

A PUBLICATION OF GUNDERSEN MEDICAL FOUNDATION

PATHFINDERS

Where generosity changes lives



A look back through Gundersen's rich history illustrates that part of what has ensured our longevity is the ability to change and plan for the future. In fact, being able to innovate and adapt has been integral to our organization's long-term success.

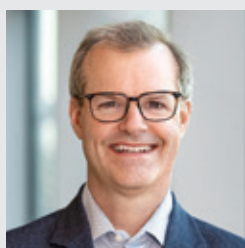
While change can create uncertainty, it also creates excitement and new opportunities for those with vision and courage.

This issue of Pathfinders is filled with stories that highlight some exciting changes. For example, you'll meet our new vice president of medical education, Dr. Ben Jarman. You will also learn more about how we are serving you from our new space in downtown La Crosse, a change that situates us in the heart of our community. You will even learn a bit more about the merger between Gundersen Health System and Bellin Health.

While the merger is founded on great patient care, you can be assured that the medical foundation operations and fundraising efforts of each organization will remain separate. As always, the new and existing funds raised will remain designated for intended areas as directed by donors.

Finally, you will read other stories that emphasize one constant—the life-changing generosity of our benefactors and our community. I want to highlight donors like Ron and Jane Rada, Lynetta and Steven Kopp, the Busta family and the Padesky family who serve as inspiring reminders of the power of philanthropy.

Thank you for allowing us to be your partners in changing lives and positively impacting our community.



All the best,

Stephen B. Shapiro, MD, FACS
Chief Medical Foundation Officer
Chair, Gundersen Medical Foundation

Gundersen Medical Foundation

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PATHFINDERS

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To learn more about the Foundation's medical education, research and community health outreach programs, or to inquire about making a charitable gift, please visit us at gundersenhealth.org/foundation or call the Foundation office at (608) 775-6600.

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If you do not want to receive future fundraising requests supporting Gundersen Medical Foundation, please call the Foundation between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday–Friday (either the local number (608) 775-6600, or toll-free number (800) 362-9567, ext. 56600) and if you receive a voicemail message, please identify yourself and state that you do not want to receive fundraising requests. As an alternative, you can e-mail us with the same request at gmi@gundersenhealth.org. We will honor your request not to receive any fundraising communications from us after the date we receive your decision.



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On the cover: Thanks to the support of family members, friends, and music lovers across the U.S., Jim and Mary Lou Busta raised more than \$46,700 to support Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

There is no greater gift than giving.

This time of year, many of our patients express profound gratitude for the care they have received.

"To have Children's Miracle Network Hospitals® come in and provide so willingly and generously to our family was a huge relief. It helped to lift our spirits to know we had support."

*Dianna Schaller, Superhero Mom,
grateful patient family*



With a year-end gift to Gundersen Medical Foundation, you're investing in a lifetime of health for you and your community. Your generosity will change lives.

- **USE THE QR CODE** to donate
- **RETURN** the enclosed gift envelope
- **CALL** (608) 775-6600 or (800) 362-9567, ext. 56600



MARY ANN GSCHWIND, FSPA

Dedicated to service



Mary Ann Gschwind, FSPA, and her two siblings were born and raised in La Crosse. Their father, a police officer, and their mother, a nurse at Lutheran Hospital, modeled care for others. These examples, along with her personal and professional experiences, have inspired Sister Mary Ann to become a dedicated volunteer, including serving on the board of Gundersen Medical Foundation.

"I believe in the Foundation's mission, and I respect those I already know on the board," she shares. "Their commitment inspired me to make the same commitment."

Schools for the Archdiocese of Omaha, Neb., for five years, teaching a graduate course in Personnel Leadership at the University of San Francisco's Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership for nine summers and teaching English in the Czech Republic for three summers.

A PASSIONATE VOLUNTEER

Although Sister Mary Ann recently retired after serving for 20 years as the archivist for the Franciscan Sisters, her ongoing support of the La Crosse community has led her to service on numerous boards and committees for local non-profits and civic organizations.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Professional role

- Teacher and administrator (retired)
- Community volunteer

Board length of service

- One year

Expertise

- Administration
- Non-profits
- Board experience

Board role

- Philanthropy committee

AN EDUCATOR AND ADMINISTRATOR

After high school, Sister Mary Ann earned a bachelor's degree in English with a minor in music from Viterbo University. She went on to earn a master's degree in English from the Catholic University of America and an educational specialist degree in educational administration with an emphasis on teacher education from Michigan State University. Sister Mary Ann has been a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration for 62 years.

Some of her favorite career experiences include serving as the Education Department Chairperson and Director of Teacher Education at Viterbo University for five years, being Superintendent of

"Since its inception, the Foundation has helped Gundersen Health System provide outstanding care through support for medical education and research," she shares. "However, donor support for events (like Steppin' Out in Pink), programs (like Children's Miracle Network Hospitals), and a variety of specific funds (like the Carilee Fund and Paula's Purse) mean an incredible number of lives are touched. I am proud to be part of an organization that makes a difference in so many major ways." +



Introducing our Vice President of Medical Education

On October 1, 2022, Benjamin Jarman, MD, began serving in his new role as the Edwin L. Overholt, MD, Vice President of Medical Education/Designated Institutional Official (DIO) for Gundersen Medical Foundation.

Q & A



In his new role overseeing medical education programs, Dr. Jarman (right) will work closely with residents like Abby Markstrom, MD, (center).

Dr. Jarman currently serves on the Gundersen Health System Board of Trustees and has been the General Surgery Residency program director since 2010. He has served as acting interim DIO for the Foundation's residency and fellowship programs since the retirement of Dr. Greg Thompson in June 2022.

He has practiced in the Department of Surgery at Gundersen Health System since 2007 and has held various positions on boards and committees throughout the organization, including the Board of Governors, Finance Committee and the Integrated Center for Education Advisory Board. He is also a clinical adjunct professor for the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine.

In his new role, Dr. Jarman will oversee medical education programs at Gundersen, driving the strategic direction for all levels of education, including physicians, residents and fellows, medical students, nursing students and paramedical/allied health students.

Recently, we invited Dr. Jarman to share a bit about himself, his experiences and his goals:

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I was born in Marion, Indiana, and grew up in a small town called Upland where my dad was a wrestling coach at Taylor University and my mother was the domestic engineer who made it possible for our family to thrive. We moved to the north suburbs of Chicago when I was 6—then back to Indiana when I was 16 due to my dad's career.

HOW DID YOU BECOME A SURGEON?

As a freshman at Manchester College, I initially planned on becoming an accountant. Then a family friend and mentor, Dr. Bob Jackson, asked me to volunteer on a missionary team in

the Dominican Republic. That experience was pivotal, and with the ongoing mentorship of Dr. Jackson, I decided to pursue general surgery as a career.

