

Winter 2021/Spring 2022

BENEVOLENT VOICE

A publication for donors and friends of Ascension Borgess Foundation, Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation and Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation

INSIDE:

New Ascension Borgess
Cancer Center

Education at the heart of
diabetes clinic mission

Quality and safety earn
Ascension Borgess
national recognition



Ascension Borgess
Foundation



I am pleased to share with you our newest and upgraded version of the *Benevolent Voice*. The magazine will be published twice a year. Through the *Benevolent Voice*, we will share with you, our most trusted donors, Board members, volunteers and friends, the exciting happenings at Ascension Borgess across our four hospitals in southwest Michigan. We hope you find the content enlightening, and it reinforces the trust you have in us as your local Catholic healthcare partner.

June 30, 2021, concluded our fiscal year. Please know how much we appreciate and value you as donors and volunteers. The last two years have been challenging for our healthcare workers who have been on the front lines keeping our communities safe. Our Ascension Borgess nurses, physicians and associates value and appreciate the prayers, kind words and donations you have made in expressing your support.

We see a new dawn on the horizon, and our future is bright because of people like you who believe that having a Catholic health system is an essential part of our communities. Our foundations (Ascension Borgess, Ascension Borgess-Lee and Ascension Borgess Allegan) are conduits between the hospitals and communities we serve. Our goal is to provide each donor with the opportunity to advance quality healthcare in their communities through philanthropy. We take this responsibility seriously and promise we will continue to use your donations as intended.

I invite you to reach out to me personally at the Ascension Borgess Foundation to share your thoughts about the new *Benevolent Voice* or learn how you may become more involved with your local foundation.

Warmest Regards,



Craig T. Chindemi

Chief Development Officer, Ascension Southwest Michigan Region
Ascension Borgess, Borgess-Lee and Borgess Allegan Foundations

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269-226-8100

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Cindy Schrauben, Great Gus Marketing

Cindy Schrauben, MA, has more than 25 years of experience writing for magazines and businesses. As the owner of Great Gus Marketing, she helps her clients achieve their business goals through copywriting, content writing and strategic marketing.



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Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. As one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the U.S., Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. In FY2021, Ascension provided \$2.3 billion in care of persons living in poverty and other community benefit programs. Ascension includes more than 150,000 associates and 40,000 aligned providers. The national health system operates more than 2,600 sites of care – including 142 hospitals and more than 40 senior living facilities – in 19 states and the District of Columbia, while providing a variety of services including clinical and network services, venture capital investing, investment management, biomedical engineering, facilities management, risk management, and contracting through Ascension's own group purchasing organization.



Reflection

*Benjamin Schaefer, M.Div., BCC
Manager of Spiritual Care, Ascension Michigan*

Throughout this pandemic, we have talked about how it is a disruptor event. It has changed the ways we do many day-to-day tasks and activities – from shopping and the way we greet others, to how we connect with our closest friends and family. It has even

disrupted the ways we grieve those we have lost. Most of these changes have been hard, even unbearable, but a few have had a silver lining. For instance, the pandemic situation has helped me to be more consistent in talking with my sister who lives far away. It has helped me reflect on what is truly important in my life and the importance of being there for my community.

COVID-19, however, hasn't been the only disruptor event at play. There is one that is far more powerful and long lasting. It is hope. I have seen the hope in patients' eyes as they look at the team taking care of them and bringing them safely through their illness. I have seen hope as our associates receive their vaccinations and finally let themselves believe there could be an end to this sad and difficult pandemic. As supporters of the foundation, you too are a part of this hope. You have stood beside us as we strive to live out our Mission in a terribly difficult time. You have helped associates, patients and their families find hope, strength and resilience. Thank you for blessing our associates and our community in ways that bring hope.

Mission

Rooted in the loving ministry of Jesus as healer, we commit ourselves to serving all persons with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable. Our Catholic health ministry is dedicated to spiritually centered, holistic care which sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities. We are advocates for a compassionate and just society through our actions and our words.

Vision

We envision a strong, vibrant Catholic health ministry in the United States which will lead to the transformation of healthcare. We will ensure service that is committed to health and well-being for our communities and that responds to the needs of individuals throughout the life cycle. We will expand the role of laity, in both leadership and sponsorship, to ensure a Catholic health ministry in the future.

Values

Service of the poor — Generosity of spirit, especially for persons most in need

Reverence — Respect and compassion for the dignity and diversity of life

Integrity — Inspiring trust through personal leadership

Wisdom — Integrating excellence and stewardship

Creativity — Courageous innovation

Dedication — Affirming the hope and joy of our ministry



Ascension



New Ascension Borgess Cancer Center offers convenience, comfort and comprehensive care for patients

By Cindy Schrauben

When patients hear the words “You have cancer,” they enter a frightening, stressful time. That reality was forefront in the minds of a team of Ascension Borgess professionals when they began to reimagine cancer care in southwest Michigan.

The team, led by Iman Mohamed, MD, and Adam Davis, surveyed and spoke with cancer patients to learn about their needs. The result of their extensive research and evaluation is the new Ascension Borgess Cancer Center which opened in September.

“This is a building that encompasses everything a modern cancer center should have,” Mohamed says. “It’s constructed with a vision for the future, offering multidisciplinary services to patients.”

Visitors entering the 38,000-square-foot state-of-the-art building experience a large, bright atrium

that overlooks 8.5 acres of wooded land. The center, situated off of Drake Road next to Asylum Lake on Kalamazoo’s west side near U.S. 131 and Stadium Drive, is convenient for patients coming from Kalamazoo and outlying communities.

“We really listened to patients” in planning the center, says Davis, Director of Oncology Services for Ascension Borgess. “Patients said they wanted easy access and easy parking. We also wanted to offer as comfortable an environment as possible.”

Mohamed says the building has a peaceful atmosphere. “All patient rooms have windows overlooking a natural area, where they can see sunrises and sunsets.”

The center is staffed by “10 providers who are absolutely amazing,” Davis says about the physicians,

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nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants. "This is a group of people who truly know and work well together." Rounding out the center's team are 48 support staff, including infusion nurses, pharmacists, registration clerks and other administrative professionals.

The Ascension Borgess Cancer Center's creation follows a long-term joint venture between Ascension Borgess and Bronson Healthcare in the West Michigan Cancer Center (WMCC). After serving the community from a downtown Kalamazoo facility for more than 25 years, the two medical groups outgrew the space and decided to build separate facilities.

WMCC will continue to serve the community, offering radiation, surgical and gynecologic oncology services. The Ascension arm of the facility will operate as a new practice named Ascension Borgess Oncology Downtown. The Ascension Borgess Cancer Center will focus on medical oncology services including chemotherapy and immunotherapy.

During the new cancer center's planning, there was the opportunity to really look at what works for patients.

"We wanted to provide better continuity of care than was possible at WMCC," Davis says. "The center achieves this with an in-house pharmacy, a dedicated social worker and a dietitian. There is even a yoga studio with classes taught by an oncology infusion nurse and a financial counselor to help patients ease treatment costs. We're focusing on the whole person, not just cancer."

Another significant addition is an on-site laboratory. "Every patient needs to have labs done before chemo, and we will be able to turn them around in 20 minutes," Davis says. "Most cancer centers don't have that."

In addition to listening to patients, Mohamed's experience is benefiting the Ascension Borgess Cancer Center's development. Mohamed, a medical oncologist who holds a master's degree in public health and an MBA, came to Kalamazoo in 2018 after creating several cancer centers on Michigan's east side. Though creating another cancer center wasn't in her initial plans, she feels called to practice her talents where

they are most useful. "We're here to make the world better for our fellow humans," she says.

The Ascension Borgess Cancer Center will help provide more accessible oncology care for patients in outlying areas through relationships with four affiliate hospitals: Ascension Borgess Allegan, Dowagiac's Ascension Borgess-Lee, Three Rivers Health and Oaklawn in Marshall.

"We are able to offer all the specialty services (to the outlying areas) and have doctors in the affiliates," Davis says. "Patients will receive the same care at the affiliates that they will get in Kalamazoo. People don't have to travel to Kalamazoo to get the same care they can get in their community."

Ascension Borgess Cancer Center features:

- ✓ 33 infusion bays
- ✓ Five private infusion rooms
- ✓ 35 exam rooms
- ✓ On-site pharmacy
- ✓ On-site laboratory
- ✓ Nurse navigation program
- ✓ Survivorship program
- ✓ Medical social work
- ✓ Collaborative research
- ✓ Genetic services
- ✓ Tumor board
- ✓ Health and wellness classes
- ✓ Dietary
- ✓ Boutique patient-centered wellness program
- ✓ Access to prevention and early detection programs, cancer education and support services



Ascension Borgess Hospital Incident Command team

Crisis team quickly responds to evolving pandemic

By Cindy Schrauben

Before most Americans knew much about the mysterious new virus spreading throughout the world, Ascension Borgess leadership began preparing for the COVID-19 pandemic. Together with their counterparts at Ascension Michigan and Ascension, they began gathering in January 2020 to create procedures and form plans to care for southwest Michigan residents during what would become the world's biggest health crisis in more than 100 years.

