

Volunteer CONNECTION

SPRING 2021

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Volunteer Spotlight - PG. 2

Graduates Congrats - PG.2

Volunteer Week - PG.3

High School Scholarships -
PG. 3 - 5

New Fundraisers - PG.5

Gift Shop News - PG. 6

Health Watch - PG. 6

Health Care Advocacy - PG.7

Volunteers & Vaccinations
- PG. 8 - 9

Calendar of Events - PG.10



"Alone we can do so little, together so much" -Helen Keller The above photo by Suzanne Rose shows the hands of many volunteers at Ascension Mercy

It Was One Year Ago

It was one year ago, March 11, 2020, when the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. At the time no one could truly foresee the impact on our community, our nation and our world. As we determined how to respond to this challenge, we had faith that focusing on the needs of patients, volunteers and associates would be the right course, no matter what lay ahead. During the past year we developed protocols to keep us safe and were willing to make changes adapting to current needs while keeping our Mission, rooted in the healing ministry of Jesus, at the forefront of our decision making. These protocols included suspending our onsite volunteer services.

We continue to have several teams working to embrace what we learned during the past 13 months and we are adapting our work to support these learnings of our pandemic work environment response. We are also awaiting direction from Ascension Infection Control at the national level, which continues to monitor CDC guidance around building occupancy, including distancing requirements and vaccination status.

Easter and spring are times of renewal and new life. Today, as three vaccines have now been authorized in the U.S. for emergency use against COVID-19, and as the rates of new cases have dropped over the past few weeks, we have a renewed sense of hope. As we have reached this milestone of an unprecedented year, we look forward to a bright future where our volunteers are back onsite, and we continue to carry on our vital work and essential care for our community. Until that time, please be patient and continue to follow CDC guidelines, we will keep you informed as planning moves forward regarding volunteer return. We appreciate your support and we miss you in our midst!

Jennifer Derks
Vice President Hospital Operations

Volunteer Spotlight – Joan Bitter

Joan started volunteering at Ascension Mercy Hospital in March of 2006 and has devoted over 10,900 hours of service. Currently, with the pandemic, Joan is crafting things from home for the giftshop and for our patients. Joan has been busy making greeting cards, candy bar sleeves, dish towels and tray favors. Prior to the pandemic, she volunteered in the craft room, giftshop and assisted with fundraising sales. Not only is Joan volunteering at Mercy, she is also volunteers at Wild Rose Hospital. When not volunteering, you can find Joan paper crafting or taking a visit out west to Montana or Oregon to visit her kids and grandkids.

Joan started working as a nurses aide in high school and then went on to college for nursing. She worked at Mercy on the OB unit and also at Theda Care.

Joan's favorite part about volunteering is giving back to the hospital. When asked what three words she would use to describe herself, Joan stated that she was giving, crafty and social. If Joan were to give advice to new volunteers it would be that if you need to feel fulfilled, find a volunteer role you really enjoy and take the time to meet people where you volunteer.

Celine Hartig, Field Placement Student



Joan with some of her craft projects

Timely News

Congratulations Graduates

College

Melinda Boehm
Jasmine Davis
Celine Hartig
McKennah Matulle
Kylie Nachreiner
Mohan Xu

High School

Keerthana Ambati
Aidan Brazeau
Lauren Hahn
Hailey Kons



National Volunteer Week April 18 – 24, 2021

Even without onsite volunteers from mid-March forward Ascension Mercy volunteers still donated nearly 40,000 hours of service in fiscal year 2020. Since last March our off-site volunteers are continuing to make items (masks, blankets, baby hats, cards, tray favors, ice bag covers, cancer caps, etc.) Off site volunteers have also put together welcome kits for our patients and written out birthday cards for our volunteers and foundation donors. Most importantly, Mercy volunteers have been supportive of our frontline caregivers by writing notes of thanks, sending positive e-mails, following the CDC guidelines and getting vaccinated against COVID 19. **THANK YOU** for your support of our patients, visitors, staff, and community!



Because of COVID 19 restrictions we are again unable to host our usual volunteer recognition event this year. When we can all finally get together – what a party that will be! Please know that you are missed and appreciated. We are anxiously awaiting the time when we can see volunteers back at Mercy in all the volunteer roles. Please know that it will take time and planning before that happens, and the return may occur in phases where roles that don't involve patient contact start back first and then onward from there as the COVID situation improves. Until then please stay safe and healthy!

Amy Brownson, Manager Volunteer Services

Lauren Hahn – MHV Volunteer Scholarship Recipient

Congratulations to Lauren Hahn, this year's recipient of the \$500 MHV Volunteer Scholarship. The scholarship is funded through a Mercy Health Foundation endowment established by the Mercy Hospital Volunteers (MHV). Criteria for this scholarship are that the awardee is to be a high school graduating senior and a Mercy Hospital Volunteer, in good standing, with a high amount of volunteer hours. The student must also be planning to attend a technical school or university.

