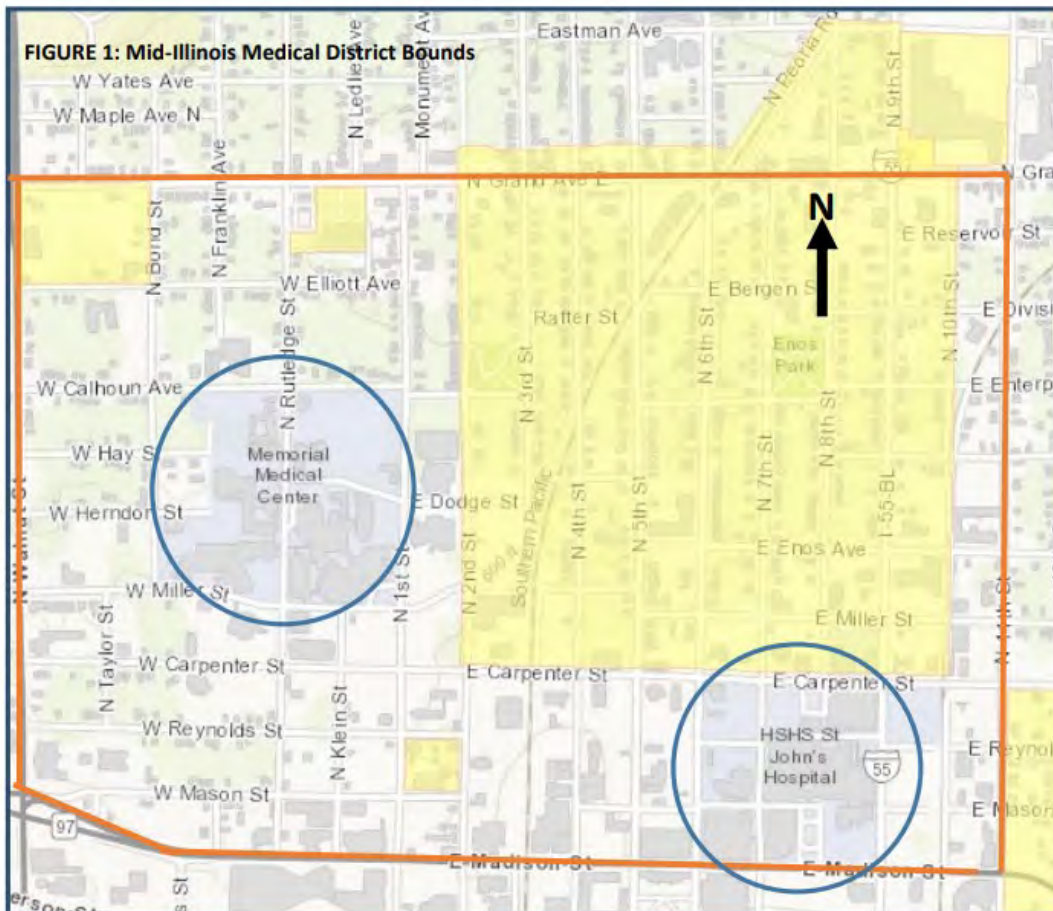
For example, a 2018 ESRI analysis (the last year for which this data is available) found 403 businesses involved in Health Services in Sangamon County. These enterprises made up over 15% of all employment in the county.

Health care also had a significant impact on consumer spending. It accounted for \$455,312,876 of such spending in Sangamon County in 2018, the last year for which this data is available, or an average of \$5,406.94 per consumer. This

accounted for a Health Care Spending Index of 94 (the nation is indexed at 100 for comparison purposes), meaning that there was still significant room for growth in the county alone. When the other counties in the MIMD service region are included, the potential for growth is accordingly much higher.

## The District's Bounds

As per its establishing legislation, the one-square mile Mid-Illinois Medical District (shown in Figure 1, below) is bounded by Springfield's 11th Street on the east, North Grand Avenue on the north, Walnut Street on the west, and Madison Street on the south. To help orient the readers of this report, major medical facilities are identified on the figure within and adjacent to the two blue circles. The SIU School of Medicine is located immediately to the west of Memorial Medical Center, and a major Springfield Clinic facility is located to Memorial's immediate east. Prairie Heart Institute's Cardio-vascular Center is located immediately to the west of HSHS St. John's Hospital. The yellow areas represent existing Springfield-Sangamon County Enterprise Zone sub-zones.



## The Commission's Members

As noted previously, changes made to the MIMD's statute in 2007 expanded the membership of the District's Commission from nine to 11 members to match its perceived geographic educational and training reach.

The Commission is currently made up of: six members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the State Senate, two of whom shall be from Cass, Christian, Logan, Macoupin, Mason, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, or Scott counties; four members appointed by the Mayor of Springfield with the advice and consent of the Springfield City Council; and one member appointed by the Chairperson of the Sangamon County Board, with the advice and consent of that board.

As of February 11, 2021, 10 members had been appointed and were serving terms, leaving one seat vacant.

### 2019-2020 Commissioners:

**Dr. Charlotte Warren, President**

**Mitch Johnson , Vice President**

**Joe Hurwitz, Secretary**

**Rex Brown**

**Roland Cross**

**Ryan Croke**

**Jennifer Lee**

**Dr. Gurpreet Mander**

**Jack Mazzotti**

**Norman Sims**

Given the anticipation that at some point the Commission would be assisted by professional staff, the Act and the Commission's Bylaws allow for the offices of Secretary and Treasurer to be elected but need not be Commissioners. With this allowance, the Commission selected as its Treasurer Ms. Ramona Metzger, an employee of the City of Springfield, who has provided these services to the Commission on a *pro bono* basis for several years. She will continue to do so in 2021.

The Commission notes Ms. Metzger's service as being indicative of its ongoing efforts to better engage with its partners. For example, the Commission has increased dialogue with its two major governmental partners — Sangamon County and the City of Springfield — in order to increase their involvement in the Commission's activities and development in the District. The Commission anticipates that the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance will become more involved with the District as that organization matures given its identification of the medical sector as a major area for regional economic growth.



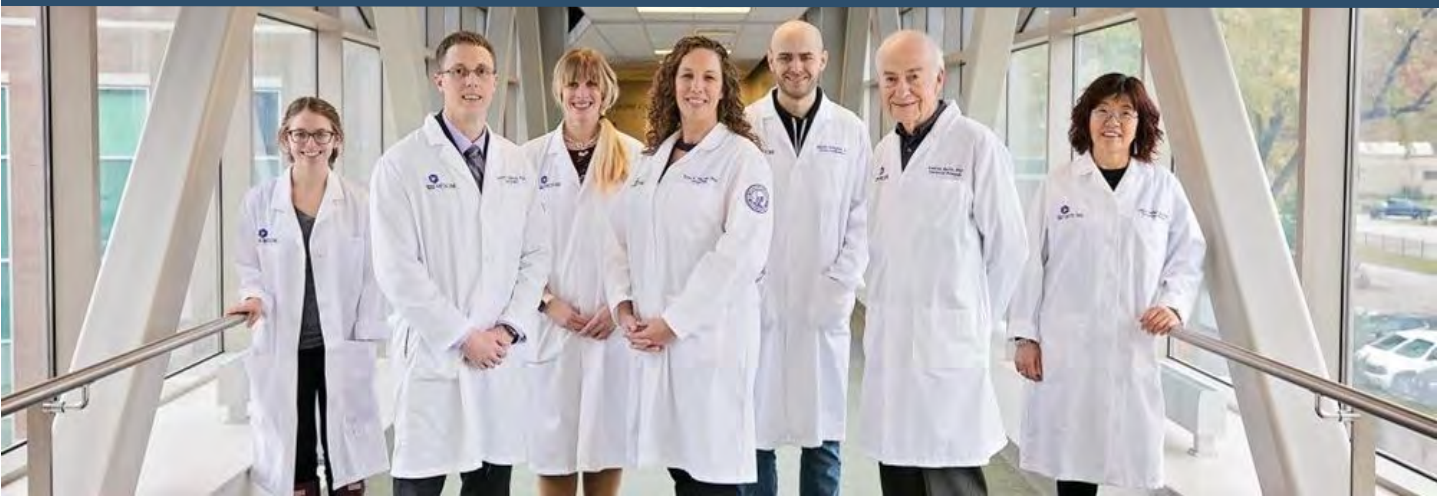


PHOTO: SIU School of Medicine

## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES OF NOTE DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