I graduated from college with a degree in biology-chemistry and then attended medical school at Indiana University School of Medicine.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO LA CROSSE?

After medical school, I completed my residency at Mount Carmel Health System in Columbus, Ohio. Then I was hired by Affinity Medical Group in Appleton, Wisconsin, as a general and vascular surgeon. I worked with great partners, but I wanted to teach in an educational setting, and I was lucky to make contact with Gundersen. The Gundersen mission, which focuses on serving our communities through research and education, resonated with me.

I initially applied for a trauma and acute care surgery position, but it did not seem consistent with what I wanted to do long term. About six months later, Dr. Shapiro contacted me, when one of his general surgery partners was retiring. He invited me to visit La Crosse and apply for the new position. I arrived for my interview during Oktoberfest weekend and, sadly, just a few days after Dr. Edwin L. Overholt had died. The mood at Gundersen was deflated, owing to the loss of such a tremendous individual. It is serendipitous that I now serve in the role named after him.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY?

Annette and I met just outside the college cafeteria during our junior year at Manchester. She has always amazed me with regard to her intense spirituality, selfless dedication to others, commitment to raising our children and her humor. We recently



The Jarman family enjoys outdoor activities, such as biking, that the La Crosse-area has to offer.

celebrated 24 years of marriage, and I am so thankful for her impact on my life. We have three amazing children: Nicholas (19), Gabby (16) and Oliver (13).

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT LA CROSSE?

Minutes after arriving for my first visit to La Crosse, Dr. Steve Whitford (Ophthalmology) took me for a bike ride up Bliss Road to the Alpine Inn for a Spotted Cow. I was pretty much sold at that point. What a great introduction to this beautiful area! My wife and I believe that outdoor activities support good health and can be an outlet that builds resilience, so we saw La Crosse as a great place to raise our children. We love the area's unique mixture of city life and rural living.

Since then, we have grown to appreciate many things about the community, and the most impactful is our church. We were blessed to start attending First Free in Onalaska and have been engaged with the church since 2009. Our faith is vitally important to us.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT GUNDERSEN?

I was initially drawn to Gundersen by the mission, and it didn't take me too

long to know I'd found the right place. I appreciate the leadership style at Gundersen. Physicians have input into decision making, which is empowering. There are opportunities to put forth ideas and get support for initiatives that support our mission. Many healthcare organizations make decisions based primarily on cost rather than on what is best for patients—but Gundersen puts patients first, and that has a ripple effect to sustain my resiliency as a physician.

I also love that Gundersen has established roots in education dating back to its early development. Our clinical learning environment is special owing to so much dedication over the past century in establishing expectations and setting the tone for medical education to thrive.

HOW DID YOU CONNECT WITH GUNDERSEN MEDICAL FOUNDATION?

In 2008, Dr. Tom Cogbill announced that he was going to step away from his role as surgery residency program director. I remember calling him and expressing an interest; he was supportive. Tom has been and continues to be a terrific mentor to me. I became the associate program director in 2009 and then the program director in 2010.

HOW DO YOU CONNECT YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES TO YOUR NEW ROLE?

Dr. Greg Thompson was a great mentor to me. He has helped me see the bigger picture of undergraduate, graduate and continuing medical education and has always supported me in my initiatives. Through his support, I gained regional and national opportunities and expanded my understanding and experience with leading educational initiatives.

Being a program director also provided incredible experiences with human resource challenges, having tough conversations, establishing new educational initiatives, implementing innovative programs and providing routine assessments of both learners and faculty.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT YOUR NEW ROLE?

I'm excited and inspired by the opportunity to serve in this new role. The work is so impactful. I love working with residents and students and look forward to the opportunity to coach program leaders where I am able. I will use my past leadership experiences, as well as the lessons I have learned from mentors, to help others overcome challenges.

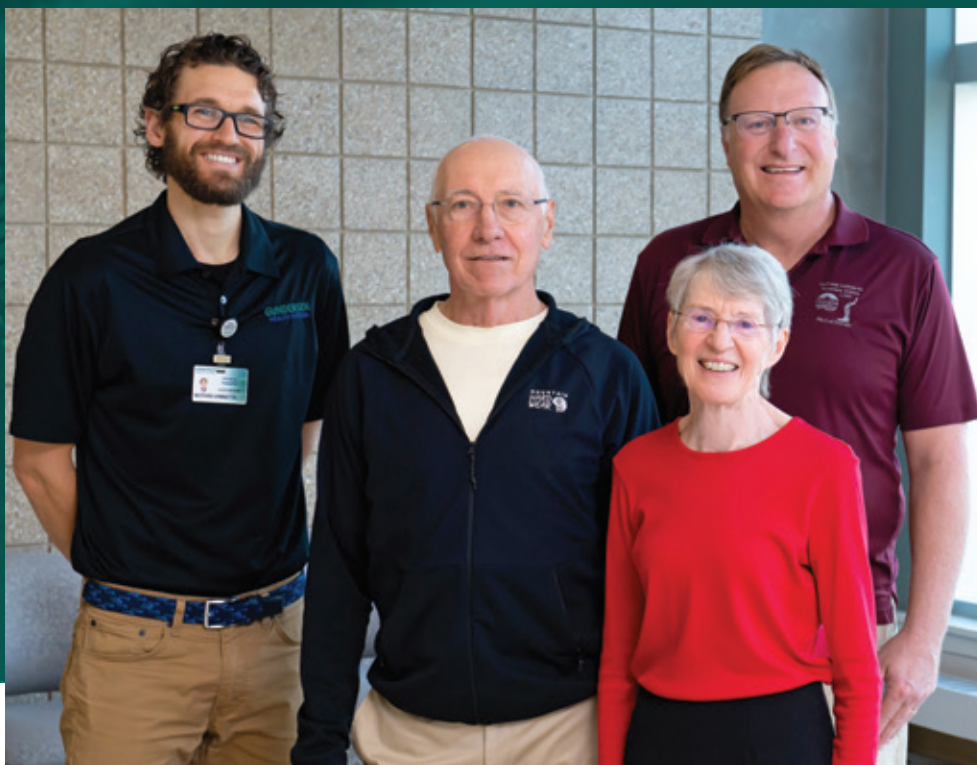
WHAT DOES YOUR PERFECT DAY AWAY FROM WORK LOOK LIKE?

I love life and am satisfied with many different activities. One version of a perfect day would include a bike ride (maybe with my whole family), a church service and a family dinner. If I was able to fit in a nap, some manual labor and some reading, it would be just about perfect.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE QUOTE?

