

**Volunteer
CONNECTION**

Spring 2023

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“Alone we can do so little, together so much” -Helen Keller
This photo taken by Suzanne Rose is hands of many volunteers at Ascension Mercy Hospital

National Volunteer Week: April 16 – 22, 2023

As National Volunteer Week nears, we would like to Thank YOU for sticking with us through “thick and thin” during the height of COVID to today. Last year Mercy volunteers gave nearly 20,000 hours of service and the Mercy Hospital Volunteer (MHV) group donated over \$9,000 towards scholarships and programs to benefit Ascension Mercy’s patients. **We appreciate your support and your comeback!**

Mercy volunteers are a **TREAT** to work with: **T**rustworthy, **R**eliable, **E**nergetic, **A**greeable, and **T**errific!

We would like to shower you with treats during volunteer week. Stop by the volunteer office during the week to pick up a special gift. We will also have daily treats available by the sign in computer each day: Monday – cookies, Tuesday – popcorn, Wednesday – donuts, Thursday – munchies, Friday – bars. Thank you for all you do!

Amy Brownson, Manager
Volunteer Services



Volunteer Spotlight

Susan Morgen & Barb Piencikowski

Sisters, Susan, and Barb, have something more than being “related” in common. They are both Ascension volunteers. They volunteer just across the lake from each other. Susan at Ascension Calumet and Barb at Ascension Mercy. Susan (the oldest) and Barb (the second oldest) grew up in Chilton in a family of eight children. They lived on Brooklyn Street close to the hospital. Barb and Susan are one and a half years apart in age and are very close.

Susan has been volunteering with Ascension Calumet Hospital for over 10 years. Before being recruited by volunteer Ann Korb, Sue had heard about the Calumet Hospital Auxiliary and hospital volunteering through several different organizations. Currently, she volunteers in the Gift Shop and also within the community at Homestead in New Holstein. She volunteered in transport in the past and has also helped with Auxiliary fundraisers.

When Sue was asked what two words you would use to describe yourself, she responded with “people person.” Sue loves being around people and talking to the locals who find themselves visiting the hospital. In the Gift Shop, Sue helps customers pick out items, make purchases, and helps keep the shop neat and tidy. Sue states, “Volunteering is not a hard job, it’s good for you and the patients.”

Outside of volunteering, Sue enjoys being around animals and doing yardwork. When asked what her plans for the future where, Sue responded “stay healthy.”

Barb has been volunteering at Ascension Mercy Hospital since 2017 when she became interested in volunteering as a Eucharistic Minister distributing “holy communion” to patients. In addition, she volunteers at the Reception Desk.

Barb says, “I look forward to Monday mornings and working with people, being busy and doing worthwhile volunteer work. I enjoy the gratitude I receive from people I escort to various areas of the hospital. Also, I get at least 10,000 steps each shift.”



Barb volunteering at Mercy Reception



Susan volunteering in the Calumet Hospital Gift Shop

As a teenager, Barb would walk to Calumet Hospital to work. Barb worked as a RN at Mercy Hospital for 33 years. She fondly recalls, “As a nurse, I loved being part of a team. My co-workers helped me personally and professionally.”

In her spare time, Barb is an avid quilter, reader and volunteers preparing dinners for funerals at St. Raphael Church. Barb has a passion for traveling! She is planning a spring trip to Peru and will visit Machu Picchu with her daughter. Her future plans are to continue to travel, “I am a good walker and I want to enjoy traveling while I can.”

We appreciate both Susan and Barb for their giving personalities and people skills. Traits they were brought up with and are willing to share at both Ascension Calumet and Ascension Mercy Hospital.

