

# BGCT president: Baptist Health Foundation and Baptist Community Services

March 16, 2016

Two institutions that began as hospitals have morphed into Baptist General Convention of Texas-supported organizations that provide financial, physical and spiritual guidance to families—from children to senior adults.



René Maciel In the San Antonio area, many people have heard of the Baptist Health System, which administered the Baptist Medical Center, Mission Trail Baptist Hospital, North Central Baptist Hospital, Northeast Baptist Hospital and St. Luke's Baptist Hospital. Those hospitals collectively employ the fourth-highest number of civilians in San Antonio.

BHS opened in 1903 when 30 physicians and two dozen businessmen and professionals organized the San Antonio Associated Charities. They constructed the Physicians' and Surgeons' Hospital on Dallas Street, which eventually became the far-reaching Baptist Health System and affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1952.

Texas  
Baptist  
Voices



Baptist Health Foundation  
*of San Antonio*

Today, that organization is known as the **Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio**. The move from administering the health facilities occurred in 2003, when the BHS board of trustees recognized economic hardships threatened to compromise the system's ability to provide exceptional care. Vanguard Health Systems, with headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., purchased BHS in 2003. In 2013, Tenet Healthcare Corp. of Dallas bought Vanguard Health Systems.

Baptist Health Foundation was incorporated, with the proceeds from the 2003 sale to fund not-for-profit healthcare services and education throughout Bexar County and contiguous counties in South Texas. The first grant was given in 2005.

The mission of the foundation is to improve the health of the community by fostering and funding clinical, educational, spiritual and scientific initiatives while honoring God and its Baptist heritage. The foundation enjoys a strong relationship with the School of Health Professions and its Clinical Pastoral Education program.

Since its inception, the foundation has granted more than \$55 million to hundreds of worthwhile nonprofit organizations in the San Antonio area. Many of the grant recipients are Baptist churches and Baptist organizations.

The foundation is governed by a board of trustees whose 20 members belong to BGCT-cooperating churches in the San Antonio area. The BGCT

elects 51 percent of the board.

Frank Elston was the foundation's first president and CEO until Cody Knowlton became the president and CEO in 2012 upon Elston's retirement. To learn more, visit the [foundation's website](#).

Another institution is **Baptist Community Services**, based in Amarillo. It also began as a hospital—High Plains Baptist Hospital—in the mid-1960s. It has evolved to operate a variety of facilities and provide a variety of services to the Texas Panhandle area.



Its primary focus is to provide quality, spiritual-based services to senior adults. The Park Central Community in south downtown Amarillo is composed of seven facilities providing independent living, assisted living and long-term care to senior adults. A new addition is scheduled to open this year. It will provide memory care/dementia services for up to 52 residents.

Seven chaplains provided by BCS provide spiritual care for residents, families and employees of 19 senior-living facilities in the Amarillo area.

Baptist Community Services also expands its services at The Arbors, a long-term care and skilled nursing facility that is both Medicare- and Medicaid-certified. In addition, High Plains Christian Ministries Foundation supports the BCS programs but also provides grants to Baptist and other Christian causes in Amarillo and the Panhandle. And as a service to families, the

Amarillo Town Club's Health Promotion Foundation operates two family fitness centers in the city. They impact 22,000 lives by providing wellness programs geared to the entire family.

Learn more by visiting the [BCS website](#) or contacting President/CEO Steve Dalrymple.

*René Maciel is president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and president of Baptist University of the Americas in San Antonio.*