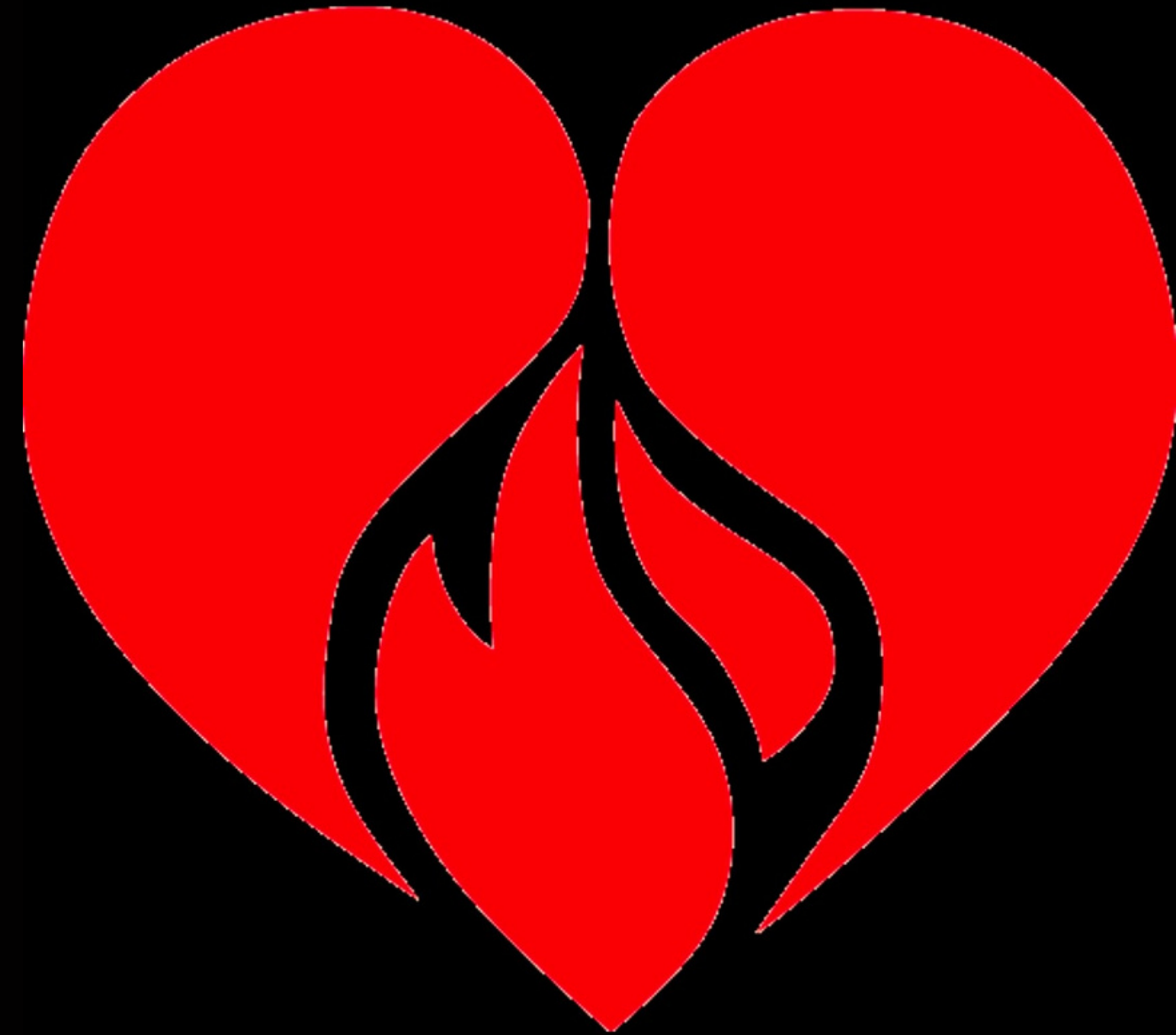


FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE WORKERS

**ASCENSION &
ST. FRANCIS
HOSPITAL**



EVERYONE DESERVES QUALITY HEALTHCARE



SOURCE: [HTTPS://HEALTHCARE.ASCENSION.ORG/LOCATIONS/WISCONSIN/WIMIL/MEQUON-ASCENSION-COLUMBIA-ST-MARYS-HOSPITAL-OZAUKEE](https://healthcare.ascension.org/locations/wisconsin/wimil/mequon-ascension-columbia-st-marys-hospital-ozaukee)


As recently as 2019, Ascension was trumpeting its success at reducing its number of employees per occupied bed, a common industry staffing metric. At one point, executives boasted to their peers about how they had slashed \$500 million from the chain's labor costs. In the years before the pandemic, they routinely refused requests to hire more medical workers or fill open jobs, according to current and former hospital administrators and employees.



SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES, PUBLISHED
12/15/2022, UPDATED 12/16/2022

The yearslong effort — a combination of widespread layoffs and attrition — rarely attracted public attention.

SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES, PUBLISHED 12/15/2022, UPDATED 12/16/2022



The image shows a screenshot of a New York Times article. At the top, the 'The New York Times' logo is visible. Below it is a photograph of a modern hospital building with a curved facade and large windows. The text 'Emergency Department' is visible on the building. Below the photo, the article title 'How a Sprawling Hospital Chain Ignited Its Own Staffing Crisis' is displayed in a large, bold, serif font. Underneath the title, a sub-headline reads 'PROFITS OVER PATIENTS'. The main text begins with 'Ascension, one of the country's largest health systems, spent years cutting jobs, leaving it flat-footed when the pandemic hit.'

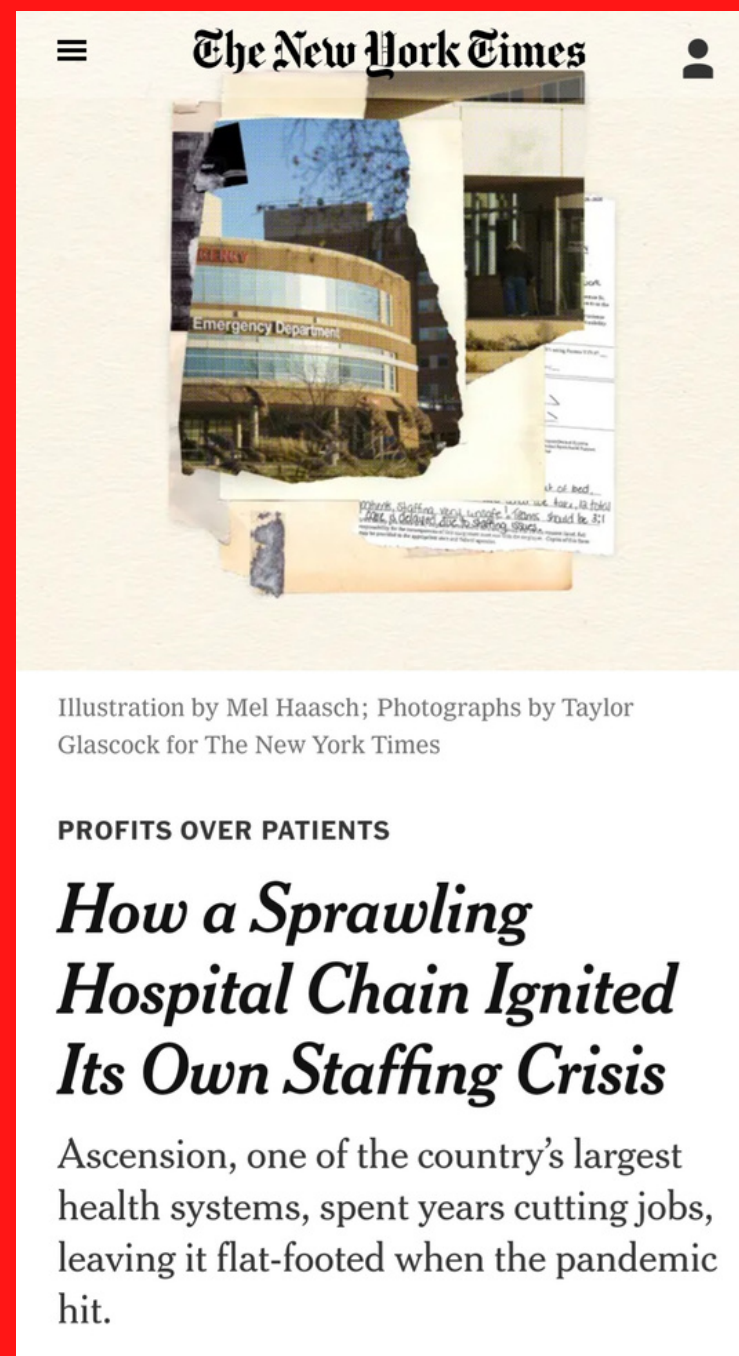
Illustration by Mel Haasch; Photographs by Taylor Glascock for The New York Times

PROFITS OVER PATIENTS

How a Sprawling Hospital Chain Ignited Its Own Staffing Crisis

Ascension, one of the country's largest health systems, spent years cutting jobs, leaving it flat-footed when the pandemic hit.

