

Volunteer News

April/May/June 2024

Quarterly Newsletter for Gundersen Volunteer Services and Gundersen Partners



Eileen Wiltinger,
Manager,
Volunteer Services

Hello!

Friends and family frequently ask about my job here at Gundersen. They know that I no longer work in the Gift Shop where they would occasionally see me on their visits to the clinic, but they wonder what my work looks like as the manager of Volunteer Services. I share that I work with over four hundred dedicated, compassionate, and truly wonderful people.

Behind the scenes our team works on recruiting, onboarding, training, and retention of all our wonderful volunteers. We evaluate the roles in which all volunteers serve and work with the departments to make sure we are living our purpose statement: *Facilitate meaningful volunteer experiences with diverse individuals to enhance service, experience, and quality of care.*

For over 57 years volunteers have been serving our health care system here at Gundersen. We are excited to celebrate your volunteer service during National Volunteer Week, April 21st – 27th. We are hosting an Ice Cream Social with entertainment on Thursday, April 25th from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the ICE House here on the La Crosse campus. I hope to see you there to celebrate with us and BGHS senior leadership.

We chose “Celebrate Service - Volunteers make a difference” as our theme this year. Throughout this newsletter you will read about service and how each and everyone of you “make a difference.” It is with sincere gratitude that I thank you for choosing to volunteer with Gundersen Health System!





Hello!

I am thankful for the opportunity to share a message with you once again.

With our eyes on being the Healthcare Partner of Choice at the top of our region and enterprise strategic plans, our system is focusing on providing exceptional care experiences in many ways. Volunteers partner with staff from across the BGHS organization in so many ways. All of you infuse love, trust, and connection into special moment after special moment.

*We are about halfway through our fiscal year, and we have already achieved our 2024 target in the Gundersen Region – a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 88. An NPS score measures overall customer (patient) loyalty. This is an **incredible** accomplishment and I thank each of you for your meaningful service that contributed to our success.*

I see more and more volunteers in our patient care areas every day and it makes me smile every time! I look forward to celebrating you and hearing about your service moments later this month at our annual Volunteer Event.

*~ Take care,
Shannon Hulett, DNP, RN, CNL
Director, Patient Experience*

Patient Experience
Purpose
Shaping a culture of love, trust and connection where compassionate, personalized experiences are always in action.



An update from Erica Pichette, Volunteer Program Coordinator



New volunteer assignment – Onalaska Urgent Care Support!

We're excited to share a new volunteer opportunity at Onalaska Clinic! Volunteers are supporting Onalaska's Urgent Care department by transporting patients, assisting with wayfinding, and other department support tasks. We are in the process of building the schedule, but volunteers will likely be present in Urgent Care from 7:00am – 10:00pm, with the most support needed in the mornings and afternoons. If you or someone you know is looking for an active way to volunteer in Onalaska, reach out to Erica at 608-775-3294 or erica.pichette@gundersenhealth.org for more information!

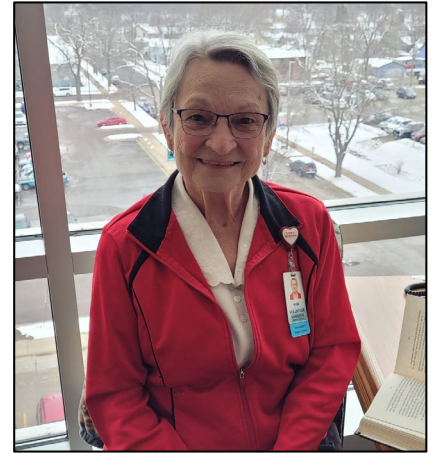
Save the Date: Summer New Volunteer Orientation

We have a special New Volunteer Orientation session scheduled on Saturday, May 18th. Our goal is to welcome new high school student volunteers for the summer term, but this session will be open to all ages! If you have a local student in your life who is thinking about volunteer service this summer, please encourage them to submit their application today! <https://www.gundersenhealth.org/careers/volunteer-services/volunteer-interest-form>

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT - Rose Ledden

Rose Ledden began her volunteer career 10 years ago. She says she had extra time and really enjoys being around people. She also volunteers with the Stoddard food pantry. She has continued to volunteer because everyone has been so kind to her, and she is enjoying being able to help people. She has built relationships with the GHS staff and really looks forward to coming to work.

