



From the 2018 Aurora Gala in September: (L-R) Randy Varju, with honoree, Judy Gardetto, and Cristy Garcia-Thomas, Chief External Affairs Officer

Message from Randy

As we near the close of 2018, it's a great time to reflect on what a significant year this has been for Aurora Health Care Foundation, especially thanks to donors like you. It's been a year of transition, as I took on the role of President of Advocate Aurora Health Foundations. In this year, I've now had the pleasure of getting to know many generous donors like you and our passionate team members who are redefining care for our patients.

What stands out to me is how every gift, no matter the size, can touch someone's life. And how every person, no matter his or her job title, can make a difference. Giving is personal. When we give of ourselves, whether it's a financial donation or our medical expertise, we are making an impact on someone else's life.

One person I had the privilege of meeting this year really personifies that. His name is Dennis; I met him at the open house for the new Dewey Center on the Aurora Behavioral Health campus in Wauwatosa. Dennis worked as a housekeeper there for nearly 10 years. Not only did he work hard every day to make sure the facility was well-kept and maintained, he would often bake brownies for the residents because he wanted them to know they were all "good people getting better."

Dennis has retired, but he came back for the open house in July because the place means so much to him. He is an important reminder that every single one of us can help change a life. Sometimes all it takes is a plate of brownies.

So as we head into the holiday season, I want to say that I am so thankful for donors like you and for people like Dennis, who remind us all that **we can make a difference**.

Thank you for setting such a great example.

Randy Varju
President, Advocate Aurora Health Foundations &
Chief Development Officer, Advocate Aurora Health

Serenity Garden

AT THE DEWEY CENTER

You're building the foundation for recovery

In July, the new Dewey Center opened on the Aurora Behavioral Health campus in Wauwatosa. The addiction recovery center is supported by your gifts to the Foundation's ongoing \$1.5 million *Renew, Restore, Rebuild* campaign.

The new facility has twice the capacity and space for integrative therapies. It also includes a Serenity Garden with decorative bricks that can be personalized by donors.

You can still support recovery efforts with a gift or brick purchase. Contact Allison Klein at allison.klein@aurora.org for more information.

Giving Circle photo caption from cover:

Left to right, standing: Cheryl Hill, Renee Johnson, Rachel Peete, Jean-Marie Poindexter, Melissa Goins, Mark Natzke, Marquette Baylor, Meg Grogan, Candace Sanchez; seated: Maureen Schuerman*, Kathy Turkal*, Michelle Zapinski, Shawn Hittman*, Sally Turner and Herica Silva.*

Not pictured: Annette Blanchard, David Caruso, Emma Chaves, Tom Cooper, Linda Davis*, Chris Doerfler, Cristy Garcia-Thomas*, Linda Haag, Satchi Hiremath, MD, Mark Huber*, Vivian King, Laura and Stephen Kollatz, Mindy Lubar Price*, Raechell Thuot and Craig Williams, Katie Wilke, Leslie Winger* and Stacey Zysk.*

* Giving Circle Founder

A “Giving Circle” of support for survivors of abuse

“I still look at my life and can’t believe how much better it is now than it was before.”

Shawn Hittman was sexually abused when he was just seven years old. He told no one and lived in shame about it for decades. He now credits the counseling he received at Aurora Healing Center on Bruce for helping him to let go of that shame and live a free, confident life. So when he was asked to be one of the founding members of the Aurora Healing & Advocacy Giving Circle in 2016, he didn’t hesitate.

“I know these programs make a difference and help people because they helped me,” Shawn said.

Shawn was one of 10 founders who each gave \$1,000 to form the Aurora Healing & Advocacy Giving Circle, the first donor group of its kind at Aurora. They are survivors and allies who pool their funds together and then, as a group, allocate funds to Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services projects that serve survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

In the last two years, this passionate group of donors has grown to more than 30 members, and they have allocated over \$47,000. Funded projects and items include counseling and basic needs for pregnant moms fleeing domestic violence, video remote language interpreters, mobile kits so nurses can travel to treat survivors, clean clothing for victims whose clothes are kept as evidence and iPads with age-appropriate content for child victims.

“This group is so thoughtful about their giving,” explained Sharain Horn, director of Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services. “They really look at how they can serve the greatest need. That’s more than giving; that’s caring.”