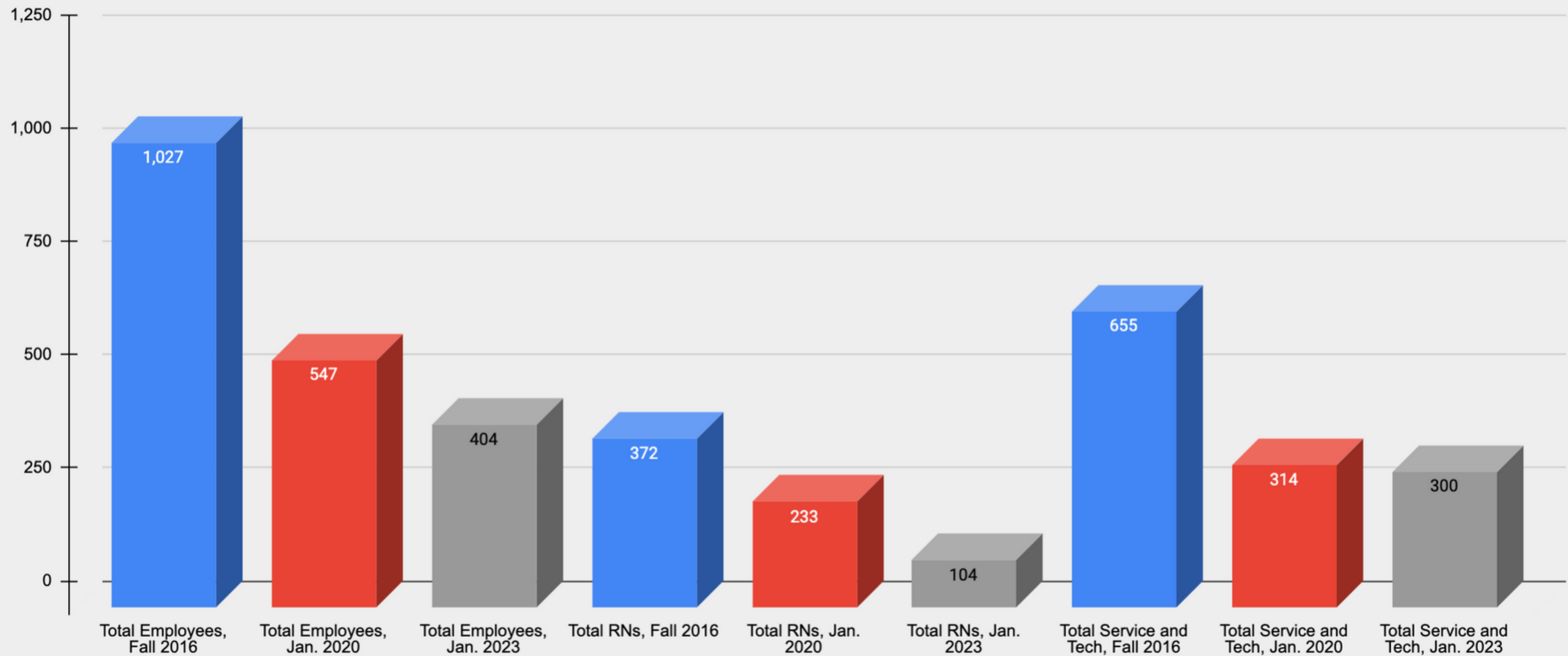
Across its network of hospitals, Ascension set individual financial targets, and executives whose hospitals did not achieve their goals would not get bonuses, according to three former executives. Keeping staffing low was one of the easiest ways to get paid, since labor costs make up about half of a hospital's expenses.



SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES, PUBLISHED 12/15/2022, UPDATED 12/16/2022

TROUBLESOME TRENDS

OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS EMPLOYED AT ASCENSION ST. FRANCIS: 2016, 2020, 2023



SOURCE: DATA PROVIDED TO WFNHP BY ASCENSION AND TOUCHPOINT MANAGEMENT

ASCENSION WI EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION, FY ENDING JUNE 2020

For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the Instructions for Form 990.

