

Shriners Children's Highlights Pioneering Work of Dr. Sara Higginson During National Women Physicians Day

On National Women Physicians Day, Shriners Children's is celebrating its more than 400 female doctors providing innovative, world-class care for patients.

DAYTON, OH, UNITED STATES, February 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On National Women

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Dr. Sara Higginson, Chief of Staff at Shriners Children's Ohio.

Physicians Day, Shriners Children's is celebrating its more than 400 female doctors providing innovative, world-class care for patients every day. Dr. Sara M. Higginson, the Chief of Staff at Shriners Children's Ohio, has quickly become a leader within the nonprofit healthcare system. She is no stranger to pushing through adversity and challenging norms.

“I've always wanted to be a doctor ever since I was a little kid,” said Dr. Higginson. “I remember telling my father that and his response was, ‘do you mean you want to be a nurse?’ and I remember saying, ‘no,’ I want to be a doctor.”

Since then, I've had a lot of moments in life where I didn't follow a traditional path, but the winding road really helped me get where I am today.”

Dr. Higginson started her career as a high school science teacher before deciding to join the Navy. She became a Naval officer and EMS helicopter pilot and found her calling helping people through life-threatening and traumatic injuries. It was that experience that made her realize she wanted to be a trauma and burn surgeon. Now, more than 20 years later, Dr. Higginson is not only a burn surgeon, but she's also leading best-care practices for the entire healthcare system.

“Being a surgeon and getting to take care of patients is so rewarding,” said Dr. Higginson. “Now, as the lead burn physician for Shriners Children's entire healthcare system, I'm able to help make meaningful change on a large scale and help set the tone for best practices in pediatric burn care throughout the nation. At Shriners, we provide more pediatric burn care than any other system and we educate other healthcare systems on what works. I love leading efforts that help ensure burn patients anywhere can receive the best possible care.”

Dr. Higginson said she's proud to see that, compared to when she entered the medical field, females are leading the way in the areas of surgery and trauma. She said the advice she'd give to other female physicians or those aspiring to become doctors is to make goals for yourself and never give up on them.

"I was 33 when I started medical school. Now I'm the Chief of Staff at Shriners Children's Ohio. So, it's never too late to achieve your dreams," said Dr. Higginson. "As women and as a society, we also still put a lot of pressure on ourselves. There's still a lot to be investigated about the guilt of being a working mom, even as a physician. You're saving a child's life but you're not at your child's play and there's guilt there. But everything you do has value and it makes us who we are. It's an honor to be a part of our patient's lives. I wouldn't do anything different."

About Shriners Children's

Shriners Children's improves the lives of children by providing pediatric specialty care, conducting innovative research, and offering outstanding education programs for medical professionals. Children with orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate are eligible for care, regardless of the families' ability to pay, and receive all care and services in a compassionate, family-centered environment. For more information, please visit shrinerschildrens.org.

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Cutline: Shriners Children's Highlights Pioneering Work of Dr. Sara Higginson During National Women Physicians Day.

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Media-approved image of Dr. Sara Higginson and Shriners Children's burn patient, Merhia.

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