“I just want to make a difference in the world, and this has called to my spirit,” explained Cheryl Hill, who joined



Aurora Healing & Advocacy Giving Circle members Cheryl Hill and Shawn Hittman

the Giving Circle in 2017. “I have learned from some of the other members who are survivors that when you help these folks, they help others. That’s a good investment.”

A good investment that enables someone like Shawn to give back to others what was given to him. “I want all survivors to get the help they need so they can enjoy life the way I do now. They deserve it.”

By making a \$1,000 gift, you can join the Aurora Healing & Advocacy Giving Circle for 2019! To make a gift or learn more ways to support these programs, contact Cindy Hosale at cynthia.hosale@aurora.org.



Donors answer the call for help

One of the projects enabled by the Giving Circle is promotional support of the Aurora Healing Center Hotline. This group provided \$4,000 in seed money for an awareness campaign to promote the hotline that offers support to survivors 24/7, **no matter where they live**. Donors at this year’s Hope Shining Blue fundraising event went even further and provided another \$26,000 to help spread the word.

“This will enable more people who experience this violence to know they are not alone,” said Nicky Glaser, manager of Healing and Advocacy Services. “No matter what. No matter when. Help is here and it really is just a phone call away.”

The ads will appear on social media and in signage placed throughout Milwaukee-area bars, restaurants and bus shelters through mid-November.

Dawn Panfil: Celebrating a decade of Pink Possible

Dawn Panfil is a 10-year survivor of breast cancer. She remembers her diagnosis like it was yesterday.

“I didn’t feel sick; I didn’t feel a lump,” Dawn recalled. “And I remember thinking, ‘I can’t understand how something like this could happen to me.’”

It was 2008, and Dawn put her professional life, as the owner of Hair & Body Solutions in New Berlin, on hold. She underwent surgery, chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

As she recovered, Dawn wanted to do something to help others. So with help from leaders from Aurora West Allis Women’s Pavilion, Dawn launched Pink Possible—a fundraising campaign where stylists sold pink hair extensions to raise breast cancer awareness. That fall, Dawn and her stylists visited businesses, schools and universities, raising \$10,000. Still, Dawn knew something was missing.

She provided the spark that led to a new post-treatment effort, *Living Well Beyond Cancer*, a comprehensive 16-week women’s cancer survivorship program focusing on diet, exercise and individual treatment. To date, 188 people have participated in the program, free of charge, thanks to support from Pink Possible.

“*Living Well* was the missing piece,” Dawn said.

Meanwhile, Pink Possible grew—spanning 36 salons in 2017 across eastern Wisconsin. Collectively, it’s raised more than \$520,000 to support local Aurora-led breast cancer programs.



(L-R) Julie Kepple, MD, Aurora breast surgeon, poses with Dawn Panfil at a Pink Possible fundraising event in October.

“So many blessings have come from this. And it’s helping more people share their story while reminding so many to get screened.”

To make a gift in honor of Dawn or a breast cancer survivor close to you, visit give.aurora.org/pinkpossible or contact Kaelyn Cervero at kaelyn.cervero@aurora.org.

Thank you for helping us celebrate our innovators!



(L-R) Advocate Aurora Health’s Randy Varju, Cristy Garcia-Thomas, President and CEO Nick Turkal, MD, Kathy Turkal, Gala Honoree Judy Gardetto (center), Gala Chairs Susie and Dan Minahan, Diana Skogsbergh and President and CEO Jim Skogsbergh

We are incredibly grateful for the more than 800 people who attended the 2018 Aurora Gala, Aurora Health Care Foundation’s only system-wide gala. The event was held on Saturday, September 8, at the Wisconsin Center in downtown Milwaukee. Attendees were entertained by surprise musical guest Earth, Wind & Fire and raised more than \$800,000 to strengthen innovation and new care models that improve access to quality care across our health system.

“We are thrilled to celebrate so many individuals and teams who do so much to advance care at Advocate Aurora Health,” said Randy Varju, President and Chief Development Officer for Advocate Aurora Health Foundations. “We are so grateful to our many partners and supporters whose contributions will help so many more people live well.”

Dan and Susie Minahan of Milwaukee served as the event’s honorary chairs. At the event, longtime Aurora Health Care supporter, Mrs. Judy Gardetto, was recognized for her family’s continued support and dedication to Aurora Health Care. *You can see more photos from the night on page 8.*

Ernie Pomsel's passion for Aurora St. Luke's comes from the heart

Even though Ernie Pomsel now considers Naples, Florida, his home, he will always have a special home in Milwaukee when it comes to his heart care—that's Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center.

