

THE DREAM TEAM

TWO BRANDON CARDIOTHORACIC SURGEONS PROVE THEY HAVE HEART

Dr. Bradley L. Bufkin, M.D. and Dr. Ignacio G. Duarte, M.D. are best friends. They met during their general surgery residencies at Emory University in Atlanta about 15 years ago and never lost touch. So when leading cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Duarte joined Brandon Regional Hospital's efforts to expand its cardiac surgery department, he knew just who to call.

"It's great working with your best friend," says Dr. Bufkin. "When you call one of us, you get both, whether you want it or not."

All jokes aside, these two talented cardiothoracic surgeons share a passion for bringing the most advanced technologies to the area. They're doing everything possible to make sure Brandon Regional Hospital can provide the minimally invasive procedures that, up until August of last year, were only available in a limited number of hospitals in West Florida.

"People think you have to drive across the bridge or hop on the Crosstown for a state-of-the-art cardiac surgical care," says Dr. Duarte, "but the Brandon community needs to know that everything at other Bay area hospitals is here now."

Both surgeons bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to Brandon Regional. After graduating from Baylor College of Medicine with honors and completing his residency at Emory, Dr. Bufkin practiced for nine years at Fort Sanders Parkwest Medical Center, a seven-time Top 100 Heart Hospital. Dr. Duarte earned his medical degree from Columbia University and studied with some of the best cardiothoracic surgeons in the country before moving to the Bay area. Both are diplomates of the American



Board of Surgery and the American Board of Thoracic Surgery and are specialized in using the most advanced technologies to offer the least invasive options for heart surgery.

"Every line of work has its rewards," says Dr. Duarte, "but there's no bigger bonus than having a patient say, 'Thank you.'"

Cardiothoracic Surgeons Dr. Bradley L. Bufkin, M.D. and Dr. Ignacio G. Duarte, M.D. bring compassion, new technology and minimally invasive procedures to Brandon Regional Hospital.

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