"Everything was unknown," says B.J. Predum, Vice President of Operations for Ascension Borgess. "Nobody knew how this was going to impact our community."

As they saw the virus take hold in Detroit and New York, Ascension Borgess leaders waited, wondering when it would hit home and how big the hit would be. "There was a lot of preparation and anticipation for things that we just didn't know at that time. We were navigating the unknown."

Predum and Sarah Knisely-King, MSN, RN, Vice President of Nursing for Ascension Borgess, led the hospital team in forming a preparedness plan and incident command center from which they made all

decisions on combating the pandemic. Departments from all areas of Ascension Borgess Hospital are part of the team as well as representatives from Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital, Ascension Borgess-Pipp Hospital and Ascension Borgess-Lee Hospital.

Support for the team was also available from outside the immediate Ascension Borgess system. "We were fortunate because Ascension state leadership brought all of our local hospital leadership together to start talking about an incident command structure at both the local and state level to combat this pandemic," says Predum.

The first local surge of COVID cases arrived later than expected, giving Ascension Borgess leaders time to adapt their response. The team's dedication drove them as they worked very long days. "We were able to come together, socially distance and work through action plans late into the night, every night," Predum says. "The first number of weeks, it was a 24-hour incident command with active work going on at least 18 hours a day by these individuals who are so dedicated to serving our hospitals and our communities."

As a United States Navy veteran, Predum is well versed in crisis management. Still, this crisis called for a unique incident command center for which there was no

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roadmap. “Usually, an incident command center is created because of an emergent situation, such as a fire, and stays open for a brief amount of time until that event is finished,” he says. “With a pandemic situation, it’s much different. We had to evolve our incident command structure to take care of a pandemic that hit us over time.”

One of the first evolutions was transforming from meeting in person to meeting virtually. The ability to meet virtually was essential, not only due to the virus’s nature but because, in addition to the main hospital in Kalamazoo, the incident command center serves three hospitals: Ascension Borgess-Lee in Dowagiac, Ascension Borgess Allegan, and Ascension Borgess-Pipp in Plainwell. The team soon adapted by creating shared documents to help them virtually monitor patients, hospital environments, screening stations and vaccinations.

“We were able to creatively come up with the virtual roadmap for navigating incident command that has led us into an environment that a year ago I never would’ve seen us operating in,” Predum says. “It’s not only very effective but is very efficient.”

The nature of hospital work created another challenge in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. “We had to create environments to safely take care of our patients while also creating an environment that was safe for our caregivers to deliver that care. That was a heavy lift,” Predum says.

The nursing staff also made changes quickly. “We rapidly changed models of care, obtained and deployed additional nursing resources and expedited rapid training for nurses,” Knisely-King says. “Our nursing teams, despite being as exhausted and scared as they were, stepped up and provided amazing care to all of our patients.”

Preparing for the pandemic response was made a bit easier for Ascension Borgess staff when the first surge of cases arrived later than expected.

“I would say that that’s definitely God’s grace in our community, that we were given that time to really prepare and then creatively come up with solutions,” Predum says. “We were able to create COVID units where we could care for these patients in a negative pressure suite isolated from the rest of the hospital, build that environment and perfect it, before we were hit with a larger surge.”

Assistance from the state- and national-level Ascension teams was vital in transforming the hospital quickly and increasing inpatient capacity for treating COVID patients. The hospital went from 424 patient beds to 529.

“We were able to get the capital we needed to purchase equipment and complete the construction in a very short time,” Predum says. “We have created environments that allow us to treat patients in very controlled spaces that are the safest for patients as well as staff.”

These areas are still being used for COVID care but can go dormant when the crisis subsides and used again later if needed.

Predum stresses that all Ascension staff have been working long hours through evolving, challenging situations for nearly two years. People tend to work in healthcare because they have a “heart for service,” Predum says, and that’s been tested throughout the COVID crisis.

“So many showed that heart. From all the caregivers to food and environmental services, and facilities, everybody was needed to make everything work,” Predum says.





Ascension Borgess-Lee Hospital team



Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital team

"Staff dedication was put to the test. There were times that were so hard, not only for our physicians caring for COVID patients and other patients but for our associates and nursing staff who pour their hearts into this hospital. A lot of times, it was an environment where a number of our patients and even some of our associates didn't make it through this pandemic.

"When you work in healthcare, you can build a wall, and you can deal with this at work and not take it home," Predum adds. "That wall was removed. There wasn't a caregiver who could leave it at work anymore. You're in it, and that was a tough environment."

Ascension places a priority on taking care of staff. "There is a lot of focus on taking care of them, not only with making sure they have PPE but meals and providing an environment where they can get away and recover," Predum says. "A huge strength in Ascension is that the associates who are affected by this pandemic are cared for as much as our patients."

As Vice President of Nursing for Ascension Borgess, Knisely-King saw the results of Ascension's efforts to secure PPE. "The provision of PPE for our teams in a time when it was needed and scarce across the country was a challenge," she says. "Ascension went to great lengths to ensure our clinical teams had the PPE that was needed to protect staff during their shifts."

Ascension also developed ways to take care of associates so they could take the best care of patients.

"We focused on providing self-care tools for our clinical teams, recognizing the toll this pandemic has taken on them mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually," Knisely-King says. "We created wellness rooms for the staff to be able to take a break and relax for a few minutes in a Zen-like atmosphere, away from all the chaos. The Wysa app was introduced which provides information and suggestions on self-care to help our people prioritize caring for themselves to provide the best care for our patients."



Ascension Borgess-Pipp Hospital team

Predum says, "We have learned the power of our organization. It's very difficult to talk about everything we've done over the past two years. Just the amount we've learned and how we've risen to the challenge and responded to this is inspiring, and it's something we should all be very proud of."



Thank you for your donation to our care teams

Ascension Borgess associates would like to extend a very sincere **Thank You** to the southwest Michigan community for the incredible generosity you have shown during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your gifts brought many smiles and were deeply appreciated.

-Ascension Borgess, Ascension Borgess-Pipp, Ascension Borgess-Lee and Ascension Borgess Allegan associates





New Director of Nursing named for Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital and Ascension Borgess-Pipp Hospital

By Cindy Schrauben

MEET DOROTHA (DEE) HOFFMAN, MBA, BSN, RN

Dorotha (Dee) Hoffman has been named Director of Nursing for Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital and Ascension Borgess-Pipp Hospital.

Hoffman, who has been with Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital since 2015, is embarking on several projects to bolster the hospitals' nursing care. The first project is establishing nurse practice councils at each hospital. Nurses representing various departments sit on the committees and study potential areas of improvement for patient safety and quality as well as process enhancements.

"Nurses volunteer to be on the councils and approve practices for things that are in the best interest of patients and nurses," Hoffman says. "We've already implemented fall precautions that were recommended by the Ascension Borgess Allegan council, including color coding and new bed alarms."

With a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Excelsior College in Albany, NY, an MBA from the University of Detroit Mercy and Emergency



Department leadership experience, Hoffman is well-equipped to lead the nursing staff. She is now busy expanding on the hospitals' management team, which includes: **Betty Sousley, MSN, RN**, Manager for both Emergency Departments; **Shelia Stillson, RN**, Manager for the Acute Care Inpatient Units; **Darrell Ratliff**, Supervisor for the Respiratory Therapy departments; **Michelle Owens**, Manager of Surgical Services for Ascension Borgess Allegan.

Hoffman says the Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital computer system is also receiving an upgrade. The upgrade will join the hospital system with the overall Ascension network, an outcome of the hospital merging with Ascension.

The new system will "increase nurses' communication across the board," Hoffman adds. "They will be able to document patient records electronically so records will follow the patient no matter which Ascension facility they visit. It will be much better for patients and nurses."

Education at the heart of Ascension Borgess Diabetes and Endocrine Center's mission

By Cindy Schrauben

Donors' support of Uninsured/Underinsured Clinic ensures patients receive needed care

In 2010, Della Ingram-Stephens' top priority was working and taking care of her family. Seeing to her health was often an afterthought. That changed when she ended up in the Ascension Borgess Emergency Department (ED) at age 50.

"I was very dizzy and weak, and I couldn't see well," Ingram-Stephens says about her decision to ask her son to drive her to the ED. Hospital staff found that Ingram-Stephens had dangerously high blood sugar (glucose) levels and quickly went to work to get her out of danger, stabilize her and admit her to Ascension Borgess Hospital.

