

## UPFRONT

Insights and transparent talk from leadership

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## Making Strides

*The Herma Heart Institute is committed to caring for the hearts of children*

**BY THOMAS T. SATO, MD**

In this issue, you will read about how our Herma Heart Center recently became the Herma Heart Institute. We feel this transformation speaks directly to our expansive vision for learning, teaching and caring for the hearts of children.

As one of the leading clinical care institutions in the country, we are fortunate to have internationally recognized investigators and clinicians who are focused on an audacious goal: preventing congenital heart disease (CHD) from negatively affecting children's lives.

Two of our researchers, Michael E. Mitchell, MD, and Aoy Tomita-Mitchell, PhD, are doing cutting-edge work to identify genetic factors for CHD. While achieving that goal will take time, they are already learning some of the genetic and environmental factors that contribute to the disease.

Our heart team is working on every developmental stage. Through the Fetal Concerns Center, we are gaining a much better understanding of CHD in the fetus and how it can be corrected or mitigated in utero. Our leadership team includes internationally recognized experts, including our chief of pediatric cardiac surgery, Viktor Hraska, MD, PhD, and our chief of pediatric cardiology, Jeanne M. James, MD.

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In addition, clinicians at the Herma Heart Institute understand that care for the heart doesn't end with structural repair—they are looking at every child's quality of life after surgery, with comprehensive evaluation of neurodevelopmental milestones and the impact of concurrent congenital abnormalities.

Audacious goals—but not impossible.

Best,

*Thomas T. Sato, MD, FACS, FAAP  
CEO, Children's Specialty Group  
Senior Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs,  
Professor of Pediatric General and Thoracic  
Surgery, Medical College of Wisconsin  
Pediatric general and thoracic surgeon,  
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin*

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