As noted previously, the MIMD Commission sees its role and responsibilities as involving some direct administrative actions, but to primarily work with and through its various partnering agencies, organizations and institutions. For this reason, the Commission will address actions during the reporting period related to district growth and improvement in the key areas mentioned previously. It will also address Commission Leadership Activities in the section of this report dealing with efforts over the next two years.

The Commission limits its comments in this section to some exemplary efforts and activities of MIMD part-ners during CY 2019-2020 that it believes strengthened the District overall and assisted the Commission in advancing its mission.

However, it is important to recognize a singular challenge that faced the Commission and its development partners.



The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the medical community, its resources, and its immediate plans. To put this in some context, as of February 25, 2021, the 10 county region that makes up the anticipated MIMD service area had experienced 20,406 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 629 COVID-related deaths.

The pandemic immediately placed an economic burden on health care providers. For example, as reported by the *State Journal-Register* (March 7, 2021) Memorial Health Systems, which operates Springfield's Memorial Hospital, posted an operating loss of \$13.9 million in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2020. It faced what it saw as dire financial straits after canceling elective procedures for six weeks in the spring of 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and conserve limited personal-protective equipment.

Memorial, a not-for-profit system, took various actions to reduce internal expenses for the rest of the year. This included staff attrition and the lay-off of 140 full-time equivalent positions. This reduced employment by 10% at the same time the need for workers was increasing due to the pandemic.

The situation might have been worse, but the Memorial system benefited from \$66 million in federal COVID-19 relief funding and \$145 millions in Federal Medicare revenue stabilization funds.

HSHS St. John's Hospital and its associated system also saw significant revenue losses and cost increases during the period. According to the *State Journal-Register*, the system's annual report shows an "operating margin" loss of \$177.5 million, or 7%, during its last fiscal year. It was also assisted by Federal COVID-19 relief funds in the amount of \$142 million, and \$248 million through the Medicare program.

The HSHS annual report says that 10% of the HSHS system's workforce was laid off. One would also expect that the other major medical care providers in the District — SIU Physicians and Surgeons, and Springfield Clinic — suffered similar financial stress during this period.

Yet while the impact of the pandemic had potentially dire economic effects, it also seriously limited on-going health care to patients as it caused the closure of various health care resources to limit the spread of the disease. Many planned tests, physician visits, procedures and operations were delayed or postponed during the past year, yielding a notable financial impact on District healthcare providers. Unfortunately there are not yet suitable metrics available to quantify this impact locally.

Equally important, the pandemic placed extraordinary stress on the medical staff and other employees of the facilities within the MIMD. The Commission recognizes the important and heroic actions of all of those involved in patient care over these past many months as they worked long hours to save lives and control the spread of this disease. We also recognize how it has affected their personal growth and development, as well as their lives and the lives of their families.

Addressing the needs of the public during the pandemic required that District medical care providers find new ways of offering care. For example, Springfield Clinic maintains a significant presence in the District, but began offering multiple ways for the public to receive testing outside of it,



PHOTO: Springfield Clinic

including testing for COVID-19. This was accomplished by establishing drive-up lab locations. Springfield Clinic was not alone in this approach, with other health care providers (e.g., HSHS St. Johns, Memorial Hospital, and SIU-Medicine) taking similar approaches.

The effects of the pandemic were felt beyond the medical community and in ways that indirectly affect activities and development within the District.

The closure of many businesses within the City of Springfield, particularly in the downtown area adjacent to the MIMD, affected the local economy and development plans. City staff were required to work away from their normal places of business. This caused delays in some planning and other activities associated with the MIMD. At this point working and meeting remotely may feel normal, but not so long ago that was not the case. Learning new ways of communication and coordination took time and delayed activities and projects.

The Commission has high hopes that the next two years will see a refreshed and enthused commitment to the MIMD, its resident health care educators and providers, and those they employ, as the various dislocations caused by the pandemic subside.





PHOTO: SIU School of Medicine

## Noteworthy Medical Education and Training Activities Conducted in the MIMD

During the reporting period the MIMD continued to provide a significant resource for medical education. Currently the District is the home of education and training programs offered by the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, the University of Illinois Springfield, Lincoln Land Community College, and St. John's College of Nursing.

## Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation Continues Efforts



PHOTO: Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation

The Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation (MCLI) provides a cornerstone for healthcare training and education in the MIMD. With its 72,000 square feet in four floors, the MCLI is the home to employee and leadership development courses as well as a variety of community educational opportunities. It also hosts degree and certification programs in conjunction with its academic partners: SIU School of Medicine; Lincoln Land Community College; University of Illinois Chicago; and University of Illinois Springfield.

During the reporting period it continued to expand on its technological resources, state-of-the-art simulation training center, dynamic classrooms and debriefing areas, and the J. Roland Folse Surgical Skills Center. This allows Memorial hospital staff and clinical partners to practice and test innovative approaches in healthcare practices in real world situations. MCLI conducted a number of activities geared to assist the public, ranging from sessions providing information on COVID-19 to sessions on such matters as how to handle life-threatening bleeds. MCLI also hosted several meetings of Governor JB Pritzker's transition committees.

## Lincoln Land Community College Demonstrates Additional Commitment to MIMD

Showing its continuing commitment to development in the District, Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) changed the name of a training facility to better reflect its connection to the college, its location, and its mission.

The LLCC education and training facility located in the MIMD, a center located at 130 W. Mason St. and only blocks away from the District's two major hospitals, is now officially known as the *LLCC-Medical District*. The facility was previously known as the Capital City Center. It is a state-of-the-art training facility designed to meet the growing technology training needs of local employers. Due to the growth of the MIMD and medical community, over the past few years the training programs offered at the facility have grown to include many programs in the healthcare field.

In announcing the name change, LLCC Assistant Vice President for Corporate/Government Training and Economic Development Paula Luebbert said the change was due to additional focus on short-term, healthcare training and its location in the Mid-Illinois Medical District.

The programs to now be offered at the LLCC-Medical District include dental assistant, medical assistant, phlebotomy technician, CNA to medical assistant bridge, pharmacy technician, massage therapy, ECG technician, and even veterinarian assistant.



The programs are designed so that they can be completed in six months to one year, and they offer students the opportunity to gain experience with a local employer through an externship. Due to the program's structure and employer demand, the program offers a potential job before graduation.

All of the programs are nationally certified and have pass rates well above national averages.

Luebbert says that the facility's programs are expected to expand based upon employment opportunities.



