

# Volunteer News

**GUNDERSEN**  
HEALTH SYSTEM®

**Quarterly Newsletter for Gundersen Health System's Partners & Volunteer Services**  
January/February/March 2020

## From the director

Lori Van Lin, director, Volunteer Services



As this newsletter reaches you, the holiday season is behind us and we have started a new year – 2020! Gundersen Health System and healthcare overall experienced many changes in the past year. We are so fortunate that in a time with challenges and unrest, we serve an organization whose mission is

to help and heal those around us. Gundersen's strategic priorities are to offer an outstanding experience of care, improve the health of our communities and ease the financial burden of healthcare. As a volunteer, you contribute to all three of these strategies.

One of our transport volunteers recently shared what inspired him to join our program. It was the comments of a Gundersen employee who stated that volunteers are valued members of our community and are very respected by others within Gundersen. I hope you know and feel this every time you choose to volunteer.

As we move forward into the new year, we are challenged to continue to raise the bar in our service to patients, families and our communities. Your commitment as a volunteer is even more important and appreciated. Wishing each of you a happy, healthy 2020!

My thanks,  
Lori

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## Hands on Health Day

By Karol Fox, program coordinator

In October, a group of our teen/high school volunteers took part of our annual Hands on Health Day, organized by Scenic Rivers Area Hospital Education Centers (AHEC). The event consists of job shadowing a healthcare professional, testing their skills in the Integrated Center for Education (ICE House) and a brief presentation on Public Health programs. The students were taught CPR skills from instructor Pam Haller. Andrew Torresani demonstrated the Anatomage Table, which looks like a huge iPhone, where the students learned about human anatomy in a very interesting and hands-on way. Sheila Chapel and Andrew Welch were the instructors in the Fundamental Laparoscopic Skills (FLS) lab, where the students tied "surgical" knots and stacked blocks using

the laparoscopic tools, challenging their dexterity. Lastly, Brandon Aspenson hosted the Impairment Goggles session. During his presentation the students learned about alcohol and its effects; they wore impairment goggles to experience first-hand the effects of alcohol and drugs. Each station offered the students a new learning experience in a smaller setting with hands-on professionals. Bob Matysik from Scenic Rivers AHEC showed a video on Public Health and the impact it has had on society, such as immunizations, smoking and car seat safety. The day concluded with lunch and each student writing a thank you note to the employee they shadowed.

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# Volunteer News

## Hands on Health Day - continued

A couple of the students wrote reflection essays. Here are some of their comments:

- Kenzie Caya said, "Overall it was a very great experience where I learned a lot and was able to do and try new things".
- Felix Rose remarked the event was invaluable to getting a more complete picture of what an actual health care career consists of, and he thinks he's found a career path that he would enjoy.

Our special thanks to Partners for providing funds for the lunch, which also was a highlight of the day.

In closing, although the new year will have already begun when this newsletter lands in your inbox, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for sharing your energy, steadfast commitment and positive attitudes. You've been wonderful with picking up extra projects, helping at the Flu Shot Clinic and coming in to volunteer when scheduled. We couldn't ask for a more dedicated and responsible crew. Wishing you all the best in 2020 and, as always, take care.



**Felix Rose and Vikram Ailiani testing their laparoscopic skills**



**Kenzie Caya (right) with the Anatomage Table.**

## Campus Corner

By Donna Niedfeldt, program coordinator

By the time you read this, the holiday season will have passed. During this time of year, gratitude is everywhere! It is referred to and spoken about, it is the subject of ads we see and read, and in the lyrics of the songs we hear and sing.

Brandon George, one of our newer college volunteers, shared with me recently some of the reasons he is grateful to be a volunteer at Gundersen. He said it has been a "friendly and welcoming experience." The guidance he has received has helped him become a better volunteer. Most of that guidance is coming from his fellow volunteers who share in the desire to give back. He says, "It is a great introduction to a clinical setting by helping out in different areas throughout the campus... (it) gives you great opportunity to strengthen your interpersonal skills."

David Stiendl-Rast adds: "It is not happiness that makes us grateful but gratefulness that makes us happy." As a volunteer, you take the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of our patients, families, staff and your fellow volunteers who are in turn grateful for what you have done for them. With that opportunity, you may have given the gift of happiness. You are college students with demanding, crazy schedules and yet, here you are giving what free time you may have. You truly demonstrate the attitude of gratitude every day, no matter the season, with every shift, every service hour and every completed task. I am humbly grateful to you and for you year-round. You inspire me!

## Healthy Living with Chronic Pain

If you or someone you know is living with ongoing pain, our six-week Healthy Living with Chronic Pain workshop offers new solutions for managing it.