Ingram-Stephens' visit to the Ascension Borgess ED was just the beginning of her health journey. She was in the hospital for a week and a half, during which doctors and nurses were successful in lowering and stabilizing her blood sugar level. They also diagnosed her with type 2 diabetes, a chronic disease in which the body does not use insulin properly, leading to high blood sugar levels. Having high blood sugar levels for an extended period can lead to health problems such as cardiovascular disease, nerve damage, kidney damage or failure, and blindness.

Diabetes is a long-term disease, but patients can manage it through diet, exercise and medication. During her hospital stay, Ingram-Stephens learned about the Ascension Borgess Diabetes and Endocrine Center, where she could develop relationships with diabetes experts and learn how to control the disease. Ingram-Stephens began attending group education classes at the clinic and seeing the clinic's physicians, including Dr. Michael Valitutto, who leads the clinic.



Millions of Americans need diabetic care

While Ingram-Stephens' introduction to diabetes may seem dramatic, the diagnosis is not unusual. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 10.5 percent of the U.S. population lives with diabetes, while 34.5 percent of the adult population is prediabetic. Prediabetes is when a patient's blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed as having type 2 diabetes. Additionally, an estimated 7.3 million people are undiagnosed diabetics. These statistics should give everyone pause and incite a sense of urgency to create awareness about diabetes, says Dr. Valitutto.

"The facts are clear and heart-wrenching: Diabetes patients lose an average of seven years of life, and their chance of developing heart failure is two and a half times higher than average," Dr. Valitutto says. "And three-quarters of those with diabetes don't adequately control it."

Dr. Valitutto and others at the diabetes center are working to spread awareness of diabetes and increase understanding of why it is crucial to control the disease. "If you look at the costly life-disrupting consequences of poor diabetes care, it's devastating," Dr. Valitutto says. When patients control their blood glucose, blood

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pressure, blood cholesterol and stop smoking, they significantly reduce their odds of developing severe complications from diabetes. "At least three out of every four diabetics don't adequately control" these four factors, Dr. Valitutto adds.

Educating patients about how to control their blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol through diet, exercise, medication and insulin, if needed, is at the heart of the center's work. "We have a world-class education program," Dr. Valitutto says. "We're a Michigan-certified and an American Diabetes Association-certified Diabetes Center of Excellence."

Dr. Valitutto explains that patients receive 10 hours of face-to-face education in their first year with the center. Each year after, if there's a change to their health, they can receive two additional hours of updated education if requested by a clinician. The education ranges "from understanding how to monitor your glucose, how to make better food choices, and how to administer these game-changing, lifesaving medications," Dr. Valitutto says. In addition, patients work with a diabetes coach who "walks that journey with them because this is a marathon, not a sprint."

Providing care for uninsured/underinsured patients

An essential part of the Ascension Borgess Diabetes and Endocrine Center is the Diabetes Uninsured/Underinsured Clinic. The clinic provides eligible patients with free doctor visits, lab work, diabetes education, and glucose meters with ongoing testing supplies.

"Patients who receive care through the uninsured clinic receive identical care as those who have premium health insurance," Dr. Valitutto says. In addition, a diabetes education coordinator helps patients complete assistance applications to pharmaceutical companies so they can benefit from free diabetes medications.

Funding for the uninsured clinic comes from generous donations from Cole Community Solutions, Schupan & Sons, and the Ascension Borgess Foundation. "We could not provide care to uninsured and underinsured patients without these generous donors," Dr. Valitutto says. "One hundred percent of the dollars from these donors has gone directly to patient care."

Patient Della Ingram-Stephens received care through the

Do you know your ABCDESS?

To minimize cardiac risk, Dr. Valitutto suggests diabetes patients keep track of their ABCDESS, which stands for:

- A A1C blood sugar regulated** — aim for 7% or less.
- B Blood pressure control** — the target is less than 30/80 mmHg.
- C Cholesterol** — LDL cholesterol should be less than 2.0 mmol/L.
- D Diet** — it is best to meet with a dietitian to learn which foods to eat.
- E Exercise** — 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week.
- S Smoking cessation** — smoking makes it more difficult to control blood sugar.
- S Salicylates or aspirin** — can help control glucose levels in type 2 diabetics.

uninsured/underinsured clinic. She credits the education and care she received through the clinic with her now having her diabetes under control.

Ingram-Stephens learned about proper nutrition for diabetics at the clinic. She became a pescatarian which means she eats fish and eggs but not meat. The pescatarian diet also stresses other vegetarian foods such as vegetables, fruits, dairy, beans, tofu and grains. "I don't want to feel bad every day, so I will eat like this until the day I die," she says. "I didn't realize that what I was eating was all wrong."

Changing her diet and adding an exercise regimen that includes walking twice a day – two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening – has led to weight loss, stabilizing her blood sugar, and lowering the amount of insulin she needs. "I feel really good," she says.

Ingram-Stephens is grateful to the donors who make the uninsured clinic possible. She says financial donations to the clinic have played a large part in her success by making educational classes and medication available. "A lot of people can't afford the medication they need. That's why a lot of people die," she says. "Donations keep people alive."

The clinic is such an indispensable part of her life that Ingram-Stephens has included it in her will. "Whatever is left after I'm gone goes to the clinic."

Diabetes symptoms and risk factors

Warning signs/symptoms of diabetes

If you experience any of the following symptoms, see your doctor and have your blood sugar tested:

- Urinate a lot, often at night
- Are very thirsty
- Lose weight without trying
- Are very hungry
- Have blurry vision
- Have numb or tingling hands or feet
- Feel very tired
- Have very dry skin
- Have sores that heal slowly
- Have more infections than usual

TYPE 1 DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes, which generally begins in childhood through young adulthood, can develop quickly and be serious. With type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin, which it needs to get the glucose it uses for energy from the bloodstream into the body's cells. In addition to the symptoms listed above, look out for nausea, vomiting or stomach pains.

TYPE 2 DIABETES

Type 2 diabetes usually begins in adulthood (though younger people can develop it) and progresses over time. Unlike type 1 diabetics, type 2 diabetics' bodies produce insulin, but their bodies do not use it properly. Symptoms can be difficult to identify, so many people do not even know they have diabetes. In addition to the symptoms listed above, it's a good idea to become familiar with the risk factors of type 2 diabetes (listed below).

TYPE 2 DIABETES RISK FACTORS

You are at higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes if you:

- Are overweight.
- Are 45 years old or older.
- Have a parent or sibling who has type 2 diabetes.
- Lead a sedentary lifestyle and exercise less than three times a week.
- Have had gestational diabetes or given birth to a baby that weighed more than 9 pounds.
- Are African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American or an Alaskan native.



ASCENSION BORGESS DIABETES & ENDOCRINE CENTER RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

The Ascension Borgess Diabetes and Endocrine Center offers complete care for diabetes and endocrine issues. The center is the recipient of the following awards and recognitions:

- Certificate of CDC Full Recognition – National Diabetes Prevention Program
- The Diabetes Self-Management Education Program, Certified by the Diabetes Prevention & Control Program, Michigan Department of Health & Human Services
- Certificate of Recognition from the American Diabetes Association for meeting the National Standards for Diabetes Self-management Education

If you or someone you know is in need of diabetic care, contact:

Ascension Borgess Diabetes & Endocrine Center
1722 Shaffer St., Suite 3
Kalamazoo, MI 49048
269-226-8321

Personal experience motivates Cole family to raise funds for diabetes clinic

By Cindy Schrauben



Pictured: Robert Schauer, Tim Cole, Dr. Michael Valitutto and Craig Chindemi

For the Cole family, diabetes is a private, personal matter. However, the quest to aid others in their battle against the disease is public.

For more than 20 years, the Cole family and the Cole Automotive Group have raised funds to fight diabetes through Cole Community Solutions and their annual fundraiser, Touchdown for Diabetes. Each year, the family transforms the Cole Buick GMC Cadillac dealership campus into an enormous tailgate party. Tom Cole, Cole Automotive Group's founder, started the event after his son, Tim, was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. Having lived with the challenge of managing the disease, the family wanted to help others take charge of their health and diabetes.

"He (Tom Cole) had a passion for diabetes because I am a diabetic," Tim Cole says, "and it allows us to give back to the community, which has always been a driving force for Cole Automotive."

After Tom's passing in 2015, Tim and his wife, Tina, took over the event.

