

WINTER 2023

# BenchMarks

Stories about your impact through Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation



## **BEATING CANCER**

one day at a time

pg. 4

## **HEALING through music**

pg. 8

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## DEAR FRIENDS,

Healing takes many forms. It can mean physically recovering from illness or disease, but mental and emotional healing are just as important. Your gifts to Marshfield Clinic Health System support so many types of healing for our patients, their loved ones and our care teams.

In 2023, I lost my father. He was a lifelong grateful patient of the Health System who supported many of our programs. He was beyond proud of my role in the Foundation. I went to my dad's house the day after he passed and found the BenchMarks magazine he had just received in the mail sitting on his counter. He had torn out my photos and letter; I'm sure he couldn't wait to talk to me about it.

During this holiday season, my family will spend some time healing and remembering my dad. My dad left an amazing legacy, including making a gift to Marshfield Clinic Health System in his will. It warms my heart to know that he will continue making an impact even after his passing. If you want to learn more about how you can make a legacy gift, please reach out to our Foundation team.

Because of you, we can provide enhanced care services that go beyond treatment. You make healing possible through funding new equipment, research, updated facilities, comfort items, support services, assistance for families and so much more.

In this issue of BenchMarks you'll read stories that highlight how you make true healing possible for our patients. You'll read about Bill Bertoldi (pg. 4), an Upper Michigan native who received compassionate, comprehensive cancer care close to home at Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson. Bill says he is "treated like family" and that special care has made all the difference in his healing. You'll also learn more about our music therapy service (pg. 8), which harnesses the healing power of music for patients. Like all our expressive therapies services, music therapy is 100% supported by philanthropy.

As we approach the end of the year, it's a wonderful time to reflect on all the ways that you make an impact for our patients in the communities we serve. Thank you for making healing possible.

With gratitude,

**Teri M. Wilczek, CFRE**  
**Chief Development Officer, Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation**



# BEATING CANCER

**B**ill Bertoldi wakes up each day with one question on his mind:

“What can I do today to beat cancer?”

It's a question he's been asking himself for years, ever since his mother fought colon cancer. When she was first diagnosed, she underwent surgery at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota and was given six months to live. Because of the care his mother received close to home at what is now Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson in Iron Mountain, Michigan, she lived for four more years until she passed away in 2010.

“Beat cancer” was my mother’s motto,” said Bill. “While she didn’t end up surviving cancer, she did something every day to beat cancer. Sometimes it was as simple as starting a load of laundry. She wanted to prove that cancer didn’t control her.”

The cancer care team at Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson, led by Dr. Gustavo Morel, made a meaningful impact on Bill and his mother through her diagnosis and treatment.

“She had the world’s highest opinion of Dr. Morel,” said Bill. “Before she died, she made me promise that if I ever had cancer that I would go to Dr. Morel for treatment. That was probably the best medical advice I was ever given.”

Bill is proud to call the Upper Peninsula home. He was a high school science teacher for more than 30 years and active in the community, even leading a rocketry program for his students. In 2014, his diabetes flared up dramatically and he noticed an odd mole on his leg. He went to see his family doctor at Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson to get it checked out. That appointment revealed Stage II melanoma, so the team removed the growth along with a few other suspicious moles.

However, the following year his diabetes began to flare up again which corresponded with pain in his groin. Bill went back into the hospital and was diagnosed with Stage III melanoma which had spread to his lymph nodes.

Many people who live in rural areas struggle with access to health care, especially comprehensive cancer care. But Bill’s cancer care team, led by Dr. Morel, along with his dermatologist, acted fast to make sure he got the care he needed.

“How often do you have doctors who will take the time to walk you over to the lab, go with you to help set up your appointments to make sure it was all taken care of?” said Bill. “That’s the kind of care you get there. They really look out for their patients.”

Dr. Morel offered a new immunotherapy medication for Bill and he had 18 lymph nodes removed, 2 of which were cancerous. Bill received 34 radiation treatments and 14 immunotherapy treatments at Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson from his trusted care team. He even recognized one of his radiologists as a former student.