Rose first started volunteering in the transport office, traveling all over campus. She recently switched to the Outpatient Surgery Center (OSC) in the East Building where she can avoid pushing wheelchairs up ramps. She is incredibly happy to be as active as she is at her age. Rose is an impressive baker as well. Eileen Wiltinger says, "As a former student in the school district where she was a cook, I can attest that she made the best cinnamon rolls!" 😊



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – GERI GUY

Geri has been volunteering with Gundersen for almost 17 years. Geri retired from Trane Company, Plant 6 in 2000. She says after seven years of retirement and completing all her chores, she decided she needed something else to do.

Geri volunteers on Thursday afternoons in Volunteer Transport Services (VTS) with a group of volunteers that she is very fond of – (pictured from left, Nancy, Darla, David and Ruth (Geri is in the bright blue top). They have become like family, often meeting at Piggy's for an early supper and catching a play at The Weber Center after "work." She also enjoys working with the many college students that serve each semester.



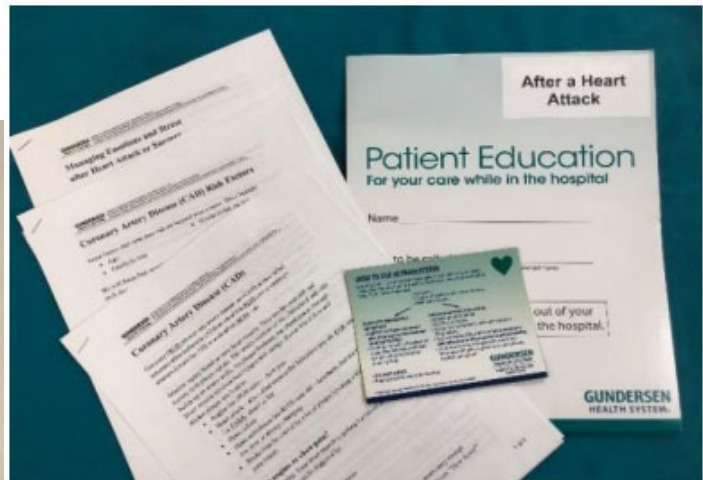
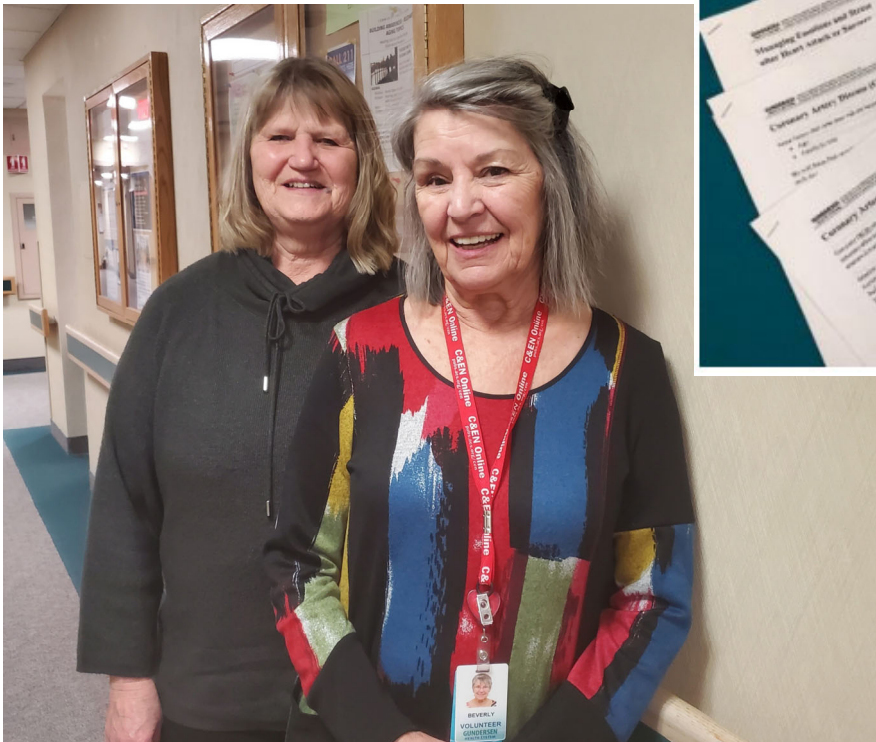
Geri enjoys being around people and has found volunteering in the transport office to be extremely rewarding. When asked for advice she would give to young people interested in volunteering, she said, "Think about your parents and grandparents and how they could benefit from an interaction from a volunteer." Her most memorable experience has been meeting so many different people.