The first quote that comes to mind was highlighted in the the movie *The Gladiator*. Maximus Aurelius states, "Things we do in life echo in eternity."

Also, one of many verses from the Bible that really speaks to me is Hebrews 12:1. It reads, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." +



Ron and Jane Rada (center) are pictured with Gundersen's Associate Program Director of the Sports Physical Therapy Residency Program, Dr. Nathan Vanatta (left) and UWL's LIMS Director, Dr. Tom Kernozek (right).

“Ron and Jane’s investment in medical research and education illustrates the power of philanthropy.”

Mandy Richardson, CFRE
Foundation's Director of Philanthropy

The power of philanthropy

Making a difference in the lives of others is always impactful—but when passion is united with purpose, giving becomes transformational. Such is the case for Ron and Jane Rada, longtime supporters of Gundersen Medical Foundation, who recently made a significant gift in support of medical research and education.

In 2018, Ron and Jane provided funding to support a collaborative research initiative between Gundersen Health System and the La Crosse Institute for Movement Science (LIMS) that was created in 2005 at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UWL). The project brings together scientists and clinicians from each institution to study the biomechanical factors related to common injuries in runners and other athletes to better understand how they occur and what

interventions could be made to prevent or better treat these injuries.

The gift was transformational on several levels. Not only did it allow Ron and Jane to draw on their passions for education, collaboration, and fitness, but the project is already changing lives. “Ron and Jane’s investment in medical research and education illustrates the power of philanthropy,” says the Foundation’s Director of Philanthropy Mandy

Richardson, CFRE. “When we invest in these programs and draw on collaborative opportunities, we improve the overall health of our community and enhance the quality of care for patients at Gundersen Health System.”

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Ron and Jane are passionate about education because of the role it has played in both their personal and professional lives. Ron and Jane grew up 10 miles from



The collaborative research project funded by Ron and Jane Rada's gift to Gundersen Medical Foundation will support research that can positively impact patient care.

each other in rural South Dakota. Both came from families with limited economic means who recognized education as one pathway to a successful future.

After earning undergraduate degrees from the University of South Dakota-Springfield, they got married and continued their education. Ron earned a master's degree from the University of South Dakota-Vermillion and a doctorate degree from Montana State University, while Jane earned a master's degree from Montana State University and, later, an MBA from UWL.

In 1975, they moved to La Crosse for their careers. Ron joined UWL as a professor of Biology and Microbiology and also served as co-director of the River Studies

Center. After 22 years, he moved into administrative roles, including Associate Dean of the College of Science and Health, Director of Graduate Studies, and Interim Provost. Ron retired from UWL in 2007 but continues to volunteer at the university.

Jane also had an expansive career in education, spending 25 years as an instructor in the Business Division at Western Technical College and later coordinating the college's accreditation process before retiring in 2003. She began volunteering at Gundersen in 2004, while also serving as a board member for several local non-profit organizations.

Ron and Jane feel fortunate to now be in the position to give back, both through volunteering and philanthropy. They look

for opportunities to support organizations that positively impact the community and that speak to their passions, including education.

"We believe in Gundersen and in the Foundation," explains Ron. "The focus on education speaks to us—and we have the same attitude towards UWL. These are exceptional organizations."

FOSTERING COLLABORATION

In addition to focusing on education, Ron and Jane chose this initiative because it featured another aspect that is important to them: community collaboration. "We wanted to make an investment in a collaborative partnership that would build on the unique strengths of each institution to better serve the Gundersen clinical staff,

UWL faculty and students, Gundersen Residents and the La Crosse community as a whole,” says Jane. “Our philanthropic goal is for each gift to always be about more than what we are bringing to the table.”

According to Dr. C. Nathan Vannatta, a physical therapist in Gundersen’s Sports Physical Therapy Department, the collaboration between Gundersen and the LIMS lab has been beneficial. “Not only has the project impacted clinical practice by informing standards of patient care and creating meaningful and formative experiences for healthcare professionals and students,” he explains, “but the collaboration enables everyone to learn how scientific knowledge in movement science is acquired and then integrated in a meaningful way within the practice of healthcare. It has been a win-win for both of our institutions.”

As a practicing physical therapist, Dr. Vannatta is also an instructor with

Gundersen’s Sports Physical Therapy Residency Program and part of the LIMS research group working on this initiative. He and Dr. Tom Kernozek, the LIMS director, are able to see first-hand the impact hands-on research has on learners.

“This interaction between students and residents has been really meaningful, especially when I see one of those lightbulb moments as they are able to connect the dots between something we have learned in the lab and how it affects what they do with a patient,” shares Dr. Vannatta. “As we move forward, we are hoping to offer opportunities for community members to be able to access the lab facilities and directly benefit from our research by learning about their individual movement patterns and how that may influence their injury risk.”

PROVIDING THE SPARK

When it comes to philanthropy, Ron and Jane see themselves as catalysts—as

people who plant a seed for a project or initiative that is connected to something they care about. Their hope is that the seed sprouts and the idea resonates with others, thus taking an idea even further to build capacity.

In this case, it’s clear that goal has been met. While the project is ongoing, their gift has already had a positive impact. “We have had the opportunity to assist local high school athletes in screening for injury risk and collegiate athletes hoping to characterize factors that may contribute to running-related injury—all while providing undergraduate, graduate and resident learners state-of-the-art research opportunities that influence clinical practice and the delivery of healthcare right here in La Crosse,” says Dr. Vannatta. “Ron and Jane’s gift truly benefits the community at large and serves as an investment in the next generation of healthcare professionals.” +

From learner to leader

Today, C. Nathan Vannatta, PT, DPT, SCS, is a physical therapist in Gundersen’s Sports Physical Therapy Department—but in 2014, he was a graduate student in UWL’s physical therapy department. There, he was part of a research practicum led by Dr. Kernozek, director of LIMS, and contributed to a project examining knee biomechanics during sports-related activities and the connection to ACL injury risk (as well as other studies investigating running mechanics and their relation to injury).

Later in 2014, Dr. Vannatta enrolled in the Gundersen Sports Physical Therapy Residency Program where he had more experiences with LIMS. Then, in 2015, he joined the clinical staff at Gundersen. Recently Dr. Vannatta was appointed Associate Program Director of the Sports Physical Therapy Residency Program at Gundersen, which means he is not only participating in the research efforts at LIMS but also helping to lead the education efforts.

“One of the most precious commodities in the present, fast-paced day and age is our time. Thanks to the generous



philanthropic support by the Radas, I have protected time to help develop research protocols, offer services and analyze data that otherwise would have to be fit into my full clinical schedule,” explains Dr. Vannatta. “My hope is that these continued efforts will lead to LIMS being a valuable and accessible resource for our community members.” +



New location!



