

# Gift of Health

Our Philanthropy Magazine

SUMMER 2023

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## SAINT MARY'S FOUNDATION

A Member of Trinity Health

*In this issue of Gift of Health, we celebrate the many ways Saint Mary's Foundation is making a difference at Trinity Health Grand Rapids.*

For Donors of  
**Saint Mary's Foundation**

**Nursing Excellence  
Award Winner and  
Magnet® Guide  
Keren Nobel, RN,  
Lacks Cancer Center!**

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Each year at Trinity Health Grand Rapids (THGR), we look forward to celebrating Nurses' Week and Hospital Week in early May. This year, our nurses and the entire health system have a significant reason for celebration—achieving recognition as a Magnet® hospital for the third time! This is a remarkable accomplishment and a designation that few other hospitals in the state and nation have earned.

As we prepared for this issue of *Gift of Health*, we were overwhelmed with how much there is to celebrate, beginning with our remarkable nursing team.

We're also celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Kidney Transplant Center, the wall breaking of our Behavioral Health Crisis Stabilization Unit, the groundbreaking for Southridge Behavioral Hospital, innovative programs such as the Prescription for Health at our Sparta community-based office, Top Doctors, Care Champions, our wonderful volunteers, and much more!

Trinity Health Grand Rapids is a remarkable hospital that is always here to serve you and your family. Saint Mary's Foundation is honored to connect you and your gifts of gratitude to our mission of caring and the programs and services at THGR that mean the most to you

As we move into celebrating summer with friends and family, please stay safe and take care of yourself!

With sincere appreciation,



**Michelle Rabideau, MPA, CFRE**  
President, Saint Mary's Foundation

## 100% of all gifts to Saint Mary's Foundation are used locally to serve the needs of the communities and patients we serve.

With your help, we can further enhance the remarkable care at Trinity Health Grand Rapids. Together, we can improve the health of our community. Every gift, no matter how large or small, makes a difference in the lives of the patients and families we serve. Most importantly, your gifts (100%) will always stay local to support the programs or projects you intend.

To speak to someone about making a gift, please call us at 616-685-1892.







*Left to Right: Abby Howell-Jaeger, Magnet® Program Coordinator; Michelle Peña, Chief Nursing Officer; Gina Gent, Director of Professional Practice & Development; and Matt Biersack, Trinity Health Grand Rapids President.*

## Trinity Health Grand Rapids Nurses Achieve High Honors – Magnet® Recognition!

The American Nurses Credentialing Center recently evaluated our health systems' performance and determined Trinity Health Grand Rapids meets the Magnet® standards for designation. Magnet® designation is not an award; it is a recognition of nursing excellence and the gold standard of nursing care. This is Trinity Health Grand Rapids' third designation since 2013.

The evaluation process was rigorous and thorough for all involved—from the direct-care nurse clinicians to the department leaders, executive team, and members of the board of directors. Magnet® recognition is an impressive and important distinction for our health system, as well as the communities we serve.

Michelle Peña, chief nursing officer, is responsible for overseeing all elements of the process for meeting the Magnet® standards. To prepare for the site visit from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, Abby Howell-Jaeger, Magnet program coordinator, and Gina Gent, director of professional practice & development, provided educational trainings and materials to colleagues to help them prepare.

Department and clinic leaders also equipped their teams. The nursing team that wrote the 1,800-page Magnet® submission document and helped to lead the effort included Beth Triezenberg, Ginger Mileski, Caitlin Gardner, Casie Sultana, Gina Gent, Rachel Catinella, Kat Hoffhines, Lisa Irwin, Megan Mayse and Regina Manczak.



Left to Right: Sabrina Howell, Clinical Nurse, THRIVE; Abby Howell-Jaeger, Magnet Program Coordinator; Nancy Oelerich, Clinical Nurse, Neonatal ICU; Keren Nobel Clinical Nurse, 4 Lacks; Julie Glerum, Clinical Nurse, Hauenstein 3; and Gina Gent, Director of Professional Practice & Development.

professional nurses. Receiving recognition from ANCC for the quality of our nursing staff reinforces this belief.”

Nationally, only 10% of hospitals have achieved Magnet® recognition. Of the more than 90 Trinity Health hospitals in the nation, Trinity Health Grand Rapids is one of only five that have received this prestigious distinction.

*The ANCC Magnet Recognition Program® seeks to continually elevate patient care around the world in an environment where nurses, in collaboration with the interprofessional team, flourish by setting the standard for excellence through leadership, scientific discovery and dissemination and implementation of new knowledge.*

“As the Chief Nursing Officer, I am immensely proud of our nursing team’s achievement in earning the prestigious Magnet® designation for the third time. This is especially significant given all that our teams have faced over the past three years. It is a testament to their dedication, expertise, and unwavering commitment to excellence.”