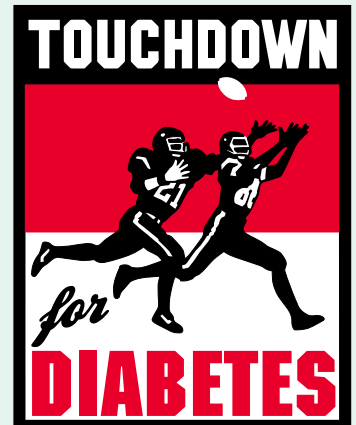
Initially, Touchdown for Diabetes raised money for juvenile diabetes but transitioned to funding the Ascension Borgess Diabetes and Endocrine Center's Uninsured/Underinsured Clinic. The Cole family understands the many challenges diabetes patients face and saw firsthand the difficulty some patients have paying for treatment.

"Being diabetic, I understand how difficult it can be to manage diabetes," Tim says. "There are many negative effects, and if we can be a small part of a cause that helps people afford care, we want to do that." He emphasizes his admiration for the clinic's educational component, noting that education is the key to managing diabetes.

The virtual event, held on November 18, 2021, raised \$106,000 for uninsured and underinsured patients to receive diabetic care at the Ascension Borgess Diabetes and Endocrine Center.

Valitutto, who leads the clinic, says funds from donors make it possible to provide care, including doctor visits, educational sessions and lab work, for about 250 uninsured and underinsured patients each year. "We could not provide this care to the patients without generous donors such as the Cole family," he says.

For more information, visit touchdowndiabetes.events or find us on Facebook.



Schupan & Sons' Rich Holtz Golf Outing honors late employee, raises \$48,000 for diabetes clinic

By Cindy Schrauben

Rich Holtz's favorite saying, "The man with the best army wins," sums up Schupan & Sons' involvement in raising funds for multiple community organizations. Marc Schupan and the entire company have taken on the fight for diabetes with the Rich Holtz Golf Outing, named for the beloved late vice president of the company's Beverage Recycling Division.

The 21-year-old outing is a labor of love for Schupan and his staff, who work numerous hours preparing for the event each year. It's all to honor Holtz and lighten the load carried by many diabetes patients who are uninsured or underinsured and have difficulty paying for treatment. In 2021, \$48,000 was raised through the outing and donated to the Ascension Borgess Diabetes Uninsured/Underinsured Clinic.

Schupan is humble about his involvement in the event and its success. "I am just happy it has evolved into such a successful outing," he says. "I am hoping this one event helps impact peoples' lives positively."

Dr. Michael Valitutto, who leads the Ascension Borgess Diabetes and Endocrine Center and the center's Diabetes Uninsured/Underinsured Clinic, says the funds raised by Schupan & Sons and other donors positively impact the lives of diabetes patients – about 250 each year.

"Patients who receive care through the uninsured clinic receive identical care as those who have premium health insurance," Dr. Valitutto says. "The services include seeing a doctor or another medical provider, sessions with an educator, and lab services. And we work through patient assistance to get the patients the meds that they need and deserve."

Because Holtz received care at the clinic, it was natural to select it to receive the funds raised at the outing. While Schupan and those who worked with Holtz say they will never forget him, the event serves to ensure others remember him.

"I have never met anyone who, within 15 minutes of communication, could gain the respect and friendship as

Rich was able to with new people," Schupan said in his eulogy during Holtz's funeral in 1996. "There is a quote that fits; I believe this truly describes the gift he had: 'Remember that everyone you meet wears an invisible sign. It reads: Notice me. Make me feel important!'"

Through the Rich Holtz Golf Outing, "I feel positive knowing we are helping others in our community fight this dreadful disease," Schupan says.



Marc Schupan visits with Paula Holtz Redler at the 21st annual Rich Holtz Golf Event on June 7, 2021. This event raises over \$98,000 every year to be shared by Ascension Borgess Endocrine Clinic and Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Kalamazoo.



Marc Schupan looks on as an outing participant gives a donation to Sherry Butler (Big Brother, Big Sisters of Southwest Michigan) to participate in the "Beat the Pro" game.

Katie Skaggs named KVCC's Respiratory Care Preceptor of the Year

By Cindy Schrauben



Katie Skaggs, LRT, a member of Ascension Borgess Hospital's Respiratory Care team, was pleasantly surprised to receive the Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) 2021

Respiratory Care Preceptor of the Year Award. Each year, KVCC's

respiratory care students vote for the preceptor (i.e., an experienced practitioner who provides supervision) who has had the most impact on them during their clinical rotations.

"This was totally unexpected," Skaggs says. "I feel honored." Skaggs and the other Respiratory Care preceptors volunteer to assist students during their clinical rotations in addition to their regular duties. As a graduate of KVCC's program, Skaggs says she knows what the students are going through and believes she can help make the transition to their clinical rotations a bit easier.

"I can remember being a student, and it was overwhelming," Skaggs says. "I reassure them that all they are feeling is normal. I tell them it gets better with time and experience."

Being a preceptor has been a growing experience for Skaggs, and she's seen her patience develop. "I try to be encouraging and not critique how the students do things," she says. "I let them get a feel for their own way of doing things."

"Katie is an excellent respiratory therapist who genuinely connects with students and offers them top-notch clinical experiences," says Jason Ramsey, LRT, Respiratory Care Services Manager at Ascension Borgess Hospital. "She is caring, approachable, down to earth and patient. She is a tremendous asset to the Ascension Borgess Respiratory Care team."

Skaggs says while she is honored to receive the award, it isn't hers alone. "I want to give a shout-out to our whole department," she says. "Any one of us could have gotten this award because this is truly a team effort."



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For information on how to support any Ascension Borgess Hospital, please contact:

Craig Chindemi, CFRE
Chief Development Officer

t 269-226-5104
craig.chindemi@ascension.org



Ascension Borgess
Foundation

Ascension Borgess Hospital honors organ donors

Ascension Borgess Hospital is honoring those who make the ultimate selfless gift of life with the Organ Donor Memorial Tree installation. Thanks to generous donations from the Gift of Life Foundation, Ascension Borgess Foundation, board members and the southwest Michigan community, the project is possible.

Each donor who gave the gift of life through organ, cornea and tissue donations at Ascension Borgess, Ascension Borgess-Lee, Ascension Borgess-Pipp and Ascension Borgess Allegan hospitals is honored and remembered with an engraved leaf on the memorial tree. Stones at the tree base recognize financial contributions of \$2,500 and above to the Organ Donor Program.

"We wanted to install the Organ Donor Memorial Tree because it gives the staff, visitors and community the opportunity to walk by the tree each day and be reminded of those who gave the ultimate gift," says Susan Hanna, APACHE (Acute Physiology and Chronic Health Evaluation) System Coordinator.

Hanna says the memorial tree also provides a way to honor the sorrow and sacrifice of donors' families. "We hope it inspires others to give the gift of life through organ donation," she says.

The Organ Donor Memorial Tree helps the Ascension Borgess Organ Donor Program educate staff, patients, visitors and the community about the crucial need for organ, cornea and tissue donations. This education is critical because every 10 minutes someone is added to the national transplant waiting list. Tragically, 22 patients die each day because not enough organs are available.



The Ascension Borgess Organ Donor Program encourages people to join the Donor Registry and assures them that the quality of their medical care at the hospital will never be compromised.

Each organ donor has the comfort of knowing their donation will save or improve the lives of up to 75 people. Each of the eight donatable organs – lungs (2), liver, pancreas, heart, kidneys (2) and intestines – can add years to a recipient's life and significantly improve their quality of life. In addition, donated tissue such as tendons, skin and bones can be used to restore mobility and hope for combat veterans, burn victims and individuals with failing joints. Corneas, the most common transplant, can also be donated and used to restore vision.

Answers to common questions

Can I register as a donor if I have other medical conditions? Anyone is a potential organ donor despite their medical conditions or history.

Does my religious preference impact my ability to donate? All major faiths approve of donation.

Will I still receive lifesaving care? Being an organ, cornea and tissue donor does not affect the quality of someone's medical care at Ascension Borgess Hospital.

Become an organ donor

Registering to become an organ donor is easy and takes only about one minute. To register as a donor, visit Gift of Life Michigan golm.org/go/Borgess or scan the QR code. To make a donation to the organ donor program, or learn about other ways to support Ascension Borgess Hospital, contact the Ascension Borgess Foundation at 269-226-8100 or borgessfoundation.org.



"I would not be here if my donor had not made a conscious decision and then acted upon it."

**-HSR
Double Lung Transplant
Recipient**



Quality and safety focus leads to national recognition for Ascension Borgess Hospital

By Cindy Schrauben

A generation or two ago, Americans often had a strong allegiance to their local hospital and didn't give much thought to the quality of care offered or the hospital's safety record. This is changing, and today hospitals must prove to patients that they provide quality, safe healthcare, says Dr. Thomas Rohs, Chief Medical Officer for Ascension Borgess Hospital.