"Moving downtown makes sense given the mission of the Foundation. Our new location allows us to have a beautiful and functional facility that is easily accessible to donors and guests. We look forward to being more integrated into our community."

Stephen Shapiro, MD
Chairman of the Foundation



Gundersen Medical Foundation's departments of Philanthropy, Resolve Through Sharing® and Administration have relocated to their new space at 201 Third St. N. in Downtown La Crosse.



Please drop in for a visit anytime and plan to attend our holiday social on **December 9 from 4:30–7:30 p.m.**





"We are excited to be in a new location in the heart of Downtown La Crosse. This new location represents the many ways our community is at the center of all we do at Gundersen Health System and Gundersen Medical Foundation."

Mandy Richardson, CFRE
Director of Philanthropy



This move to an off-campus location was funded entirely by Gundersen Health System with the goal of freeing up space for patient care.



The Foundation's new office features a welcoming lobby, access to a local café called the Free Range Exchange (opening soon), flexible work areas and multiple conference rooms.





Tim Padesky and Tara Johnson (center) with their children, Layna (left) and Nicholas (right).

An investment in compassion

As a boy growing up in La Crosse, Tim Padesky felt lucky to live in a neighborhood with several retirees who enjoyed hiring out their snow shoveling and lawn mowing chores. These odd jobs provided Tim with valuable learning opportunities, not to mention some “walking around” money. By the time he was 13, he even had some savings.

Tim’s savings came in handy when his dad, Don, a World War II veteran, encouraged him to buy two shares of NSP stock that had come available for \$67 each. Those shares and their earnings remained untouched for 54 years—until Tim decided to partner with Gundersen Medical Foundation on a special initiative.

Influenced by Tim’s health challenges and a desire to help others, he and his family decided to use the earnings to establish The Tim Padesky Family Transplant Endowment Fund.

HOMETOWN PRIDE

Tim has always been proud to live and work in his hometown. After graduating

from Central High School in 1972, Tim worked for his dad, a contractor, as a residential electrician. In 1977, he completed an apprenticeship at Western Technical College and became a journeyman electrician.

For the next few years, he was employed by Johnson Controls where he worked on

Now, families who are dealing with an organ transplant may receive emergency financial assistance through The Tim Padesky Family Transplant Endowment Fund.

large industrial and commercial projects. These projects required him to travel often, sometimes for weeks at a time. Eventually, the travel became tiresome, and Tim decided to start his own business. In 1982, Tim founded T.D. Padesky Electric.

In 1996, Tim married Tara Johnson, and the couple started a family. Nicholas was born in 1997, and Layna was born in 1999. Because the kids grew up playing baseball and softball, Tim became active in the Shelby Youth Ball organization, including serving as its president. Nicholas and Layna went on to graduate from Central High School just like their dad. Today, Tim continues to serve his community as a Shelby Town Supervisor.

"I am proud to own a business in the town where I was born and raised," shares Tim. "We've been blessed with great employees and customers; we've made so many community connections."

In the fall of 2022, T.D. Padesky Electric celebrated its 40th anniversary. Tim takes pride in having worked with local businesses like Kwik Trip, Walzcraft, Ray Hudson Chevrolet—and many more—on their commercial and industrial projects. He is also fulfilled by knowing that his own small business has positively impacted his hometown's economy. Not only has T.D. Padesky Electric supported his own family, it has also supported the families of his many employees, some of whom have been with the company for decades.

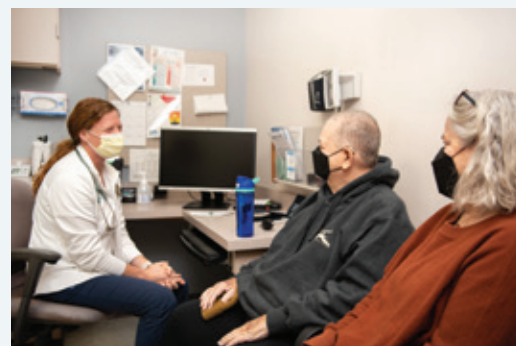
GRATITUDE FOR CARE

In 2013, Tim began to suffer physically. Later that year, he was diagnosed with kidney failure. Tim's sister, Mickey, was a match, and she became a willing donor. In 2014, Tim underwent a kidney transplant at UW-Health in Madison. However, Tim was grateful to be able to receive most of his care at Gundersen Health System, the same provider he had used for his whole life.

"The quality of care I have received at Gundersen—right here in my own hometown—is priceless," shares Tim. "I have always felt comfortable and confident in my care. I know not everyone is so lucky."

Although the transplant was successful, Tim has had to manage other healthcare challenges. In 2017, he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma (blood cancer) and had to undergo a stem cell transplant (using stem cells harvested from his own body). In late 2021, he suffered an infection that required additional treatment.

It was around this time that Tim and Tara began to reflect on the worry and stress that transplant patients and their families experience. They felt fortunate to have been able to manage the expenses



Tim and Tara are grateful for their Gundersen care team, including Melissa Trimm, RN.

associated with multiple trips to Madison, including gas, food and lodging, yet they knew many families were not in the same position.

Now, thanks to Tim's business savvy and the value of compounding interest, families who are dealing with an organ transplant may receive emergency financial assistance for gas cards, hotel accommodations, food vouchers or other needs through The Tim Padesky Family Transplant Endowment Fund.

"When a loved one is facing a healthcare crisis, just worrying about their care and well-being is stressful enough," says Tara. "We realized how much more difficult it would be to also have to worry about unexpected costs—and we wanted to help."

If you would like to make a gift to The Tim Padesky Family Transplant Endowment Fund, please contact Gundersen Medical Foundation at (608) 775-6600. [+](#)



To learn more about this fund or charitable giving, please contact Andrew Steger, CFP®, MBA, manager of philanthropy at (608) 775-1575 or amsteger@gundersenhealth.org.

Support the causes you care about!

CHARITABLE BEQUEST Consider naming Gundersen Medical Foundation as the beneficiary of your income in respect of decedent (IRD) assets while leaving your cash and other investment assets to your heirs. Why? Charities are tax exempt and, unlike your heirs, will not pay taxes on IRAs and other retirement plans. Complete a beneficiary designation by contacting your plan administrator.

CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST Funding a charitable remainder trust with your IRA or other assets as part of your estate plan can help you provide for heirs and reduce their tax burden. The trust will pay heirs income over a number of years. Heirs will pay tax on the income over time, as opposed to facing a large tax bill if IRA proceeds were given in a lump sum. At the end of the trust, any remaining principal will go to help further our mission.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY Some individuals prefer leaving their IRD assets to fund a charitable gift annuity that will benefit a beneficiary with lifetime fixed payments. A gift annuity is easy to establish with our organization. With this plan, usually only one charity is the named beneficiary of the remaining value.

