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**MUSC Black River Medical Center serves rural community with modern facility featuring EFCO impact-resistant, high-performance products**

***Curtain wall, storefront and entrance by EFCO support resilient, sustainable design;***

***project earned two Green Globes certifications***

Monett, Missouri (May 2025) – Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Health recently opened Black River Medical Center as a newly established 63,500-square-foot hospital, expanding essential access to health care across this rural region.

McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture designed the new facility to blend high-tech, modern medicine with positive patient experiences in a safe, comfortable and healthy space. Greeting patients, staff and visitors as they enter the hospital, the architects specified EFCO curtain wall, storefront and doors to achieve the required high performance, sustainable goals and MUSC’s established aesthetic. The curtain wall was engineered as a sweeping, segmented system, giving the appearance of a continuous curving line.

Bringing the Black River Medical Center from concept to completion, Charlotte Glass Contractors installed all the EFCO aluminum fenestration and framing products. Saving time in the field and simplifying installation, EFCO impact-resistant, thermal performance curtain wall and storefront are engineered for compatibility with its heavy-duty entrance doors. EFCO brand products are part of Apogee Enterprises, Inc.’s Architectural Metals segment.

***Sustainability and Well-Being***

Black River Medical Center earned two Green Globes certifications through the Green Building Initiative (GBI), which evaluates environmental sustainability, health and wellness, and resilience of new construction. Supporting these project goals, EFCO products deliver daylight and views with a connection to nature, which are recognized as contributing to physical and mental health and well-being, and to creating a calming atmosphere.

***Resilience and Impact Resistance***

For hospitals, resilient construction means preparing these essential facilities for continuity of care for emergency and disaster events, when communities need them most. Hurricanes, tropical storms, high winds and wind-driven rain are of particular concern in South Carolina. The coastal state ranks fifth in the U.S. for having the most hurricane impacts on the Atlantic coast.

As part of Black River Medical Center’s protective building envelope, EFCO products were successfully engineered and tested to meet impact resistance and air, water, structural, acoustic and thermal performance.

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***Energy Efficiency and Minimal Maintenance***

Green Globes certification further encourages projects to incorporate energy savings, reduce carbon emissions and lower future maintenance costs. Enhancing buildings’ energy efficiency, the aluminum framing on EFCO products features an insulating thermal barrier.

Supporting Black River Medical Center’s energy-efficient, code-compliant facility, EFCO 5600 Series curtain wall and 526 Series storefront are approved through the National Fenestration Rating Council’s Component Modeling Approach (CMA) Product Certification Program. EFCO DuraStile D618 Series swinging doors on the hospital also are CMA certified and meet ADA requirements for accessibility.

Combined with solar-control insulating glass units, EFCO systems help reduce energy use, utility costs and carbon emissions associated with light fixtures, heating and cooling. Minimizing maintenance and repair, EFCO finished all its aluminum framing and doors in durable, clear anodize.

***Warm Welcome, Natural Materials***

Helping safeguard staff, patients and visitors, without sacrificing access or convenience, Black River Medical Center is designed with a prominent, public entrance. A single vestibule provides access to the emergency department, surgery and outpatient wings, each having its own waiting area, as well as access to natural light and outdoor views.

Highlighting the inviting exterior and biophilic interior, McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture described the Black River Medical Center:

“A welcoming curved-glass curtain wall marks the hospital’s entrance, mirroring the architectural style of other MUSC hospitals.

Inside, the design features calming neutral tones and nature-inspired colors set against an off-white background. Local artists contributed wall graphics and artwork that celebrate the region’s natural beauty and cultural heritage.

The cafeteria doubles as a multipurpose room. It opens to an outdoor dining area, providing a versatile space for patients, staff, and visitors.”

***Planned and Purposeful Patient Care***

Serving the communities of Williamsburg and lower Florence counties, Black River Medical Center consolidated and replaced two existing hospitals. The new hospital is part of the MUSC Health Florence Division.

MUSC Health worked diligently with the former Williamsburg Regional Hospital (Kingstree) and Lake City Community Hospital to create a planned and purposeful community transition. Reflecting MUSC’s dedication to education, research and patient care, the design and development process involved collaboration with patient advocacy representatives and staff.

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The new Black River Medical Center provides vital access to a full range of modern diagnostic and interventional capabilities, such as 3-D mammography, MRI, nuclear medicine, CT scanning, an on-site pharmacy and a complete imaging department. The new facility features 25 inpatient beds, four observation beds, two operating rooms and 16 emergency treatment rooms.

***Reports on Rural Health Care***

For 61 million Americans, rural hospitals and health systems provide care close to home and serve as economic anchors in their communities, according to the American Hospital Association (AHA). The AHA reports that rural hospitals represent 35% of all hospitals in the U.S., and nearly half of them have 25 or fewer beds.

Unfortunately, nearly 200 rural hospitals have closed in the last two decades. In many of these areas, the hospital is the principal source of primary care and the only place for people to have laboratory tests or imaging studies.

“A community without health care is a community without a future,” said MUSC’s president, Dr. David J. Cole, M.D., FACS. “Rural health care facilities like Black River are the heart of their communities. They provide a sense of belonging and trust that only occurs when neighbors care for other neighbors. … We tend to feel safer when we’re closer to our homes and have the benefit of knowing that we can access the care we need.”

***Optimistic Outlook***

MUSC Health’s Black River Medical Center not only ensures quality health care in rural Cades, South Carolina; it also has future growth in mind. Constructed on a 40-acre parcel on SC Highway 52, south of Lake City, the site includes provisions for expansion to meet the evolving needs of the community.

The hospital held a grand opening celebration in January 2023. “We are officially open to help people, and I couldn’t be more excited to offer these important services to this area,” said MUSC Health Florence Division CEO, Jay Hinesley. “MUSC Health set out to fill a gap that desperately needed to be filled. Community members can be reassured that this hospital is here whenever you need us with the most state-of-the-art technology and services available.”

Allen Abernethy, executive director of MUSC Health Black River, added, “Today marks a great day in this area for everyone in the community. We have worked tirelessly to make this the best rural hospital and provide the best care possible. I think we’ve done that, and we should be proud.”

More than 50,000 patients visited MUSC Health Black River Medical Center during its first year of operation.

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**Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Health - Black River Medical Center, 3555 Williamsburg County Highway, Cades, SC 29518; https://muschealth.org/black-river-medical-center**

* Owner: Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Health; Charleston, South Carolina; https://muschealth.org
* Architect: McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture; Charleston, South Carolina; https://www.mcmillanpazdansmith.com
* General contractors:
  + Rodgers Builders, Inc.; Charlotte, North Carolina; https://www.rodgersbuilders.com
  + with Thompson Turner Construction; Sumter, South Carolina; https://turner.thompsonconstructiongroup.com
* Glazing contractor: Charlotte Glass Contractors; Charlotte, North Carolina; https://www.charlotteglass.com
* Curtain wall, storefront, entrance systems – manufacturer and anodize finisher: EFCO brand products, part of Apogee Enterprises, Inc.’s Architectural Metals segment; Monett, Missouri; https://www.efcocorp.com
* Photographer: ©Abstract Photography, Inc.; Terry Wieckert

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