## Lincoln Land and Memorial Health System Partner to Address Area Nursing Needs

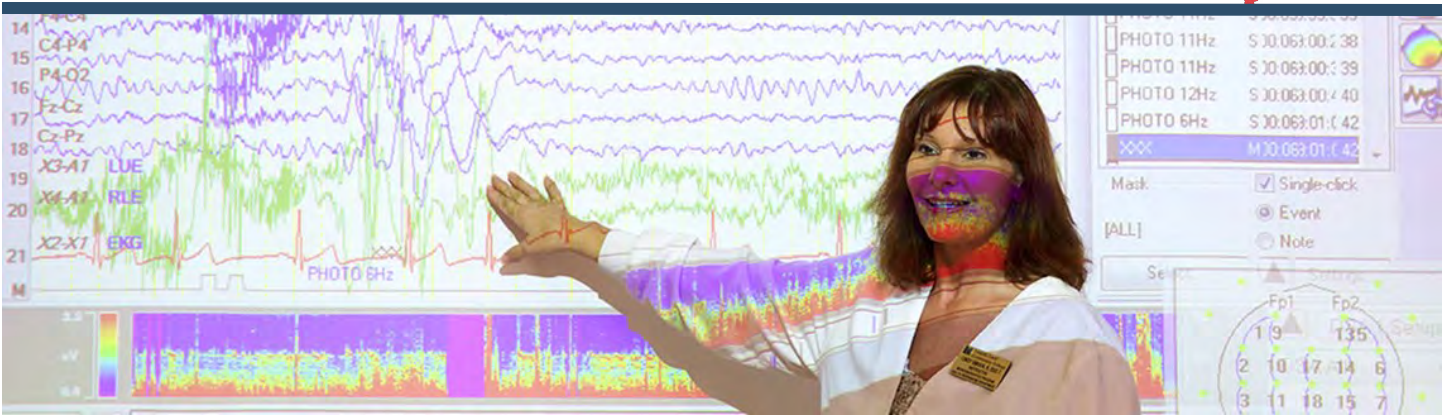
It is of particular note that in 2020, designated as the “Year of the Nurse” by the World Health Organization, Lincoln Land Community College and Memorial Health System (MHS) announced a nursing education partnership to help address the regional nursing shortage. The program will admit 90 additional students each year into the LLCC’s Associate degree in nursing program. This new effort is expected to generate 215 new nursing students each year.

As part of the joint effort MHS is providing approximately \$6.1 million in funding. This will allow for some LLCC facilities to be renovated, the purchase of state-of-the-art equipment, and the hiring of additional staff.

As the facilities in the MIMD and throughout the region report a shortage of nurses, the partnership is expected to be of tremendous benefit to both patient healthcare and medical industry growth.

The LLCC’s Associate degree nursing program provides training and clinical experience for a career as a registered professional nurse (RN). This expansion is in addition to the LLCC programs for those interested in Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN), LPN to Registered Nurse transition, and Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA).





## Noteworthy Medical Research and Technology Development Activities Conducted in the MIMD

The medical community in Springfield has long been recognized for innovative work in healthcare. Many of the partners in the MIMD are directly or in-directly involved in research and technology efforts, and the SIU School of Medicine has this as a point of emphasis.

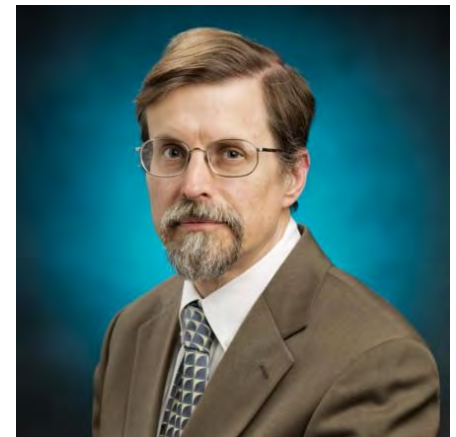
Due to constraints caused by COVID-19 during the reporting period, time and resources were taken from various research programs. However the partners in the District continued their efforts in a number of areas, particularly clinical trials. The testing of vaccines for COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of well planned and executed clinical trials, and the Springfield medical community is well-known for its ability to host and conduct them.

### SIU-Med Launches Clinical Trial to Study PTSD

The Vietnam War first brought the suffering caused by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to the public's attention, and concern about it was only heightened by wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. What often goes unreported is that PTSD can develop outside of combat situations. PTSD can be brought on in many different ways, and people who experience or witness a traumatic event that causes unwanted memories or struggles with anxiety, may fall victim.

For all the reasons that PTSD can develop, finding a treatment for those suffering from it is consequential.

During the MIMD reporting period the SIU School of Medicine (SIUM) launched a clinical trial to study the safety and efficacy of an investigational drug for PTSD. Local researchers led by Dr. Jeffrey Bennett, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at SIUM, are currently evaluating a drug that has received FDA approval for schizophrenia and as an adjunctive therapy for major depressive disorder.



**Dr. Jeffrey Bennett, Principal Investigator for PTSD Trial**  
PHOTO: SIUM

Doctors involved in the new study are evaluating the drug in combination with another drug, Sertraline, to determine its efficacy in the treatment of PTSD.

During the trial the participants in the study will have their health and safety monitored closely, and all of their costs associated with it will be covered.

## Patients Enrolled in SIUM Parkinson’s Disease Trial



**Dr. Ahmad El Kouzi, Principal Investigator for Parkinson’s Disease Study**  
PHOTO:SIUM

During the reporting period SIUM began recruiting patients with early-stage Parkinson’s disease for the study of a new drug that could become a potential treatment for this debilitating condition.

Parkinson’s disease (PD) is a nervous system disorder that affects movement, causing slowness, stiffness, tremors, walking and balance problems, and inability to write, talk, or in some cases, even feed themselves. There is no known cure for PD, and in its early stages the symptoms may be mild and diagnosis easily missed. Unfortunately, patients with it experience a worsening of their symptoms over time.

SIUM’s PRISM Parkinson’s Research Study is evaluating an investigational drug to determine if it might slow the progression of PD. Patients enrolled in the study are in the early-stages of Parkinson’s and not on any other PD treatments. They are receiving a test drug and all their medical exams at no cost, and may be compensated for time and travel.

Dr. Ahmad El Kouzi, SIUM Assistant Professor of Neurology, is the principal investigator for the study, and says, “Currently, no FDA-approved medications exist to slow down Parkinson’s disease. This study addresses a great research need. Participants could make an important difference in the world of our Parkinson’s disease patients.”

## SIUM Studies Using Ultrasound Energy to Reduce High Blood Pressure

Hypertension, known more commonly as high blood pressure, is sometimes termed the “silent killer”, but a new SIUM clinical trial is investigating if it can be affected by sound waves.

Under the guidance of Dr. John M. Flack, who holds the *Sergio Rabin, MD, Endowed Chair in Internal Medicine* at SIUM, researchers are working to determine if ultrasound energy can be used to reduce blood pressure in people with resistant hypertension.

The ReCor Medical RADIANCE-II clinical study will give patients the opportunity to try a new technology to reduce their reliance on medication. The study is designed to evaluate the ability of the Paradise Renal Denervation (RDN) Sys-



tem to reduce blood pressure in patients with Stage 2 hypertension who are prescribed no more than two anti-hypertension medications.

The results of the study will be significant for, as Dr. Flack points out, high blood pressure affects half of all adults in the U.S., and is the greatest risk factor for death and disability worldwide as it “increases the risk of suffering from heart disease, kidney failure, vascular disease and stroke. For patients who can’t manage their hypertension with medications or are seeking an alternate treatment for high blood pressure, this trial offers a promising new approach.” As Dr. Flack specializes in treating resistant hypertension in minority populations, he is particularly interested in how this new approach might be of assistance with this group given its comparatively high hypertension rates.