“When you go into the hospital, you’re treated like family,” said Bill. “Not only are they experts at what they do, but the way they treat you makes you feel good even when you are going into a scary situation. They always have a smile and ask you how you’re doing, whether it’s in the hospital or out in the community. They treat you so well. That makes a big difference in your medical outcome and it just makes you feel good.”

Bill does not have many family members in the area, and while his family helped as much as possible during his treatment, he often relied on support from his neighbors to help give him rides to and from the hospital and check in on him.

“I tried not to ask too much of people,” said Bill. “I wanted to be as self-reliant as possible. It was also hard to bring people into my house because my immune system was so compromised.”

His beloved dog, Emma, was his main support system.

“Emma knew I was really sick. Her whole demeanor changed,” said Bill. “We’d go on walks and I’d only be able

# ONE DAY AT A TIME

Cancer care in the Upper Peninsula helps local man become a survivor



to handle a couple blocks, and she'd just stay by my side the whole time. We'd get home and I'd sit down in my chair and she'd stay in my lap all day. She's normally a really active dog so staying quiet with me was not typical for her. But she knew that's what I needed; it was amazing. She was also a big factor in me maintaining a positive attitude. She kept me going even when I had tough days."

Bill remained on immune therapy for three more years. But his battle with cancer was not yet over. In February 2022, he went in for a routine computed tomography (CT) scan and the technician discovered some irregularities. Additional testing in Green Bay confirmed Stage IV lymphoma.

"At that time Dr. Morel shared with me that my cancer was very serious and I needed emergency treatment," said Bill. Bill needed chemotherapy but did not have a port in his arm at the time. After discussing the risks, Dr. Morel proceeded with the treatment.

"I truly believe that if I hadn't have had that chemotherapy treatment, I would have died," said Bill.

While it kept the cancer at bay, the chemotherapy caused burns on Bill's arm that had to be treated at Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee. Despite this complication, Bill's follow up scans continue to show that he is now cancer-free.

"I always tell people that Dr. Morel is the best doctor I hope they never have to see, but if they do need to see him, they're in good hands," said Bill. "So many people even just in my neighborhood have experienced cancer that they know the importance of having great care here."

Like many who have been touched by cancer in the Upper Peninsula, Bill was happy to hear that Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson is building a new Cancer Center with the help of fundraising through a \$3 million capital campaign. The new Cancer Center will bring chemotherapy infusion, radiation oncology and oncology clinical care under one roof, offering better service to patients and families undergoing treatment and new opportunities for providers to collaborate to ensure all patients have access to the latest treatments.

The Cancer Center will also bring Marshfield Clinic Health System's Cancer Care and Research program to Marshfield

Medical Center-Dickinson. By combining cancer care with research, the Health System will provide comprehensive cancer care including the latest equipment, healing spaces, clinical trials, access to nationally-recognized research studies, survivorship programs and support services to rural Upper Peninsula communities.

The capital campaign is well underway with more than \$750,000 of the \$3 million already secured. Dr. Morel and his wife, Michelle Morel, PA-C, are both contributing personally to the campaign and serving as honorary campaign committee co-chairs. The new facility is expected to be completed by 2025.

Bill also chose to make a personal gift to the capital campaign in memory of his mother, Joyce.

"I'm so thankful that the new Cancer Center is being built at Dickinson," said Bill. "There is a huge need. If I can get cancer treatment two miles from home versus having to travel hundreds of miles to get it, that is a big benefit for people in this area."

But supporting the new Cancer Center isn't the only way that Bill is remembering his mother's legacy. He has also continued an important hobby throughout his cancer journey in her memory: flying rockets.

"When I was first diagnosed with cancer I wanted to build a rocket with the high school rocketry club that would signify her journey," said Bill. "We built one that is 12 feet tall and weighs more than 100 pounds. I chose to put 'Beat Cancer' on the side of it in honor of my mother and to teach the kids about the importance of having a positive attitude through hardship."

Along with his students, Bill has launched the "Beat Cancer" rocket multiple times since it was built and still aims to launch it once a year with help from his friends. Each time the rocket is launched, people who have been touched by cancer can add their signature to it. Bill even launched it at a national event where it was signed by people from all over the country. It was also kept in Dr. Morel's office for a while so he and his patients could sign it.