Lauren started volunteering at Ascension Mercy Hospital in 2018 wanting to gain experience in the medical field. Over the years she has dedicated her hours of service in Errands. While volunteering, Lauren's enjoyed meeting new friends in fellow volunteers. She met her best friend through volunteering at Mercy! Lauren is graduating from Oshkosh North High School and will continue her education at Moraine Park Technical College. She plans to pursue the medical field and will be studying respiratory therapy.

Celine Hartig, Field Placement Student



Lauren Hahn

Keerthana Ambati - Natalie Bolin Scholarship Recipient



Keerthana Ambati

ONE OF THE
GREATEST GIFTS
YOU CAN GIVE IS
YOUR TIME

#VOLUNTEER

Congratulations to Keerthana Ambati for being this year's recipient of the \$1,000 Natalie Kate Bolin Scholarship. The Natalie Kate Bolin Mercy Student Volunteer Scholarship Award was created by the family of Natalie Kate Bolin, a former Mercy student volunteer, in memory of her beautiful spirit and life. The Scholarship is administered by the Mercy Health Foundation. Criteria for this scholarship are the awardee is to be an Oshkosh West High School graduating senior and a Mercy Hospital Volunteer, in good standing, with the highest amount of volunteer hours. The student must also be planning to attend a technical school or university.

Keerthana has been a volunteer at Ascension Mercy Hospital serving at the ER reception since 2018. Keerthana is a senior at Oshkosh West High School where she is one of four editor managers of the Oshkosh West Index which is the school newspaper. She also enjoys being a part of the youth symphony and orchestra.

When asked what she likes best about volunteering, Keerthana said she likes being able to be that smiley and friendly face when people are coming into the ER. She enjoys being able to provide whatever comfort she can. Keerthana started volunteering as she saw it as a good opportunity to serve the community and a great way to help out. Her advice for future volunteers is that when it gets hard, remember people appreciate it even when it doesn't feel like it. It is very important to serve when you can.

Keerthana will be continuing her education at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh where she plans to major in computer science and minor in spanish. Keerthana would also like to extend her gratitude to the Ascension Mercy Foundation and particularly the Natalie Bolin family, for giving her this scholarship to support her future education.

Celine Hartig, Field Placement Student

Aidan Brazeau – Wilma Ritsema Scholarship Recipient

Aidan Brazeau is the 2021 recipient of the \$500 Wilma Ritsema Scholarship. Al Ritsema created this fund within the Mercy Health Foundation to annually award students in honor of his wife, Wilma. Al and Wilma were both very active volunteers at Mercy. Wilma took on many volunteer roles as well as serving as president of the Mercy Medical Center Auxiliary. Criteria for this scholarship are that the awardee is to be a high school graduating senior and a Mercy Hospital Volunteer, in good standing, with a high amount of volunteer hours. The student must also be planning to attend a technical school or university.

Aidan began volunteering after his mom sprung the idea to him and he thought it would be a great way to help the community and better himself as a person. Aidan spent his volunteer time in the gift shop where he enjoyed talking to the other volunteers and hearing their stories.

Aidan will be graduating from Oshkosh West High School. At West he has enjoyed high jumping for the track and field team the last four years and has been on the swim team this year. Aidan will be continuing his education at Ripon College. There he will be going into Pre-Law and double majoring in business and psychology with a minor in criminal justice.

Aidan's advice to any future volunteers would be if you are debating on it, just do it. There is no downside to volunteering, you are helping the community which is a great feeling.

Celine Hartig, Field Placement Student



Aidan Brazeau

Those who can, do.
Those who can do
more, volunteer.

~Author Unknown

New Fundraiser – Thunderbird Bakery

The MHV will be sponsoring a new fundraiser in April with Thunderbird Bakery. Thunderbird is an Oshkosh based wholesale Bakery focusing on sourdough bread and handcrafted pastries made from scratch. You may have purchased their product at the Oshkosh Farmers Market. More information and order forms will be emailed out soon or call Bev Hoffman at 223-4440 to have one sent to you in the mail. Orders need to be returned to the Mercy Gift Shop or volunteers services along with payment by April 30. Orders can be picked up at Mercy on May 6th at the in the hallway by the gift shop. Who doesn't love baked goods! Keep your eyes open for futher information.