The PRD System was of interest as nerves running to the kidneys are particularly important in the control of high blood pressure, and the Paradise System is a minimally invasive procedure to treat these overactive nerves. A small incision is made in the groin and a small, flexible catheter is inserted into an artery supplying the kidney. Ultrasound energy is then delivered to the tissue surrounding the artery for several seconds, and the sound waves generate heat to decrease the overactivity of the nerves leading to the kidney. Both kidneys are treated and following treatment the device is removed.

The initial results of a similar study found that patients treated with the system had a greater reduction in blood pressure than a control group, and the reduction was sustained at six months even though their blood pressure medications had been decreased.

## SIU Group Studies Impact of COVID-19 on Alzheimer’s Disease.

While the COVID-19 pandemic affected many activities in the District, it also opened important new areas of research.

For example, researchers at SIUM’s Neuroscience Institute are studying how the novel coronavirus may accelerate the progress of Alzheimer’s disease to help identify patients that are more susceptible to cognitive and physical decline.



**Dr. John M. Flack studies effects of sound waves on hypertension in SIUM clinical trial**  
PHOTO: SIUM

Erin Hascup, Ph.D., who is director of the Center for Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders and Associate Professor in the departments of Neurology and Pharmacology at SIUM, is teaming with Kevin Hascup, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in Neurology in the Institute, to lead the study. They are being assisted by Michael Olson, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Medical Microbiology, Immunology and Cell Biology (MMICB), and Andrew Wilber, Ph.D., Associate Professor MMICB, along with Dr. Wilber’s lab staff.



**Along with Dr. Erin Hascup, Dr. Kevin Hascup, shown here, helps lead study of impact of COVID-19 on Alzheimer’s patients.**

PHOTO: SIUM

The Hascup led group had previously been awarded \$6.7 million in grants from the National Institutes of Health’s National Institute on Aging to study how glutamate dysregulation, inflammation and cellular senescence within the brain affects the cognitive decline of Alzheimer’s patients. This work is seen as possibly producing early biomarkers and therapeutic targets for fighting Alzheimers.

Dr. Kevin Hascup notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has created an unparalleled health crisis, but the group wants to help answer questions as to how this new disease might affect Alzheimer’s. “COVID-19-positive patients have acute respiratory infection”, he notes, “but there is also evidence of inflammation in the brain that may accelerate brain again and increase the risk of developing Alzheimer’s.” He points out that their research project will help determine the effects of COVID-19 on the Alzheimer’s population, as well as determine if COVID-19 changes a patient’s susceptibility to, or progression of, the disease.



## On-Going Work of SIUM's Center for Alzheimer's Disease

The COVID-19 project is part of a larger effort to confront Alzheimer's and indicates the potential for additional growth of research efforts in the Medical District.

Thanks to a major financial gift from Dale and Deborah Smith, the SIUM is looking to expand research, enhance programming and improve care for people with Alzheimer's disease and assist their caregivers. The gift allowed the school to create a center for Alzheimer's research and treatment that is named for the Smiths.

The new center replaces and expands upon the former SIUM Center for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders, providing clinical care, research, and community programs throughout Illinois.

Since the original center was established, its staff has served more than 4,000 patients and their families. Its research work has resulted in more than \$7.2 million in awards from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Aging over just the past three years.

Along with its research project related to the affect of COVID-19 on Alzheimer's patients, the center was involved in the following projects and studies:

- Use of pharmacology targeted at receptors to restore glutamate function and cognitive decline associated with Alzheimer's disease.
- Determining the neurochemical changes that occur as a result of PTSD in military veterans that makes them more susceptible to Alzheimer's disease.
- Tracking Alzheimer's disease progression by using a lifespan approach to determine changes in glutamate neurotransmission during a cognitive task and how it is differently altered depending on disease progression. For the first time these studies will show functional differences that occur throughout disease progression, and they have the potential to identify and design disease-stage specific medical interventions.
- Determining the relationships between cellular senescence (when cells stop functioning properly, common in ageing and may be increased in Alzheimer's disease), inflammation, glutamatergic neurotransmission (important for learning and memory) and cognition.
- Examining the prevalence, treatment and outcomes in rural-urban setting, along with racial disparities in relation to Alzheimer's and related disorders to better understand the disease's demographics and improve patient outcomes.



This research is important to the medical community as well as the MIMD. Currently, 5.7 million Americans are challenged by Alzheimer's. By 2050, this number is projected to more than double, with nearly 14 million suffering from the disease.

## SIUM Physician Pioneers New Endoscopic Technology

Dr. Abdul Sweid, an advanced endoscopist in the SIUM's Division of Gastroenterology, is now working with the world's first single-use duodenoscope approved by the FDA.



Dr. Sweid and the new disposable scope. PHOTO: SIUM

A duodenoscope is a hollow, flexible, lighted tube that allows a physician to see the top of a patient's small intestine, or duodenum. They help doctors diagnose and treat such severe, and even dangerous, diseases as cancer or gallstones in the pancreas and bile ducts, and have the advantage of being less invasive than traditional surgery.

Dr. Swied is the first physician in Illinois and Missouri to use the revolutionary scope made by Boston Scientific: the EXALT Model D. It is a disposable endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography, or ErCp. Its innovative single-use design eliminates the need for the reprocessing and repairs that more common scopes require, meaning that it minimizes infection risk for patients.

Dr. Swied is the first physician in Illinois and

## Telemedicine Visits



PHOTO: Pixels

This report would be remiss if it did not mention the expansion of an innovative approach to patient care driven by the pandemic: *telemedicine visits*.

Telemedicine has been used in remote locations for many years, but due to the pandemic it became common here with many of the MIMD's medical care providers switching from patients visiting their offices to on-line video consultations. For example, SIU Medicine, the private practice group made up of SIUM physicians, switched most of its regular office visits to a virtual

platform to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infections. SIU Medicine was not alone in this approach, however, and as insurance companies responded to the special demands of the pandemic by reimbursing virtual medical office visits at the same rates as in-office ones, more-and-more physicians took part.



PHOTO; SIUM

## Noteworthy Health Care Facility Development Activities in the MIMD

### HSHS St. John's/SIUM Pediatric Outpatient Facility

As noted in the MIMD's previous biennial report, St. John's Hospital and SIUM were completing construction of a new Pediatric Outpatient Building in 2018, and it became fully operational on the HSHS St. John's Hospital campus beginning in 2019. The facility is located on the east side of 9th Street between Madison and Carpenter streets. It is directly connected to the St. John's facility by skywalk.

One of the sidelights of the construction for the 2019-2020 period was the discovery in the southeast corner of the District the remnants of homes destroyed in Springfield's 1908 Race Riots. While these riots form a sad part of the city's history, they led directly to the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

The site near the Pediatric facility has been designated as historically significant, and the city and various partners, including those in the MIMD, are seeking Federal designation of the area as well as funding to memorialize the event and the creation of the NAACP. Legislation is currently before Congress to recognize the significance of the site as a National Monument. Actions have already been taken to add art and other materials to the Pediatric facility to recognize the site and its historical importance.



PHOTO: Springfield Business Journal



## HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Renovation

October 4, 2019, marked a special day as it was on that day that HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital and O'Shea Builders hosted a "Demo Day" to celebrate the start of construction on the much anticipated neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) renovation project.



Photo: HSHS

By expanding and updating the facility, it now provides single family patient rooms for the first time in St. John's 78-year history of caring for premature and critically-ill infants. It is the only Level III NICU in the area, going well beyond the MIMD region by serving 39 counties across an approximate 80-mile radius.

And research shows that the family-centered care it offers will benefit patient care. It is expected to reduce the length of an NICU stay by approximately 5.3 days, cutting the average length of stay in St. John's NICU by more than 20 percent.