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER If you are 70½ or older, you can make a gift of up to \$100,000 from your IRA every year. Making direct charitable gifts from your IRA is one of the best ways to give. Gifts from your IRA are not included in your adjustable gross income.



Let us help.

Mary Freybler, Planned Giving Specialist
(608) 775-6658 or msfreybl@gundersenhealth.org

GUNDERSSEN
MEDICAL FOUNDATION



Mary Lou and Jim Busta (center) are pictured with their daughters (L–R) Lisa, Kennedy and Mollie; daughter-in-law, Amanda, and son Chad (right), and their grandchildren, Jayden and Xavier (front).

Compassion for kids: One family's fundraiser for CMN Hospitals®

Anyone who has spent time with Jim Busta has likely heard him say, “It’s a good day to be alive.” Jim, a retired educator and the ongoing leader of The Jim Busta Band, has used this motto for decades to spread positivity and gratitude. Recently though, the sentiment took on an even deeper meaning.

In February 2022, Jim was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, and by early March, he was undergoing chemotherapy treatments at Gundersen Health System. Despite the difficult diagnosis, the support of his family and access to high-quality, compassionate care left Jim feeling blessed.

As his treatments continued, though, Jim was heartbroken to see young patients and their families also dealing with cancer. Together with his wife, Mary Lou, and their children, the Busta family connected with Gundersen Medical Foundation to learn how they could make a positive impact. During that meeting, the Bustas

learned about Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, a program that provides assistance to families with children facing medical challenges, including cancer—and they were all inspired.

Their plan was to invite family members and friends to make a \$20 donation in Jim’s honor to CMN Hospitals. In appreciation for the gift, each donor would receive a t-shirt featuring Jim’s well-known motto.

Initially, the family ordered 450 t-shirts and set their fundraising goal at \$5,000. To their astonishment, that goal was

achieved in just 24 hours—and the donations continued to pour in. Another 400 t-shirts were ordered, and in the end, over \$46,700 was raised to support CMN Hospitals.

“To say that we are overwhelmed is an understatement,” shares Jim. “It feels good to be part of making a positive impact. This experience shows that good things can come from difficult situations.”

HONORING IMPACT

Considering the number of lives Jim and Mary Lou have touched as educators and musicians, it is easy to see why the fundraiser was so successful.

Jim spent years as an English teacher and coach in northeast Iowa before becoming a principal. In 1985, he became a superintendent in Spring Grove, Minn., where he worked for 25 years before retiring in 2010. Mary Lou taught Family and Consumer Science before working for 23 years in the Spring Grove and Caledonia, Minn., school districts as the director of the Early Childhood & Family Education Programs. She retired in 2011.

Outside of education, the Bustas are well-known for their passion for polka. Jim started playing the button accordion as a boy and transitioned to the concertina. He and Mary Lou

have always enjoyed polka music, and their children grew up attending live performances and music festivals.

In 1979, Jim started The Jim Busta Band, a popular group that has performed throughout the U.S. and in Europe. Growing up, their son, Chad, and daughter, Mollie, played in the band. Eventually, Mollie would go on to have her own successful music career. Using the stage name “Mollie B,” she has performed with a variety of musical groups including Squeezebox. In 2011, she was also named host and co-producer of “The Mollie B Polka Party,” which airs weekly on RFD-TV.

While the fundraiser was doing well initially, once Mollie B shared the details with her fans, the response was outstanding. Many of her fans know the family’s musical background, and some have even seen her perform with her father. To date, donations have come from 33 states, with a good number coming from the Bustas’ music-loving fans.

“We are so honored by the outpouring of compassion and generosity,” says Jim. “Our hope is that the funds raised will help many young people and their families know that people care and are willing to provide a little extra support during tough times.” +

Giving back and paying it forward

Steven and Lynnetta Kopp were raised to care about community and to value giving—especially “giving back.” That is why they are proud supporters of Gundersen Medical Foundation. Not only do they see the impact of the Foundation in our community, but as they love to share, they are first and foremost grateful patients.

Steven grew up on a farm in Centerville, Wis., and has considered Gundersen Health System his healthcare provider for over 60 years. His family doctored at Gundersen, and when he and Lynnetta moved to the area from Minnesota to be close to family, there was no question that Lynnetta would obtain her healthcare at Gundersen as well.

When Steven’s mom began to decline in health, the family witnessed first-hand the compassionate care for which Gundersen is known. “The outlook for Steven’s mom was poor, but Dr. Greg Thompson did not give up. He gave her seven more years of life, which meant seven more years of family,” remembers Lynnetta. “Her Gundersen team cared for her—and about her—until her very last breath.”



To learn more about charitable giving, please contact Jon McKenzie, philanthropy officer, at (608) 775-6609 or jmckenzen@gundersenhealth.org.



Lynnetta and Steven Kopp

Before the Kopps moved back to the La Crosse area, their careers placed them in a variety of cities, including Minneapolis, Los Angeles and Chicago. "We've lived in a lot of cities with many different medical facilities," says Steven, "but the care we have received at Gundersen is second-to-none. People who leave the area soon see the difference, which is why we chose to return to Gundersen for our healthcare even when we didn't live nearby."

For Steven and Lynnetta, supporting the Foundation is a way to "give back" for the care they receive while also "paying it forward" to ensure the same quality of healthcare for future generations.

CARE FOR COMMUNITY

In addition to their personal experiences, the Kopps' professional experiences have also given them confidence in their choice to invest in the Foundation.

Steven worked in the financial industry as the chief information officer of a large accounting firm before retiring six years ago. A dedicated community volunteer, Steven has served on the La Crosse School Board and the board for The Parenting Place. He currently volunteers for WAFER and serves on the board of directors for a regional bank, as well as on the Advisory Board for Western Technical College's IT Program.

This community involvement has allowed him to meet other volunteers, including many Gundersen leaders and employees. "I see many people who are part of Gundersen's care teams are also part of our community team," says Steven, "and that impresses me."

Lynnetta's career expertise in fundraising and non-profits led her to serve in a variety of leadership roles in the community, including positions at the

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, the Humane Society of La Crosse and Coulee Region RSVP, Inc., where she served as the Executive Director for 15 years. By the time she retired five years ago, she had witnessed the many ways Gundersen partners with other community organizations, and she had begun to learn more about the breadth and depth of the Foundation's programming.