– Michelle Peña, MSN, RN, NEA-BC

Research shows that Magnet-recognized organizations demonstrate better patient outcomes, higher patient satisfaction, lower registered nurse (RN) turnover, lower patient mortality, lower hospital-acquired infections, higher nurse perception of quality of care, and higher patient-experience ratings. The Magnet® designation is a validation of excellence and the highest quality patient care.

“We’re a better organization today because of the Magnet® recognition we first achieved in 2013,” said Peña. “We have always believed that we employ the highest-quality and most

Registered Nurses Piper Ebe, Heather Eelkema and Mandy Calandrino smile after learning that masks are no longer required.





# Celebrating Nursing Excellence

Each year, the Trinity Health Grand Rapids Nursing Practice and Environment Council (NPEC) honors outstanding nurses with the Nursing Excellence award. The recipients exemplify the performance and actions associated with our five nursing values of spirituality, compassionate care, knowledge, collaboration and advocacy.

Two nurses were also selected to receive the Vision Award for unwavering support and evidence of outstanding contributions across all our values.

## THIS YEAR'S NURSING EXCELLENCE AWARD HONOREES ARE:

- **Keren Nobel**, RN, 4 Lacks – Spirituality Award
- **Christie Sal**, RN, 4 Lacks – Knowledge Award
- **Jonhana Reyes**, RN, 4 Lacks – Advocacy Award
- **Andrew Sitte**, RN, Clinical Supervisor, 3 Hauenstein – Vision Award Nurse Leader
- **Erin Wilson**, RN, Case Management – Collaboration Award
- **Erin Johnson**, RN, 7 Main – Compassionate Care
- **Kathryn Boven**, RN, Infectious Disease – Vision Award Direct Care. Karen also received the DAISY Award for May 2023.

Congratulations to our outstanding nursing colleagues. We appreciate your professionalism and care for our patients and our community!

*Left to Right: Keren Nobel, RN; Christie Sal, RN; Jonhana Reyes, RN; Andrew Sitte, RN; Erin Wilson, RN; Erin Johnson, RN; and Kathryn Boven, RN.*





## Celebrating 50 Years of Kidney Transplants!

In 2023, the Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center in Grand Rapids is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since its opening in 1973, more than 2,800 kidney transplants have occurred, improving the lives of not only of the patients but of their loved ones and caregivers.

The Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center is the only adult kidney transplant center in West Michigan and has continued to stay on the forefront of clinical advancements.

“Over the last 50 years, our program has become one of the largest and most successful community hospital-based transplant programs in the country,” said Jill McNamara, MSN, RN, Transplant Services liaison for the Kidney Transplant Center.

In 2022, the Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center became the only adult transplant center in Michigan to partner with the National Kidney Registry (NKR), the largest paired donation program in the world. The NKR has the largest living donor pool, making the likelihood of finding a match potentially faster than other paired programs.

One of the latest technological innovations, robotic live donor nephrectomy, has created even more opportunities for live kidney donation. The robot not only offers remarkable precision during surgery, but studies have shown that following a robotic donor nephrectomy, patients experience less pain.

*To learn more about the Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center or how to become a living kidney donor, visit [www.TrinityHealthMichigan.org/KidneyTransplant](http://www.TrinityHealthMichigan.org/KidneyTransplant)*

### Trinity Health Grand Rapids Kidney Transplant Program 2022 Statistics

**102**

TOTAL TRANSPLANTS

**759**

TOTAL REFERRALS TO PROGRAM

**37**

LIVING DONOR TRANSPLANTS

**65**

DECEASED DONOR TRANSPLANTS

**256**

PATIENTS STARTED TRANSPLANT  
EVALUATION PROCESS

**84%**

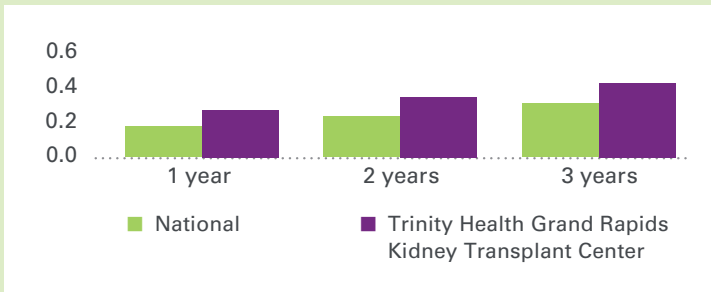
OF PATIENTS TRANSPLANTED  
ON DIALYSIS

**155**

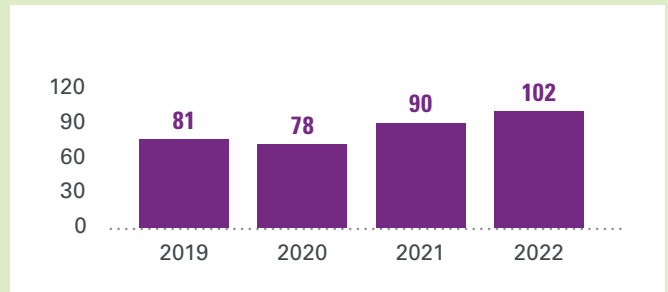
PATIENTS APPROVED AND  
ADDED TO WAITING LIST



