A New Lease on Life

Cancer survivor reunites with the transplant physician who saved his life.

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Message from Cristy

Dear Friends,

Health is so important. When we or a loved one are sick, it feels like the world stops for a moment. Nothing else matters but the steps needed to get well. When we regain our health after an illness, sometimes it can feel like we have been given a second chance at living.

I hope you will take a brief moment to really dive in to the stories in this edition of Inspire and see how your gifts are giving so many people a new lease on life. Your gifts mean more than you will ever know.

• Your gifts mean there is life after transplant.
• Your gifts mean a heart attack isn’t the end of the story.
• Your gifts mean that parents get the support they need to navigate their stressed-out, sleep-deprived life with a beautiful newborn.
• Your gifts mean thousands are living freed from the chains of addiction.
• Your gifts mean men and women are rebuilding their lives after abuse.

You are hope for so many. If we introduced you to every person whose lives were transformed by your gifts, this newsletter would be thousands of pages long. If you want to learn about all the ways your gifts are making a difference, we invite you to subscribe to our blog. Go to Aurora.org/FoundationBlog.

We are honored to share the stories of just a few people who wanted to share their joy and their new life with you. Thank you for the many ways you are giving and changing lives.

Always,

Cristy Garcia-Thomas
Executive Vice President, Aurora Health Care and President, Aurora Health Care Foundation

P.S. The new year is a great time to review your gift planning. Steve Davis, director of gift planning, has creative ideas to help you produce life-changing impact. Go to AuroraLegacy.org or call Steve at 414-219-4751 to schedule a complimentary review of your current plan.
Dan Kwiecinski vividly remembers the winter of 1990, “I had just gotten out of the hospital after my transplant. The snow was so crisp. It was just wonderful. There is so much you appreciate after going through all that.”

Dan was in his early 20’s when he was diagnosed with stage four Hodgkin's lymphoma and experienced a recurrence after nine months of chemotherapy. He shared his story with nearly 100 fellow survivors at a recent Celebration of Life event, dedicated to those treated by the Autologous Stem Cell Transplant Program at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center.

The first Autologous Stem Cell Transplant was performed at Aurora St. Luke’s in 1990. Today, Robert Taylor, MD, medical director of the Autologous Stem Cell Transplant Program at Aurora St. Luke’s, and his medical team have performed more than 700 transplants at Aurora St. Luke’s.

Dan admits that 23 years later, he has lost a bit of the wonder he had back then, because he has gone on with his life without cancer. He explains what he appreciated most about the approach Dr. Taylor and his medical team at Aurora St. Luke’s took with his cancer treatment was that, “their message to me was ‘the sooner we can get you back to your life, the better’. I loved that.”

“It’s the irony of this business … that the better patients do, the less that I see them. Everyone is out living their lives, which is the way that it should be,” said Dr. Taylor. “It is why I do what I do.”

Living is definitely what Dan has done since his transplant. A lot has changed since he first met Dr. Taylor 23 years ago. Now a married father of three and executive vice president at Hays Co. in Wauwatosa, Dan wants to make people’s lives better. “And I can do it because of what Aurora St. Luke’s has done for me,” Dan said.

“What began as a bucket list so many years ago has now been checked off multiple times over,” said Dan. He and his friends began an annual golf outing a number of years ago and donate the event proceeds to the transplant program at Aurora St. Luke’s. Over the years, they have donated nearly $100,000 to impact patient care. This year, their gift will directly support the experience of patients and families who are on the transplant unit at Aurora St. Luke’s.

Dan shared the sentiments of everyone gathered in thanking Dr. Taylor and his team for their care and support, “I hope you truly see how you have grown families. Just look at what you have contributed to life.”

Join Dan and his friends in supporting the transplant program at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center. Visit Aurora.org/Donate or contact Carol Rausch, Aurora Health Care Foundation director of development at 414-649-7892 or carol.rausch@aurora.org.