"The rocket is a symbol of not letting bad things take over your life," said Bill. "It's one of the ways that I choose to beat cancer."

## YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

### MARSHFIELD MEDICAL CENTER-DICKINSON CANCER CENTER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Health care providers and staff at Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson have been providing exceptional cancer care to Dickinson County and the surrounding areas for more than two decades. In the past year, the cancer care team has treated more than 1,000 cancer patients at the current Cancer Center. Of those, more than 70% live within 25 miles of the hospital. When Marshfield Clinic Health System acquired Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson in 2022, the Health System made a promise to continue that commitment to the community and invest in a new Cancer Center to enhance the current quality of care.

In the existing facility, cancer care services are spread out amongst different areas within Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson. Patients are moved between various locations to receive all of the services they need. Additionally, the current cancer care facilities are out of date with an open-concept style that creates excess noise, crowding and lack of privacy for families.

The new Cancer Center will bring chemotherapy infusion, radiation oncology and oncology clinical care under one roof, offering better service to patients and families undergoing treatment and new opportunities for providers to collaborate to ensure all patients have access to the latest treatment. The expansion of the Cancer Center will also bring Marshfield Clinic Health System's Cancer Care and Research program to Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson.

The new Cancer Center will include an approximately 8,000 sq ft expansion with a private entrance and waiting room, a canopy-covered walkway and vestibule. Approximately 2,000 sq ft of current space around the new linear accelerator will also be renovated. The new facility will increase capacity for chemotherapy by 45% and increase cancer patient capacity by 56% along with providing a more patient-friendly environment.

New Cancer Center spaces will include:

- 5 exam rooms
- 1 procedure room
- 11 infusion rooms



- 1 shared infusion suite
- Private gowned waiting area for radiation oncology patients
- Provider and staff workspaces
- Nourishment area
- Shared consult and conference area

Marshfield Clinic Health System has committed to building the new Cancer Center to serve the Dickinson community. But cancer care is about more than a new building. With your support we can add special enhancements that will improve the patient experience and bring comfort to families during a challenging time. The \$3 million capital campaign will fund:

- Private infusion suites with upgraded amenities (e.g., heat and massage chairs)
- A boutique and patient library to provide wearable and education items for patients
- A private consult room
- An enhanced nutrition area

The \$3 million capital campaign will ensure that the new Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson Cancer Center has all the essential elements of a world-class facility close to home for the patients we serve. Donations to the campaign will fund enhancements to the new Cancer Center that will set this facility apart to give patients the highest level of care.

It's time to expand cancer care for families in the Upper Peninsula. With your help, we can care for even more patients in need and provide those patients with the comprehensive, compassionate care they deserve.

*To learn more about the Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson capital campaign, please contact Jill Steckbauer, gift officer with Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation, at 715-383-2514 or [steckbauer.jill@marshfieldclinic.org](mailto:steckbauer.jill@marshfieldclinic.org).*



# *Healing* through music

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Music therapists play an important role in treating patients

**A**t Marshfield Clinic Health System, board-certified music therapists harness the therapeutic effect of music to support patients in their healing journeys. Music therapy is an established health profession in which music is used within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive and social needs of individuals. Music therapists currently provide services to pediatric, oncology, rehabilitation, intensive care, and palliative care patients at Marshfield Children's Hospital, Marshfield Medical Center-Marshfield and Marshfield Medical Center-Weston. In 2022, music therapists provided 4,465 music therapy sessions for patients at Marshfield Clinic Health System. The program is provided free of charge to patients, is 100% donor-funded and costs more than \$280,000 per year.

As part of the expressive therapies program, music therapists work in tandem with care teams while developing a therapeutic relationship to create individualized music therapy sessions. After assessing the strengths and needs of each patient, music therapists provide the indicated treatment including creating, singing, moving to and/or listening to music. This process strengthens patients' abilities which are then transferred to other areas of their lives. Music therapy also provides an alternative way to communicate which can be helpful for those who find it difficult to express themselves in words.