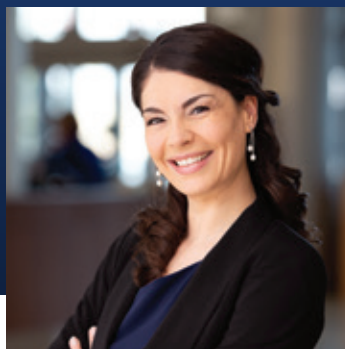
"All gifts to the Foundation permeate throughout the community," she says. "Whether it's support for medical education, research, or initiatives that improve population health, the Foundation is actively working to increase the quality of life for everyone."

Because the organization's mission aligns closely with her own, Lynnetta joined the Foundation's Board of Directors in 2015. She serves on the Philanthropy and Nomination Committees and is currently the vice chair.

IMPACTING THE NEXT GENERATION

In retirement, Steven and Lynnetta continue to volunteer and to enjoy their hobbies. While they both enjoy traveling and dogsitting their two "granddogs," Steven enjoys motorcycling and Lynnetta enjoys running marathons.

Several years ago, the couple also became members of the Foundation's Legacy Society. "It was easy to include the Foundation in our estate plan," say both Steven and Lynnetta, "It feels good to give, knowing the Foundation will be an excellent steward of our gifts." +



Mandy L. Richardson, CFRE
Director of Philanthropy



Todd A. Mahr, MD
Medical Director of Philanthropy

Following our heart

We are thrilled to announce that Gundersen Medical Foundation has moved to its beautifully renovated space located at 201 Third St. N. in Downtown La Crosse.

The relocation was inspired by the need to free up more space for patient care on Gundersen Health System's La Crosse campus, but the new location provides easier access for visitors to the Foundation.

While the relocation of our offices was practical, our downtown location also serves as a visual reminder that community is at the very heart of our mission. It is our honor to collaborate with donors like you, uniting passion and purpose, to fund initiatives that strengthen our community and improve its well-being.

This issue of Pathfinders highlights many examples of people in our community changing lives through generosity. We feature Ron and Jane Rada, a couple whose passion for running, education and collaboration led them to invest in a unique research project between Gundersen Health System, Gundersen Medical Foundation and the La Crosse Institute for

Movement Science (LIMS) at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. This collaboration not only positively impacts medical residents from Gundersen and physical therapy students at UWL, but it also informs medical care—which ultimately impacts Gundersen patients.

We also share the story of La Crosse native Tim Padesky and his family who, after their own experiences with Tim's transplant, were inspired to create a fund to help others. Today, The Padesky Family Transplant Fund does just that.

These are just a few examples of the power of philanthropy.

Care for our community is at the heart of everything we do at Gundersen Health System and Gundersen Medical Foundation. And everything we do is because of you. We are proud to partner with you to change lives and strengthen our communities.

We invite you to visit us in our new space and learn more about the many ways your philanthropy is shaping our community. The doors are open, and the coffee is always on. We look forward to welcoming you to our new home. +

COMMEMORATIVE GIFTS

March 1–September 30, 2022

Expressions *of Caring*

Gundersen Medical Foundation thanks our
many friends for their generous gifts.

Commemorative gifts made after September 30, 2022, will appear in the next issue of Pathfinders.

Charitable gifts to Gundersen Medical Foundation are a thoughtful way to celebrate a specific individual on special occasions like birthdays, anniversaries or holidays. Our donors also find this method of giving is a meaningful way to express appreciation to Gundersen care providers or entire departments for exceptional care received.

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A gift that endures—a lasting tribute

A gift to Gundersen Medical Foundation in the name of the person or persons you wish to honor provides both the donor and the recognized, or bereaved family, the satisfaction of having made a lasting contribution to others.

Your gift will touch their hearts

In response to your gift, we send a note of acknowledgment to the honored individual or, in the case of a memorial, to the family. You will be notified that your gift has been received and designated according to your wishes. The names of those recognized by tribute gifts are included in this publication, Pathfinders. Specific amounts are confidential.

Throughout the year, Gundersen Medical Foundation is honored to be the chosen recipient of special gifts made in remembrance of friends or loved ones who are no longer here to carry on their own legacy of caring.

Memorial gifts pay lasting tribute to a person's life and accomplishments, while also advancing healthcare quality for the future.

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Hometown heroes give back to kids

Johnny and Jordan Davis enjoyed spending time with CMN Heroes and their families at Gundersen's Pediatric Oncology Department in July.

La Crosse natives Johnny Davis of the Washington Wizards and Jordan Davis of the Wisconsin Badgers were in town last July to host the second annual Davis Brothers & FoxBall Camp at Central High School.

Despite their busy schedules, the brothers took time to visit Gundersen Health System's pediatric oncology patients and Children's Miracle Network Hospitals' Heroes.

"We wanted to spend time with these kids to show them support," says Johnny. "Some of them couldn't participate in the basketball camp, so we wanted to make sure they had a fun event they could take part in, too."

During their visit, the Davis brothers played basketball with the kids and their families using the hoop located in the Ronald McDonald's Kid Town area of Gundersen's Pediatrics Oncology Department. They also enjoyed finger painting with the youngsters, creating artwork with autographed handprints for each child.

"We are grateful to the Davis brothers for showing their support to Gundersen's pediatric patients and to CMN Hospitals," shares Christopher Stauffer, senior consultant, corporate communications & media relations for Gundersen. "The kids were initially star-struck hanging out with a Wisconsin Badger and a Washington Wizard, but Jordan and Johnny put everyone at ease. So many local

kids—and adults—will never forget that special day; it was full of joy and laughter."

Making a difference in the lives of others is important to the Davis brothers. "We love giving back to our hometown community and putting smiles on the faces of kids—especially those who are going through difficult times," explains Jordan.

CMN Hospitals Specialist Beth Noffsinger points out that events like these illustrate the generosity of our community. "I am inspired by the support this community shows for children and families in need," she says. "Support for CMN Hospitals helps us change lives."



Brooklyn Days organizers Mel Kinneberg and Alyssa Miller (above left), along with Jed Kinneberg (not pictured), were proud of the wide-spread support for this fundraising event.

A fundraiser to pay it forward

On May 21, 2022, the community of Rushford, Minn., gathered at Brooklyn Park for a fundraiser in support of Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. This locally organized event raised \$23,000 and allowed one family to pay it forward.

The event, called Brooklyn Days, was initiated by Mel and Jed Kinneberg. Their son, Charlie, was hospitalized multiple times as an infant due to breathing difficulties and, later, for surgery to remove his tonsils and adenoids. CMN Hospitals helped the family by providing meal tickets for use during hospital visits, helping to purchase a breathing machine and providing support at continued clinic appointments.

The Kinnebergs, who had never heard of CMN Hospitals before Charlie was born, were inspired to organize Brooklyn Days to give back to CMN Hospitals while also raising awareness about the organization within their community.