Geri was an avid bowler in her day, and she was recently inducted into the River Valley la Crosse Bowling Association Hall of Fame. These days you can find her playing Bingo at the Onalaska Legion with her large circle of friends.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – Barb Jacobson and Beverly Burand

Barb Jacobson (below left) began volunteering in 2013 at Gundersen following her husband’s death. She was prompted after seeing volunteers offering snacks while he was being treated for Melanoma in Rochester. That type of assignment felt “too close to home” so she started assembling Patient Education folders with Ardis and Lydia in the former “tiny” home of Volunteer Services on 3rd floor of the Heritage Building. As part of a team that assembles over 40,000 patient education folders and packets annually, she sees how her volunteer role impacts departments and staff throughout Gundersen Health System. Barb feels it is important to know how to give back and understands how difficult it is for young people to volunteer because they have so many activities that take up their time.

Beverly Burand (below right) was a preschool speech pathologist, helping children with medical problems, including feeding tubes and connections. A friend told her there was a need for volunteers for those children. She ran into another volunteer who suggested she volunteer at Gundersen. Beverly originally wanted to volunteer as a baby cuddler, but there were no opportunities for that assignment. She initially helped with patient mail and flower deliveries in the same area as Barb and Ardis. That assignment evolved into Patient Education because she needed something to do between deliveries. Beverly continues to volunteer because she believes that “everyone needs to be needed and useful in life.” Beverly’s message to young people, “When you volunteer, you get a taste for how the entire business operates, and how your contributions impact the business.”



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – Bev Bodine



Gloria Kubiak (L) and
Bev Bodine (R)

Bev has been volunteering at GHS for over 21 years. A friend shared that Gundersen was looking for more volunteers and insisted that she would like it.

Prior to volunteering Bev worked in accounting at her church. Her love of numbers led her to be the Treasurer for her chapter of the AAUW (American Association of University Women).

Bev's advice to young people considering volunteering is to just do it! She says that volunteering not only allows you to give back to your community but to make new friends and connections.

Bev is a good listener and will take the time and patience to listen to visitors and comfort them during their difficult times.

Bev and Gloria Kubiak volunteer together in the Gundersen Gift Shop. They knew each other when they both lived in Milwaukee, but neither of them knew that the other one had moved to La Crosse. Bev was picking her husband up at church one day and there was Gloria! Bev convinced her to volunteer at GHS and the rest is history.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – Karilyn Parrott

Karilyn Parrott began volunteering with Gundersen in August 2022 as a patient companion on the Heritage Unit and has since expanded her service into Medical Specialties. Each Monday she spends time with patients who are experiencing long hospital stays or whose family and friends are not able to visit very often. Karilyn helps to brighten their day by offering recreational activities or a wheelchair ride to the Gift Shop or Healing Garden to spend time outside of their rooms.

Karilyn shared she's met lots of interesting people as a volunteer and enjoys hearing their stories. She is a great listener and if a need comes up, she tries to help. Once, a patient shared that they'd like a Bible to read. Karilyn stopped by the Spiritual Care department to alert the Chaplains of their request.

Although she describes herself as new to Gundersen's volunteer program, Karilyn is not new to volunteer service in the Coulee Region. She volunteers every week at the Kane Street Community Garden. She is also an active member of the La Crosse Jail Ministry, and a long-time member of NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. This passion for mental health and wellness shows up in all the ways that Karilyn serves patients. She truly embodies Love + Medicine!



Karilyn Parrott

Gundersen Gift Shop Update

by Jessica De Ruyter, Gift Shop Supervisor

This is such a heartwarming story, I felt it had to be shared.

A few months ago, a customer came into the Gift Shop on a Thursday afternoon and struck up a conversation with our volunteers, Gloria Kubiak and Beverly Bodine. Her teenage daughter was in the hospital, receiving treatment for leukemia. Gloria and Bev listened to her talk about her time in the hospital and the trials and tribulations that she was going through with her daughter. They also took an interest in her life outside of the hospital, learning that she owned her own gift shop in Decorah, Iowa. Gloria told the customer that she would like to make a prayer shawl for her daughter. A few weeks later, her daughter came in and said that someone here had something for her. Gloria gave her the shawl and she lit up. It was purple, her favorite color! Her father was with her and said the color purple that Gloria had chosen was the exact color of her room at home! They spoke for a while and Gloria shared that she would be thinking and praying for her. While she had no idea who this girl was just weeks ago, the connection between them was authentic and full of love. These acts of kindness are shown by the volunteers in the gift shop on a regular basis. Not only are they here of their own volition to help the gift shop raise money for our organization and the community, but they are also here to share their empathy and shine their light on our patients and visitors every day. While the affect they have on our customers every day may go unnoticed by them, the difference they make in people's lives is recognized each day by those who surround them and interact with them.