Research in music therapy supports its effectiveness in overall physical rehabilitation and facilitating movement, increasing people's motivation to become engaged in their treatment, providing emotional support for patients and their families and providing an outlet for expression of feelings. It can also reduce the need for pharmaceuticals and the length of hospital stays for patients.

"Being in the hospital can be very stressful for anyone," says Heidi Giese, manager of Child Life and Expressive Therapies. "Music therapy is scientifically proven to provide an emotional outlet as well as pain management and the reduction of stress and anxiety."

Music therapy takes many forms. It can be used to help alleviate patient stress and pain through listening to or singing along with specific songs. Patients, family members and care teams also get involved with writing songs during treatment or to celebrate leaving the hospital. For rehabilitation patients, music can help them begin to speak



or move in ways that they were previously limited. And for infants in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), music therapists can promote sensory stimulation or give comfort by recording mom's heartbeat to play when the family can't be there.

Music therapists also play an important role in palliative care support. They help families cope with end-of-life journeys by collaborating to memorialize loved ones through music. They can even use recordings of patient heartbeats to be used in memorial songs as an enduring legacy for families.

Additionally, music therapy has been provided hospital-wide at Marshfield Medical Center-Marshfield through closed-circuit television since the COVID-19 pandemic. The programming runs 2-3 times per week with more than 120 sessions last year. This service is available in all patient rooms for patients, families and care teams to enjoy. It helps to relieve isolation and confusion for patients, particularly those with restricted visitor guidelines.

"I use live music (typically guitar and singing) to help my patients feel more relaxed. Often times, music is almost instantly effective in helping a patient who is struggling. Many of my patients apologize for falling asleep during music, but I always say that it is a compliment," said

Carolann Helding, WMTR, a board-certified music therapist who works in adult palliative care, adult oncology and at Marshfield Medical Center-Weston.

Helding's favorite music therapy intervention is when she uses music-assisted relaxation techniques. "I love seeing the evidence of how music works in the brain through measurable outcomes like lowered heart rate readings, increased oxygen saturations, lower pain score ratings and more."

Amanda Czarnecki, board-certified music therapist shares, "At Marshfield Children's Hospital, we see kids from newborns to 18 years old. Singing or instrument play can be helpful in regaining lung strength after illness or procedure. With the help of a music therapist playing your favorite songs live, they can assist you in becoming more relaxed and promote sleep by slowing down the music."

A music therapist can also use music to structure opportunity for emotional expression, which is helpful when coping with illness, injury and hospitalization. Prior music experience is not required to participate or benefit from music therapy!"

**"Music therapy is scientifically proven to provide an emotional outlet as well as pain management and the reduction of stress and anxiety."**

**- Heidi Giese**  
*manager of Child Life  
and Expressive Therapies*

Patients and families are grateful for the music therapy service, with feedback including:

"I don't know what I would have done without the music. Thank you for all that you do."

"Even on the tough days when everything seems to be going wrong, music therapy helps get us through."



"I remember when my 92-year-old mother was dying and she received musical therapy in palliative care. It was like a breath of fresh air for her."

"When I focus on the music, I don't notice my pain as much."

Hans Christian Andersen was once quoted saying, "When words fail, music speaks." For these and so many other patients at Marshfield Clinic Health System, music therapy offers a special kind of healing. Thanks to donor support and partnership with Children's Miracle Network Hospitals at Marshfield Children's Hospital, music therapy services continue to expand at the Health System and bring smiles to patients in need.



## YOUR GIFTS AT WORK



### EXPRESSIVE THERAPIES AT MARSHFIELD CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM

Being in the hospital can be scary, confusing and come with intense emotions. Expressive therapies, like music and art, offer a nonthreatening way to process emotions and distract from pain. Thanks to donor support and funding through Children's Miracle Network Hospitals at Marshfield Children's Hospital, these services are provided free of charge to patients. The cost of providing Child Life and Expressive Therapies is more than \$900,000 per year, and it is 100% supported by philanthropy.

Some examples of Child Life and Expressive Therapies include:

- Music therapists working with cancer care teams to write songs to sing to patients when they are discharged from the hospital.
- Pet therapy dogs visiting pediatric and adult patients as well as Marshfield Clinic Health System staff.