Cat. No. 50053T

Schedule J (Form 990) 2019

Schedule J (Form 990) 2019

Part II Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees. Use duplicate copies if additional space is needed.

For each individual whose compensation must be reported on Schedule J, report compensation from the organization on row (i) and from related organizations, described in the instructions, on row (ii). Do not list any individuals that are not listed on Form 990, Part VII.

Note. The sum of columns (B)(i)-(iii) for each listed individual must equal the total amount of Form 990, Part VII, Section A, line 1a, applicable column (D) and (E) amounts for that individual.

(A) Name and Title		(B) Breakdown of W-2 and/or 1099-MISC compensation			(C) Retirement and other deferred compensation	(D) Nontaxable benefits	(E) Total of columns (B)(i)-(D)	(F) Compensation in column (B) reported as deferred on prior Form 990
		(i) Base compensation	(ii) Bonus & incentive compensation	(iii) Other reportable compensation				
1 JONATHAN SOHN TREASURER	(i)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	(ii)	504,590	198,227	46,021	18,200	21,998	789,036	0
2 BERNARD J SHERRY SECRETARY	(i)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	(ii)	841,407	849,745	323,738	18,200	24,115	2,057,205	0
3 TODD A CONKLIN PRESIDENT (START 11/2019 - END 2/2020)	(i)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	(ii)	569,621	411,400	129,423	14,000	16,669	1,141,113	0
4 VANESSA L FREITAG PRESIDENT (START 2/2020)	(i)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	(ii)	257,269	0	1,368	14,487	26,978	300,102	0
5 TRACY A ROGERS FORMER OFFICER (END 6/2019)	(i)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	(ii)	406,927	375,310	353,964	16,800	12,512	1,165,513	0

SOURCE: ASCENSION WISCONSIN LABORATORIES INC. TAX FILING

[HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/ORGANIZATIONS/391701402/202121329349304937/FULL](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/391701402/202121329349304937/full)

**"MANAGEMENT FEES"
PAID BY ST. FRANCIS
HOSPITAL TO
ASCENSION**



**FY 2019:
\$39.6 MILLION**

NET PATIENT REVENUE \$158 MILLION

**FY 2020:
\$40.9 MILLION**

NET PATIENT REVENUE OF \$150 MILLION

SOURCE 2019:

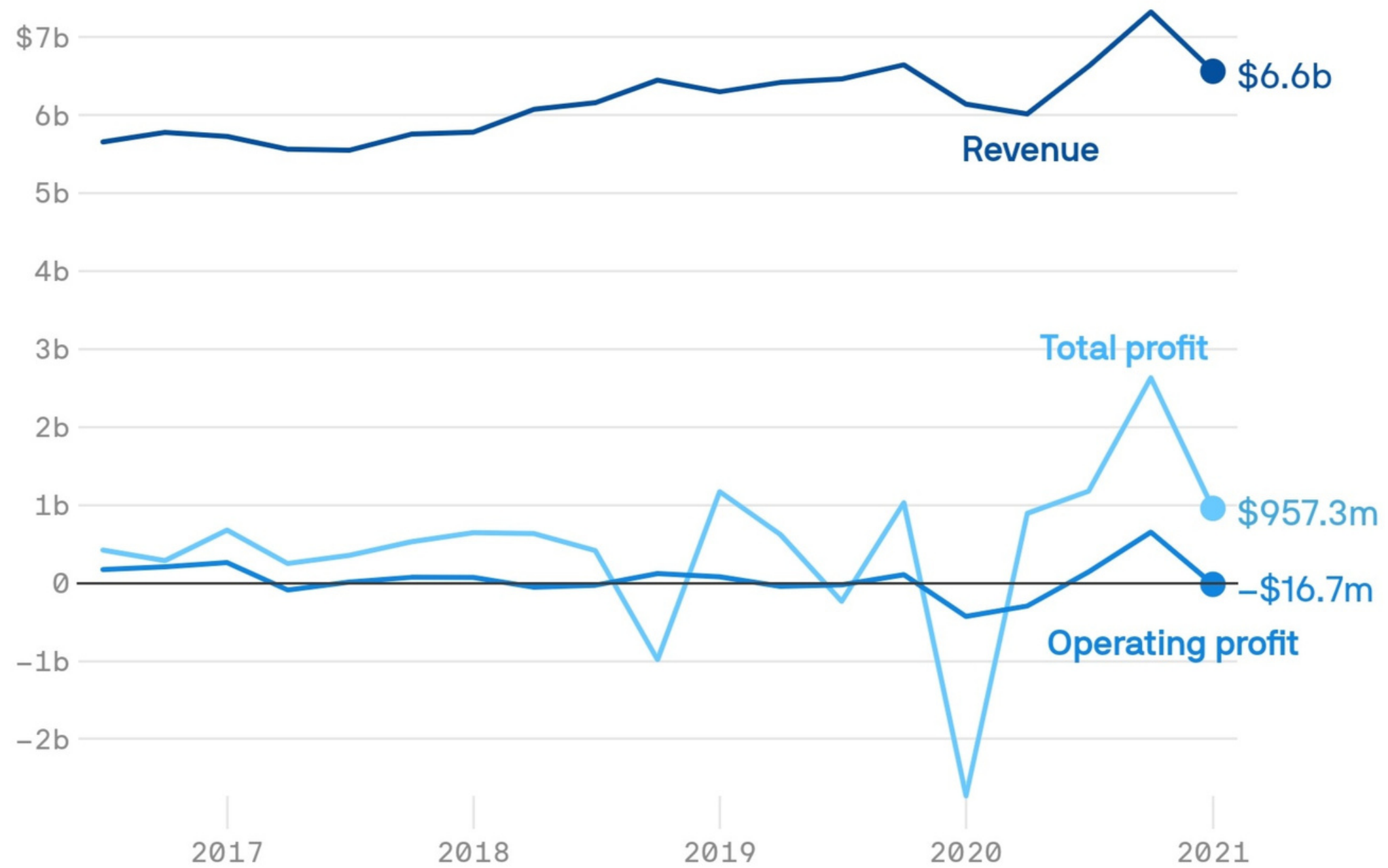
[HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/ORGANIZATIONS/390907740/202011339349301631/FULL](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/390907740/202011339349301631/full)