Led by Gundersen experts, this small group program focuses on helping participants gain control and get back to doing the things they love.

### People who take this workshop learn:

- Strategies for understanding and managing pain
- Short-term goal setting
- Gentle movement and stretching exercises

- Mind and body connection
- Relaxation techniques
- Stress and depression management
- Communicating effectively with family, friends and medical professionals

Cost: \$30 (includes textbook)

Classes are offered Jan. 6 from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and April 6 from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Pre-register by calling (608) 775-6870 or visit [gundersenhealth.org/living-well](http://gundersenhealth.org/living-well).

## Healthy Living with Diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic, lifelong, ongoing condition. While you may see a physician or another healthcare provider several times a year, most days you are the one who controls your diabetes through monitoring, nutrition, exercise and managing your symptoms. Healthy Living with Diabetes is a researched and proven program designed to help you do just that.

This workshop helps adults with type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes, or those caring for someone with diabetes, learn self-management skills and increase their confidence in managing their diabetes. The workshop meets for 2 ½ hours once a week for six weeks. Healthy Living with Diabetes complements existing treatments a participant receives.

### People who take this workshop:

- Learn techniques to deal with the symptoms of diabetes.
- Learn about appropriate exercise, use of medication and healthy eating strategies.
- Report improved health, health behavior and a sense of confidence in managing their diabetes.
- Show improvements in blood sugar levels and a decrease in health distress and hypo- and hyperglycemia.
- Feel more confident in their ability to communicate with physicians.
- Have fewer doctor and emergency room visits and fewer hospitalizations.

Please call (608) 775-6870 or visit [gundersenhealth.org/living-well](http://gundersenhealth.org/living-well) to learn more about this workshop.

## Embracing Winter

Whether you enjoy winter or dread every bit of it, it will be here for as long as Mother Nature decides. Rather than run from the season, why not learn to embrace it?

**Get moving.** Not only will exercise warm you up, allowing you to escape the cold for a bit, but it also releases the feel-good chemicals in the brain to help improve your mood.

**Eat for happiness.** Eating a diet full of healthy, wholesome foods will increase your energy levels and give your mood a boost.

**Sunshine the blues away.** Getting sunlight doesn't have to include bundling up to head outside. Try opening the blinds and sitting next to the window.

**Long lived days.** Don't let the shorter days force you to

hunker down. Power through and get out of the house to run errands or keep busy by doing projects around the house.

**Friend power.** Socializing is a great way to boost your mood. Plan a couple of fun outings a week—anything from dinner, to shopping, to a movie night.

**Think positively.** Just remember that from the day winter arrives, the days start getting longer!

**Dress the part.** Be sure to dress warm during the cold months. Being cold can zap your energy, so bundle up and stay warm.

**Vacation.** If you have the means, escaping the cold is a great option. Choose a destination that is warm, allowing you to forget about the snow...at least for a few days.

## From the president

Linda Gillette, president, Gundersen Partners



Happy New Year!

Gundersen Partners was busy with so many great events in the fourth quarter of 2019. In October, Partners hosted the Simply Sweet candy sale which is always a success! The PRN Footwear sale also took place on the La Crosse Campus at the end of October. In November,

Partners sponsored another very successful \$6 sale and our very first Discovery Toys fundraiser. At the Discovery Toys sale, shoppers were able to purchase and donate toys to Gundersen Pediatrics patients for the holidays and other special occasions throughout the year. All wish list items were sold out before noon on the first day. Partners is always overwhelmed by the kindness of Gundersen staff. December events included Partners annual Love Lights celebration and annual membership meeting. With support from Gundersen Partners, Santa visited the Gundersen Child Care Center and Eagle Crest Memory Care and brought everyone a small present to make their holidays a little brighter. Once again, Partners donated a significant number of new blankets to support the Department of Nursing blanket drive and helped distribute blankets to inpatients during the holidays. This occasion is always special to Partners members, as sometimes the blankets we help distribute are the only presents some patients receive.

One of the newest and most special projects Gundersen Partners undertook in the fourth quarter was purchasing “baby shower” gifts for infants in need at Gundersen. With \$500 generously donated by Dr. Ed and Sally Miner through the Thrivent Choice Dollars® program and matched by Gundersen Partners, Partners was able to purchase clothing and other newborn necessities for Pediatrics/Obstetrics patients. We are grateful to be able to assist newborns and their families when they need it most.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, Gundersen Partners completed our final funding distributions for the year. Proceeds from our fabulous Gift Shop and other fundraisers in 2019 helped deliver year-end blessings for the following organizations and programs: Place of Grace; Gundersen Inpatient Rehabilitation Services to assist inpatients returning to community living who

have suffered from stroke, brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, aphasia; daily necessities for residents at New Horizons Shelter and Outreach; and the Onalaska Police Department K9 unit.