St. John's also plans to offer "couplet care" rooms in the newly updated facility. Couplet care rooms allow healthy moms and their babies to heal together in the same space. St. John's will be the first hospital in downstate Illinois to offer this type of care, making Illinois one of only ten states to provide this type of care to families.

To show its significance, about 2,000 babies are born at St. John's each year, and about 700 of these require NICU care.

## Prairie Heart Institute at HSHS St. John's Opened a Remodeled Cardiac Unit

In addition to the improvements to the NICU, noted above, the Prairie Heart Institute at HSHS St. John's Hospital made facility improvements, opening its newly remodeled cardiac unit in February, 2020. Space in the unit includes that for patients recovering from open heart surgery and such catheter lab procedures as TAVRs, mitral clips, or ablations.

The \$16 million project added 33 Cardiovascular Care Unit beds and provided more space for family-friendly patient rooms as well as support areas and nurses' stations. Front-line colleagues helped design the space to maximize efficiency.

“The new unit will help facilitate collaboration between heart surgeons, cardiologists, ICU physicians, specialists and support staff,” said Dr. John Scherschel, president of Prairie Cardiovascular. “It also incorporates technology that will help us better care for our patients and their families.” Part of that new technology is a nurse call system with nurse locator and family station. It also features the latest Phillips cardiac monitoring system.

As with the NICU project, the improvement for Prairie Heart Institute is part of a multi-year phased initiative to update key areas in this MIMD-based medical facility.



PHOTO: Prairie Heart Institute

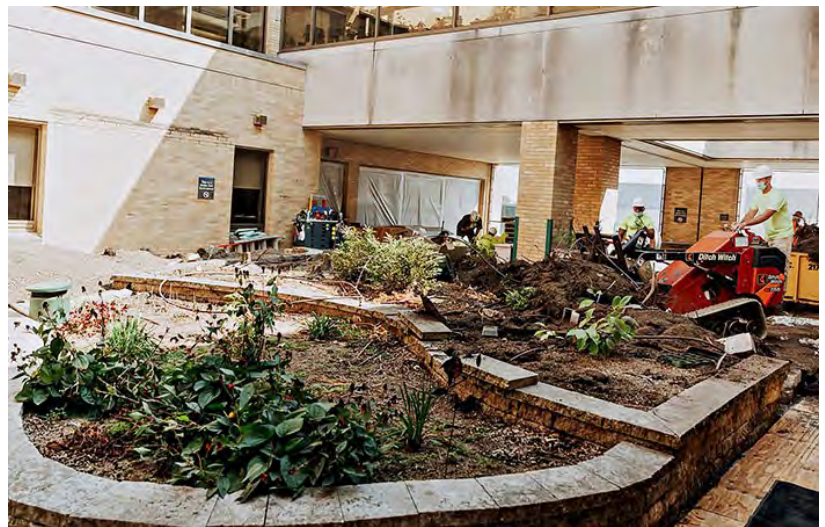
## Pediatric Healing Garden Added at Children’s Hospital

Renovations began in 2020 to rejuvenate the Pediatric Healing Garden at HSHS St. John’s Children’s Hospital. This is the first major update since the garden was dedicated ten years ago.

The goal of the garden is to address another aspect of the healing arts: providing a calming atmosphere for patients and their families during their hospital care. The renovation, funded with contributions from generous do-nors, includes maintenance-friendly landscaping and lighting, maintenance-free turf, kid-friendly walking and wheelchair surfaces, music, a wheelchair-accessible swing, benches and wheelchair-accessible picnic tables, synthetic trees that light up year round, and festive wall decor.

The renovation will provide more open spaces, and the seating will feature a neighborhood-style configuration. The new space will offer families the opportunity to enjoy the area while maintaining an element of privacy for prayer, conversation, reflection and relaxation.

According to Beverly Neisler, Development Director for the HSHS St. John’s Foundation, the rooftop garden is a wonderful place for the hospital’s youngest patients and their families to go to relax and unwind.



Work commences on Healing Garden  
PHOTO: HSHS

## SIU School of Medicine Opens New Thyroid Clinic

During 2020 the SIU School of Medicine contributed to development in the MIMD by opening a new Thyroid Center there. The thyroid is a vital gland, located in the neck, that releases hormones that help to regulate metabolism, growth, and development of the human body.

The center offers multi-disciplinary care for both thyroid and parathyroid patients, and will be staffed by specialists from SIUM's Department of Otolaryngology. The Head and Neck Surgery's Division of Endocrinology will offer care and treatment, including for such conditions as tumors, nodules, and hyperparathyroidism.

## Next Generation Scanner Comes to the MIMD



**New PET/CT Scanner**  
Photo: SIUM

Technology advancement is not limited to SIUM. During the reporting period other MIMD partners adopted and advanced technology, and HSHS St. John's Hospital offers but one example.

Some of the most interesting advances in medical technology are coming from improvements in imaging. Knowing this, and as part of its ongoing efforts to offer cutting-edge medical imaging technology, St. John's acquired the Siemens Healthineers' Biograph Vision scanner, the next generation PET/CT scanner.

Joanne VanLeer, Director of Radiology at HSHS St. John's, says that the new scanner enables the hospital to, "identify the smallest lesions early as a result of the high resolution and image quality, which supports an accurate diagnosis and more personalized treatment options for our patients. By incorporating premium PET/CT into our practice, we can improve patient outcomes, reduce procedure costs, and help avoid ineffective therapies for our patients."

## Cooperating in Treatment

One of the important aspects of the MIMD is the extent to which its partnering facilities cooperate to address local needs. The response by the medical providers and facilities to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the importance of this cooperation.

While many examples could be given — from simple efforts to the most complex — this report will offer two, both responding to some of the challenges posed by the pandemic.



One of the problems that the medical community in the MIMD service area faced during spring and summer was a decline in blood donations. Residents were afraid that this could put them at additional risk for the virus, so donations lagged.

In light of this, MIMD healthcare leaders from HSHS Illinois, Memorial Health System, SIU Medicine, and Springfield Clinic, joined with the Sangamon County Department of Public Health and the Central Illinois Community Blood Center to ask donors to step forward in support of the region's blood supply.

These partners began a series of activities to stress that giving blood at a donor center or mobile blood drive was a safe activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. They reminded residents that blood was still needed for surgery, cancer treatments, heart procedures, traumas, births, and to treat anemia, as well as for other medical purposes that didn't go away because of the pandemic.

Their efforts helped assuage concerns about the risk of donations, as well as the on-going need for an adequate blood supply, encouraging a new round of donations.

The second example is directly related to the battle against the disease.

In December, 2020, it was announced that the Region 3 COVID-19 vaccine hub for the Pfizer vaccine would be HSHS St. John's Hospital.

As one of the state's Regional Hospital Coordinating Centers, St. John's held the vaccine allocations for each of the region's 18 counties. St. John's immediately began to work with representatives from four of those counties as well as Memorial Health System to distribute the initial allocation of vaccine.

The hospital also began administering vaccines to clinical colleagues who were providing direct patient care.

Distributing vaccine and helping put it in the arms of medical professionals in the region was but a small step, but an important one in the battle against the virus.



PHOTO: CUNY





PHOTO: E.N. Sims

## Noteworthy Neighborhood And Surrounding Area Activities in the MIMD

The primary activities associated with neighborhood development occurred within the Enos Park neighborhood during the reporting period. This neighborhood benefits from its relationship with the City of Springfield by virtue of its being a tax increment financing (TIF) project area and being included as a subzone of the Springfield-Sangamon County Enterprise Zone. It is a stressed area that has been making redevelopment progress over the past decade.

This neighborhood approximately covers the eastern half of the MIMD, and is bounded by Carpenter St. on the south, North Grand Ave. on the north, reaching 2nd St. on the west and 9th St. on the east.