Consumers today are "not like our grandparents who just went to the hospital that was right down the street," says Dr. Rohs, who is also a surgeon. "Our grandparents wouldn't think to go to another town because the hospital was 50 percent better. People are different today." They will travel further to get care from healthcare providers who provide transparent proof of quality and safety.

In 2019, Ascension Borgess Hospital leadership committed to providing the community with evidence that the hospital is among the best by beginning to participate in national hospital safety-grading programs. The programs, such as the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade and Healthgrades, provide unbiased, independent reports on hospitals throughout the country. The rating programs are an outgrowth of the Affordable Care Act and large corporations' desire to spend their healthcare dollars on providers that will deliver the best return on investment.

Hospital leadership knew Ascension Borgess is better than average and set out to prove it to their patients and the community. "While Ascension Borgess Hospital has always offered superior patient care, leadership became more razor focused than ever on ensuring delivery of quality healthcare," says Barb Mulder, Director of Quality and Patient Safety for Ascension Borgess.

The results are coming in and verify Ascension Borgess Hospital's commitment to patient safety and quality of care. Among the notable findings:

Leapfrog's spring 2021 and fall 2021 conclusion rates the hospital as Grade A, an improvement from the B received in fall 2020.

- **America's 250 Best Hospitals Award** (2021 and 2020)
- **America's 100 Best Pulmonary Care** (2021, 2020 and 2019)
- **America's 100 Best Stroke Care** (2021, 2020 and 2019)
- **Joint Replacement Excellence Award** (2021, 2020 and 2019)
- **Neurosciences Excellence Award** (2021)
- **Named a Top 10 Hospital in Michigan** by *U.S. News & World Report* (out of 136 acute care hospitals in the state)

Participating in Leapfrog means the hospital opens its records, allowing an accurate, publicly available quality and safety picture. This participation attests to the quality processes and protocols the hospital has put in place to ensure patient safety.

"The goal is transparency," Mulder says. "The grading program results tell you exactly how we perform on multiple quality and patient safety measures."

To receive an A rating from the Leapfrog Group, high performance must be exhibited in most of the quality performance indicators. These indicators are publicly reported on the Leapfrog Group website as gauges, from red for the worst scores to green for the best scores.

"We have to give our patients and our community all of the information so they can make well-informed decisions on their own healthcare," Dr. Rohs adds. "The hospital safety-grading programs provide the consumer with the information to do this."

Participation in the safety reporting programs "puts the hospital under more of a microscope because it's a very comprehensive, complex formula of our overall inpatient hospital safety measures," Dr. Rohs says. The results are a "publicly reportable, reliable, validated system that shows you are less likely to experience death or an unintended

medical error in a Grade A hospital than lesser-graded hospitals."

Taking part in the grading programs and improving the hospital's scores takes commitment from associates at all levels of the hospital, starting with the executive team. Mulder speaks highly of the team's dedication to quality and safety led by CEO Peter Bergmann. "I've been in healthcare for many years, and I have never had an executive leadership team or a CEO that has put more emphasis on quality and patient safety," she says.

Mulder also points to a culture of solid working relationships and teamwork throughout Ascension Borgess Hospital and the entire Ascension system for the hospital's ability to produce strong results. "There's not a week that goes by that I'm not on a phone call for a safety

or quality conversation (with Ascension colleagues), trying to figure out how we can make things better," Mulder says. "Even in areas where we do really well, we want that bar to keep going up. We still ask ourselves, 'How do we get better?'"

Mulder, Dr. Rohs and their colleagues continue to strive to improve the hospital's quality and safety. One goal is increasing the use of technology to make the delivery of care even safer. For example, one area under consideration is how to use barcodes for medication administration to ensure patients are given the correct medications in the accurate dosage.

The continuing quest to increase healthcare quality and safety goes back to Ascension Borgess Hospital's roots and ties directly to patient outcomes, says Craig Chindemi, Chief Development Officer. "We are a Catholic health system that cares very, very much," he says. "Ever since the Sisters of St. Joseph came here in 1889, we've been focused on patient outcomes. The letter grades (from the grading programs) may be new, but our commitment to this has never wavered. We're just trying to communicate better to our community so they can make a better-informed decision when it comes to their care."

Ascension Borgess Hospital's 2021/2022 RECOGNITIONS FOR QUALITY CARE

- **A - Leapfrog Hospital Grade**
- **America's 250 Best Hospital Award**
- **America's 100 Best**
Pulmonary Care, Stroke Care
- **Speciality Excellence Awards**
Joint Replacement, Neurosciences
- **Five Star Ratings**
Pacemaker Procedures, Heart Attack, Heart Failure, Pulmonary Embolism, Respiratory Failure, Sepsis, Bowel Obstruction, Gastrointestinal Bleed, Stroke, Hip Replacement, Knee Replacement, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- **Top 50 Cardiac Hospital**
(IBM Watson)
- **Ranked #7 nationally for Top Teaching Hospitals** with a Cardiovascular Residency Program (IBM Watson)
- **Top 100 Best Hospitals**
Cardiology and Heart Surgery (*U.S. News & World Report*)
- **Top 10 Hospitals in Michigan**
(*U.S. News & World Report*)
- **High Performing Designation**
(*U.S. News & World Report*) for: Colon Cancer, Heart Failure/Heart Bypass/Cardiac Care, Hip and Knee Replacement/Knee and Hip Surgery, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- **Blue Cross Blue Shield Distinction Plus**
Bariatric Surgery, Maternity Care, Spine Surgery
- **Blue Cross Blue Shield Distinction**
Knee and Hip Surgery, Cardiac Care
- **Center of Excellence**
Transthoracic Artery Revascularization (TCAR) procedure (SilkRoad Medical)
- **Medical Excellence Award**
(CareChex by Quantros)
- **3 Star Certification:** Society for Vascular Surgery Vascular Quality Initiative (SVS-VQI)
- **Best Maternity Hospital 2021**
(*Newsweek*)
- **Maternity Excellence Award**
Economic Alliance for Michigan (EAM)
- **Women's Choice Award**
Breast Cancer
- **Gold Safe Sleep Champions**
(Kids for Cribs)
- **Certified Comprehensive Stroke Center**
(The Joint Commission)
- **Get with the Guidelines Heart Failure Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award** (American Heart/American Stroke Association)
- **Bariatric Center of Excellence**
(Clinical Science Institute)
- **Comprehensive Accredited Center for Bariatric Surgery** (Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery accreditation and Quality Improvement Program)
- **Designated Bariatric Institute of Quality** (Aetna)
- **Center of Excellence for Bariatric Surgery** (Optum Insurance)

Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation supplies lifesaving defibrillators to hospital

By Cindy Schrauben



Pictured with one of five new Stryker defibrillators are Fred Hicks, Clinical Coordinator, and Shannon Mack, Cardiac Rehab Coordinator/CEP, for Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital.

What's a clinical leader to do when notified, amid a pandemic, that a manufacturer is dropping support for crucial equipment, and she knows replacing the equipment is outside her budget?

If you're Betty Sousley, MSN, RN, Emergency Department Manager for Ascension Borgess Allegan and Ascension Borgess-Pipp hospitals, you turn to your trusted community partner and ask the Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation for help. Then, you hold your breath. Fortunately, Sousley didn't have to wait long for the foundation to approve her grant request for more than \$55,000 to purchase five new Stryker LifePak 20e defibrillators for the crash carts at Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital - Allegan Clinic. Crash carts are indispensable for resuscitating patients experiencing cardiac arrest. Stocked with emergency medical equipment, including defibrillators, medical supplies and

drugs for use by medical personnel during codes, fully supplied crash carts can mean the difference between life and death. While Sousley could have replaced the equipment with a less expensive version from another company, she believed it was essential to replace the defibrillators with very similar units.

"The staff had been through lots of changes in a short amount of time (due to COVID-19), and I didn't want to introduce another change," Sousley says. Replacing the older Stryker LifePak 20 defibrillators with the upgraded version brought a "comfort level for staff because they are very familiar with them."

Continuing to use Stryker LifePak 20 defibrillators also meant less training on the new equipment, saving precious time for the staff.

"If not for the Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation, we would have had to switch to new equipment and then do training," Sousley says. "This would have brought on high anxiety during a busy time."

The new defibrillators bring enhanced safety to patients, Sousley says. One of the safety features is that the machine counts compressions for the end users. This feature ensures staff members have time to rotate duties to prevent exhaustion and maintain high-quality chest compressions to keep perfusion high, which provides for better outcomes. The older units - except for one - were returned to Stryker for credit. The unit that wasn't returned was donated and continues to function as a lifesaving auto external defibrillator (AED) in Honduras. "The foundation was amazing, and we're grateful," Sousley says, reiterating that training and familiarity with the equipment were invaluable to the staff. "Plus, we were able to donate back to a developing country, supporting our Catholic vision to serve the poor and vulnerable."