In 2020, Gundersen Partners will celebrate its 70th anniversary! More information about our rich history will be shared throughout the year. An afternoon tea celebrating this milestone will be held on Wednesday, July 23 at Mother Mary of the Church. Please save the date for this special event. Gundersen Partners does so many important things all year with the support of its members, so this anniversary is a time to celebrate you.

Please view the calendar for upcoming events in 2020. Valentine’s Day will be here before you know it. Be sure to preorder carnations as a thoughtful gift for friends and loved ones. All proceeds from the annual Carnation Sale fund merit awards for our teen volunteers. Teen volunteers do so much to support our patients, and we want to honor them by making this sale a huge success.

Every year, members of the Wisconsin Hospital Association travel to Madison, talk with legislators and attend roundtable discussions with elected representatives to discuss healthcare-related issues. This annual event is designed to educate and motivate healthcare employees, trustees and volunteers on important healthcare-related issues, and to encourage grassroots advocacy opportunities. The 2020 event takes place in Madison on Wednesday, March 18. At the end of the day, attendees meet with their local representatives about local health topics. Representatives from Gundersen Partners attend each year.

Annual membership renewals will be in your mailbox shortly. Your membership dues and generous donations of both time and money make it possible for Gundersen Partners to support programs at Gundersen Health System and in the community. If you have not already renewed by mail or online, it’s not too late. If you have any questions, please contact Partners’ office assistant, Sheila Erickson, at (608) 775-3602.

**GUNDERSEN  
PARTNERS**

ENHANCING CARE THROUGH SERVICE AND GIVING

# Partners News

For 70 years, Gundersen Partners has been enhancing care for patients, their families and the community through service and giving. Your generous donation enables Partners to continue funding local programs that make a difference in the lives of patients and underserved individuals in our community and beyond. Our scholarship programs contribute to the educational success of students pursuing their dream of a healthcare career. Help us celebrate 70 years of giving. Mail your tax-deductible donation today!

Gundersen Partners, 1900 South Ave., Mailstop H04-009, La Crosse, Wis. 54601

Gundersen Partners is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## Stop the Bleed

### From Trauma Services

Would you know what to do in a bleeding emergency? Knowing what to do could save a life. Stop the Bleed is a national program supported by the U.S. government and the American College of Surgeons. It encourages people to get educated and trained in how to manage bleeding until professional help arrives. The free one- to two-hour training will teach you the skills needed, if the situation should arise, to control bleeding using tourniquets and wound packing. A person who is bleeding can die from blood loss in less than five minutes. Even with the best trained, best equipped emergency response professionals, it may take more time than that to get to the scene. As a trained bystander you may make the difference between a life saved and a life lost.

Stop the Bleed classes will be offered in 2020 on the following dates and held on the La Crosse Campus in the Patient Education–Mooney Conference Room:

- Jan. 7, 10 a.m.
- Feb. 19, 3 p.m.
- March 12, 4 p.m.
- April 20, 2 p.m.
- May 27, 3:30 p.m.

If you're interested in attending a class or have questions, please contact Brenda Miller, Trauma Services at (608) 775-3054.

## Calendar of Events

### January

- 1 Happy New Year
- 20-22 \$7 and up Partners fundraiser\*, La Crosse Campus, Legacy Lower Level Lobby
- 23-24 \$7 and up Partners fundraiser\*, Onalaska Campus, Education Center, Lower Level

*\*Enjoy name-brand, top-quality products while supporting the scholarship programs and charitable works of Gundersen Partners. Items include fashion accessories, jewelry, gifts, gadgets and more—priced 80% below retail. There's something for everyone! Bring a friend!*

### February

- 4-6 Blood drive, La Crosse Campus, Legacy Lower Level Lobby
- 12-13 Blood drive, Onalaska Campus, Education Center
- 14 Annual Valentine's Day Carnation Sale, La Crosse and Onalaska Campuses

### March

- 18 Partners of WHA Advocacy Day in Madison, Wis.

The next blood drive on the La Crosse Campus will be April 20-22 and in Onalaska on May 7 and 8.

**SAVE THE DATE:** The Volunteer Recognition Event is scheduled for Friday, April 24 in the Integrated Center for Education (ICE House) on the La Crosse Campus. Invitations will be mailed to your homes.

## Volunteer Services Mission Statement

Volunteer Services provides meaningful experiences for our volunteers – elevating services and programs for our patients and families and the community we serve.

## Partners Mission Statement

Gundersen Partners serves as a group of caring, committed individuals dedicated to enhancing patient and family care, healthcare education and community well-being through service and fundraising.