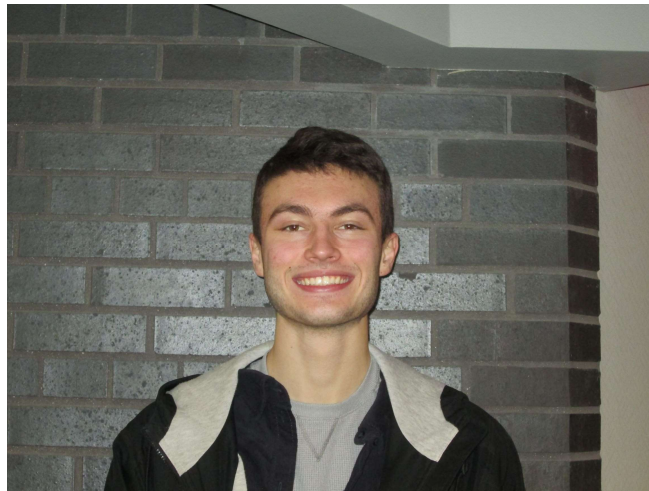
Kristal Coats, Gift Shop and Fundraising Coordinator
Laura Hensel, Coordinator

Timely News

Congratulations Graduating Volunteers



Andrew Herman – UW Oshkosh



Sam Trout – UW Oshkosh





Geranium and Plant Sale

The Mercy Hospital Volunteers are excited to host our annual Geranium and Plant Sale on **Wednesday, May 17th and Thursday, May 18th**. This event will take place from 10:00 AM – 5:30 PM in the Oakwood Parking Lot (LOOK FOR THE TENT). Pre-orders can be placed until Monday, May 15th. To place a pre-order pick up a form from the Mercy Hospital Gift Shop, Volunteer Services office, or by emailing kristal.wiese@ascension.org. Return the completed pre-order form with payment to the Gift Shop or Volunteer Services office.

Geraniums, greens, hanging baskets, assorted potted annuals, tomato & green pepper packs are all being grown especially for us by Hrnak's Flowerland and will be available on the days of the sale. Proceeds will be used to help fund hospital & community healthcare programs. Please help us reach our goal of selling out this event this year!

Kristal Coats

From the MHV (Mercy Hospital Volunteer) Chair

THANK YOU to all of you who donated to the "Bakeless Bake Sale" that benefited the MHV Radiology Scholarship right here at Mercy. We raised \$1,845, which will benefit students completing their radiology clinical training at Ascension Mercy Hospital.

I recently had my first hospital stay at Ascension Mercy. My check-in was so efficient with the use of My Chart early sign in. The surgical plan was described, and I was prepped and ready to go! My new hip was inserted while I slept away.

In recovery the staff and Dr. McLaughlin explained what just happened and what to expect that day and recovery. My pain management made my stay a good experience. The staff was responsive to any need. Communication about my care at home was made clear. It was hard to realize I was going home with a new hip. My recovery was monitored, and I followed instructions faithfully. The six-week checkup x-ray gave me a picture of my new hardware. I give a special thanks to Dr. McLaughlin and staff that I am back to volunteering after just six weeks. The entire process was a positive experience and made me feel proud to be a part of a team that provides great care. Being a patient also helped me to appreciate and understand how the tasks our volunteers carry out make a difference daily.

We are always looking for new volunteers and MHV board members. If you know of someone you think would be interested, please ask them. Share your experiences and the joy you receive from helping others. Have them contact Volunteer Services for an application or to answer any questions they may have. Have a blessed Easter.

Sue Boerschinger, Chairman
Mercy Hospital Volunteer (MHV) Advisory Board

Volunteer Opportunities

OAKWOOD DESK

Volunteers greet and provide information to visitors and patients. Duties include answering desk telephone, providing directional assistance, and keeping the lobby area tidy.

TRANSPORT

Volunteers provide wheelchair transport of patients from unit at discharge to car at hospital entrance. Volunteers deliver supplies and equipment to and from nursing units, ancillary departments, and support services. Duties also include pick-up and delivery of meal trays from the serving kitchen, running errands, and other projects as requested

GIFT SHOP

Volunteers greet customers, handle sales via money/checks/credit cards, replenish the candy supply, deliver gifts or flowers to patients, and dust or straighten as needed.