"Aurora St. Luke's is not just better than the rest, it's head and shoulders above the rest," Ernie explained. "I recommend it to everyone, and I wouldn't go anywhere else."

That passion for Aurora St. Luke's comes from the heart he received 20 years ago, when he needed a transplant after suffering several heart attacks. Ernie was hospitalized at Aurora St. Luke's for five months; he was waiting on the match that would eventually save his life. Not only does he keep coming back to the hospital for his care, he's making a donation through his living trust in honor of his physician, John Crouch, MD, a cardiovascular and thoracic surgeon.

Ernie's goal is for some of his gift to be used at the annual Celebration of Life event. It's a gathering of organ recipients and their donor families, all of whom received care through the transplant program at Aurora St. Luke's. Ernie attended several of the gatherings after he had his heart transplant, and he just returned this year, in September, to speak and celebrate his 20th anniversary.

"It's a really emotional thing. I've never seen a happier bunch of people in my life," he said of the annual celebration. "All of us are just so darn happy to be alive and our loved ones are so happy to have us. It's a powerful and unique group."

We're grateful to generous donors like Ernie who give their blessings back to help others. To learn ways you can make a gift from your will or living trust, contact Susan Mongillo at susan.mongillo@advocatehealth.com.



(L-R) John Crouch, MD, with Ernie Pomsel



(L-R) Joe Bartolotta with his living donor, his brother-in-law, Jamie Shiparski

Joe Bartolotta: Celebrating life and giving back

Milwaukee restaurateur Joe Bartolotta knows how important the annual Celebration of Life event is because he's grateful to be alive himself. He will celebrate six years since his kidney transplant in February 2019. He also had his transplant surgery at Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center.

Joe has diabetes and says he would be on dialysis, or likely dead, were it not for his kidney donor, his brother-in-law, Jamie Shiparski. "It's just one of the coolest gifts anybody could ever give you. I keep trying to come up with ways to thank him," Joe said of Jamie.

Joe's gratitude is one of the reasons Bartolotta Restaurants wanted to be the presenting sponsor of the Celebration of Life event. He feels a responsibility to give back and support his community, but this event is truly personal.

"Food, restaurants and nights like this are vehicles for connection," Joe shared. "The meal is a catalyst that brings people together and everyone there shares this common experience. Celebrating life—I like what it represents."

The annual Celebration of Life event is free for all transplant survivors thanks to generous donors like the Bartolottas. If you would like to support this event, contact Adam Martin at adam.martin@aurora.org.

How Jere McGaffey's generosity is bringing recognition to nurses

Jere McGaffey has spent decades donating his time and treasure to helping make Aurora Health Care the leading hospital system it is today. Jere is a past Aurora Health Care Board Chair and Board President of Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center.

He recently helped create the *Jere McGaffey Nursing Education Fund* for continuous training and education for nurses at Aurora St. Luke's. That fund received over \$120,000 in gifts and will help ensure the hospital maintains a highly skilled nursing team that can continue to meet the complex needs of patients.

Nurses have made a big impact on Jere's life. His late wife, Ruth, was treated for cancer at Aurora St. Luke's and he is extremely grateful for the comfort and care they provided.

"The doctors bring this great expertise and knowledge of course, but the other 23 hours of the day, the nurses are the ones taking care of you," Jere shared. "I'm hopeful that what I do helps to bring more prestige to nurses. They are an important element in the delivery of health care."

To learn how you can create a fund that supports care you're passionate about, email Jeannie Fischer at jeannie.fischer@aurora.org.



Jere McGaffey was honored at this year's Legacy of Excellence event for his dedication to Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center. Here, he is pictured with hospital president Marie Golanowski.

Honoring their son's memory by helping others



(L-R) Jeff and Robin holding a picture of their son, Ethan

Ethan Monson-Dupuis was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Lacrosse and a long-distance runner with a passion for musicianship and the Los Angeles Lakers. Ethan also fought substance use disorder for eight years. Like so many others battling addiction, he unfortunately lost his fight in 2016.

"For those eight years, we all struggled," said Ethan's mother, Robin Monson-Dupuis. "We put our marriage on the back burner and didn't pay enough attention to our daughter."