After being suddenly diagnosed with congestive heart failure, John Baker’s physicians at Aurora St. Luke’s implanted a Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) to keep his blood pumping while he waits for a transplant. Read more at Aurora.org/FoundationBlog.
Lighthouse on Dewey:
Transformed space is transforming lives

Christine remembers when she arrived at Dewey Center, suffering from active alcoholism and having experienced multiple relapses after treatment. “When I first arrived here, I was like the old President’s House, so broken and in need of a lot of work.”

With courage, strength and grace, Christine shared her story of recovery at the dedication of the new Lighthouse on Dewey – formerly known as the President’s House. A major fundraising campaign for Aurora Health Care Foundation, the $2.1 million renovation project to transform the space was completed in December 2013.

“Interestingly enough, some of the same people who saw hope in the house also saw a glimmer of hope in me,” she said. “And now I live a life that is full and one of purpose.”

Lighthouse on Dewey has truly become a beacon for those recovering from addiction. It provides a safe and welcoming space for several recovery support groups and community activities that promote healthy relationships, recovery and continued sobriety.

“The combination of Dewey Center, the Alumni House and Lighthouse on Dewey provides continued, ongoing care that is necessary to sustaining sobriety,” said Christine.

As she stood before the group of donors and volunteers who made this community resource a reality, Christine exuded gratitude and a selfless passion for helping others struggling with addiction.

“There is no greater gift than knowing you helped give someone their life back,” she said.

Aurora Behavioral Health Services needs your continued support to treat all who seek our services. Learn more and see the complete list of donors and cabinet members from this project at Aurora.org/LighthouseonDewey.

Join us as we honor Aurora Psychiatric Hospital’s 130 years of service to our community. Visit Aurora.org/Foundation to learn more.

Aurora offers a pathway to healing:
Show your support on Denim Day, April 23, 2014

More than 2,500 survivors of sexual abuse each year start their healing journey in an Aurora Health Care facility. In fact, Aurora Health Care is the only health care system in the state dedicated to helping survivors of abuse from the point of crisis through life-long recovery. By providing immediate care, advocacy and support to men, women, and children who have had a traumatic experience, Aurora caregivers become a critical piece of each survivor’s support network.

That’s why Aurora caregivers and community supporters rally around Denim Day – an international movement to raise awareness and support for survivors of sexual assault.

Aurora Health Care’s Denim Day activities will support local abuse response programs, including The Healing Center, The Sexual Assault Treatment Center (SATC) of Greater Milwaukee, and Aurora’s S.A.N.E. (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) Program at Aurora locations in Burlington, Elkhorn, Hartford, Kenosha, Oshkosh, Milwaukee, and Sheboygan.

“I am a survivor of sexual abuse. The Healing Center taught me skills to better cope. My guilt and shame evaporated into its walls. I am now blooming with life. I am so thankful.”

– Maria, survivor

Mark your calendars now to wear denim and make a gift to support survivors of sexual assault. To find out the top five ways to support survivors on Denim Day, go to Aurora.org/Denim Day or call 877-460-8730.
Equipping first-time parents with the support they need

Being a first-time parent can be stressful. Aurora Health Care is putting donor gifts to work by ensuring new parents have the support they need when they go home with their new baby. Here are some examples of how your gifts are helping parents:

**Aurora Medical Center Manitowoc County** is offering free online education for expecting parents with busy schedules. After a patient sees her physician, she receives free access to online sessions about breastfeeding, childbirth, C-sections and more. If she has questions, she can type them in the online tool for her next visit to the doctor. A free text4baby resource will even send parents text messages with baby care tips before and after their delivery date. Now, busy parents can login and learn when it is convenient for them.