The family reached out to Alyssa Miller, also from Rushford, who is a nurse on the inpatient pediatrics and pediatric intensive care units at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse to help organize the event.

"We were all so proud to support CMN Hospitals because we have seen the impact made on families every single day. In what may be the worst time in a parent's life, CMN Hospitals can help to make things a little easier," says Alyssa.

The event featured music from a live local band, Troubleshooter, a silent auction, a live auction, a bean bag tournament, a 50/50 raffle and more. The local fire department served food, and kids enjoyed face painting, games and rides on a children's train.

"Everything needed to make Brooklyn Days successful was donated by local businesses, families and surrounding communities," shares Alyssa. "We had so much fun putting the event together, and we are grateful for our amazing community."

Next year's event is already scheduled for May 13, 2023.



Please welcome Sierra Lyon to our team as a Children's Miracle Network Hospitals specialist.

In this role, Sierra will be connecting with national partners as well as local fundraisers to share the impact of CMN Hospitals on our region. Sierra comes to us with a history of fundraising and a passion for offering programs to children of all abilities.

Sierra Lyon – (608) 775-4469 | sierra.lyon@gundersenhealth.org

Cards for kids, a holiday tradition

Each year, cards designed by our Children's Miracle Network Hospitals' Heroes are available for purchase, with 100% of sales benefitting CMN Hospitals.

Cards are available for purchase at:

- **Gundersen Medical Foundation**
201 Third St. N. in La Crosse
- **Gundersen Gift Shop**
Gundersen Health System's La Crosse campus
- **Gundersen Pharmacy Locations**
The Onalaska Clinic on Sand Lake Road in Onalaska; Cass Street in La Crosse; the Village Shopping Center in La Crosse; the Winona Campus in Winona, Minn.; and St. Elizabeth's in Wabasha, Minn.
- **Email**
cmnhospitals@gundersenhealth.org

CMN Hospitals would like to thank Empire Screen Printing for their sponsorship for the past 35 years! By generously donating the time and materials needed to print the cards, all of the proceeds go directly toward helping local kids and their families.

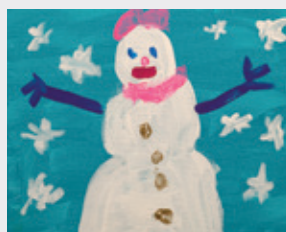
"Our owner, Jim Brush, believes in community and family," says Jennifer Schloesser, creative director at Empire Screen Printing. "Knowing that what we're doing is making a difference in kids' lives will keep this tradition going for many years. Everyone at Empire is proud to be part of the CMN Hospitals community."



Araina



Piper



Taryn



Jedi



Silas

Inside message:
May your days be merry
this holiday season & into
the new year.

A gift from the heart

This holiday season is the perfect time to honor friends or family members with a gift (in their name) to Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

Just look at what your gift can do:

- **\$100** will cover gas cards for a family traveling to visit a child in the hospital
- **\$250** can help cover the cost of sled hockey or other adaptive recreation
- **\$500** will pay for an iPad so a child can communicate
- **\$750** will help a child receive horse therapy or other specialized support
- **\$1,000** helps cover the cost of adaptive bikes

These are just a few examples of the impact your gift to CMN Hospitals can make for children and families in need.

Give today at gundersenhealth.org/foundation.



Dear CMN Hospitals,

On November 13, 2020, our son, Stone, was born approximately ten weeks early.

For the next month, Stone was in the neonatal intensive care unit at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. Unfortunately, between COVID and the remodeling happening at Mayo, we were unable to stay in the hospital with our son.

We looked into staying at the Ronald McDonald House or in a hotel, but ultimately found it would be easiest for us to travel from our home in Decorah, Iowa, to Rochester every day. A social worker at Mayo encouraged us to apply for a grant through Children's Miracle Network Hospitals to help with transportation expenses.

Stone continued to grow, and we were thrilled to bring him home earlier than expected on December 13, 2020. Today, our son is doing well, so our family feels truly blessed.

We are incredibly thankful for the assistance that ensured our family could be with our son while he was hospitalized—and we just cannot thank CMN Hospitals enough for their generosity.

The Boyd Family



save the date

Miracle
Gala

We are excited to announce the return of our annual gala event—now the Miracle Gala! This special event will feature a child art auction, a fund-a-miracle opportunity, a dessert auction and more.

Please mark your calendars for Friday, April 14, 2023, and plan to attend the Miracle Gala.

Tickets for the event will go on sale in February 2023.

TOGETHER, WE HELP CHILDREN

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals®, a service of Gundersen Medical Foundation, is dedicated to saving and improving the lives of children. We directly assist children and their families and support pediatric programs and services that help kids battle diseases and injuries of every kind. In the Gundersen service area, Children's Miracle Network Hospitals has raised more than \$23 million since 1986. Each charitable donation—whether through special events, annual gifts, business partnerships, sponsorships or planned giving such as bequests—benefits children in this region and provides support for specialty medical care, research and preventive education.

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals | Gundersen Medical Foundation

**Mail to: 1900 South Avenue, La Crosse, WI 54601 | Office location: 201 Third St. N., La Crosse, WI 54601
(608) 775-4424 | gundersenhealth.org/foundation**



Happenings

Gundersen Medical Foundation News



Celebrating Excellence

As part of National Philanthropy Day on November 15, the Association of Fundraising Professionals (Upper Mississippi Valley Chapter) recognized several individuals and organizations for their outstanding contributions. Congratulations to these honorees:

Outstanding Philanthropists:

Ron and Jane Rada
(La Crosse, Wis.)

Outstanding Philanthropic

Organization: Wieser Brothers
General Contractor, Inc.
(La Crescent, Minn.)

Outstanding Youth in

Philanthropy: Jonah Larson
(La Crosse, Wis.)

Outstanding Volunteer

Fundraiser: Pat Ruda
(La Crosse, Wis.)

President's Award:

Mandy Hansel
(Winona, Minn.)

Gundersen Medical Foundation assures donations will remain local

GUNDERSEN
HEALTH SYSTEM®



bellin
health

As Gundersen Health System and Bellin Health move forward finalizing a merger of equals later this year, you can be assured medical foundation operations and fundraising efforts will remain separate. Gundersen Medical Foundation's existing and new funds raised will remain designated for intended areas as directed by donors.

"A major driver for seeking this merger is to maintain a strong connection and commitment to the communities we serve," said Stephen Shapiro, MD, chairman, Gundersen Medical Foundation. "While this merger will allow Gundersen and Bellin to better serve their communities through patient care, the systems' foundations will remain separate to assure funds given or pledged are used

within the regions intended by those commitments."