- Art activities offered to patients to help distract them from the hospital environment.
- Certified child life specialists and music therapists working together to help children through physical and occupational therapy.
- Music therapists working collaboratively with families during patients' end-of-life journeys to help remember their loved ones through song.
- Child life specialists engaging in medical play with children to help them understand and cope with treatment.
- Child life and music therapists spending time with patients in special sensory environments to help them engage with rehabilitation activities.

*To add your support to Child Life and Expressive Therapies, visit [marshfieldclinic.org/cmnh](http://marshfieldclinic.org/cmnh)*



**L**elyn is one in a million. He is the only person living with Wood Syndrome and just the sixth person to ever be diagnosed with it. He is quite literally helping write the history books on his condition.

Due to the extremely rare occurrence of a genetic gene mutation from both of his parents, Lelyn was born with no eyes, known as anophthalmia. When he was just three years old, he also had fat grafting from his legs inserted into his orbits in hope the fat would find a blood supply and grow, in turn lifting his forehead and bone structure to prevent collapse. It took a year but ultimately the experimental procedure was successful. At four years old, he received his first set of prosthetic eyes. Lelyn also received cochlear implants that year as he lost his hearing at the age of two.

In 2020, he was diagnosed with Failure to Thrive which resulted in damagingly large bowel obstructions. Due to complications, his parents, Stormi and Ken, feared they would lose him. After time in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Marshfield Children's Hospital, he recovered but it was uncertain if he would be dependent on a G-tube and cecostomy. Today, with regular daily maintenance



## Children's Miracle Network Hospitals®

Change Kids' Health.  
Change the Future.

### Lelyn Schmidt

**Age:** 10

**Hometown:** Mercer

to his GI system with ports and botox treatments, he is living a more normal life. These medical interventions allow management of his bowels, nutrition and medication administration without the use of IVs, injections or hospitalization.

Lelyn's parents are grateful for the individualized care provided at Marshfield Children's Hospital. Stormi shared that Dr. Daryl Fish, pediatric gastroenterologist, thinks outside the box and his team always remembers Lelyn and what's "normal" for him. She's thankful they know him so well that she doesn't need to repeat his medical history or direct his care when in the hospital. "Everyone collaborates really well. The nurses on the floor – they rock...I walk on the floor and I have a smile even though it was the darkest time. We made the greatest friendships," said Stormi.

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals supported Lelyn and his family through providing meal tickets and services by child life specialists and music therapists. Because he was hospitalized during the COVID-19 pandemic, child life specialists helped support both Lelyn and his mom when their family support system couldn't be with them. Now when Lelyn visits Marshfield Children's Hospital for treatments, he walks in with a "let's do this" attitude. Lelyn has come a long way and is back to enjoying swimming, playing with his two brothers, riding on the side-by-side, playing the keyboard and jumping on the trampoline. Someday, he'll get to ride a rollercoaster which his mom thinks he will love.

Follow Lelyn's journey at [facebook.com/SeeingForLelyn](https://facebook.com/SeeingForLelyn)

## YOUR GIFTS AT WORK



### CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK HOSPITALS AT MARSHFIELD CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Serving the local community for over 30 years, Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Hospitals at Marshfield Children's Hospital is one of only three CMN Hospitals in Wisconsin.

Sixty-two children enter a CMN Hospital for treatment every minute. Whether they suffer from common childhood afflictions like asthma and broken bones, or fight bigger challenges like birth defects or cancer, CMN Hospitals provide comfort, treatment and hope to millions of sick kids and their families.

Every dollar donated stays local to help kids in central and northern Wisconsin. Funds help provide the latest hospital equipment and technology, child life and expressive therapies, research and assistance to families in need.

Last year, donations to CMN Hospitals at Marshfield Children's Hospital supported many needs for patients, including:

- Child passenger safety programs: Marshfield Children's Hospital has various car seat programs including our Car Seat Loaner Program, Car Seat and Car Seat Safety Check Program that allow families who have a pre-determined financial need to receive specialty car seats, car beds or car bed harnesses that they might not otherwise have the means to utilize.
- Pediatric (orthopedics and surgery) exam room renovations: Even when pediatric exam rooms are located within adult patient areas, they now provide the comforting, healing, inviting and age-appropriate feel to improve the patient and family experience.