Ascension partners with The DAISY Foundation national nurse recognition program



Ascension Borgess has partnered with The DAISY (Diseases Attacking the Immune SYstem) Foundation as part of a system-wide nursing excellence recognition program.

The partnership supports our commitment to nursing excellence at Ascension Borgess hospitals in southwest Michigan, recognizing nurses who have gone above and beyond in their local ministries.

The impact of the monthly DAISY Award is deep, affecting nurses' job satisfaction, retention, teamwork, pride, organizational culture, healthy work environment and more, according to The DAISY Foundation. The DAISY Foundation aims to help nurses see in themselves what their patients, families and colleagues see in them and help them learn the behaviors that make a powerful difference.

The DAISY Foundation was founded by the family of Patrick Barnes, who, after falling ill in late 1999 (then 33 years old and a survivor of Hodgkin's disease), was admitted to the hospital and diagnosed with the autoimmune disease Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura

(ITP). Pat and his wife, Tena, had just had their first child two months before he became sick.

"We are so blessed we were able to spend the eight weeks of his hospitalization with him and his family," said Mark Barnes, Pat's father. "During those weeks, we experienced the best of nursing. As we discussed what to do in Patrick's memory, we knew that first and foremost, we needed to say thank you for the gifts nurses give their patients and families every day, just as we had experienced."

DAISY Award recipients are nominated by their peers, physicians, administrators and other staff, as well as patients and families. They receive a certificate, proclaiming them as an "Extraordinary Nurse," a DAISY Award pin and a unique, hand-carved serpentine stone sculpture from Zimbabwe, titled "A Healer's Touch."

To nominate an outstanding nurse for a DAISY Award, visit daisyfoundation.org.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 DAISY AWARD WINNERS AT ASCENSION BORGESS HOSPITAL

Jan. Klasiena Kuhn, 3 North; **Feb.** Judy Looper, 3 North; **March** Jacob DeMott, 2 North; **April** Charlene Orwat, PACU; **May** Laurie Simmons, 1 North; **June/July** Jeff Kroehler, 3 North; **Aug.** Jay Ammerman, 7 North; **Sept.** Anastasia O'Deal, 2 North



From left to right: Bruce Franco-Young, Stephanie Werner and Dr. Abbas Syed

New operating room equipment aids in patient and surgical staff safety in Dowagiac

By Cindy Schrauben

Thanks to the Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation, the hospital's Operating Room staff recently received a new vital piece of equipment that increases their safety along with that of their patients.

The Neptune 3 is a mobile unit used to collect waste and evacuate surgical smoke generated from electrocautery. It is a constantly closed system that collects, transports and disposes of surgical waste fluid while protecting staff from hazardous fluid and smoke exposures.

According to Diana Mikulski, Registered Nurse Manager, Surgical Services and Emergency Department, the Neptune 3 is essential for staff and patient safety. "Because of the Neptune device, the Operating Room

staff now has decreased exposure to body fluids as well as potentially harmful smoke inhalation," she says.

The Neptune 3 system works by displaying fluid collection amounts on a large screen. For each patient, the Operating Room staff inserts a single-use manifold into the unit. The unit has eight suction ports. Fluid collects into two canisters - one that holds four liters, and the other 20 liters. Following each shift, the machine docks to the station, and the canisters are emptied and cleaned.

"The entire Ascension Borgess-Lee Operating Room staff is grateful to the foundation for the support," Mikulski says.

Tree of Love program provides free breast health services to women in need



DEBRA'S TREE OF LOVE STORY

By Cindy Schrauben

On a quiet winter night, as she walked down the hallway toward the bathroom at 3 a.m., Debra scratched an itch, discovering a lump in her breast. Naturally, her initial concern was for her health. But, because she does not have health insurance, her mind soon turned to worry about paying for the medical costs associated with any needed treatment.

"I can't fathom having thousands and thousands of dollars in bills when I don't have that kind of money," Debra says.

Debra was able to put her financial concerns aside on her first visit to Ascension Borgess Breast Center - Mammography.

"I went to the window to register and told them I don't have insurance. The gal told me, 'Don't worry. I will put you under the 'Tree of Love.'" The office associate explained that the Ascension Borgess program that provides free mammograms and breast health services for uninsured and underinsured women in southwest Michigan would cover the costs associated with the visit.

"It made me cry," Debra says. "I thanked her up one side and down another. She didn't know me from Adam, but she was helping me when I really needed it."

During her initial visit, Debra had a mammogram and ultrasound, and her lump was rated suspicious. So, she returned for a second visit and a biopsy. A breast cancer diagnosis soon arrived. However, bills did not follow because the Tree of Love program covered Debra's care.

"It would not have been a good outcome if this hadn't happened for me. Without the Tree of Love, I don't think I could have gone forward with what I needed to do."

Debra was fortunate because the cancer was caught early and could be removed via a lumpectomy, followed by radiation. Her doctor is confident that a clean bill of health is not far away.

Asked what she'd say to Tree of Love donors, Debra says, "Thank you! I don't know what else you can say. They (donors) have no idea how thankful people are for this. God bless them for being so generous. I wish I could hug them all."

The Ascension Borgess Tree of Love campaign raises funds to provide mammograms and breast health services to women in need in our community. The campaign kicks off each year on October 1, the start of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and runs through December. Pink lights on the Tree of Love represent a donation made in honor or memory of a loved one.

To make a gift to provide women in need with lifesaving mammograms and breast health services, visit treeoflove.borgess.com, text TREEOFLOVE to 53901 or call the Ascension Borgess Foundation at 269-226-8100.



Pictured in front of the Tree of Love in the atrium at Ascension Borgess Medical Center, left to right: Bill English, Tree of Love Chair; Dr. Jennifer Frink, Medical Director, Ascension Michigan Women's Health; Craig Chindemi, Chief Development Officer, Ascension Borgess Foundation; and Ben Schaefer, Manager of Spiritual Care.

Thank you to the generous donors and sponsors who supported the 2021 Tree of Love campaign

ASCENSION BORGESS

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Hospitals welcome new administrator

Rob Mach joins Ascension Borgess Allegan, Ascension Borgess-Pipp

By Cindy Schrauben

For Rob Mach, it's crucial that people receive healthcare in their communities so neighbors can take care of neighbors. Ascension integrates this philosophy into its Mission, Mach says, which made it natural for him to accept the position of administrator of Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital in October 2020. Mach has since been named administrator of Ascension Borgess-Pipp Hospital in Plainwell, too.

"Allegan County is a great community, with a family feel where everyone knows everyone," Mach says. "But it's more than a family atmosphere – it's a taking-care-of-your-neighbor atmosphere. There are a lot of rural hospitals that are closing, and it's really important that Allegan County has these great resources right here."

Mach's background prepared him for the challenge of providing a thriving healthcare system in smaller communities. The former Marine air traffic controller – the profession often cited as being the most stressful – says the "stress (of being an air traffic controller) didn't bother me."

After his service in the Marine Corps, Mach moved to Vermont to care for family members and found his passion for healthcare and taking care of people. He began his career in radiology after attending school on the GI Bill.

Mach came to Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital from Select Specialty Hospital in Battle Creek, a 25-bed long-term acute care facility, where he served as chief executive officer. Before that, he was chief operating officer at Littleton Regional Healthcare in Littleton, NH, for 13 years.

Ascension's philosophy of caring for neighbors, its Mission as a Catholic non-profit organization, and Ascension Borgess President Peter Bergmann drew Mach to Allegan County. "Everybody has been great," Mach says. "We're here for the long haul."

Ascension Borgess hospitals will also have a larger presence in the county, Mach says. When Ascension acquired Allegan Healthcare Group, including Allegan



General Hospital, in 2019, it brought many new medical resources to the area. As a result, Mach estimates that 90 percent of the healthcare area residents need can be provided within their communities.

Among the expanded offerings are increased opportunities for general and orthopedic surgeries at Ascension Borgess Allegan. In addition, 3D mammography will soon be available. Mach added that Ascension Borgess-Pipp facilities are receiving a \$1 million facelift, including new floors.

Another high priority for Mach and Ascension is building a continuum of care program – from high- to lower-level care – within the Ascension system so patients can heal closer to home. For example, a patient may have major cardiac surgery at Ascension Borgess in Kalamazoo and while recovering can be transferred back to Allegan County for more care before going home. This is much easier for patients and their families, Mach says. "People want to have their care local, and they want their families to be close."

This continuum of care is possible because Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital offers "swing care" beds in addition to regular inpatient beds. This option allows for care that may be less intensive than what is offered in Kalamazoo but more rigorous than what nursing homes provide. Patients at Ascension Borgess Allegan can also receive physical and occupational therapy and X-rays at the hospital. In contrast, if they were in a nursing home, they may need to be transported outside for extra care.