Gloria knitting a prayer shawl

A note from Sheila Erickson, Senior Office Assistant
Gundersen Partners and Volunteer Services

Thank you volunteers! You are all the epitome of the Merriam-Webster definition:

Volunteer (noun) - a person who voluntarily undertakes
or expresses a willingness to undertake a service.

No one could describe you better!

You belong to a very special community and with unapologetic bias, I know Gundersen has the **best** volunteers. I knew it when I was a transport volunteer and I've seen it daily since becoming an employee.

I have the pleasure of working alongside many of you. My days are typically focused supporting our patient education and transport volunteers, the Gundersen Partners board of directors and committees, as well as volunteers in many other assignments throughout our health system, and of course, my awesome coworkers. To say I have the "best job" is an understatement! We would be lost without your dedication to help wherever you see a need. That call to duty is in your DNA as I know many of you also serve as volunteers in other ways in our communities. You are very serious about giving back, but you are also kind, generous and fun. Thank you for making my day better just by being in it.

National Volunteer Week is coming up April 21-27. I hope you can join us at the ICE House on April 25 so that we can celebrate YOU! We cannot possibly thank all of you adequately, but we will continue to try.



GUNDERSEN PARTNERS

ENHANCING CARE THROUGH SERVICE AND GIVING

2023 IMPACT REPORT

*"We make a living
by what we get.
We make a life
by what we give."*
- Winston Churchill

Gundersen Gift Shop
100% OF ALL
PROCEEDS
SUPPORT
CARE AT
GUNDERSEN
AND
COMMUNITY
PROJECTS



Scan for more
information
about
Gundersen
Partners

Supporting Patients and Staff

- Angel Eyes Camera System
- Child Life Specialties
- Children's Miracle Network
- Emergency Services Activity Kits
- GHS Food Drives
- GMF Hospice
- Pediatric Social Services/Pediatric Therapies
- GHS Social Services
- Pawsitively for Patients
- Dental Specialties Intra-Oral Scanner

Community Outreach

- Adult & Teen Challenge Wisconsin
- Coulee Region Humane Society "Ambassadors of Love"
- Hamilton Early Learning Center / SOTA Food Pantry
- Hamilton Giving Tree
- New Horizons Shelter and Outreach Center
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace
- La Crosse Area Retired Educators Association (LAREA) WeCare Packages for at-risk youth
- WisCorps Camperships
- REACH Resource Center
- n.a.s.a. All Abilities Park
- The Good Fight
- Warming Center
- St. Clare Health Mission

Investing in Education

- Endowed Scholarships at UWL, Viterbo University and Western Technical College
- Scholarships for Children of Gundersen Employees pursuing healthcare careers
- Clinical Pastoral Education Fund

Partners Board Members Staying Informed

- Participating in Partners of WHA Western District Meetings and State Convention
- Opportunity to attend Wisconsin Hospital Association annual Advocacy Day event
- Monthly updates from:
 - Gundersen Leadership sharing organizational goals and outcomes
 - Community Health Education Chair sharing timely public health information
 - GHS External Affairs sharing federal, state and local legislative activities

Gundersen Partners Highlights Jill Blackbourn, Partners President



Dear friends,

Happy Spring! I love anticipating the sights, sounds and smells of springtime and what seems like an opportunity to refresh.

Our Partners Board is doing some "refreshing," too! We've had a great start to the year and are especially pleased with the response rate to the Partners Membership Renewal and Questionnaire; thank you so much! Your input is invaluable in helping us to improve the member experience. We are creating new opportunities for members, such as helping at events we hold throughout the year and offering input on some of our projects. We are also updating and "refreshing" the packet of information provided to new members, Partners website, and other materials to help clearly define our work and the roles of those involved. More information on this work will be forthcoming in the summer newsletter.

I'd also like to call your attention to our Impact Report to the left. We've created this as a summary of our work throughout 2023 so that all can see how we are living our mission and contributing to the lives of others in our organization and community.

Some of you likely remember our Valentine's Day Carnation Sale, and we enjoyed bringing that back this year. It was a delightful event which allowed the Partners Board members to connect with others as flowers were delivered to employees throughout the organization or were purchased. As one of our members stated: "I know I enjoyed working the event and seeing all the smiles. The bottom line in what we made doesn't tell the whole story in the amount of joy we spread that day." And another shared: "Don't forget to count the smiles that the flowers generated - that's priceless." In March we sponsored the Discovery Toy sale, generating funds for our Pediatric patients.