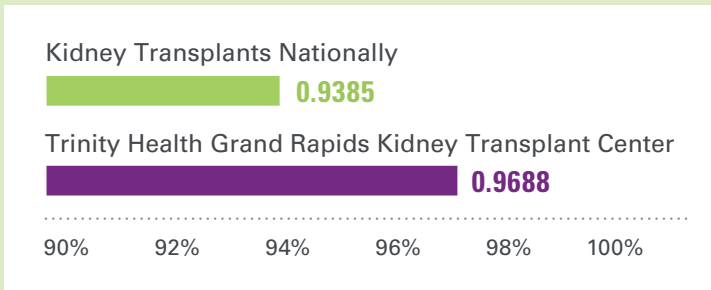
### Time To Transplant



### Transplant Volume



### Patient Survival Rates



Thanks to the support of our community, Saint Mary’s Foundation has provided continuous philanthropic support to the Kidney Transplant Center during the past 50 years.

## Gift of Life Michigan Honored Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center with Donation Champion Award

Gift of Life Michigan has honored the Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center as its transplant center Donation Champion Award winner for 2023.

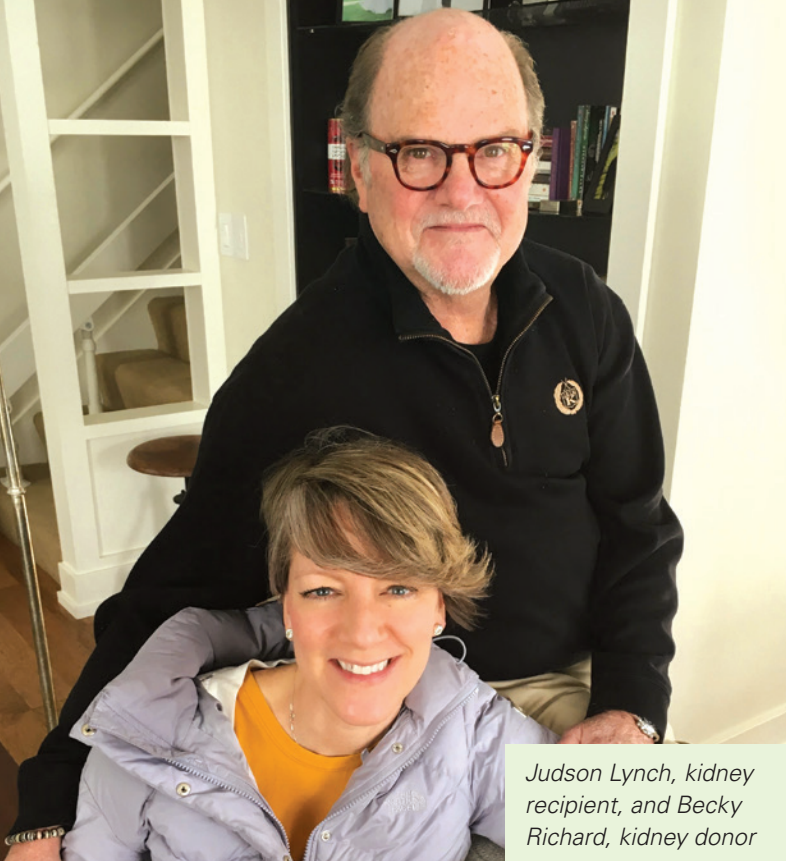
The Trinity Health Grand Rapids is one of 21 people or organizations in Michigan that was recognized in an April ceremony for extraordinary efforts in promoting organ tissue donations or helping make transplants available at their hospitals.

Trinity Health Grand Rapids does both but was chosen in the transplant center/professional category for excelling as one of the largest and most successful community hospital-based programs in the country.

“It takes several partnerships and collaborative efforts to ensure our patients receive individualized, compassionate and expert kidney transplant care,” said Kelly Summers, Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center manager. “We are grateful for our strong partnership with Gift of Life Michigan to continue in this extraordinary work to bring hope and life to our community and the patients we serve.”



Left to Right: Dorrie Dils, CEO of Gift of Life Michigan; Kelly Summers, Clinical Services Manager, Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center; Kristy Todd, Clinical Services Director, Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center; Jill McNamara, Transplant Services Liaison, Trinity Health Kidney Transplant Center; Bill Thompson, Transplant Center Liaison, Gift of Life Michigan; Rebecca Valko, Clinical Nurse Leader, Inpatient Kidney Transplant, Trinity Health Grand Rapids



Judson Lynch, kidney recipient, and Becky Richard, kidney donor

## Judson Lynch's Kidney Transplant Story

*President's note: Jud Lynch has been a friend, supporter and former trustee of Saint Mary's Foundation for many years. As we celebrate 50 years of the Kidney Transplant Program, we asked Jud, a kidney recipient, for an update on his story.*

I was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease that was affecting my kidneys in my early 20's. As I grew older, my kidney function began to deteriorate, causing the problems that are common with such. My quality of life was declining, prohibiting me from enjoying many of the activities I once took for granted, eventually leading to dialysis.

