

GUNDERSEN PARTNERS

ENHANCING CARE THROUGH SERVICE AND GIVING

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.

August 2, 2021

Re: Gundersen Partners Update - August 2021

Happy summer to Gundersen Partners,

I hope everyone's summer is going well. Summer started out pretty toasty and dry, but the weather seems to be moderating and that makes me happy. Partners has had a successful summer so far. On May 19 we held the **Style on the River** luncheon and style show with the Franciscan Healthcare Auxiliary. There were 125 people that attended, and we were so pleased to see so many people at the event. We held a membership social on June 22 at Huck Finn's on the Water. It was a beautiful day and we had about 25 members who got together, enjoyed food and beverages, and caught up with each other. We hope that we can have this as an annual event because people who attended wanted to know when we would hold another gathering. There was another great \$7 sale in June at both the La Crosse and Onalaska campuses. Due to an emergency blood drive in the Legacy Lower Level, we had to move locations at the La Crosse campus at the last minute. Hats off to Sheila Erickson for all her work finding and coordinating a new venue.

In other news, Partners received 38 scholarship applications from children of Gundersen Health System employees who will be studying for careers in the healthcare field this fall. This is such a great program that benefits some amazing students.

In June our fantastic Donations Allocation Committee recommended donations for the "Ambassadors of Love" pet therapy program at Coulee Region Humane Society, North American Squirrel Association (n.a.s.a.), Kids and Mentors Outdoors (KAMO), Causeway Caregivers for their Lap-tivity Quilt

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program and New Horizons Shelter & Outreach Center. Every one of these organizations benefits so many people in our community. Partners is so incredibly proud of the work the Donation Allocation Committee is doing that we submitted an application to Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association for a WAVE award. WAVE stands for Wisconsin Awards for Volunteer Excellence and recognizes volunteer programs whose work directly furthers the mission of the institution they serve. Gundersen Partners believes that Partners organizations throughout the state would benefit from implementing a similar program within their local organizations. WHA will notify the winners in August and we are hopeful Gundersen Partners will be honored with this award.

There are many upcoming events to highlight for the fall of 2021. On September 11, **Steppin' Out in Pink** will hold its annual walk to benefit local breast cancer research and breast cancer initiatives at Gundersen Health System. Again this year the **Partners in Pink** team will represent Gundersen Partners. If you are interested, please join our team or donate to this cause. Every dollar raised is used locally and will help in breast cancer research and other Gundersen Health System breast care efforts. On September 28 and 29 PRN will hold its second footwear sale of 2021. Please join us in the lower level of the Legacy building. PRN has a great selection of work and casual shoes and the commission received by Partners is used to fund our charitable works.

In October Partners of WHA will hold its annual state convention in Madison. The theme this year is "Together we build a better future." We hope to have several members attend to learn about issues affecting healthcare organizations in Wisconsin, gather ideas of how to grow membership in our local organizations and learn about best practices of Partners organizations across our state.

Partners is excited that we will hold our first "Sweet 'n Salty" sale of the year on October 26 in La Crosse and October 27 in Onalaska. This will be a perfect time to find goodies for Halloween and treats to store away for the holidays.

There are so many meaningful volunteer opportunities within Gundersen Health System and in our community. I have been volunteering in the gift shop on Wednesdays and am so blessed to be able to help the people that come into

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the gift shop. That is just one of the many opportunities within Gundersen Health System. Just recently we received information about another important group in our community. Causeway Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers connects people with needs to people who care for ongoing supportive connections. Causeway Caregivers provides volunteer and community services to the elderly and adults with disabilities allowing them to maintain independence and dignity. Just some of the needs are grocery shopping, doing errands, taking people to appointments, snow saints in the winter for shoveling or snow blowing. A new OASIS respite program has been started that offers socialization and fun activities for individuals in the beginning or mid stages of dementia. It also provides a break for caregivers on Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. If you are interested in volunteering for this organization, please visit their website causewaycaregivers.org.

Finally, I just wanted to tell all of you that I have been thinking of all of you as we try to get more involved in outside activities. Gundersen Partners is such a special organization that does so much for all of the people inside Gundersen and in the community. I am so proud of all that we do and thank you for your part in this work. Please enjoy the rest of your summer.

Take care and be well,

Linda J. Gillette, President