Spring has Sprung, and the Mercy Gift Shop is Ready for Summer

Enough of winter, it is time to bounce into spring at the Ascension Mercy Gift Shop. New spring merchandise is arriving! We have purses and colorful jewelry to accessorize. And for those special Baptism, Communion and Confirmation occasions, we have frames, books, cross necklaces, bracelets, and Baptismal outfits. For outside enthusiasts, there are wind chimes, yard art and statues to decorate your gardens and backyards. These items would make great Mother's Day or Father's Day gifts. The Mercy Gift Shop hours are Monday and Tuesday 11:00am – 5:00pm and Wednesday and Friday from 10:00am – 3:00pm.

Bev Hoffman, Gift Shop Coordinator

Health Watch

Medical Myths: All About Aging

Physical deterioration is inevitable. This is not entirely untrue. As we age our body does get some wear and tear. However, people can slow this down by increased physical activity and improving your diet.

Older adults should not exercise. Good evidence shows that regular exercise can reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. If you are wanting to start a new exercise regime consult your doctor prior.

Older adults need less (or more) sleep. Perhaps this comes from the stereotype that older people enjoy a nap. There are certain diseases that can make one's ability harder to fall asleep or stay asleep. The silver lining is some research shows that older adults can handle sleep deprivation better than young adults.

Only women get osteoporosis. This condition can affect either sex and people of an age. However, osteoporosis is more common in older people, white people, and females. To minimize your risks, eat foods rich in calcium and vitamin D, also try to exercise regularly.

Dementia is inevitable as you age. As the risk of developing dementia increases with age, it does not affect all older adults. In the United States, an estimated 13.9% of those over 71 have dementia, that means 86.1% of those over 71 do not have dementia!

There's no point in giving up smoking now. No matter how long you have been smoking for and how many cigarettes you smoke, your health will begin to improve the moment you quit smoking. Some health benefits are immediate, some are longer-term, but know it is never too late to quit!

Submitted by Tom Wollangk, MHV Community Health Education Chair
Excerpted from Medical News Today, September 2020

Health Care Advocacy

WHA's Virtual Advocacy Day April 14, 2021 8:30 - 11:30 AM

Registration is now open for **Wisconsin Hospital Association's (WHA) Advocacy Day 2021**, scheduled for Wednesday, April 14. Advocacy Day is an annual event that connects hospital supporters from across the state with legislators in Madison where lawmakers can learn how issues impact local hospitals and communities.



This year, WHA has contracted with the professional event platform, **LeaderPass**, to deliver this event to advocates across the state **virtually**. Check out all the details (including the day's agenda and list of featured speakers), and register at

<https://www.wha.org/AboutWHA/CalendarofEvents/Conference/AD-2021>

While the day will be a little different in the virtual format, attendees can still expect to hear from a great line-up of speakers, including opening keynote Frank Sesno. Sesno is an internationally recognized journalist with more than 30 years of experience reporting from around the world. Well known as a television anchor, White House correspondent and talk show host with CNN, he is also a nationally-renowned moderator who has engaged some of the world's leading personalities. The day will also include the always-interesting and popular legislative panel discussion, and Governor Tony Evers has been invited to offer special guest remarks. ***With the COVID-19 pandemic still underfoot, it has never been more important for you to participate in Advocacy Day and let your voice be heard!***

Legislative Visits – Attendees can also meet with their legislators and/or their staff virtually and are encouraged to do so. Specific times, in 30-minutes intervals, are set aside on April 14, 15, and 16 for these meetings. Meetings are scheduled based on **home state senate districts**, to include corresponding state assembly districts. For example, if you live in state senate district 13, your meeting will also include state representatives from state assembly districts 37, 38, and 39. Advocates can expect a follow-up from WHA staff shortly after registration confirming their specific meeting date and time, along with virtual instructions to join the meeting. **There is no registration fee to attend Advocacy Day, but pre-registration is required.**

Excerpted from WHA_HEATADVOCACY@WHA.ORG VIA VOTERVOICE.NET

Mercy Volunteers – Vaccination Happiness!



Ihsan R.



Peggy M.



Jim & Shirley S.



Anne and Spencer G.



Bill and Pat B.



Peg L.



Sue B.



Sue S.



Upcoming Calendar of Events

Fridays in April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Wear Fun Scrubs and Jeans	When you wear Fun Scrubs or Jeans Donate \$2 for each Friday	Hospital campus wide
April 14th	Dine Out or Carry Out 11:00 am - 9:00 pm	Mention Mercy Hospital and 20% of sale will be donated to the MHV	Benvenuto's Italian Grill For carry out: 920-230-2300 For menu: www.benvenutos.com
May 17	MHV Board Meeting 9:30 am	Volunteer Multi-purpose Room	
Fridays in July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Wear Fun Scrubs and Jeans	When you wear Fun Scrubs or Jeans Donate \$2 for each Friday	Hospital campus wide
		Have a Happy Easter!	