My transplant took place seven years ago. I and my donor are doing well. From the moment I awoke from the surgery and saw that my new kidney was performing as it was expected, I started to feel the benefits of the toxins being flushed from my body.

The story of my living donor, Becky Richard, has been told often post-transplant. Becky was and still is my hair stylist and has a strong client base at the salon where she works, including my wife, Lynn. Her altruism and compassion are truly unique, offering her kidney as she did when she heard of my impending need. Becky, her husband and their beautiful children have become a part of the Lynch family. My granddaughters call her Auntie Becky. We are all so fortunate to have the Richard family in our lives.

Fortunately, I was only on dialysis for a short period before my living donor's tests were completed. They matched my levels almost as a sibling. After the recovery from surgery, I was able to do all the activities I enjoyed—tennis, golf, travel, volunteer work, etc.—once again. It had been so long since I had felt normal that I almost forgot what that meant.

To say that my life had changed is an understatement. I continue to exhibit normal blood test levels, something that had not happened for many years prior to the transplant. This procedure indeed changed my life! I truly feel that I got a second chance to experience life. I'm thankful for every day, and happy to be alive. I try not to let a single day go to waste.

According to the great transplant team at Trinity Health Grand Rapids, I am optimistic that Becky's kidney will remain healthy and strong for many more years. She is my Angel!





Left to Right: Dr. Michael Hoffman, Director; Jenn Figures, kidney recipient; Katie Vreeland, kidney donor; and Michelle Rabideau, President, Saint Mary's Foundation



## Vine & Vinyl Supports Kidney Transplant Center

Our first in-person Vine & Vinyl event since 2020 brought music to life and showcased the remarkable care our patients receive at the Kidney Transplant Center. The stories shared by Jenn Figures, Katie Vreeland, and Dr. R. Michael Hofmann highlighted the impact of the Kidney Transplant Program and the ongoing advancements in surgical techniques and the innovative donor options that offer hope to our patients.

Thanks to the National Kidney Registry's Voucher Program, Katie Vreeland was a voucher donor for Jennifer Figures because they were not a match. Katie donated to a man in New York, and Jennifer received a kidney from a woman in Florida.

Vine & Vinyl is a storytelling experience with a curated meal paired with wine (and other specialty beverages) and a unique soundtrack.

### Save the Date

## UP on the ROOF

Thursday, September 14, 2023

This highly anticipated event is back with a different look and purpose. Now, Up on the Roof will highlight the impact and stories of a featured service area.

The 2023 event will feature our new Mobile Mammography unit. Join us in celebrating the first year of the Mobile Mammography unit and participate in an evening filled with delicious food, cocktails, and live entertainment—all taking place on a unique rooftop setting overlooking the city skyline.



To attend or become a sponsor of **Vine & Vinyl** or **UP on the ROOF**, contact Angela Paasche, corporate relations and community engagement officer, at [angela.paasche@trinity-health.org](mailto:angela.paasche@trinity-health.org) or 616.685.1426.

## Wall-Breaking for Behavioral Health Crisis Center

On May 22, 2023, Trinity Health Grand Rapids and Network 180 hosted a wall-breaking ceremony to kick-off renovation on the space that will become the new Behavioral Health Crisis Center (BHCC) on the hospital campus.

Targeted to open in early 2024, the BHCC will provide walk-in behavioral health services 24-hours a day, seven days a week. At the heart of the BHCC is the Crisis Stabilization Unit, which will allow for rapidly accessible intensive treatment that can stabilize most behavioral health crises within 24 hours.

“There is nothing else in our community, or in our state, like this revolutionary model of medical and behavioral health care, created by a unique



*Left to Right: Mike Jandernoa, business and community leader; Dr. Dan Roper, Chair, Department of Emergency Medicine at Trinity Health Grand Rapids; Stan Stek, Chair of Kent County Board of Commissioners; and Wayman Britt, Vice Chair of Trinity Health Michigan Board*

collaboration of public and private entities,” said Matt Biersack, MD, president of Trinity Health Grand Rapids.

The BHCC will be a hub for connecting people in crisis to the right care, at the right intensity, at the right time, offering “no wrong door” access to care in Kent County and West Michigan.

## New Southridge Behavioral Hospital Coming to Byron Center

Southridge Behavioral Hospital, the joint venture partnership between Universal Health Services (NYSE: UHS) and Trinity Health Michigan, held a groundbreaking ceremony on June 5, 2023, for the new Southridge Behavioral Hospital, which will be located near the Trinity Health Medical Center in Byron Center, Michigan.

“Southridge Behavioral Hospital will help address the growing need for high quality mental and behavioral health care services for people struggling with depression, anxiety, substance use and other issues, and who need hospitalization and intensive individualized care,” said Matt Biersack, MD, president of Trinity Health Grand Rapids. “Southridge represents a sustainable, long-term solution and it will be a key piece of the behavioral health care continuum in West Michigan.”