- Novii wireless patch system: In the Birth Center, mothers need to be continuously monitored. Because movement is key to having a successful labor and delivery, the Novii wireless patch system allows for moving freely and changing positions often. This device increases comfort levels and successful labors as well as improves the mother's experience.
- Sensorimotor therapy swings: Our occupational and physical therapy patients have specific goals and milestones for their bodies to reach. Adaptive swings provide our pediatric patients with regulating and therapeutic vestibular input to promote progress for our patients developmentally and help to meet their functional outcomes.
- Lactation services: Lactation specialists provide individual education to all patients, pre- and post-delivery to help them feel more comfortable, supported and prepared through their breastfeeding experience.
- Child life and expressive therapies: Certified child life specialists provide individualized therapeutic and healing services through diagnoses, procedures and hospital stays to help minimize stress and anxiety related to patient care. Music therapists provide individual or group support to assist with coping and provide emotional outlets, improve strength, endurance, functioning and promote developmental milestones.

*To help change kids' health and change the future, visit [marshfieldclinic.org/cmn](http://marshfieldclinic.org/cmn)*

# Celebrating top Volunteers

High school volunteers graduate with milestone hours of service

The 2023 graduating class of Volunteers from the Marshfield Medical Center-Marshfield volunteer program represented an incredible group of students, as is evidenced by the top six teens who donated the most service. This year the volunteer program had a total of 33 graduating teens who donated more than 4,400 service hours. The students represented six school districts and served in 26 different service areas around the Marshfield campus.

Every year the top six teens with the most hours served in their high school career are recognized. This year, those six accounted for 1,862 of the service hours donated by the graduating class. “Many Volunteers, in addition to volunteering at the Medical Center, hold down jobs, are active in sports and are integral members of other organizations and clubs... and yet they find the time to give back,” shared Melissa Darr, volunteer services coordinator. “These top six are just a snapshot of this amazing class of 2023.”



**Emily Grace Boyer**

226 hours

**High School:** Columbus Catholic High School

**Volunteer Area(s):** Covid Vaccine Clinic, Coffee Café, Pediatrics

**Parents:** Kevin and Tracy Boyer  
**Future Plans:** Attend UW-Stevens Point majoring in either Nursing or Elementary Education



**Hannah Brusky**

279 hours

**High School:** Marshfield High School

**Volunteer Area(s):** Nursing Units, Inpatient Pharmacy, Outpatient Pharmacy

**Parents:** Justin and Angie Brusky  
**Future Plans:** Attend UW-Milwaukee majoring in Social Work



**Logan Giese**

231 hours

**High School:** DC Everest Senior High School

**Volunteer Area(s):** Special Projects, Pediatrics, Volunteer Services, Ronald McDonald House

**Parents:** Heidi and Warren Giese  
**Future Plans:** Attend UW-Madison majoring in Civil Engineering

**Cassidy Ann Kallembach**

309 hours

**High School:** Marshfield High School**Volunteer Area(s):** Coffee Café, Gift Shop, Hospital Information Desk**Parents:** Brent and Melissa Kallembach**Future Plans:** Attend UW-La Crosse then UW-Madison majoring in Biology with intents to attend the UW School of Medicine to become a Pediatric Oncologist**Sophia Soskos**

367 hours

**High School:** Marshfield High School**Volunteer Area(s):** Med Peds, Nursing Units, Outpatient Surgical Center, Pediatrics, Inpatient Pharmacy, Employee Health, Nuclear Medicine, Covid Vaccine Clinic, and Covid Test Kit Assembly  
**Parents:** Dr. Athanasios Soskos and Dr. Jian Khamo-Soskos  
**Future Plans:** Attend University of Minnesota – Twin Cities**Katie Wernberg**

452 hours

**High School:** Marshfield High School**Volunteer Area(s):** personal protective equipment stocking, Covid Test Kit Assembly, Nursing Units, Employee Health, Family Waiting Room, Nuclear Medicine, Outpatient Surgery Center, Pediatrics, Emergency Department, Hospital Info Desk, Volunteer Services**Parents:** Dr. Jessica and Curt Wernberg**Future Plans:** Attend UW-Madison majoring in biology**YOUR GIFTS AT WORK****VOLUNTEERING AT MARSHFIELD MEDICAL CENTER**