For more information, please contact Ascension Mercy Hospital Volunteer Services at 920-223-0225 or email MHVolun@ascension.org. You can apply online at www.ascension.org/ascensionmercyvolunteer

Laura Hensel

June W. at
Oakwood
Desk



Sharen S.
in
Transport



Sandy M. in the
Gift Shop



Health Watch

How to Build Healthy Habits that Stick

Stack habits - One of the easiest ways to commit to a new habit is to attach it to a current one. This is known as habit stacking. Your current habit may be eating breakfast every morning and the habit you want to add may be walking. In this example, completing breakfast triggers the beginning of your walk. After some time, following breakfast, you'll go for a walk without having to think about it or remind yourself. The best part about habit stacking is that you can build on it. Once you form a new habit, you can stack on another, such as taking time to meditate after a morning walk. Habit stacking can help you add activities slowly and form a full routine.

Start small - Setting smaller, more manageable goals will help set you up for success. Start by walking for a set time, for example. Then gradually increase the time you walk and your pace. This will help you reach your larger goal.

Be specific - It's motivating to see how far you've come — so track your progress. You can create a chart where you write down how many minutes you meditated. Or use a fitness tracker to note how many steps you've taken in a day. When you see how it adds up over time, your confidence will grow.

Reward yourself - Find fun ways to acknowledge your milestones, like treating yourself to a movie. Or find ways to add your celebration to your healthy habit. For example, invite friends to meet you for a hike.

Find a bigger purpose - Attaching your healthy habit to a bigger purpose can be helpful. Your purpose could be that you'd like to do more activities with your grandchildren or be able to enjoy an active retirement. Connecting the why to a healthy habit is a powerful way to stay motivated.

Excerpted from https://thrive.kaiserpermanente.org/thrive-together/live-well/%20how-to-build-healthy-habits-that-stick?wt.tsrc=email_pih&cat=2b,
Posted: August 12, 2022

Laura Hensel

Welcome New Volunteers!

12/1/22 – 3/31/2023

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Rama Alsakka | Liz Behrendt | Rose Busch | Cheryl Clark | Jennifer Folske |
| Rhonda Gerhartz | Barb Klug | Joyce Lorfeld | Mim McCann | Joann OConnor |
| Jim Peterson | Maggie Peterson | Jess Trembl | Sam Troudt | |

Patient Experience

Practicing Kindness, Listening and Serving Together

Ascension is introducing new simplified Service Commitments to further deliver on our Mission. These commitments call each associate, including volunteers, to “Extend kindness, listen to understand and serve together.” Below are some examples of how to carry out these commitments.

| Extend Kindness | Listen to Understand | Serve Together |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Respect inherent human dignity | Connect to our greater purpose | Demonstrate solidarity |
| Engage with compassion | Be fully present | Take initiative |
| Create Personalized moments | Gather perspectives | Promote teamwork |
| Express gratitude | Build shared understanding | Exceed expectations |

I have personally seen many volunteers already incorporating these service behaviors into their daily routines as they interact with patients, visitors, and staff. You are encouraged to reflect on these commitments and keep them in mind as you are volunteering. As volunteers, you are ambassadors of Ascension Mercy, and we truly appreciate the important role our volunteers play in making the patient experience positive and our staff’s daily tasks a little lighter. Thank you for making a difference.

Excerpts from Good Day Ascension Spring 2023 issue

Amy Brownson



Judy Z. and Sharon H. – Ready to serve in the Gift Shop

Health Care Advocacy



COVID Continues Stress on Health Care

Nearly three years after COVID-19 upended the health care system, hospitals continue adjusting to what are longer-lasting impacts of the pandemic. At the same time, Wisconsin hospitals and health systems, 95% of which are nonprofit, continue providing a variety of services filling health gaps across the state. However ongoing strains on resources, finances, and workforce are posing unprecedented challenges to fulfilling these missions.