*Representatives from Universal Health Services and Trinity Health Grand Rapids broke ground on the new Southridge Behavioral Hospital slated to open in 2025.*

On track to open in 2025, the new Southridge Behavioral Hospital will accommodate up to 96 beds, serving adult and geriatric patients. It will employ approximately 170 full-time and part-time staff, including physicians, nurses, therapists, mental health technicians, administration, dietary and housekeeping personnel.





*Gretchen Humphreys, 6<sup>th</sup> from the left, led the Cheeriodicals project for Lacks Cancer Center in memory of her friend Gregory Hurst.*

## Cheering Cancer Patients & Celebrating Gregory Hurst

Gretchen Humphreys, along with colleagues from Citizens Insurance and the Oswald Companies, partnered with the Cheeriodicals® organization to create 40 care packages for Lacks Cancer Center patients in memory of Gregory Hurst. The boxes contained activity books, water bottles, handwritten notes, socks, lotion, and more. The team filled the boxes with the hope of putting smiles on patients' faces, a gesture that Gretchen says would have meant everything to Gregory.

### ABOUT GREGORY HURST

As a young man eager to begin his career, Gregory did not let his lymphoma diagnosis hinder his dreams of a future in Insurance and Risk Management.

While in college, Gregory received news that he had cancer. He continued his classes while undergoing chemo. Right before graduation, Gregory learned that he was in remission. Extremely excited, he walked across the stage to receive his diploma. Then he moved to his favorite city (Grand Rapids) and started his career in the insurance industry. Gregory loved that his job entailed helping people in their time of need.

Gregory and Gretchen, a territory sales manager for Citizens Insurance, a company of The Hanover Insurance Group; met in college and quickly became inseparable.

Gretchen describes Gregory's zeal for life and bubbly personality as contagious, saying, "He loved living, laughing, and putting a smile on everyone's face."

Unfortunately, Gregory's cancer returned, and he succumbed to his cancer, passing away on May 17, 2022.

Gretchen shared, "Everyone who knew him, including all the nurses at the hospital, loved him, and he loved and cared for them. He made such an impact on everyone he met. After he passed, we got an idea of how we could give back and honor him."

As the group met with the Lacks Cancer Center staff, Gretchen spoke about Gregory; nearly everyone remembered him. It was an emotional and tearful moment.

A request Gregory had for Gretchen while he was in the hospital was to bake all the nurses apple pies to show his appreciation for their hard work. When the boxes were delivered, Gretchen made sure to bring apple pies for the nurses to recognize everything they did for Gregory.

Gregory spread kindness and joy and had an impact on everyone he met.







Left to right: Chelsea Cordova, Business Office Coordinator; Miriam Esquivel, BSN, RN; John (Jack) Schneider, MD; Nyssa Johnson, Practice Leader; and Cynthia Jaimes, Community Health Worker.

## Leaders, Teachers, Healers

# Prescribing Health in Sparta, Michigan

The Trinity Health Medical Group Primary Care office in Sparta is offering patients and their families a unique prescription for health. This innovative program addresses chronic health conditions, such as diabetes and hypertension, by removing food insecurity.

Through the Prescription for Health program, providers, such as John (Jack) Schneider, MD, give qualifying patients a prescription that includes setting personal health goals, increasing consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, and learning about health, food and nutrition.

Participating patients get enough weekly fresh produce for their whole family (20 to 30 lbs. biweekly), as well as kitchen items (food storage containers and vegetable peelers) to help them prepare their food. They are also given and trained to use a blood pressure monitor, a pulse-oxygen monitor and a scale to help them track their progress toward their health goals.

“The Prescription for Health program is a unique idea for looking at medicine,” said Dr. Schneider. “It steps out of the boundaries of traditional medical care and creates a program that motivates patients to take responsibility for their own health but also helps them do so by eliminating the barrier of access to healthy fruits and vegetables. We are providing patients with the necessary equipment to be successful, but we are not stopping there. We spend time teaching them how to use the items and offer cooking tips. It is a full approach to looking at their medical condition.”

“The question we asked before we started the program was, ‘If we eliminate food insecurity, will health outcomes improve?’,” said Nyssa Johnson, practice leader. “And the answer, from what we have been able to gather, is yes. Whether it is diabetes, hypertension or obesity, we are seeing the positive impact that food security brings.”



“Now, patients have more confidence with their health goals and outcomes and feel they are attainable,” added Dr. Schneider.

Most participants are immigrant Hispanic families with at least two children and one or more family members with a chronic health condition. Cynthia Jaimes, community health worker, helps identify patients and their families who meet the program criteria. The team also helps patients identify health goals, connects them to additional resources, and tracks their progress through regular check-ins.

Johnson explained, “Access to food is a key driver for all health and well-being outcomes and goals. When our patients know they will be getting the food boxes, and they can depend on that, it allows them to concentrate their resources on other items, such as proteins, dairy and healthy carbs. It also helps eliminate the stress of wondering ‘How am I going to feed my family?’.