Volunteers complement the care provided by hospital staff and are instrumental in helping to meet the needs of patients, families and visitors. Volunteers serve in more than 60 areas across the system from assisting at information desks to helping in gift and coffee shops to clerical support. They act as greeters at entrances and waiting rooms while others escort patients or spend quality time with patients in rehab or hospice. Some volunteers donate their time and compassion; others contribute items like blankets, food and even their dogs for pet therapy. Volunteers touch all aspects of our Health System.

Volunteer opportunities are available for all levels of ability including students. Whether you want to assist with patients, behind a desk in the office or behind the scenes in non-patient areas, we have a place for you. Whatever your talent, you can do amazing things as a volunteer.

*Learn more about becoming a volunteer at [marshfieldclinic.org/giving/volunteer](http://marshfieldclinic.org/giving/volunteer)*



# Angel Funds are a lifeline for families in need

Your support provides financial assistance for families facing health challenges

*\*This article is reprinted from our Winter 2019 issue of BenchMarks and has been updated with new information on Angel Fund use since the COVID-19 pandemic\**

No one plans for a health crisis. When it happens, family members lean on each other as they try to heal and move forward.

Families facing financial hardship may find the way forward is even more uncertain and many hesitate to ask for help.

Thanks to you, they don't have to.

Angel Funds at Marshfield Clinic Health System are a lifeline for patients in need. Donations to Angel Funds

help patients experiencing a health crisis and their families with transportation, lodging, utilities, food and gas cards and other non-medical needs.

More than \$100,000 is granted to families each year from Angel Funds, helping families in more than 30 Wisconsin counties and supporting families facing health challenges, from children in treatment for cancer to the elderly and disabled.

"These are families who work hard and are very proud. They never imagined they'd be in this type of situation," said

Lorrie Busche, a Marshfield Medical Center social worker. "Some families are literally faced with choosing between paying for their children's cancer treatment or paying the mortgage. They should never have to make that choice which is why we have Angel Funds."

Most Angel Funds are granted based on financial need and intended to provide temporary, non-medical assistance. Others, like the Compassionate Care Angel Fund, address patients' immediate medical needs. The Compassionate Care Angel Fund helps hospitalized patients who lack resources to go home.

"It might surprise people to know there are a lot of unexpected costs associated with leaving the hospital,"

Every year, more than  
**\$100,000**  
is granted out to families  
in need through Angel Funds.

said Val Dehline, a Marshfield Medical Center case manager. “Transportation costs, especially for the elderly on disability and veterans, can be high. Specialized transportation services are often not covered by insurance and many of our patients struggle to pay out of pocket. Compassionate Care Angel Funds allow us to help lift that burden when other options aren’t available.”

Particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, transportation costs have escalated, increasing the burden on families in rural communities. Some patients have to drive several hours to appointments and others do not have access to transportation.

“Think of it this way,” said Busche. “Maybe it costs you \$30 or more round trip to travel to your appointment. Now imagine you are in treatment for a condition and have appointments five days a week for five or six weeks. It adds up so fast. Even a \$20 donation can help patients significantly with these costs.”

***“Since the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen an increase in usage of Angel Funds,” said Busche. “After pandemic-related resources ceased, families lost their Medicaid, food share and living expenses increased. Because of this, patients and families are struggling even more to meet the basics of life let alone the financial burden of medical conditions.”***

For those who work with families in need, no two days are the same. Social workers and case managers are constantly looking for ways to help patients. Some stories they encounter are truly heartbreakingly sad but the gratitude families share makes their jobs worth it.

“I wish you could be there when we meet with these families,” said Busche. “They are so incredibly grateful. They often cry when we tell them that Angel Funds are available to help them through the most difficult times of their lives. They want to thank the people who donated to help them. By giving to Angel Funds you are truly helping people in need.”

As for Busche, she’s just grateful.