**Aurora Lakeland Medical Center** caregivers spurred into action after learning that six babies born in their hospital were later hospitalized with shaken baby syndrome. Now, every parent who delivers at Aurora Lakeland watches a DVD during their stay that teaches them how to manage and cope with the stress of a new baby. The DVD is provided in English and in Spanish, and parents are provided with a copy to take home and share with others who are helping to care for their new baby.

Read more on programs supported by Aurora Health Care Foundation that are helping growing families, such as Safe Mom/Safe Baby, Aurora Family Service, The Stork’s Nest, Safe Ride and Safe Sleep. Visit [Aurora.org/FoundationBlog](http://Aurora.org/FoundationBlog).

The hospital that will always be near and dear to one man’s heart

Last December, Ed Willman, a lifelong resident of South Milwaukee, returned from his daily walk and felt something was wrong. His wife drove him to Aurora St. Luke’s South Shore. When Ed arrived at the Emergency Room, his heart stopped and he wasn’t breathing.

“We used our defibrillator and were able to shock his heart back into rhythm,” recalled Yvette Karweik, RN, who was with Ed in the Emergency Room.

Ed is so grateful for the care he received in the Emergency Room. “They brought me back and I’m alive today,” he shared.

Ed shared his experience at the Generations of Pride Ball on Jan. 25, which celebrated Aurora St. Luke South Shore’s 55 years of service to the community.

Ed has had a special place in his heart for his community hospital long before they got his beating again. “My father worked for the city and he helped grade the property the hospital is built on,” Ed told us. “People donated their time so we could have a hospital in our community.”

The community rallied together to show its support again, now a half-century later.

All proceeds from the Generations of Pride Ball supported Emergency Services at Aurora St. Luke’s South Shore.

Visit [Aurora.org/FoundationPhotos](http://Aurora.org/FoundationPhotos) to see photos from Generations of Pride. Support Aurora St. Luke’s South Shore by contacting Bridgette Frommell at 414-649-3636 or visiting [Aurora.org/Donate](http://Aurora.org/Donate).
Workplaces rally to make a difference
Local companies are putting the “fun” in fundraising with Aurora Health Care Foundation

When Debra Alder, President of Alder Companies, is looking for her family-owned business to support a charity, cause or nonprofit, she wants the contributions to make a difference in their community. And she is not alone.

When organizations partner with Aurora Health Care Foundation, all gifts support health care needs in their communities, where they can make the greatest impact.

The Milwaukee office of law firm Quarles & Brady LLP, has engaged their associates in supporting Aurora’s Family to Family Thanksgiving and Denim Day campaigns. This year their support of $9,730 meant 278 Thanksgiving meals for families.

“Our attorneys and employees have a passion for giving back,” said Ann Murphy, managing partner of the firm’s Milwaukee office. “We believe our enthusiasm for giving makes this a great place to work, and our overall commitment to help others defines who we are as a law firm. We actually have a lot of fun every year.”

CEO of ACUITY in Sheboygan, Ben Salzmann, has hosted a fundraiser for Aurora Health Care in Sheboygan County for the last two years. Last fall ACUITY hosted a Bucket List Bash, to support Aurora’s palliative care program. The event raised more than $160,000 and gave participants a chance to experience thrills such as gliding on a zip line and eating chocolate-covered crickets.

“One of the things ACUITY tries to do for our employees, for our insureds, for the community, for charities, is just be a rallying point,” Salzmann said.

Not all community fundraisers are of that scale. As Debra Alder sees it, “even if we see we can help a little bit, we say, ‘Let’s go. Let’s do it.’” She said, “Whether we donate a case of milk for an event, sponsor an employee walking for a cause, or make a corporate donation to the McGMO golf outing, each one creates a ripple effect that impacts the community.”

Because of her giving spirit and can-do attitude, Alder will be honored with the Humanitarian Award from Aurora Lakeland Medical Center at the Benefit Ball on May 10.