**“The most important thing is that food is medicine. What you put in your body is what fuels not only your physical but your mental health as well. Providing our patients with the Prescription for Health program has helped them lower their stress levels and Body Mass Index (BMI), increase their energy, and learn to use the vegetables and health tools to attain their goals.”**

– Nyssa Johnson, Practice Leader

Launched in September 2022, the Sparta office coordinates the program and secures the produce for the program from North Kent Connect (an organization that meets basic needs and supports economic independence). There are currently 22 families enrolled, and funding is made possible thanks to support from the Sisters of Mercy, the Mercy Fund for Ministry Grant Program with additional support from Saint Mary’s Foundation.



*Brenda Garcia (right) and daughter Vanessa Soto (left) are eating more fresh fruits and vegetables and seeing the health benefits thanks to the Prescription for Health program.*

**“Before I started the program, I was not eating many fruits and vegetables. It is a blessing to have access to the program.”**

–Brenda Garcia, program participant for eight months

## Prescription for Health Program Receives \$25,000 Amway Grant

A grant to support the Prescription for Health program was recently awarded to Saint Mary’s Foundation from Amway to support families at our community-based offices of Clinica Santa Maria and Sparta Health Center. This gift will expand the Prescription for Health program to the Clinica Santa Maria office.



## Special Estate Gifts Received

Saint Mary's Foundation is pleased to share that more than \$200,000 was received from the Marvin C. Veneklasen estate to benefit the programs and services at Trinity Health Grand Rapids.

## Making an Estate Gift

Saint Mary's Foundation is grateful to accept planned gifts from generous donors wishing to support the future of our Mission and the health of our community. There are a variety of ways in which you can support our patients, families, providers and caregivers while also ensuring that your generosity creates a lasting and meaningful legacy. In addition to fulfilling your philanthropic interests, planned gifts are a great way to provide financial security while also taking advantage of the tax benefits associated with charitable giving.



Including Saint Mary's Foundation in your estate plan is easy, and we are here to help you explore the many ways you can give. If you are interested in naming Saint Mary's Foundation as a beneficiary in your will or trust, please contact Cathy Skene at 616-685-1484 or [cathy.skene@trinity-health.org](mailto:cathy.skene@trinity-health.org).

## Annual Giving Campaign Kicks Off

Last month, we kicked off our annual Provider, Colleague & Volunteer Giving Campaign. For this year's campaign, our health system family is focused on raising funds for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Art Therapy and our community-based offices—Browning Claytor, Sparta and Clinica Santa Maria. The support from our providers, colleagues and volunteers enables us to do more for our patients and the communities we serve. Thank you, colleagues!





## Trinity Health Grand Rapids Volunteer Musicians Record Beautiful Music for Patients

Judy Lacks, a volunteer musician at Trinity Health Grand Rapids, had a simple idea of sharing her new, state-of-the-art, recordable piano with her fellow musician volunteers to record their favorite piano music. This idea blossomed rapidly into their own music channel on the hospital's entertainment system—eVideon™.

On April 14, hospital leaders met in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor lounge of the Trinity Health Lacks Cancer Center to launch the Live Piano Recordings channel. Currently, the eVideon™ system is only available in the inpatient rooms at the Lacks Cancer Center. However, due to the generosity of funding through Saint Mary's Foundation, inpatients throughout the hospital will soon be able to enjoy the Live Piano Recordings channel, among the other television and movie viewing options. The volunteer musician channel is divided by categories such as Movie/Showtunes, Classical, and Sacred, and each piece was carefully selected by our pianists to provide relaxing music therapy to our patients.

*If you are a trained pianist, or a skilled musician of another instrument, and are interested in donating your time as a volunteer, please contact Laura Conners, supervisor, Volunteer Services, at [connerla@trinity-health.org](mailto:connerla@trinity-health.org) or 616.685.6084.*



Seated, Karen Daling. Standing left to right: Carol Beimers, Greg Poltrock and Judy Lacks



## Thanking Our Volunteers – Annual Appreciation Dinner!

Each year Trinity Health Grand Rapids celebrates our volunteers with an appreciation event. This year's event was a luncheon held at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park on May 3. It was the first in-person volunteer celebration in three years. In addition to a wonderful lunch and time to stroll the beautiful facility and gardens, hospital President Dr. Matt Biersack welcomed our volunteers and provided an update on our health system.



## Celebrating Our Care Champions

During National Healthcare Week in May, Trinity Health Grand Rapids celebrated our care champions. Care champions are our providers or colleagues who have been recognized by patients or their family members through a gift to our Grateful Patients & Families Program. In 2022, Saint Mary's Foundation received gifts in honor of these remarkable providers and colleagues.

If you would like to honor a provider, colleague or an entire department at Trinity Health Grand Rapids, please call 616-685-1892 or scan the QR code.