“I always tell patients ‘thank you,’” she said. “It is truly a privilege to be a part of their journey. These families are amazing.”

#### FAMILY LEAVES LEGACY OF LOVE THROUGH NEW ANGEL ON MY SHOULDER ROSE FAMILY ANGEL FUND ENDOWMENT

The Angel On My Shoulder Foundation was created in 1995 following the passing of Dick Rose after his courageous battle with cancer. Lolly Rose and her children founded the organization as a way to give back and make a positive, profound impact for individuals and families affected by cancer.

In 2022, the Rose Family announced they would be closing the foundation and transitioning the mission to a legacy of love. Marshfield Clinic Health System has been a proud partner of Angel On My Shoulder since its founding and is honored to be a recipient of one of their final gifts.

The newly renamed Angel On My Shoulder Rose Family Angel Fund Endowment continues the organization’s tradition of making a difference for cancer patients and their families. The annual distribution for this Endowment supports the Krause Family Pediatric Cancer Angel Fund, which provides hope, financial support, and comfort for families whose children are receiving cancer treatment. Because of these Angel Funds, families may receive funding for non-medical needs such as short-term lodging, groceries, transportation, meals, and housing. While Angel Fund distributions cannot be used to directly pay for medical bills at Marshfield Clinic Health System, they can be used to make treatment easier, such as purchasing medication management bags. These funds also help to care for entire families, including providing cancer survivorship programs and support groups for parents and siblings.

We are grateful to the Rose Family for their support and for continuing Angel On My Shoulder’s legacy of helping families affected by cancer.

## YOUR GIFTS AT WORK



Angel Funds provide financial support for non-medical needs to families of patients undergoing treatment at Marshfield Clinic Health System. Here are some examples of how your gifts to Angel Funds help patients in need:

1. A grandmother was diagnosed with cancer. She was the sole caretaker for her grandchildren as their parents had passed away previously. She lived on a limited income. Her car broke down, and she needed to get to her chemotherapy appointments. Angel Funds assisted with car repair to help her get to her treatments and continue to care for her grandchildren.
2. A child who was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy wanted to ride a bike "like everyone else." However, the cost of adaptive bikes was not affordable for the family. Because of Angel Funds, this child was able to get an adaptive bike and is now biking with his family and friends like other kids his age. Plus, biking is a great therapy exercise for the child.
3. Angel Funds assisted a patient with Multiple Sclerosis to purchase a wheel chair for independence and continued ability to work. Insurance had denied the wheel chair, but thanks to Angel Funds the patient could still get the chair and continue to work.
4. Angel Funds assisted a pregnant patient with rent. A high-risk pregnant patient learned that her baby had a lethal diagnosis. She had many medical appointments and after baby was born, she needed time off to grieve the loss of her baby. She had utilized all of her medical leave and had no vacation time to use during her time off. Angel Funds assisted with rent until she could get back on her feet.
5. Angel Funds assisted with mortgage for a family whose child was battling cancer. The family lives over two hours away and the child needed to come every day for radiation therapy. The treatments were five days a week for six weeks. The parents attempted to work as much as possible, but they had exhausted FMLA and all vacation. They were struggling financially while trying to focus on caring for their child. The Angel Fund was able to assist with a mortgage payment to help this family keep their home.

*Support Angel Funds and Compassionate Care  
Angel Funds at Marshfield Clinic Health System by  
visiting [marshfieldclinic.org/giving/donate](http://marshfieldclinic.org/giving/donate)*



Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation  
1000 N Oak Ave  
Marshfield, WI 54449-5790

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## **Uniting for rural cancer care**

Brave people fight cancer every day in our rural communities. Marshfield Clinic Health System is committed to expanding access to cancer care and research for the patients we serve. With your help, we've started a capital campaign to build a new Cancer Center at Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson to help local cancer patients. We continue research into how to better diagnose, treat and prevent cancer. And we provide comfort items and support services to families of cancer patients. In all these ways and more, you help us make a profound difference for cancer patients and their families.

**Support local cancer care and research:**  
[marshfieldclinic.org/giving/donate](http://marshfieldclinic.org/giving/donate)



**Marshfield Clinic  
Health System  
Foundation**