SOURCE 2020:

[HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/ORGANIZATIONS/390907740/202131329349304843/FULL](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/390907740/202131329349304843/full)

Ascension revenue and profits

Q3 2016 to Q1 2021



Data: Ascension financial disclosures; Chart: Will Chase/Axios

2021 WFNHP NEGOTIATIONS WITH ASCENSION

**WE NEED
SAFE
STAFFING**



**DO YOU THINK
STAFFING LEVELS ARE
SAFE ON YOUR UNIT?**



**81%
SAID
NO**

WFNHP MEMBER SURVEY, 2021



**WHY WE
NEED
SAFE
STAFFING
NOW**

We are so short staffed. I work full time and do not have any balance with work and my family. My stress level is high, and I need help. I've been worried for my health. We have low morale and are tired. We need help!

WFNHP MEMBER TESTIMONIAL
ASCENSION ST. FRANCIS EMPLOYEE, 2021



**WHY WE
NEED
SAFE
STAFFING
NOW**

Certain days I do two jobs at the same time. It is a disaster waiting to happen if 2 critical patients need care at the same time.

WFNHP MEMBER TESTIMONIAL
ASCENSION ST. FRANCIS EMPLOYEE, 2021



**WHY WE
NEED
SAFE
STAFFING
NOW**

I have canceled many plans due to our unsafe staffing levels. I missed many family obligations. The stress of not being able to think, pee, eat, or breathe for a 12 hour shift...made me leave. I got no support from management other than criticism.

WFNHP MEMBER TESTIMONIAL
ASCENSION ST. FRANCIS EMPLOYEE, 2021



95%

**DO NOT FEEL
SUPPORTED BY
ASCENSION**

HOW WE SOLVE THIS PROBLEM



SAFER STAFFING GRIDS

Work together to provide nurses and techs the staff they need to do their jobs safely.

RAISE STANDARDS

Staffing levels, pay, work/life balance, respect all work in tandem to create the overall environment for work and care.

ADHERENCE TO THIS PLAN

Prioritizing these needs will yield positive results for patients, staff, community, and the company.

DECEMBER, 2022



**ASCENSION CLOSES
LABOR AND DELIVERY
AT ST. FRANCIS**

L&D: A TIMELINE



**YEARS AGO,
ONGOING**

Ongoing conversations with management about their efforts to secure OB provider. Always told Ascension is trying.



12/1/22

WFNHP RN President emails administration about provider's notice and firing of 2 travel nurses who voiced staffing concerns. Request update on L&D.



**12/9/22,
12/14/22**

Additional requests for discussion. Nothing scheduled.