Continuum of care goes back to Ascension's philosophy of caring for patients close to home. "We want the best for our patients. We want to treat every patient like they are our mom or dad," Mach says. "We will do our darndest to take the best care of you that we can. That's my commitment to the county and both hospitals. We're not just taking care of a number; we're taking care of our neighbors and our family members."

New faces, new vision:

MEET THE NEW BOARD CHAIRS FOR THE FOUNDATIONS

Rooted in the loving ministry of Jesus as healer, we commit ourselves to serving all persons with special attention to those who are poor and vulnerable. Our Catholic health ministry is dedicated to spiritually centered, holistic care which sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities. We are advocates for a compassionate and just society through our actions and our words.

The Ascension Mission provides guidance to all members of the Ascension Borgess community. How do the chairs of the three Ascension Borgess Foundation Board of Directors view the boards' role in achieving the Mission?



Ascension Borgess Foundation
Greg Dobson
Board Chair
Principal and COO of AVB

Greg Dobson joined the Ascension Borgess Foundation Board of Directors on July 1, 2016, and became board chair on July 1, 2020.

What is your leadership philosophy?

My main leadership philosophy is to engage in things I'm passionate about. If I'm passionate about something, I'm engaged with it. My goal as board chair is to make the experience for those who are on the board feel engaged by tapping into their specific talents, experiences and abilities. I want them to know they are a part of the great things the hospital does through their work on the board and that they are making a difference.

Do you have one quote about leadership that sums up your philosophy?

My goal as a leader in all things I do is simply to lead by example.

Why did you join the Ascension Borgess Foundation Board of Directors?

I joined the board because my business partners Joe Gesmundo and Daryl Rynd served on the Ascension Borgess board before me. We therefore have a long and passionate history of focusing on Catholic healthcare. Helping people to get healthy and stay in good health – in particular, the underserved population – is of great interest to our company and me especially. Ascension Borgess does a good job providing healthcare and healthcare education to our community. This makes the

work the foundation does even more rewarding. I want to see my fellow citizens be healthier.

What would you like to see the Board accomplish in the short term?

We've been looking to onboard new board members and assimilate them. We are also establishing short-term goals that revolve around mini-fundraising campaigns.

Long term?

It is key for us to have a great board and a healthy framework from which they can be successful. So, we'll be working on board development and with the board nominating committee to find new members to join as others term out. We'll also be enhancing strategic planning and coordinating with the hospital. We may be looking at bigger fundraising goals. The other thing we're doing as a foundation is enhancing staff capabilities so the staff can do more with traditional fundraising as well as estate gifts and other long-term fundraising efforts.



Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation
Lovedia Stap
Board Chair
Retired Banking Center Manager with Chemical/TCF

Lovedia Stap joined the Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation Board of Directors in 2006, became vice chair in 2015 and was appointed chair in 2017.

What is your leadership philosophy?

Be passionate about what you support and surround

Continued on page 30

yourself with others who feel the same. However, it's important to have different skills and interests for a well-rounded board.

Do you have one quote about leadership that sums up your philosophy?

Stay engaged and maintain your passion for your cause.

Why did you join the Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation Board of Directors?

I joined because I was interested in becoming involved in the community and finding a cause that I could connect with and be of service to.

What would you like to see the board accomplish in the short term?

To stay focused on the community during this challenging time and make sure the hospital staff has the support they need.

Long term?

We must continue to work on developing a long-term sustainable funding stream for our scholarship program – this is a priority. The educating of students and existing employees, in my opinion, is very important for our hospital. This allows us to be able to provide doctors, nurses, lab techs and services that the community can be confident in using.



**Ascension Borgess-Lee
Foundation
Jeremy Truitt**
*Human Resources Manager
Bud Distributing, Inc.*

Jeremy Truitt joined the Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation as a board member in 2014 and became board chair in 2020.

What is your leadership philosophy?

My leadership philosophy is that the more engaged someone is in what they are doing, the better they will be at it. So as a leader, my job is to look for ways to foster that engagement in my board members by our strategic planning and by the example I set. The more informed, involved and knowledgeable they are about what we are trying to accomplish as a board for the hospital, the more effective they can be as board members. We have

outstanding, dynamic members on our board, and I want them to have the ability to share their talents and ideas; because when they do, the entire group benefits.

Do you have one quote about leadership that sums up your philosophy?

One quote that describes my philosophy is from Jack Welch: "Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

Why did you join the Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation Board of Directors?

I joined the board because I saw all the good it was doing in my community. As the only hospital in Cass County, it serves so many essential needs to the residents in and around Dowagiac. I was born and raised in the area, and the associates of Ascension Borgess-Lee Hospital and the members of its foundation board never stop looking for ways to go above and beyond to help their fellow citizens.

What are your goals for the board?

When I became the board chair, I had two goals. The first is to have the best-informed board possible. I wanted our board to be active and engaged and have the confidence to bring their energy and ideas to benefit both the board and the hospital. We've done this by devoting a substantial amount of time in and out of our meetings toward educating our board members. We have the heads of various departments in the hospital attend our board meetings to share their ideas and vision. This way, both the board members and the hospital staff learn from each other on how we can work better together. We have also set up informational tours of the hospital for board members so they can get a hands-on idea of what takes place on a daily basis.

My second goal is to spend the money the board has raised in the most effective manner to benefit the hospital and the community. Over the past three years, I'm proud to say we've invested in nine different projects totaling almost \$270,000 for purchases ranging from much-needed Emergency Room equipment to our significant contribution for the renovations in the oncology wing at Ascension Borgess-Lee. We as a board work hard to raise funds from our local community, and I'm happy to see that money reinvested in the local hospital to make an immediate and lasting impact.

Welcome new board members of Ascension Borgess Foundations

Ascension Borgess 2020/2021



Jeanne Blondia
Stryker



Sarah Harding
Harding's Marketplace



Sabrina Pritchett-Evans
State Farm



Sherry Gesmundo
Community Advocate



Jason Ryan, MD
Ascension Borgess

Ascension Borgess 2021/2022



J. Joseph Brogger
Burnham & Flower Group



Keith Peterson
PNC Bank



Frank Saltiel, MD
Ascension Borgess



Tom Carlson
Hannapel Kitchen/Bath/Window/Door

Ascension Borgess-Lee 2021/2022

Ascension Borgess Foundations Team



Craig Chindemi
Chief Development Officer
Ascension Southwest Michigan Region



Patricia Resetar
Major Gifts Officer
Ascension Borgess Foundation



Jenifer Garcia
Senior Gift Officer
Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation



Beth Cripe
Development Officer
Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation



Julie Ruel
Annual Programs Director
Ascension Borgess Foundation



Katie Kupiecki
Regional Senior Analyst
Ascension Borgess Foundation



Jennifer Burson
Executive Assistant
Ascension Borgess Foundation

Foundation Events

ASCENSION BORGESS

Annual Golf for Health Tournament raises more than \$90,000 for Emergency Room Upgrade Project

On July 19, 124 golfers gathered at Gull Lake Country Club for the 30th Annual Golf for Health Tournament. This year's tournament proceeds benefit the Emergency Room Upgrade Project. Thank you to Golf Committee Chairman Joe Brogger, and Committee members Greg Dobson, Sherry Gesmundo, Matt Kavanaugh, Sabrina Pritchett-Evans, Andrew Riker and Dr. Jason Ryan.



Pictured left to right: Joe Brogger, Golf for Health Event Chair; Craig Chindemi, Chief Development Officer, Ascension Borgess; and Peter Bergmann, President, Ascension Borgess



Pictured: First place team of Alene Stroup, Joe Stroup, Dr. Nick Miladore and Julia Miladore



Members of the AVB team stand in front of the 2021 Golf for Health banner

Thank you to our sponsors:

Elite Sponsor — \$7,500

AVB

Eagle Sponsor — \$5,000

James R. Ryan Foundation

Birdie Sponsors — \$2,500

633 Group
Cerner Corporation
Great Lakes Flooring Specialists, Inc.
Greenleaf Trust
Gun Lake Casino
Knight Watch
Lillibridge Healthcare Services
Neurosurgery of Kalamazoo, PC
Old National Bank
R1 RCM, Inc.
Richard & Thelma Hall Foundation
Southern Michigan Bank and Trust
TowerPinkster
Treystar
TriMedx

Par Sponsors — \$1,500

Harding's Friendly Markets
Lake Michigan Credit Union
Schupan
Steel Supply & Engineering Co.