Want to get your organization involved in giving back to your local community? Contact Jeannie Jackson at 414-219-7378 or email her at Jeannie.Jackson@aurora.org.
Donor’s gift launches new **Journal of Patient-Centered Research and Reviews**

The Aurora Research Institute is pleased to announce the new *Journal of Patient-Centered Research and Reviews*. The first edition will be published in the 1st quarter of 2014. The journal is sponsored by the Robyn Temkin Memorial fund, and is seeking additional continued support from donors.

Founder of the journal and Senior Vice President and President of Aurora Research Institute Randall Lambrecht, PhD, explained, “A scientific journal allows Aurora Health Care to effectively communicate scientific findings, in addition to showcasing medical advancements that substantially improve human health and well-being. This quarterly journal will feature relevant, rigorously peer-reviewed original research of interest to a multi-specialty audience in medicine, health care, preventive care, research and basic science.”

Dennis Baumgardner, MD, has been appointed as the editor of the journal and will be leading a scientific editorial board. The journal will be accessible to academic medical centers, universities and medical institutions, as well as private and public donors.

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**Innovator joins Aurora Research Institute**

Meet Michael A. Thompson, MD, PhD, medical director of the early cancer research program, patient-centered research

What attracted you to your role?
Aurora has a history of research excellence that continues to grow. I have always had an analytical mind with an interest in problem solving. Aurora understands the core value of cancer research and this is an opportunity for me to help advance ongoing cancer research efforts.

What are you working on now that is exciting to you?
Everyone is working together to bring opportunities to improve cancer treatments. Aurora Health Care was approached by Novartis to participate as one of the first community sites in the country in a clinical trial that focuses personalized cancer care based on molecular biomarkers that may be targets for cancer therapy. This is very exciting. This has happened in other cancers such as lung cancer and breast cancer and this innovative concept is now active at Aurora. I am also grateful to serve as the guest editor for the first issue of the *Journal of Patient-Centered Research and Reviews*, which is a thematic issue on melanoma.

You are active in social media. What benefits do you see from that?
I currently have 4,000 followers on Twitter – physicians, patients, advocacy groups, pharma, biotech, mobile health and scientists. I helped start the multiple myeloma social media (#mmsm) Twitter discussion group. Online, people can passively read or engage and interact based on their level of interest with each topic.

Why is community support of research so important?
Donations from the community help to fund research projects and clinical trials that make strides in cancer treatments and options. When you support research you are improving care for the long term.

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To learn more about how you can support innovative medical research at Aurora Research Institute or this new scientific journal, please contact Jim Thompson at 414-219-4764 or James.Thompson@aurora.org.
The cover photo features the reunion of Dan Kwiecinski with his physician Robert Taylor, MD, medical director of the Autologous Stem Cell Transplant Program at Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center.

The information presented in this newsletter is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your own physician. Contact your physician if you believe you have a health problem. If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call Aurora Health Care Foundation at 877-460-8730. ©2014 Aurora Health Care Foundation.

Join us for a fabulous evening of denim runway fashion, shopping and art as we celebrate and honor survivors of sexual assault. All proceeds from this event will support The Healing Center, a Well Community Program of Aurora Health Care.

Tickets for this event are $50 or $400 for a group of 10. Sponsorships begin at $2,500.

To attend, please contact Stephanie Shabangu at 414-219-4716 or register online at Aurora.org/HopeShiningBlue.

If interested in attending an event or to learn about sponsorship, donation or volunteer opportunities, please call Aurora Health Care Foundation at 877-460-8730 or email thankyou@aurora.org.

Dr. Jeffrey Shovers, Pamela Shovers, Amanda Risse, Karen Pokorny, Emily Steffan and Lori Kania at Aurora West Allis Medical Center’s 2013 Evening of Promise, which raised more than $65,000 to benefit the Senior Resource Nurse Program.

To learn more about how to support the Senior Resource Nurse Program, please contact Elaine Maly, Aurora Health Care Foundation development director at 414-219-7827 or Elaine.Maly@aurora.org.