That's why Robin and her husband, Jeff, have established the *Ethan Monson-Dupuis Opiate Recovery Fund*. The fund supports Aurora's Opiate Recovery Program for patients receiving treatment within Aurora Behavioral Health. This includes alternative medicine options like yoga and meditation, plus scholarships to the Culver Alumni House, a sober living facility on the Aurora Behavioral Health campus.

To enable more access to these lifesaving services, Robin and Jeff recently held the first-ever Ethan's Run Against Addiction. The run not only raised \$40,000, it also helped reduce the stigma associated with substance use disorder.

"Ethan was a little boy who loved to bring me bouquets of dandelions. Now, imagine that they're full of seeds, and you blow on them and those seeds go out into the world," Robin explained to the run's participants. "Every step you take, you are the seed that sends out our messages of acceptance and love."

You can help honor Ethan's memory and support this care with a gift to the *Ethan Monson-Dupuis Opiate Recovery Fund*. For more information, contact Judi Strout at judi.strout@aurora.org.

Grateful Patient: A way to say thank you



(L-R) Colonel John Scherer, his son, Andrew, and wife, Janis

Colonel John Scherer met his wife, Janis, when she was a Navy nurse and he was an Air Force pilot in 1980. They were married for nearly 36 years, had three incredible children and were enjoying their granddaughter together.

Janis was diagnosed with a rare form of pancreatic cancer in 2007. Colonel Scherer says Janis did “everything humanly possible” to fight the disease, but it eventually took her life in 2017, at the age of 64.

Colonel Scherer is so grateful to Janis’ oncologist, Antony Ruggeri, MD, and his team at Aurora Cancer Care—Southern Lakes, that he wanted a way to say “thank you.”

“Dr. Ruggeri was just a rock star,” Colonel Scherer explained. “He and the nurses there were just exceptional. They got to know Janis and truly cared about her. I have no doubt that he was as good a doctor as we’ve seen.”

Colonel Scherer recently made a gift in Janis’ memory to Aurora Cancer Care—Southern Lakes to help other cancer patients.



Dolores, pictured with Alex Zacharias, MD, was up and walking the day of her surgery.

Dolores Miller was diagnosed with stage 2 bladder cancer in January 2017 just as she was making plans to attend her son’s wedding later in the year. Her care team at Aurora Medical Center in Grafton knew how important the wedding was to her; they also knew minimally invasive robotic surgery would give her the fastest recovery time.

Her surgery was performed in May by surgeon Alex Zacharias, MD. “I had surgery in the morning, and was up and walking that evening,” Dolores said. She had no pain from her surgery during her entire stay in the hospital. “The only time I took a pain pill was once when my back was sore.”

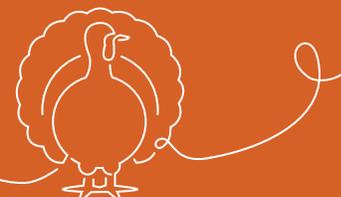
Dolores’ minimally invasive robotic surgery cured her of cancer; she had no follow-up chemotherapy or radiation, and she was able to dance with her son at his wedding. “Robotics is the future,” Dolores explained. “It’s the future for everybody.”

To show her gratitude, Dolores recently made a gift to Aurora Health Care Foundation’s Greatest Needs Fund in honor of her physicians.

If you would like a way to express your gratitude for care you received at Aurora Health Care, learn about our Grateful Patient program at give.aurora.org/waystogive.

How you can support local families this Thanksgiving!

Each year, donors to Aurora Family Service’s Family to Family Thanksgiving program provide more than 3,100 families in Milwaukee with all the ingredients they need to cook a holiday meal at home, together. To make a gift and bring families together, please visit give.aurora.org/thanksgiving.



Inspire

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Calendar of events

- Wednesday**
December 5 **Tree of Angels**
Aurora Zilber Family Hospice, Wauwatosa
Go to give.aurora.org/toa
- Saturday**
February 2 **Crystal Ball**
Veterans Terrace at Echo Park, Burlington
Go to give.aurora.org/crystalball

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For a complete list of sponsors, visit give.aurora.org/gala

The 2018 Aurora Gala was a great night to celebrate Aurora's innovators!
Thanks to all who attended.



Go to give.aurora.org/events to see our 2019 event calendar.