### Housing Rehabilitation and Infrastructure Improvements

Housing rehabilitation and neighborhood infrastructure improvements were the primary points of focus during CY 2019-2020. This included both restoration and refurbishment of existing housing stock, but also, of necessity, included some demolitions. The demolitions allowed for the removal of unsafe structures that were not suitable candidates for cost effective rehabilitation, and provided an opportunity for new structures to be built.

Drawing from Springfield's TIF reports for city FY2019 and FYFY2020, six homes in the Enos Park neighborhood received rehabilitation assistance, for a total of \$103,851.57 in assistance. In addition, the acquisition of one house was assisted (\$20,000), and \$80,000 was committed as part of the Enos Park First Responder Home Owner Rehabilitation program.

While the total number of demolitions in the area are not described in Springfield's annual TIF reports, \$63,415 was committed to the City's Office of Public

works for this purpose in both FY2019 and FY2020.

General infrastructure improvements were made in the area during city FY2019 and FY2020, in the amount of \$353,115.

Conditions in the Enos Park neighborhood were also improved by a major facility improvement on the Springfield Art Association's Edwards Place campus. This project involved the rehabilitation of the building located at 700 N. 4th St. as well as an expansion of art class space. The building rehabilitation benefited from over \$320,000 in Enos Park TIF funding.

As the Enos Park TIF will end its statutory life this year, Springfield is seeking approval from the Illinois General Assembly to extend its TIF financing period. Should the TIF be extended, funding will be set aside for improvements in two parks in the area. The parks, Enos and Gehrmann parks, are maintained by the Springfield Park District and located in the MIMD.

Enos Park is located just north of the St. John's Hospital campus. This small, 3.5 acre park is historically consistent with the Enos Park neighborhood as it became a part of the park system in 1905, making it one of the oldest neighborhood parks in Springfield.

Gehrmann Park, also about 3 acres in size, was acquired by the Springfield Park District in 1945. It is located in the north central portion of the MIMD, four blocks west of Enos Park. An older residential neighborhood surrounds the park, but the expanding Memorial Medical Center is now only one block south of the park.

The improvement of these parks would positively affect the residential redevelopment of the area and provide additional restful and recreational areas near the medical facilities for both patients and their visiting families.

## Opening of New YMCA

One of the major contributions to the MIMD during the reporting period was the opening of a new downtown YMCA facility in December, 2020.

Located at 601 North 4th Street, this 87,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility includes such amenities as: an aquatic center; gymnastics center; community center; youth center and youth gymnasium; child watch facility and infant and toddler room; men's and women's health center; group exercise Studios; high performance workout area; wellness floor with cardio and wight equipment; full court basketball gymnasium; indoor track; two racquetball courts; and a dedicated cycling room.



PHOTO: Springfield YMCA

The MIMD and its many partnering entities see the development of this facility as both a healthcare and community asset. It is located on the campus of the Memorial Medical Center, and Memorial provided \$10.4 million in support of its development. The City of Springfield also supported the development, providing \$5.9 million from the Enos Park TIF.

## New Signage

Thousands of patients and their families come to facilities in the MIMD each year, many from outside the district's ten county education and training region. For example, physicians and other health care providers located in the MIMD often report serving patients from as far away as western Missouri and southern Indiana, and some, such as the Prairie Heart Institute, have even provided medical care to foreign visitors.

Unfortunately, visitors arriving by car have reported difficulty in finding their way to the District due to the lack of wayfinding signage. This was addressed in two ways during the reporting period.

First, and thanks to the Illinois Department of Transportation, signage was added near the exits of I-55 onto Clearlake Avenue as well as I-72 onto 6th Street. These signs identify the exit ramps that will best lead visitors to the MIMD and its major facilities (SIUM, Memorial Hospital, and HSHS St. John's Hospital).

The establishment of these signs marked the first step in the creation of a wayfinding signage system for the MIMD.

Once the interstate signage was in place, the City of Springfield's Office of Public Works worked with the MIMD Commission to install signage on primary entry ways into the District. MIMD Commissioners worked with the City Traffic Engineer on the project.

The Commission then identified primary locations for this "place marking" signage based upon the District Master Plan, direction of automobile traffic movement, traffic demand, and the availability of existing sign posts at the intersections. This last component was done in order to help ease implementation and reduce costs. Ultimately 18 District "place marking" signs were produced and installed by the Office of Public Works at roadways leading into the district.





With signage now placed at the entries to the city near the interstate connections, and the “place marking” signs placed at the boundaries of the District, the Commission can move to the next phase of the project: the identification of the primary routes from the interstate connections to the bounds of the district. This will help establish a “wayfinding” system between the interstates and the District once the intermediary signs for these routes are developed and installed.

Understanding the importance of this signage to the efficient and safe movement of traffic to and from the District, the City Traffic Engineer has expressed interest in working with the MIMD Commission to advance the effort.

## Springfield Railroad Relocation

The Springfield Railroad Improvements Project is a \$315 million effort to address the impact of multiple major rail lines running through Springfield’s city center. Its objective is to move all rail traffic from what is termed the 3rd Street rail corridor onto an existing rail corridor several blocks east; known as the 10th Street corridor. When completed, this consolidation of rail traffic will reduce the current congestion through the city’s center which limits high speed rail travel from St. Louis to Chicago, and also create significant economic development benefits for both the downtown area and the MIMD.

While the major components of the Springfield Railroad Relocation Project are being constructed east of the MIMD along 10th Street rail corridor, the consolidation of the lines would result in the removal of the 3rd Street corridor from the center of the Medical District. This will improve both on-street traffic and traffic safety within the District, and also encourage development in the District by making the area more amenable as a site for development by reducing traffic congestion. The elimination of the 3rd Street line will benefit residential development due to noise reduction, and it will help attract technology-related firms that would not otherwise consider the location because of train produced ground vibrations.

The MIMD is already benefiting from the rail project due to the completion of the Carpenter St. underpass on the District’s eastern boundary. This construc-



**Work on the Springfield rail relocation project.**  
PHOTO Hanson Professional Services

tion has improved both ingress and egress in the District and was reported in the previous MIMD biennial report.

However, since the last report the rail project has also assisted the District through the installation of new, more attractive fencing along the 3rd Street corridor as well as safer crossing points. These amenities will exist along the 3rd Street corridor until the relocation of rail traffic to the expanded and improved 10th Street one is completed.

When the rail project is completed, and the 3rd Street corridor is no longer in use for rail traffic, the corridor is poised to become a linear park and pedestrian/bicycle trail linking the north part of the central city with the southern part. This will create new room for movement from both north and south through the city center and Capitol Complex, spurring opportunities for residential development and redevelopment.

Since it will also provide a significant link in the regional pedestrian/bicycle trail system, linking major existing trails on the city's north and south, it will further magnify recreational opportunities in the region, adding to the MIMD's attractiveness for residential and commercial development.

Springfield's Mayor recently spoke of the railroad relocation project as a "transformative improvement" for the community and specifically commented on its importance to the MIMD. He said that it had the ability to attract \$475 million in private investment within the Medical District, and at least \$25 million in private investment along 11th Street.

With the project funding currently in place, the project is expected to be completed by its 2025 target date.



## **MIMD Commission Activities During CY 2021-2022 and Future Priorities**

### **Continue to Support the Springfield Rail Improvement Project and Provide Any Necessary Assistance**

During CY 2019-2020 the MIMD Commission continued to support and offer assistance to the Springfield Rail Improvement Project. As noted previously, this project intends to address issues of public safety, traffic congestion, community livability and commercial development associated with the movement of rail traffic through the area. One of the important outcomes will be the elimination of the 3rd Street rail corridor and shifting the traffic on this corridor to an expanded 10th Street one.