Dr. Lara Baatenburg  
 Dr. William Baer  
 Dr. Rhoda Beltran  
 Dr. Derek Bergsma  
 Dr. Matt Biersack  
 Dr. Mark Boelkins  
 Dr. Brian Buckler  
 Dr. Jaime Caughran  
 Dr. Neil Colegrove  
 Dr. William T. Cullen  
 Dr. Laurie J. Daum  
 Dr. Baljit Deol  
 Dr. Gerald Durfee  
 Dr. Sameh Dwaikat  
 Dr. Channing E. Finkbeiner

Dr. Chad Friend  
 Emily Geerlings, NP  
 Dr. Joshua Greenberg  
 Dr. Denise Gregory  
 Dr. Thomas Gribbin  
 Rebecca L. Hauck, NP  
 Dr. Jessica L. Hedeman  
 Dr. Sam Ho  
 Dr. Andrew Jameson  
 Dr. Madhuri Kakarala  
 Dr. James Kane  
 Dr. Ryan Kelting  
 Dr. Greg Knoll  
 Michelle Korc, BSN, RN  
 Dr. Carey Krause

Dr Daniel Legault  
 Dr. Peter Lenhart  
 Dr. John Lobo  
 Dr. Karri MacMillan  
 Dr. Matthew Martin  
 Dr. John A. McAree  
 Dr. J. Bradley Morrow  
 Dr. Tricia L. Mueller  
 Dr. James P. Passinault  
 Dr. Erin Pettijohn  
 Dr. Fred Reyelts  
 Dr Paul Rodriguez  
 Dr. Daniel J. Rupke  
 Dr. Rick Saier  
 Dr. Mohammad Saleh

Dr. Mark Spoolstra  
 Dr. Eugene Tay  
 Dr. Jean B. Thomas  
 Dr. Marc Travis  
 Dr. Steven Triesenberg  
 Dr. Tanya L. Vreeke  
 Dr. Gabriel B. Williams  
 Dr. Ken K. Ye  
 Dr. Stephany Zahl







## Trinity Health Grand Rapids Veteran Affairs Officer Now on Site at THGR

Former U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Mike Franks from the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is assisting military veterans and their families with Veterans Administration (VA) benefit information at Trinity Health Grand Rapids. This one-year pilot program is the first of its kind for any health system in Michigan.

Trinity Health Grand Rapids is connecting qualified veterans with their earned benefits.

*Anyone with questions about their VA benefits, including family members of veterans, can contact Franks. He can be reached via email at [FranksM1@michigan.gov](mailto:FranksM1@michigan.gov).*

## Small Research Grant from Saint Mary's Foundation Leads to Peer Reviewed Publication

An article titled *Advance Care Planning Among Patients with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis [ALS]: Patient Perspectives on Goals of Care Conversations* by Dr. Joel Phillips and colleagues appeared online in advance of being published in the American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

The authors conducted a survey of ALS patients; the article summarizes responses from 49 patients regarding advance care planning and discussions regarding end-of-life care.

Findings indicate that, shortly (median = 1 month) after diagnosis, most (80%) ALS patients discuss with their spouse, family members, health professionals, or a lawyer, their wishes regarding goals of care and end-of-life treatment. Those who felt informed about their condition and the value of advance directives were more likely to complete legal documents such as a living will or designation of a health care decision maker to ensure that their preferences regarding end-of-life care would be honored. Regarding barriers to discussing their disease trajectory, only one respondent stated that they did not want to think about an advance directive.

Based on these findings, physicians should initiate conversations about advance directives and end-of-life care, being sensitive to a patient's comfort level. The authors note that most patients are focus on how their decisions will impact others as well as the importance of independence and autonomy. Dr. Phillips is affiliated with Trinity Health Saint Mary's Department of Neurology and the Department of Palliative and Supportive Care. The study was funded by Saint Mary's Foundation.

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## Celebrating Special Grant Funding for HIV/AIDS Patients

Trinity Health Grand Rapids was awarded \$489,346 from The Ryan White Part B Program through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. This grant covers the non-medical support services needed for the more than 1,200 HIV/AIDS patients who come from 12 counties in West Michigan. The funding covers such things as case managers, behavioral health counselors, interpretation and translation services, psychosocial support services, linguistic services, HIV antiretroviral therapy, emergency financial assistance, and transportation as needed by this patient population. In addition, a final award of \$323,145 from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) – Ryan White AIDS Program was granted.

## Meet Patient Advisor Karla Amaya-Leone

Grand Rapids Patient Family Advisory Council (PFAC) is an advisory board made up of patients and family members within Trinity Health Grand Rapids and Trinity Health Medical Group. The PFAC is comprised of representatives from Experience of Care, Nursing, Medical Staff, and Volunteer Services. The council discusses and shares ideas, then creates goals focused on improving colleague and patient experiences.

Grand Rapids resident, Karla Amaya-Leone and her family choose Trinity Health for their medical care. Karla has been a patient advisor since 2020. We asked her about her experience.