Well-documented burnout caused job vacancy rates to increase in 13 of 17 Wisconsin hospital professions in 2021. Higher vacancies have forced hospitals to increasingly rely on costly temporary staffing.

As health care needs increase with the aging population, demand for Wisconsin's health care workforce will also increase while its supply is expected to diminish. An aging population also means more health care is covered by Medicare, which reimburses Wisconsin hospitals at 23% below what it costs to provide care. Patient volumes have rebounded since their COVID-induced plunge in 2020, but many of those patients are sicker, requiring more resource- and cost-intensive care with longer, often unreimbursed, lengths of stay.

Historic inflation, has caused sharp spikes in labor, drugs, and medical supplies costs. The ability to simply recoup these costs by raising prices has essentially disappeared, yet health insurance premiums continue rising. Despite these new realities, Wisconsin's hospitals remain committed to delivering quality care for everyone, while still subsidizing negative margin services (hospice, home health, behavioral health, long term care) that would not otherwise exist in many communities. Responsible stewardship has helped Wisconsin hospitals manage through the pandemic, but its lingering damage is posing serious and ongoing challenges.

Excerpted from WHA's Newsletter – The Valued Voice, Vol. 67, Issue 3

Public Policy – Report from WHA (Wisconsin Hospital Association) President and CEO – Eric Borgerding

Laura Hensel



Volunteers in Action



Ramona N. - Baby hats



Betty C. - Information Desk



Mary R. - ER



Rhonda G. - Blankets



Pam K. - Outpatient Testing



Jo Ann D. - Pharmacy

Upcoming Calendar of Events

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Now- April 5 th | Thunderbird Bakery Easter Sweets Fundraiser | Pick up an order form in the Volunteer Office or Gift Shop or email Kristal.Wiese@ascension.org |
| April 10 th - May 7 th | Mother's Day Gift Basket Raffle Fundraiser | Tickets will be available for purchase in the Gift Shop or by emailing kristal.wiese@ascension.org . Drawing will be held on Monday May 8 th . |
| April 16 th – April 22 nd | National Volunteer Week | Volunteers stop into the Volunteer Office to pick up your gift. Different treats will be available by the sign-in computer throughout the week. |
| April 19 th | WHA's Advocacy Day 8AM - 1:30PM | In-person event will take place at Monona Terrace in Madison. Please see Amy Brownson to pre-register for this event if you wish to attend. |
| April 24 th & 25 th | The Nutman Company Fundraiser | Main Entrance Hallway |
| May 15 th - June 11 th | Father's Day Gift Basket Raffle Fundraiser | Tickets will be available for purchase in the Gift Shop or by emailing kristal.wiese@ascension.org . Drawing will be held on Monday June 12 th . |
| May 15 th | MHV Board Meeting 9:30AM | Volunteer Services Multipurpose Room, all volunteers are welcome |
| May 17 th & 18 th | Geranium and Plant Sale Corner of Ninth & Oakwood Look for the TENT! | Hanging baskets, assorted potted annuals, tomato & pepper packs, geraniums & greens will be available day of sale. Pre-orders accepted through May 15 th (forms available in the Volunteer Office, Gift Shop, or emailing Kristal Coats at kristal.wiese@ascension.org). |
| June 7 th | Dine Out Fundraiser at Greene's Pour House | Dine out at Greene's Pour House and 15% of sale will be donated to MHV when "Mercy Hospital Volunteers" is mentioned. |
| June TBD | Strawberry Sale | Main Entrance Hallway |
| Fridays in June (2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th) | Fun Scrubs and Jeans Friday Fundraiser | Wear your Fun Scrubs or Jeans, donate \$2 for each Friday to Volunteer Services or the Gift Shop |

TBD = to be determined



Jenny S. – Craft basket fundraiser winner with the Craft Project Volunteers