L&D: A TIMELINE



12/15/22

WFNHP finds out from staff that a meeting with L&D staff is set for 12/16/22., WFNHP informs admin. Admin states "I'm trying to honor their request for a touchbase this week."



12/16/22

Ascension admin emails notice 1 minute before meeting with L&D staff stating they will be closing the unit. Admin states City officials are aware and on board with plan to close the unit.

L&D: A TIMELINE



12 / 21 / 22

Last patient admission.



12 / 23 / 22

Last patient discharge.

DECEMBER 27, 2022



**MILWAUKEE
MAGAZINE
& CSM**

DECEMBER 27, 2022 FEATURE STORY, HEALTH



Ascension Columbia St. Mary's hospital in Milwaukee; Photo by Marty Peters

Special Report: How Staff Shortages Are Undermining Care at Columbia St. Mary's Hospital

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.MILWAUKEEMAG.COM/SPECIAL-REPORT-HOW-STAFF-SHORTAGES-ARE-UNDERMINING-CARE-AT-COLUMBIA-ST-MARYS-HOSPITAL/](https://www.milwaukeeemag.com/special-report-how-staff-shortages-are-undermining-care-at-columbia-st-marys-hospital/)

Locally, Wisconsin Hospital Association records show that the vacancy rates for certified nursing assistants, licensed practical nurses, surgical techs, registered nurses, and radiology technicians all rose significantly at Ascension Wisconsin between 2017 and 2021. Several positions – certified nurse assistants; licensed practical nurses; surgical techs – outpaced vacancies across southeastern Wisconsin.

According to one Ascension obstetrician, severe staff shortages impact all five local Ascension hospitals.

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.MILWAUKEEMAG.COM/SPECIAL-REPORT-HOW-STAFF-SHORTAGES-ARE-UNDERMINING-CARE-AT-COLUMBIA-ST-MARYS-HOSPITAL/](https://www.milwaukeeemag.com/special-report-how-staff-shortages-are-undermining-care-at-columbia-st-marys-hospital/)

DECEMBER 27, 2022 FEATURE STORY, HEALTH



Ascension Columbia St. Mary's hospital in Milwaukee; Photo by Marty Peters

"There were times when patients did not have a nurse to take care of them," says the nurse. "We would pause inductions to try and help free up nurses and prevent more people from going into labor." Pausing induced labor, says the nurse, carries risks including "an increased chance of infection, especially if the woman's amniotic sac has already broken."

DECEMBER 27, 2022 FEATURE STORY, HEALTH



Ascension Columbia St. Mary's hospital in Milwaukee; Photo by Marty Peters

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.MILWAUKEEMAG.COM/SPECIAL-REPORT-HOW-STAFF-SHORTAGES-ARE-UNDERMINING-CARE-AT-COLUMBIA-ST-MARYS-HOSPITAL/](https://www.milwaukeeemag.com/special-report-how-staff-shortages-are-undermining-care-at-columbia-st-marys-hospital/)

Over the last year, upwards of two dozen doctors have left their posts at Columbia St. Mary's for other institutions across the state and country. Several who shared their experiences cited conditions so bad that they feared for the safety and care of their patients.

“I’ve been a surgeon for more than 40 years,” says Stoll. “I’ve worked out of ORs in Germany, Canada, Japan, Nicaragua and across the United States. I’ve seen a lot of operating rooms, and Columbia St. Mary’s is the worst I’ve seen.”

DECEMBER 27, 2022 FEATURE STORY, HEALTH



Ascension Columbia St. Mary's hospital in Milwaukee; Photo by Marty Peters

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.MILWAUKEEMAG.COM/SPECIAL-REPORT-HOW-STAFF-SHORTAGES-ARE-UNDERMINING-CARE-AT-COLUMBIA-ST-MARYS-HOSPITAL/](https://www.milwaukeeemag.com/special-report-how-staff-shortages-are-undermining-care-at-columbia-st-marys-hospital/)

TROUBLESOME TRENDS – 2018



"Could be devastating:" Ascension St. Joseph scaling back on some services involving higher levels of care

By: David Schuman

Patients will be transported to Ascension partner facilities if needed.

George Hinton, the CEO of the Social Development Commission and a former hospital administrator, says that's not good enough.

"We ship them off to another hospital in the city, how does their family get to them?" Hinton said.

Hinton calls these rollbacks a "dismantling of a neighborhood's safety net."