### Why do you volunteer?

During the pandemic there were handmade signs posted around my neighborhood. This sign was left in front of our home, "We're all under the same sky and walk the same earth. We are alive during the same moment."  
~Maxine Hong Kingston

It's the reason I volunteer. It is a constant reminder that we are not alone. Through volunteering, I see people come together. We share our ideas to make things better.



### What drew you to serving on the Patient Family Advisory Council?

At times, when it comes to health care, many of us can feel frustrated. Whether it be trying to make an appointment, or just feeling heard. When the opportunity to join the PFAC was presented, I jumped. To see that *my* health care providers care about me and their patients' voices, I knew I wanted to help however I could.

### What has impacted you most about being a patient advisor?

What has impacted me the most is our collaboration. In supporting and learning from each other, our suggestions have become a reality. To have personally experienced some of those changes has truly been a humbling experience.

## Are you a patient of Trinity Health and want to help improve the experience of our patients and guests?

The PFAC is always looking to recruit members who represent the community and give feedback that improves the patient experience. To apply, access the volunteer application and choose Patient and Family Advisor under placement preference. Visit [www.trinityhealthmichigan.org/volunteer](http://www.trinityhealthmichigan.org/volunteer).





# Grand Rapids Magazine Releases its "Top Doctors 2023" List



Congratulations to our Trinity Health Grand Rapids physicians named "Top Doctors" as released by *Grand Rapids Magazine's* annual Top Docs survey.

Our physicians never stop researching, caring and working every day to help our patients. They continually show dedication and commitment to our West Michigan community, and each of them is an inspiration. These are the Grand Rapids physicians named to this year's list:

- |                          |                            |                        |                     |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| William Baer, MD         | Eric Geiser, MD            | Steve Klafeta, MD      | Roger Shammass, MD  |
| Derek Bergsma, MD        | Steven Gelfand, MD         | Michelle Kosovec, MD   | Brian Stewart, MD   |
| David Bonnema, MD        | Christopher Goshgarian, MD | Jurgen Luders, MD      | Herman Sullivan, MD |
| Jamie Caughran, MD       | Afriyie Gray, DO           | Andola Mathis, MD      | Eugene Tay, MD      |
| Neil Colegrove, MD       | Joshua Greenberg, MD       | Christopher Morgan, MD | Melanie Taylor, MD  |
| Richard Downey, MD       | David Hakopian, DO         | John Morris, DO        | Ashley Therasse, MD |
| Steven Dupuis, DO        | Paul Harris, DO            | Abiy Nigatu, MD        | Paul Trowbridge, MD |
| Nnaemeka Egwuatu, MD     | Jessica Hedeman, DO        | James Passinault, MD   | Geron Turke, DO     |
| Muhammad Farooq, MD      | David Henderson, MD        | Joel Phillips, DO      | Min Zhu, MD         |
| James Fitzgerald, DO     | Androni Henry, MD          | Robert Riekse, MD      |                     |
| Minerva Galang, MD       | Andrew Jameson, MD         | Camille Ryan, MD       |                     |
| Cyprian Gardine, MD, PhD | Karen Kennedy, MD          | Audrey Sanders, DO     |                     |

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# SAINT MARY'S FOUNDATION

A Member of Trinity Health

*Saint Mary's Foundation is dedicated to building relationships that inspire financial support from the community to advance the mission of Trinity Health Grand Rapids.*

**Saint Mary's Foundation**  
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or [connerla@trinity-health.org](mailto:connerla@trinity-health.org)

**Interested in planned gift opportunities?**

Contact Cathy Skene  
at 616-685-1484 or  
[cathy.skene@trinity-health.org](mailto:cathy.skene@trinity-health.org)

**Interested in becoming a member of our Grand Groups program?**

Contact Alica Woodrick  
at 616-685-1427 or  
[alica.woodrick@trinity-health.org](mailto:alica.woodrick@trinity-health.org)

**Interested in your company becoming more involved?**

Contact Angela Paasche  
at 616-685-1426 or  
[angela.paasche@trinity-health.org](mailto:angela.paasche@trinity-health.org)

**For more information, contact:**

Saint Mary's Foundation  
200 Jefferson Ave. SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
Phone: 616-685-1892

[SaintMarysFoundationGR.com](http://SaintMarysFoundationGR.com)

*If you do not wish to receive information from Saint Mary's Foundation in the future, please call 616-685-1892.*



**PAINT THE PARK  
PINK!**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 6 • 2:00 PM**

**The West Michigan Whitecaps are hosting a special game on Sunday, August 6 for Trinity Health Grand Rapids.**

A portion of all tickets purchased using the QR code or link will benefit the Mobile Mammography Program at Trinity Health Lacks Cancer Center. Package tickets include the 2023 Paint the Park Pink shirt.

**Gates open at 12:45 p.m.  
First Pitch is at 2 p.m.**

**[fevogm.com/event/paintpark](http://fevogm.com/event/paintpark)**

