



**For Immediate Release**

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**Celebrating 10 Years of World Class Heart Care**

*Luce Heart Institute at The Medical Center, Navicent Health Celebrates 10 Years of Service*

**MACON, GA (Wednesday, May 9, 2018)** – Navicent Health today celebrated the tenth anniversary of its Albert Luce, Jr., Heart Institute at The Medical Center, Navicent Health. Physicians, clinicians, caregivers, former patients and philanthropic donors who made the hospital’s dream of constructing a dedicated heart center a reality gathered today to celebrate the Institute’s impact on healthcare and the many lives it has touched.

Serving patients since 2008, the Institute is named for Albert L. “Buddy” Luce, Jr. Luce, retired Blue Bird Corporation President and CEO, contributed \$3 million toward the construction of the Institute. Luce, a Fort Valley native, donated to the project weeks after receiving heart treatment at what was then known as The Medical Center of Central Georgia.

“Buddy was happy to do his part to make this Institute a reality. He was especially glad to have the very best physicians and caregivers in the field right here in Macon, to meet the healthcare needs of central and south Georgians. We are thrilled to see that care continuing and expanded a decade later,” said Mrs. Betty Luce.

More Georgians die each year from cardiovascular disease than from all forms of cancer, AIDS, suicides and traffic accidents combined. The Luce Heart Institute provides a full range of cardiovascular services and is a regional leader in comprehensive and advanced techniques for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease. Over the past 10 years, the Institute has led the industry in new program, procedures and technologies, including the following:

- Left Atrial Appendage Closure
- Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) for advanced heart failure patients
- Micra TPS, the world’s smallest pacemaker

- Structural heart and valve care, including Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR)
- Vascular and endovascular surgical options
- Cardiothoracic surgery
- HomeWorks, a continued care program for heart failure patients
- HeartWorks, a nationally-certified cardiothoracic rehabilitation program

“For over a decade, the Luce Heart Institute has provided hope and healing to patients from central and south Georgia, and beyond. As someone who’s family has been affected by heart disease, I am proud to celebrate this 10 year anniversary milestone with those who have contributed to this wonderful institute, and look forward to impacting the lives of patients and their loved ones – allowing them to live life to its fullest potential – for many years to come,” said Dr. Ninfa M. Saunders, FACHE, President and CEO of Navicent Health.

Recognized by prestigious national institutions including *U.S. News & World Report*, *Becker’s Hospital Review* and the Society of Cardiothoracic Surgeons, the Institute is nationally recognized for its high quality cardiac care.

*In the attached photo, Dr. Felix Sogade speaks to assembled guests at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Luce Heart Institute.*

**About Navicent Health**

Navicent Health was incorporated on November 17, 1994, as a nonprofit corporation whose primary purpose is to coordinate The Medical Center, Navicent Health and other affiliated entities in their mission of providing a comprehensive continuum of high quality, reasonably priced healthcare services to the region. Navicent Health has 970 beds for medical, surgical, rehabilitation and hospice purposes. The health system includes The Medical Center, Navicent Health, a nationally recognized tertiary teaching hospital; Beverly Knight Olson Children’s Hospital, Navicent Health, the region’s only dedicated pediatric hospital; Navicent Health Baldwin and Medical Center of Peach County, Navicent Health, both rural hospitals; Rehabilitation Hospital, Navicent Health, the region’s oldest and most experienced rehabilitation provider; Pine Pointe, Navicent Health, which provides palliative and hospice care in homes and in its facility; Carlyle Place, Navicent Health, the area’s first continuing care retirement community; Navicent Health Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Navicent Health; as well as diagnostic and home care services. For more information, please visit [www.navicenthealth.org](http://www.navicenthealth.org).

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