SOURCE: <https://www.cbs58.com/news/could-be-devastating-ascension-st-joseph-scaling-back-on-some-services-involving-higher-levels-of-care>, accessed

1/26/2023

TROUBLESOME TRENDS – 2022, 2023

Latino leaders say closing the only hospital delivery unit on city's south-side worsens disparities

The Hispanic community says it's a loss of a critical service without any input from the people it serves.

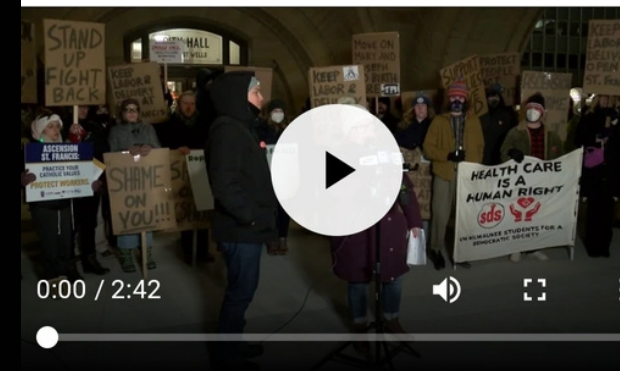
SOURCE TOP: [HTTPS://WWW.TMJ4.COM/NEWS/LOCAL-NEWS/LATINO-LEADERS-SAY-CLOSING-THE-ONLY-HOSPITAL-DELIVERY-UNIT-ON-CITYS-SOUTH-SIDE-WORSENS-DISPARITIES](https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/latino-leaders-say-closing-the-only-hospital-delivery-unit-on-citys-south-side-worsens-disparities)

SOURCE MIDDLE: [HTTPS://WWW.TMJ4.COM/NEWS/LOCAL-NEWS/ASCENSION-TO-END-LABOR-DELIVERY-SERVICES-AT-SOUTH-MILWAUKEE-HOSPITAL-BY-END-OF-THE-WEEK](https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/ascension-to-end-labor-delivery-services-at-south-milwaukee-hospital-by-end-of-the-week)

SOURCE RIGHT: [HTTPS://WWW.BECKERSHOSPITALREVIEW.COM/CARE-COORDINATION/ASCENSION-TO-CONSOLIDATE-LABOR-AND-DELIVERY-UNIT-OF-WISCONSIN-HOSPITAL.HTML](https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/care-coordination/ascension-to-consolidate-labor-and-delivery-unit-of-wisconsin-hospital.html)

ALL SOURCES ACCESSED 1/26/2023

Ascension to end labor, delivery services at Milwaukee hospital by end of the week



By: Taylor Lumpkin

Posted at 10:12 PM, Dec 20, 2022

and last updated 2022-12-21 06:08:06-05

Rally cries echoed throughout the streets of Milwaukee Tuesday night as dozens of healthcare workers gathered in opposition to Ascension's plan to close the labor and delivery unit at Saint Francis Hospital by the end of the week.

Expectant families who planned to deliver their babies at St. Francis hospital will have to find a new plan. This comes less than a week after representatives with Ascension said the southside location would no longer be offering labor and delivery services.

Ascension to consolidate labor and delivery unit of Wisconsin hospital

Kelly Gooch - Tuesday, December 20th,



Email

Ascension St. Francis Hospital in Milwaukee is transitioning its labor and delivery service to other Ascension Wisconsin locations.

Ascension Wisconsin, part of St. Louis-based Ascension, confirmed the news in a statement shared with *Becker's* Dec. 20.

The statement says Ascension St. Francis Hospital will transition its labor and delivery service to Ascension Columbia St. Mary's Hospital Milwaukee and Ascension SE Wisconsin Hospital-St. Joseph Campus in Milwaukee.

SAVED SERVICES - 2018

'We've decided to pause our plan to reconfigure medical services' at St. Joseph Hospital

| Published April 18, 2018 | FOX 6 Now Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE -- Ascension Wisconsin has "decided to pause our plan to reconfigure medical services from St. Joe's to Columbia St. Mary's Milwaukee" after recently announcing planned changes. This, after

SOURCE: <https://www.fox6now.com/news/ascension-wisconsin-weve-decided-to-pause-our-plan-to-reconfigure-medical-services-at-st-joseph-hospital>



The screenshot shows the top portion of a news article from Milwaukee NNS. At the top is a blue navigation bar with a menu icon on the left, the text "MILWAUKEE NNS" in white and yellow, and a search icon on the right. Below the navigation bar is the article title "Council approves Ascension service retention measure" in bold black text. Underneath the title is the date "April 18, 2018" followed by the author "Ald. Khalif J. Rainey" and a link to "Leave a Comment".