This component of the project is of significant interest to the MIMD Commission as the 3rd Street rail corridor runs from north to south bisecting the District. Its placement is almost in the center of the District, cutting the east side of the MIMD from the west for development and transportation improvement purposes.

There are a number of reasons why the MIMD and its partners continued to encourage and support this project during CY 2019-2020.

With regard to public safety, there are currently 68 at-grade rail crossings and 24 miles of unfenced right-of-way throughout the Springfield project area. A number of these at-grade rail crossings are present in the MIMD. At-grade crossings create conflict points for cars, trains and pedestrians that can result in train-vehicle collisions, personal injury and death, reduced train and vehicular speeds, and increased congestion. Overall, they jeopardize public safety and lengthen travel times. These conflicts can even create unique problems for emergency vehicles attempting to move injured or ill people to the MIMD's two major emergency trauma treatment centers.

In addition, rail consolidation that eliminates the rail corridor running through

MIMD will remove some of the barriers to commercial activity, technology-based business development, and residential growth that train traffic presents.

For example, in addition to increased traffic delays caused by rail crossings, more train traffic promises to generate considerably more noise and ground vibrations in the district. Train horns must be sounded at all public crossings 24 hours each day, seven days each week, to warn motorists and pedestrians when a train is approaching. At present, each of the city's rail lines is beset by noise from train horns. However, the Springfield Rail Project will remove the rail corridor now bisecting the MIMD, meaning that no horns will be heard in the district. This will help encourage both residential and small commercial development and redevelopment in the area.

The removal of the corridor will also remove the ground vibrations associated with train traffic. This will provide a tremendous benefit to the medical facilities in the MIMD as their diagnostic equipment can be affected by such vibrations. Reducing ground vibrations caused by trains will also help advance the MIMD Commission's efforts to encourage medical technology and research-related businesses to locate there, as the equipment these businesses use and develop can also be affected by train generated vibrations.

- ***Continued assistance with the Springfield Rail Improvement Project will remain a priority for the Commission during CY 2021-2022.***

## **Continue to Improve Wayfinding to the MIMD**

While thousands of people find their way into the MIMD every day to work, thousands of others must find their way there as patients or visitors. Workers are expected to know how to get to their places of work, but one should not expect others to know. And since the MIMD and its many medical facilities serve a client base well beyond Springfield and Sangamon County, it is imperative that adequate signage and wayfinding information be provided so that the public can easily, safely and efficiently get to the places where they need to go there.

Ever since the establishment of the MIMD, its Commission has worked to provide better highway wayfinding for it, and during the 2019-2020 period it had some success. As noted in the reporting above, during the CY 2019-2020 reporting period the Commission was able to obtaining placement of signage on the two interstate highways serving the MIMD as well as at the gateway boundaries of the District itself. However this does not end the MIMD Commission's wayfinding work, as wayfinding signage now needs to be created between the interstate exits into the city and the boundaries of the MIMD.

The placement of the signage on the interstate highways was seen as the first



stage of a three part plan to improve wayfinding, with the second being the “place marking” signs at the boundaries of the District. Both of these stages are now complete.

The third stage will be to identify appropriate wayfinding devices that can be used to move patients and visitors from the interstate highways to the MIMD at least along two major corridors: Springfield’s east-west Clear Lake Ave. corridor, and the north-south 5th Street/6th Street one. Work on this stage will involve both IDOT and Springfield Public Works and could not commence until stage two was completed.

- ***Discussions with the City of Springfield and, if necessary, the Illinois Department of Transportation concerning completion of a wayfinding system will re-commence in CY 2021 with the intent to have such signage in place by the end of CY 2022.***

## **Assist With Site Selection and Land Development**

In its role supporting additional development in the area, the MIMD Commission and volunteer staff continued to assist those looking to develop sites in the district during both CY 2019 and CY 2020. Commissioners played a role in several of the projects mentioned above, but also worked with both local and external development interests as they considered various development and redevelopment projects. These activities generally included such things as helping the principals of a potential development understand the MIMD Master Plan, assessing zoning matters related to sites, considering the advantages of both TIF and Enterprise Zone assistance, considering MIMD-related bond financing options, and even exploring options related to the Commission’s condemnation powers.

The creation and development of the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance provides a new avenue for these and related marketing efforts to advance, particularly given that the Alliance has selected two target areas of particular relevance to the MIMD and its partnering facilities and institutions.

- ***During CY 2021 the Commission will work with the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance to market the MIMD and assist those interested in locating within its bounds or making investments there.***

- ***During CY 2021-2022, and after limits placed on facility opening due to the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted, the Commission will look toward partnering with the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau in that organization's efforts to bring additional medicine and medical-technology related conventions and meetings to Springfield.***

## **Offer to Assist With and Support the UIS Innovation Hub**

In 2018 the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) has been awarded the first hub of the Illinois Innovation Network. This is a U of I system-led initiative to create hubs across the state connecting the Chicago-based Discovery Partners Institute with the goal of accelerating statewide economic growth through research and development.

While the system is still underdevelopment, it would be logical for the MIMD to support this effort given the relationships that could be developed between research and development resources and assets in the MIMD and those in the Illinois Medical District in Chicago.

This sort of relationship would also be important should UIS be successful in creating an expanded university presence in downtown Springfield, where the hub would serve as the focal point for an "innovation district."

- ***During CY 2021-2022 the Commission will explore opportunities to work with and assist in the development of medicine and healthcare related components for a Springfield-based Innovation Network Hub.***

## **Continue to Address Operational, Policy, and Coordination Issues, Strengthening Relationships with Public and Private Sector Partners**

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all of us, but it has also enlightened us concerning various operational, policy and partnership issues. For these reasons the Commission will explore a number of these areas over CY 2021 and CY 2022.

### **The operational matters include:**

- **Considering the need for updating the MIMD Master Plan to better reflect current conditions and opportunities.**
- **Gathering meaningful public input useful to the MIMD in its planning and decision making.**

- Improving recognition of the District brand for communication and marketing purposes.

**The coordination matters include:**

- Better identifying the mutual interests and shared priorities of the MIMD's principal parties and stakeholders.
- Strengthening the MIMD's relationships with elected officials and health care and community leaders.

**The policy matters include:**

- Reviewing and improving the system by which individuals may be recommended to local and state authorities for appointment to vacant Commission seats when vacancies to these seats exist.
- The establishment of a policy for remote meetings, as such a policy currently does not exist in the Commission's Bylaws.
- Consideration of, and necessary improvements to, the Commission's policies regarding the recording of sessions and public comments.
- Consideration of, and necessary improvements to, the Commission's operations regarding the operation, updating, and content on its website.

In assessing its future plans the Commission remained cognizant of some fundamental limitations.

## Limitations Affecting MIMD Commission Success

While all organizations must operate within certain limits, there remain significant factors limiting the activities of the MIMD Commission that must be recognized in assessing its past activities and planning its new ones. These limitations were identified in the previous report but still remain.

### Status of Appointments to the Commission

During CY 2019-2020 the work of the Commission was limited by delays in the appointment of members to it. The MIMD Act establishes both the membership of the Commission and the number of members present constituting a quorum. The quorum count is based on the total number of Commissioners that *could* be appointed rather than the number that *have been* appointed. Because of this there were times from CY 2017 to CY 2020 when delays in appoint-

ment meant that either a quorum could not be constituted or a single missing member would result in lack of a quorum.

This, of course, significantly limited the ability of the Commission to conduct business. Such a limitation is severe in cases in which the Commission is in discussions with a development prospect but cannot assure the prospect that a quorum would be available to conduct business.