Gundersen Partners 2024 Valentine's Day
Carnation Sale
(L to R) Linda Gillette, Peggy Miller,
Jill Blackbourn



Gundersen Partners 2024 Valentine's Day Carnation Sale
(L to R) Jane Rada and Kari Ranallo

*Gundersen Partners Highlights
(continued from page 5)*

There are some fun things on the horizon! Our Sweet 'n Salty sale is set for Tuesday, April 23; the ever-popular "Style on the River" luncheon and style show hosted by Gundersen Partners and the Mayo Clinic Health System-La Crosse Auxiliary is on May 22. And in June, we'll have the opportunity to enjoy each other's company at our Annual Spring Member Social at Huck Finn's on the Water. We hope you can join us at these events! Please see our "Upcoming Events," for further details on these events and more! We'll be reaching out to members who have offered to help, but also, know that if you see an event that you would like to help with, we encourage you to let us know.

Wishing you warmth and sunshine in your days,

Jill

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has." ~ Margaret Mead



Upcoming Events

April 2024

21-27 – National Volunteer Week

23 – Gundersen Partners Sweet ‘n Salty Sale, Legacy Lower Level, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

24 – Administrative Professionals Day

25 – Volunteer Recognition Ice Cream Social, 1 to 3 p.m. - The ICE House (RSVP to 608-775-3602)

29–May 3 – Patient Experience Week

May 2024

6-12 – Nurses’ Week

7 – Gundersen Partners Coulee Scrubs Fundraiser, Onalaska Clinic LL Ed Center

8 – Gundersen Partners Coulee Scrubs Fundraiser, La Crosse Legacy LL

13-17 – Healthcare Week

22 – 36th Annual “Style on the River,” The Cargill Room at the Waterfront. Ticket information below.

June 2024

17 – Submission deadline - Gundersen Partners Scholarship Applications

20 – Gundersen Partners Members Social, 3 to 7 p.m., Huck Finn’s on the Water



36th Annual Joint Luncheon
Style on the River

The Cargill Room at The Waterfront
Wednesday, May 22, 2024

10:30 a.m. Doors Open-Social | 11:20 a.m. Style Show | 12 p.m. Luncheon
Featuring fashions from Dales Clothing and Mainstream Boutique.
Door prizes. Free valet parking available.
Sponsored by Gundersen Partners and Mayo Clinic Health System -
La Crosse Auxiliary
Please bring a non-perishable food item to donate to a local food pantry.

Tickets: \$30

GUNDERSEN PARTNERS
EMPOWERING COMMUNITY THROUGH SERVICE AND SKILL

MAYO CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM

Tickets go on sale Mon., April 22 thru Tues., May 14 at the following locations:

- Gundersen La Crosse Gift Shop
- Mayo Clinic Health System Volunteer Services Office
- Festival Foods (Copeland, Village, Onalaska)

A photograph showing a person's hands performing chest compressions on a white medical training mannequin lying on a blue mat. The person is wearing a watch on their left wrist. The background is a wooden floor.

Gundersen Health System Volunteer Services

INTEGRATED CENTER FOR EDUCATION

Basic Life Support, or BLS, refers to the type of care one provides to anyone who is experiencing cardiac arrest, respiratory distress or an obstructed airway. The term basic life support (BLS) comprises of the initial assessment, airway maintenance, expired air ventilation (rescue breathing) and chest compressions.

If you are a volunteer at Gundersen Health System and would like to become BLS certified, please contact the Integrated Center for Education to register. All volunteers at GHS will receive a discounted rate of \$40.00.

Please contact the Integrated Center for Education at ice@gundersenhealth.org or 608-775-1452 to check for availability and to register.

INTEGRATED CENTER FOR EDUCATION

1827 Sims Pl. La Crosse, WI 54601
608-775-1452
ice@gundersenhealth.org

GUNDERSEN
HEALTH SYSTEM®
INTEGRATED CENTER
FOR EDUCATION



First Annual Fiber Arts Garage Sale

Saturday, May 4

9 am to 2 pm

2920 East Ave. South

La Crosse, WI

Attention:

- Fiber Artists
- Students
- Art Teachers
- Theater Departments
- Pre-school teachers
- Knitters, Crocheters
- Quilters
- Sewers
- Crafters

Search thru hundreds of items donated by fellow crafters and local businesses, including yarn, fabric, floss, canvas, books, patterns, notions, stretchers, knitting needles, fabric paints & dyes, and lots more!



A one-day garage sale to
benefit the Handcraft Program
of Coulee Region RSVP
608-785-0500
www.rsvplax.org

