

the business of fun

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# acadiana

PROFILE  
THE WARRIORS OF THE DELTA COUNTRY

## Cajun Corridor

*From Delcambre to Greysdane  
Traveling Along Highway 34*





## Dr. Kenneth Falterman

Pediatric Surgery  
Women's and Children's Hospital  
Lafayette

For Dr. Kenneth Falterman, his most difficult case involved a baby girl who weighed only 12 ounces. In the human heart there is something called the ductus arteriosus - a blood vessel in the chest close to the heart that is supposed to close spontaneously after birth.

Unfortunately this particular baby was born extremely preterm and required surgical closure of her "patent" (or "open") ductus arteriosus, which, if left opened, could be harmful to the heart and lungs. The surgery to close the ductus arteriosus is long and difficult, but it was imperative in order to save the baby girl from suffering, and save her heart and lungs long enough for her to recover in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Dr. Falterman describes this journey, not as "life-changing," but as a "reaffirming event in

which you know you must be absolutely focused, precise and at the top of your game to accomplish your goal without error ... then you can breathe again." He attributes much of his success to a fully functional and supportive team of pediatric specialists, saying, "A pediatric surgeon can't work in a vacuum."

Dr. Falterman says he picked pediatric general surgery because of its skill-level and the for the reward he gets by knowing that parents have entrusted their children in his hands. He considers it a great compliment, and rewarding on both a personal and professional level. He enjoys practicing at Women's and Children's Hospital in Lafayette, not only for its safe, friendly and clean environment, but also for the community that the hospital has created. Dr. Falterman says,

"My hospital is not too big and not too small, which makes it easier to provide efficient and excellent quality care."

Dr. Falterman grew up in New Orleans, raised by parents who came from Acadiana, both of whom spoke French. He attended University of New Orleans for his bachelor of science degree, and Louisiana State University Medical Center for his medical degree, followed by an internship at Duke and a surgical fellowship at The Children's Hospital of Pittsburg.

He says the reason he wanted to stay local to practice medicine was to ensure that "families would not have to travel away to get excellent care for their babies and children." Dr. Falterman practices in Lafayette to start and grow the number of pediatric specialty trained physicians in Acadiana, which is why he moved

to Lafayette in 1999 after 19 years at Ochsner and Children's Hospital in New Orleans.

Dr. Falterman attributes his success as a pediatric general surgeon to the hardworking and interdependent teams that he works with: "Neonatal and Pediatric Intensivist along with Pediatric Anesthesiologist, Pediatric Oncologist, and nursing support must be part of this team...this work does teach one the necessity of team play!"

Dr. Falterman appreciates the local community in Lafayette and at Women's and Children's Hospital, and so works everyday towards adding to this community in a positive way through his passionate treatment of the children and the babies within the Lafayette area, to ensure they don't have to go far for excellent professional care. - BY LAN GIFFITHS