***The Commission respectfully requests that all appointing authorities give attention to this problem and work with the MIMD Commission to seek effective solutions.***

## Lack of On-Going and Assured Staff Support

Since its inception the Commission has struggled with the need for staff support. Presently staff support is provided by a small portion of work time of one person who does not work for the MIMD but is volunteered by the City of Springfield to assist it. This is helpful, and the Commission is grateful that the City was willing to provide this support when the last volunteer support person was unable to continue due to his moving to a new employer, but it is reasonable for a limited amount of staff time and with no institutional guarantee that this assistance will continue in the future.

Aside from the volunteered staff time, the only other assistance the Commission can muster is from the Commissioners themselves. Members of the Commission have been of great help in the past, but it is of the very nature of those selected for appointment to a body such as the MIMD Commission that they are involved in a number of other activities and their time limited. In fact, the very people that one might encourage to serve on a body such as the MIMD Commission are those with a number of “irons in the fire”. And when such people find that a good amount of their Commission executive time must be spent on administrative tasks rather than the important work of actually building upon the strengths of the MIMD, they are inclined to lose interest or resign.

For example, Commission members, who are all volunteering their time without any sort of compensation, spent an onerous amount of time during the previous reporting period on a Compliance Examination required by the Office of the Illinois Auditor General. When one considers that the MIMD Commission has no institutionalized full or part-time staff and had a cash balance of only \$200.53 on hand Dec. 31, 2020, it is clear that more state taxpayer dollars were spent by the Auditor General on this one Compliance Examination than the Commission had available to employ over the past two years to conduct its business and advance the mission the General Assembly provided for it in the MIMD Act.



***Again, the Commission respectfully requests that attention be given to this problem by all appointing authorities.***

## **Lack of Marketing Resources**

The Commission hopes and trusts that this report provides some flavor as to the positive efforts of its various District partners. It's important to recognize, however, that so much more could be done if the Commission were provided with the financial resources necessary to adequately market its advantages to potential prospects.

While our District partners often conduct marketing activities, these activities are directed toward the individual partner's needs rather than the District as a whole. This is not only a rational action by the partner, it is one that should be anticipated and even encouraged. However, it is not one that will expedite the growth in the District that all hoped for when the MIMD was created.

The new Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance may be of assistance in marketing the District, but again, this is dependent upon the wishes of this organization's principal parties, not the MIMD Commission. Only with the intercession of two of the common parties of the Growth Alliance and the MIMD Commission — the governmental leaders of Sangamon County and the City of Springfield — might this even be possible.

Relevant appointing authorities must give particular attention to this limitation if the MIMD is to grow, and grow in ways that help diversify the local and regional economies. As research and experience attest, the economic base of a place or region does not grow from what currently exists. Economic diversity arises from the encouragement of start-ups different from the enterprises already existing in the local economic base, or by capturing expansions and new starts being created by existing firms in other places.

For example, if what the appointing authorities desire of the MIMD is predominately growth arising from patient care alone, that is likely to happen over the near term with or without the MIMD's assistance.

This is because the economic mix in the MIMD is primarily made up of patient care providers and those who serve them. While potential exists for business and job growth in other areas, particularly in healthcare-related technology research and development, these areas are not likely to be explored by existing secure enterprises. But additional growth of the type we already see will not increase the diversity of the local or regional economic base, nor will it be likely to attract the kinds of new firms and start-ups that are becoming the fodder for economic progress in the knowledge economy.

***The MIMD Commission strongly encourages all involved to consider the District as a strategic tool for long term economic growth and development, linking it to the partners' development plans, and assist it in obtaining the human and financial resources it needs to prosper.***

***It is also in a unique position to partner with the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance on advancing development in two of the Alliance's identified core industry areas. The relationship between these two groups should be established and institutionalized if the Growth Alliance intends to meet one of its proposed aims; to reduce the economic development "silos" in the region.***

***If these actions do not occur, the District will simply become a limited political subdivision known only for the local healthcare providers that reside there.***

# Appendix 1: Financial Report Close of CY 2019

**Illinois Medical District At Springfield**  
**Financial Report**  
**December 31, 2019**

<b>Checking:</b>		
Balance November 29, 2019		\$204.53
Receipts:		
Deposit to prevent dormancy		
Total Receipts:	\$	-
Disbursements:		
Total Disbursements:		0
Balance December 31, 2019		\$204.53

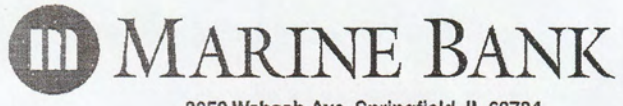
**Illinois Medical District At Springfield**  
**Bank Reconciliation**

Balance per Bank 12/31/19	\$	204.53
Less Outstanding checks:		-
Balance per Book 12/31/19	\$	<u>204.53</u>

**Outstanding Check List:**

Check Number                      Payee: \_\_\_\_\_





3050 Wabash Ave, Springfield, IL 62704

Customer Help Desk (217) 726-0660  
 24-Hour Account Information (800) 811-4190  
 Online www.ibankmarine.com

Springfield, IL (217) 726-0600  
 Champaign, IL (217) 239-0100



MID-ILLINOIS MEDICAL DISTRICT  
 COMMISSION  
 130 W MASON STREET  
 SPRINGFIELD IL 62702-5138



Member  
**FDIC**

**Financial Services Statement**

Statement Date: 12/31/2019 Enclosures: ( 0)(1) Account No.: 645753 Page: 1

**SMALL BUSINESS CHECKING SUMMARY**

Category	Number	Type :	REG	Status :	Active	Amount
Balance Forward From 11/29/19						204.53
Debits						0.00
Ending Balance On 12/31/19						204.53
Average Balance (Ledger)						204.53+

Direct Inquiries About Electronic Entries To:  
 MARINE BANK  
 3050 WABASH AVE  
 SPRINGFIELD IL 62704-6413  
 Phone: (217) 726 - 0660

**DAILY BALANCE SUMMARY**

Beginning Ledger Balance on 11/29/19 was 204.53

Date	Balance	Date	Balance	Date	Balance
12/31/19	204.53				

**This Statement Cycle Reflects 32 Days**

IDENTITY THEFT/PHISHING - DON'T GET CAUGHT. WE WILL NOT COMMUNICATE WITH YOU BY E-MAIL REQUESTING ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION SUCH AS ACCOUNT NUMBERS, DATE OF BIRTH OR SSN. IF YOU RECEIVE SUCH A REQUEST, PLEASE CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY



End Statement 05/1633/1E



## Appendix 2: Financial Report Close of CY 2020

**Illinois Medical District At Springfield**  
**Financial Report**  
**December 31, 2020**

Checking:		
Balance November 30, 2020		\$200.53
Receipts:		
Deposit to prevent dormancy		
Total Receipts:		\$ -
Disbursements:		
Dormancy Fee		
Total Disbursements:		\$ -
Balance December 31, 2020		\$200.53

2/24/2021

## Appendix 3: CY 2020 Proposed Budget

<b>Mid-Illinois Medical District 2021 Budget</b>		
<b>Cash Balance January 1, 2020</b>		<b>\$ 200.53</b>
	<b>Jan</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>		
Other	<b>2.00</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>2.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>Personnel</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.00</b>
<b>Non-Personnel</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.00</b>
<b>Projected Cash Balance December 31, 2021</b>		<b>\$ 202.53</b>
Other income is \$2 donation by MIMD Commissioners to keep bank account active The MIMD Commission does not anticipate additional funding in 2021, but will amend budget if funding is identified.		