SOURCE: [HTTPS://MILWAUKEENNS.ORG/2018/04/18/COUNCIL-APPROVES-ASCENSION-SERVICE-RETENTION-MEASURE/](https://MILWAUKEENNS.ORG/2018/04/18/COUNCIL-APPROVES-ASCENSION-SERVICE-RETENTION-MEASURE/)

WHY WE MUST ACT NOW



ASCENSION ST. VINCENT'S RIVERSIDE, FL

Ascension is closing
the maternity ward in
March.

ASCENSION VIA CHRISTI HOSPITAL, KS

Closing its behavioral
health department,
announced Dec. 19.

ASCENSION ST. VINCENT DUNN, IN

Closed entire
hospital and medical
groups effective
December 2022.



July 2, 2021

Mr. Kenneth E. Berkovitz
Senior VP & Ministry Market Executive
Ascension Health & Ascension Michigan
4600 Edmundson Rd
St. Louis, MO 63134

Vice President Berkovitz:

We, the undersigned members of the Michigan legislature, are writing about a number of concerns raised by employees at your Michigan hospitals.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses and other hospital workers have risked their lives, and their mental health, to care for desperately ill patients. Many have gone above and beyond the call of duty in this regard. These essential workers deserve to be treated with the highest levels of dignity and respect, which makes what they are telling us so concerning.

During the height of the pandemic, nurses, doctors and other hospital workers were forced to handle patient caseloads beyond anyone's imagination, while working through long hours and exhaustion. This was because of a crisis that posed a threat to life not seen in a hundred years.

Now that the pandemic has come under control, we would expect that hospitals would honor the tremendous sacrifices their employees made to save the lives of the people of Michigan. Yet, it appears that your hospitals are now telling nurses they must permanently accept workloads that rival their experience in the worst days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been reported to us that:

- Patient-to-nurse ratios in the ICU and other critical units are often 50 to 400 percent higher than they should be;
- Understaffing that began before the pandemic has worsened during the pandemic, leading to management often forcing staff to work a full second shift after already working for 8-12 hours straight;
- Ascension Genesys has disciplined nurses and other employees for saying no to forced overtime, or for being absent while in COVID quarantine or having childcare issues;
- Ascension Genesys has refused to follow its employees' contracts, including:
 - Unilaterally changing the grievance and discipline process;
 - Unilaterally requiring nurses to wear tracking devices;
 - Forcing nurses to do the work of non-nursing employees.
- Ascension is using Mick Crowley as its Director of Associate Relations, who was previously an Executive Vice President at the notorious "union avoidance" firm Adams Nash Haskell & Sheridan.



Now Ascension hospitals are experiencing record levels of senior nurses quitting their jobs and recent nursing school graduates and temporary nurses are replacing them in large numbers. New nurses traditionally learn much of their skills on the job from more experienced senior nurses, and temp nurses are not meant to take the place of full-time nurses in large numbers. Michigan residents, who are an increasingly aging population that needs quality healthcare, deserve better than this.

We appreciate how hard hospitals have worked to care for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, that care is coming from the staff who work in your hospitals, and these workers must be protected so that they can provide safe, effective care to their patients that does not come at the expense of their own health and well-being. With revenues in the billions, and having received at least \$1.8 billion in federal COVID-19 funds, Ascension does not appear to have fiscal constraints when it comes to making sure its hospitals are properly staffed.

Hospital workers have rights at work, and those rights must be respected. This includes following their negotiated union contracts and not using union-busters as labor relations staff. As Michigan lawmakers, we take Michigan workers' rights and labor laws seriously. We have high expectations for a national hospital chain that prides itself on its Catholic values.

In addition to how all these issues affect essential hospital workers, these practices can also have deleterious effects on patients. We hope to hear from you as soon as possible on how you plan to remedy these issues.

Sincerely,

The Michigan Legislative Labor Caucus Executive Board

Representative Terry J. Sabo, Chair

Representative Brenda Carter, Executive Vice Chair

Representative Regina Weiss, Secretary

Representative John Cherry, Treasurer

cc: Joseph Impicchiche, CEO, Ascension Health
Gretchen Whitmer, Governor, State of Michigan
Chris Palazzolo, Ascension Genesys CEO

TOGETHER, WE CAN

**SAVE L&D,
SAVE ST.
FRANCIS**