According to Mandy Richardson, CFRE, director of philanthropy, the Foundation's donations made in the past or future to Gundersen Medical Foundation will be linked to work within communities in Gundersen's service area. Likewise, donations made to Bellin Health Foundation will remain within communities in Bellin's service area for investment in local projects.

In addition to donations staying local, the medical foundations will remain locally governed.

Please contact Gundersen Medical Foundation's Philanthropy office at (608) 775-6600 if you have questions. +

Providing compassionate care

Employees in the Infusion Services Department of Gundersen Health System know that patients sometimes spend hours receiving treatment. These long days, on top of battling cancer, can be tough.

However, a recent grant from the Foundation's Oncology and Breast Cancer funds allows staff members to offer a light meal to patients receiving treatment (in La Crosse, Onalaska or Winona) over the lunch period and snacks to patients throughout the day.

"Staying nourished is an important part of healing," says Leanne Markos, clinical manager of Infusion Services. "Plus, it feels good to help patients stay comfortable and keep up their energy. Support from the Foundation allows us to offer our patients an outstanding quality of care."

This grant is just one example of how support for Gundersen Medical Foundation positively impacts patient care. +



Support from the Foundation impacts patients, including those in Gundersen's Infusion Services Department.

Honoring excellence

In remembrance, we pay tribute to the medical staff who served Gundersen Health System during their careers and who passed away between March 1, 2021, and September 30, 2022. We recognize their individual dedication to patient care and their collective contribution to the field of medicine.

- **Hans P. Anderson, MD**
- **George B. Ellenz, MD**



Leadership

Chair

Dr. Stephen Shapiro

Vice President

Jack Schwartz

Executive Assistant

Dawn Meyer

Philanthropy

Dr. Todd Mahr, Medical Director
Mandy Richardson, CFRE, Director

Medical Education

Dr. Benjamin Jarman, Medical Director/
Designated Institutional Official
Jennifer Lee, Director

Medical Research and Grants

Dr. Jennifer Kleven, Medical Director
Reece Rykal, Director

Global and Community Partners

Dr. Stephen Shapiro, Medical Director

Resolve Through Sharing®

Dr. Randi Berg, Medical Director
Mary Beth Hensel, Director

Philanthropy Staff

Administrative Support

Rhonda Smith

Data System

Nicole Aponte
Sarah Worman

Annual Support

Courtney Daniels Burke

Major Gifts & Planned Giving

Mary Freybler
Jon McKenzie, CFRE
Andrew Steger, CFP®

Operations

Jill Blokhuis, CFRE

Fund Allocations

Ashley Zibrowski

Special Events

Olivia Moths
Tia Sneath

Children's Miracle Network

Hospitals®

Sierra Lyon
Beth Noffsinger



STEPPIN' OUT IN PINK

Gundersen Medical Foundation

\$350,000+

RAISED AND COUNTING

2022

350

VOLUNTEERS

4,000+

PARTICIPANTS



"We hope that everyone who supported Steppin' Out in Pink understands the profound impact they have made on patients in the Coulee Region."

Tia Sneath, special events program coordinator

Thank you to our 2022 sponsors:

Elite sponsor

Gillette Pepsi-Cola Companies

Platinum sponsor

Cindy Gerke & Associates
Dick's Pallet Works
Landmark by the Rivers

Gold sponsor

Festival
Wieser Brothers General Contractor, Inc.
Badger Corrugating
River City Ready Mix
Chart

Silver sponsor

Dahl Automotive/
Family Foundation
Marine Credit Union Foundation
Kwik Trip
Gundersen Credit Union
Grand Canyon University
The Board Store
Agropur
Great Lakes Cheese
TrustPoint/Emerj360
DigiCOPY

Bronze sponsor

Coulee Region Women's Magazine
HSR Associates
Northern Engraving
Walmart – Winona
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Credit Bureau Data, Inc.

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Cremation Services, Inc.
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E. Stanek Electric
Lyche Family
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The Insurance Center
The Charmant Hotel

Media sponsor

News 8000
Mid-West Family Broadcasting
Lamar
River Valley Media Group

Gifts-in-kind

Kwik Trip
Rod's Ride On Powersports
Brian Jorstad (Hokah Bait)
The Charmant Hotel
DigiCOPY
Pepsi
Best Kept Portable, LLC
Outdoor Services, Inc.
Sign Dreamers Coulee Region

Downtown Main Street, Inc.

Larson's General
Howes Diamond Jewelers
The Pearl Ice Cream Parlor

Generosity abounds, rain or shine

Community support for Steppin' Out in Pink is always inspiring—and year 17 was no exception. Despite the inclement weather that caused the walk to be cancelled, over \$350,000 (and counting) was raised.

"As soon as the announcement was made, local organizations, volunteers, sponsors and other supporters sprang into action, just looking for opportunities to help," shares Gundersen Medical Foundation's Special Events Coordinator Tia Sneath. "We were overwhelmed by the community's outpouring of love and support."

Funds raised from Steppin' Out in Pink support local breast cancer research initiatives, provide assistance to breast cancer patients, subsidize mammograms for the uninsured and underinsured in our region, and lend support to the Center for Cancer & Blood Disorders and Norma J. Vinger Center for Breast Cancer Care.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR NEXT YEAR'S EVENT
ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2023.**



To learn more about Steppin' Out in Pink and how you can support breast cancer research, please contact Tia Sneath at (608) 775-4931 or tjsneath@gundersenhealth.org.

**GUNDERSEN
MEDICAL FOUNDATION**

1900 South Avenue
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
La Crosse, WI
Permit No. 119

Our Mission

We improve the lives of patients and our larger community through medical education, research, outreach and the philanthropic support of Gundersen Health System.

gundersenhealth.org/foundation

Gundersen Medical Foundation's

HOLIDAY SOCIAL

Friday, Dec. 9, 2022 | 4:30–7:30 p.m.

Gundersen Medical Foundation downtown office, 201 3rd Street N., La Crosse

Join us for a holiday social that features everything to make the season merry! Enjoy refreshments and live music while you shop from a variety of local vendors.

All of Us
RESEARCH PROGRAM

What story does your DNA tell? Find out with *All of Us*.

Your DNA tells a story. It can show where your ancestors came from, why your hair is curly or straight, and even whether you like the taste of cilantro. Did you know it also contains clues to why certain health conditions might run in your family?

There's a lot that your DNA can tell you, but there's so much more to learn. Take part in the *All of Us* Research Program to help researchers answer important health questions. You can also choose to learn more about your own DNA.

Learn about yourself and your health, at no cost.

JoinAllofUs.org/Gundersen

All of Us, the *All of Us* logo, and "The Future of Health Begins With You" are service marks of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.