Activity Sponsors — \$1,000

Bouma Corporation
Harding's Friendly Markets
Migala Carpet One
OptiMed Health Partners
Pepsi
State Farm, Sabrina Pritchett-Evans
Trillium Staffing

Tee Sponsors — \$500

Allied Mechanical Services
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Blakely Products Company
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
Burnham & Flower Insurance Group
CSM Group
HED
Hurley & Stewart, LLC
Kalamazoo Foot Surgery, PC
Life EMS Ambulance, Inc.
Mall City Mechanical, Inc.
Mercantile Bank of Michigan
Meyer C. Weiner Company
MOSS Telecom
Nulty Insurance
OptiMed Health Partners
Priority Health
Rathco Safety Supply, Inc.
Riverrun Press
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Ryan
Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge
Whitaker Muller Insurance Group
Windemuller Electric
Zhang Financial

Jim Gilmore Jr. Foundation Golf Outing supports the Tree of Love

The Jim Gilmore Jr. Foundation Golf Outing was started by Casey Alger and Bethany Gilmore in 2013, with special assistance from Sue Brockelbank and Chris Shook. Now heading into its 10th year, the outing has grossed over \$225,000, which is given back to Kalamazoo area non-profit organizations and charities with 501(c)3 status.

Casey Alger, an Ascension Borgess Foundation Trustee, announced that the 2021 outing will be donating \$2,500 to the foundation in support of the Tree of Love, which provides mammograms and breast health services to women in need in southwest Michigan.

The Ascension Borgess Foundation is proud to be one of eight local beneficiaries of the Annual Jim Gilmore Jr. Golf Outing. The July 20 event was held at Stonehedge North Golf Course and raised \$2,500 for the Tree of Love program.



Pictured (left to right): Josh Alger, Beth Gilmore, Casey Alger, Hollie Lass, Sue Brockelbank, Terry Brockelbank and Andy Dominianni

ASCENSION BORGESS ALLEGAN

Golf for Health raises more than \$16,600 for advanced digital mammography system

The Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation celebrated its 30th Annual Golf for Health tournament on August 5 at Cheshire Hills Golf Club. This year's tournament saw expansive growth in both sponsor revenue and number of teams present. Proceeds will help support the acquisition of a Hologic Selenia Dimensions Advanced 3D Breast Imaging System, bringing the most advanced breast cancer detection to our patients cared for through the Perrigo Imaging Center at Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital. Thank you to our dedicated Golf Committee members Andy Brockway, Dean Clendenin, Rich Espinoza, Judy Habetler, Lance Maurer and Clarence Snyder.



Borgess Allegan Golf for Health golfers celebrate a putt at the 2021 event.

Thank you to our sponsors:

Par Sponsors — \$1,000

Advanced Radiology Services, PC
Ascension Borgess Hospital
Dr. Jim and Marcia Connell
Moore Family Pharmacies
R1 RCM, Inc.
Sebright Products

Refreshment Sponsor — \$350

Pepsi

Tee Sponsors — \$150

Allegan Eye Care
Mall City Mechanical, Inc.
Meduit

Fairway Sponsors — \$500

Alliance HNI
West Michigan Air Care

ASCENSION BORGESS ALLEGAN



Runners take off at the starting line of the annual Strides for Health 5K.

15th Annual Strides for Health 5K supports Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital

Over 100 runners and walkers gathered outside the Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital's Physical Rehabilitation Building on August 21, for the 15th Annual Strides for Health 5K. This beloved 5K event, which went virtual in 2020 due the COVID-19 pandemic, was back in full stride raising community awareness and vital funds for the Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation. Revenues generated from this event totaled \$5,000 to support education, patient and family services, and clinical advancements at Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital.

Thank you to our sponsors:

Course Sponsor:
Allegan Eyecare

Cooldown Sponsor:
Dr. Jim and Marcia Connell

ASCENSION BORGESS-LEE

10th Annual Borgess-Lee Wine and Beer Tasting Event



A few guests enjoying the tasting and beautiful setting on Indian Lake.

On August 7, 350 guests arrived to enjoy music, delicious hors d'oeuvres and samples of wine and beer for tasting all at a beautiful setting on Indian Lake in Dowagiac. By the time the last glass was poured, a record high of over \$47,000 had been raised for the Radiology department's Women's Health Center. The center will provide a private and comfortable place for patients receiving ultrasound, mammography and bone-density services.

One of the highlights of the evening was the raffle which included 29 raffle items ranging from Chicago Blackhawks hockey tickets, University of Michigan football tickets to a wine tasting with Jeopardy champion Jennifer Quail.

In memory of former Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation Board member Don Blackmond, the event will now be named the **Don Blackmond Memorial Wine and Beer Tasting**. Don was instrumental in building the success of the event for the past 11 years.

Thank you to our sponsors:

Mission Sponsors — \$2,500

Don and Vicary Blackmond
Frederick Construction, Inc.
Logistick, Inc.

Service Sponsors — \$1,000

Armor Pest Control
Ascension Borgess Hospital
Tom Buddig
Bud Distributing, Inc.
Gatz Construction, Inc.
Michigan Hospital Association
Preferred Printing, Inc.
R1 RCM, Inc.
St. Denys Foundation
Thrall Family Foundation

Care Sponsors — \$500

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Matt and Beth Cripe
Delta Polymers
Fifth Third Bank
Hannapel Home Center
Jerry and Herbie Hannapel
Janel's Industries, Inc.
Jerry Morin
SPI
Mike Santin
Wolverine Mutual Insurance

17th Annual Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation Golf Outing raises \$30,333 for Women's Health Center

On July 15, 124 golfers gathered at Indian Lake Hills Golf Course to enjoy a great day of golf and support for the Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation. This year's tournament proceeds benefit the Radiology department's Women's Health Center renovation. Thank you to Golf Committee members Jeremy Truitt, Carrie Freeman, Dr. Katie Marshall and John Seculoff.



Tori Smith takes the shot while Jenna Podjan, Sydney Storey and Sarah Northrup look on.

Thank you to our sponsors:

Major Sponsor — \$5,000

St. Denys Foundation

Prize Sponsors — \$1,000

Ascension Borgess Hospital
Matthew Cripe, DDS
Lyons Industries, Inc.
Mitchell Lawn Care & Landscape, LLC
Southwest Vision Center

Activity Sponsors — \$250

Aftab Ansari, MD
Berrybrook Enterprises
Cass County Council on Aging
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Hale's True Value Hardware
IBID County Electric, Inc.
Preferred Printing, Inc.
John A. Vylonis Custom Building

Tee Sponsors — \$200

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AVB
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Dowagiac Union Schools
Edward Jones- John Seculoff, Financial Advisor
Fifth Third Bank
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Image Specialties
Indian Lake Hills Golf Course
Jansen Valk Thompson & Reahm
Midwestern Pathology, PLC
Rohdy's Heating and Cooling
Joan Schmidt
Southwestern Michigan College
Tower Pinkster

Save the Date

Mark your calendars and save the date for these upcoming events supporting Ascension Borgess hospitals in southwest Michigan:

Schupan Rich Holtz Memorial Golf Outing

June 28, 2022
Gull Lake View Golf Club
Augusta, MI

Golf for Health: Ascension Borgess-Lee

July 14, 2022
Indian Lake Hills Golf Course
Eau Claire, MI

Golf for Health: Ascension Borgess

July 18, 2022
Gull Lake Country Club
Richland, MI

Jim Gilmore Jr. Foundation Golf Outing

July 19, 2022
Gull Lake View Golf Club
Augusta, MI

Don Blackmond Memorial Wine and Beer Tasting

August 6, 2022
Indian Lake
Dowagiac, MI

Golf for Health: Ascension Borgess Allegan

August 11, 2022
Cheshire Hills Golf Course
Allegan, MI

Touchdown for Diabetes

TBD, September 2022
www.touchdowndiabetes.events

Tree of Love Lighting Ceremony: Ascension Borgess-Lee Hospital

November 30, 2022
Ascension Borgess-Lee Hospital
Dowagiac, MI

Tree of Love Lighting Ceremony: Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital

December 1, 2022
Ascension Borgess Allegan Hospital
Allegan, MI

Tree of Love Lighting Ceremony: Ascension Borgess Hospital

December 8, 2022
Ascension Borgess Hospital
Kalamazoo, MI

Ascension Borgess Foundation
1521 Gull Road, MSB 300
Kalamazoo, MI 49048
269-226-8100
borgessfoundation.org

Our Foundations are on Facebook!

Ascension Borgess Foundation, Ascension Borgess-Lee Foundation and Ascension Borgess Allegan Foundation are now on Facebook as Ascension Borgess Foundations!

This Facebook page will share updates about fundraising campaigns and events, connect with the community and share the amazing progress taking place at Ascension in southwest Michigan because of our donors.

Please like, follow and share the Facebook page with your friends, family and colleagues. To access the page, simply scan the QR code with your cell phone. If you already have Facebook open, you can search for the page called Ascension Borgess Foundations.

