

Inspired Philanthropy

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Office of Philanthropy –
Muskegon, Shelby & Grand Haven

*In this issue of
Inspired Philanthropy,
we celebrate the many
ways our supporters are
making a difference.*

For Friends & Donors of
Trinity Health Muskegon
Trinity Health Shelby
Trinity Health Grand Haven



**Nurses Amber Zanto and
Erika DeJonge are igniting
bold transformation in the
Emergency Department.**

Dear Friends and Supporters,

In this issue of *Inspired Philanthropy*, we're excited to share stories that reflect the powerful impact of transformation on our health system.

At the heart of this issue is a remarkable story of our Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital Emergency Department — the ER Changers. Their work is a powerful example of the transforming healing presence of our nurses and colleagues.

We are thrilled to share two extraordinary philanthropic gifts that will profoundly impact care. Generous support for the Johnson Family Cancer Center is helping us expand access to care. Additionally, a significant gift to our open-heart surgery program is enhancing lifesaving cardiac care and supporting innovation in surgical excellence. These investments are a testament to the deep commitment our donors have to improving lives and strengthening our health system.

We also spotlight kids' water safety and firearm safety. Injury Prevention Coordinator Holly Alway and many others work tirelessly to educate families and prevent childhood injuries.

Trinity Health Muskegon has been named one of the Best Regional Hospitals in Michigan by U.S. News & World Report, ranked No. 15 statewide. This prestigious recognition reflects our commitment to clinical excellence and compassionate care, with high-performing ratings in ten key procedures and conditions.

We are truly grateful for all the community groups and organizations whose partnership and generosity continue to shape a healthier future for everyone.

Thank you for being such an important part of this journey. Your support is changing and saving lives.

With heartfelt gratitude,



Claudine Weber
Chief Philanthropy Officer
Trinity Health Office of Philanthropy
Muskegon, Shelby & Grand Haven

On the cover: Amber Zanto, BSN, RN, CEN, and Erika DeJonge, BSN, RN, co-lead the ER Changers teams at Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital Emergency Department.

100% of all gifts to Trinity Health Muskegon, Shelby and Grand Haven are used locally to support the needs of the community.

Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference in the lives of the patients and families we serve.

Your impact by the numbers

During the past fiscal year, your gifts have impacted thousands of lives from every walk of life:

\$2,582,747 was received
in gifts, grants and pledges.

.....

739 donors made gifts
through the Office of Philanthropy

.....

SleepSacks™ were provided to
1,557 newborns,
helping them sleep safely at home

.....

30 patients received
financial assistance with their
out-of-pocket costs for cardiac rehabilitation

.....

\$36,154 was awarded
by Women *for* Health for stroke
care services

.....

468 colleagues, advanced
practice providers and physicians
have made gifts for our Mission

1,114+ patients & visitors
have received free & credible
health literature from our Patient
& Family Resource Center program.

.....

Safe Kids West Michigan —
a program of Trinity Health Muskegon—
provided at no cost:

464 bike helmets

235 car seats

692 home safety devices

782 gun locks

Tommy Davis Memorial Fund

Thanks to the Tommy Davis Memorial Fund, more families are safe from harm because of the distribution of the following safety devices: 76 baby gates, 63 baby thermometers, 43 carbon monoxide detectors, 155 door/cabinet locks, 72 gun locks, 755 medication lock boxes, 143 sleep sacks, 60 smoke alarms and 206 window/door alarms.

Reimagining the experience of emergency room waiting

At Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital, the Emergency Department (ED) has long served as a front door to care. But in recent years, especially following the pandemic, it became a place where staff felt powerless. Long waits, low morale and a sense of helplessness clouded an environment known for expedited care and compassion.

ER Changers 1: Erika's vision sparks a movement

For Erika DeJonge, BSN, RN, the tipping point came in an educational session led by Jeff Fleese, BSN, RN, professional development specialist.

"We learned how we could improve—especially in triage and the Provider in Triage (PIT) process. It was eye-opening," Erika said. "I turned to my colleagues and said, 'We've got to do something.'"

She did not wait for change to come from above. Alongside Justin Derks, process excellence specialist, and Colton Bodrie, BSN, RN, Emergency Department clinical services director, Erika invited others to join a grassroots movement—and many of the core ED staff responded. They are the ER Changers, two teams who are working together to make a difference.

"We have a big, hairy, audacious goal," Erika said. "We want to be a place where people want to work, and where other EDs look to us for ideas."

Their first project? Redesigning the waiting room experience.

"It isn't anyone's favorite place," Erika said. "Sometimes we had five people waiting. Sometimes forty. And no matter the number, it felt chaotic and confusing for everyone."



Patients frequently came to the reception desk asking if they were still in line or had been forgotten. In truth, many were already deep in the care process—triaged, seen by a provider, with labs or imaging underway, but the experience felt stagnant. It looked like nothing was happening, even when care was being delivered.

Erika's ER Changers team got to work. First, they reorganized the triage bays, which led to quick improvements in organization and efficiency. Alongside a second ER Changers group, led by Amber Zanto, BSN, RN, CEN, they tackled how they would communicate the changes.

They created structured seating areas:

- **Section A** is for patients waiting to be triaged.
- **Section B** is for those awaiting the start of their medical workup.
- **Section C** is for patients awaiting test results and final evaluations.

Clear signage and communication have helped patients understand that they are in motion—not forgotten.

“People used to say, ‘I waited four hours and nothing happened.’ Now we hear, ‘I felt like I was getting somewhere,’” Erika said. “We’re changing perception—and in doing so, we’re changing the ED experience.”

ER Changers 2: Amber’s team brings transparency & trust

Amber Zanto, BSN, RN, CEN, a veteran nurse and co-leader of the ER Changers teams, recalls the burnout after the pandemic.

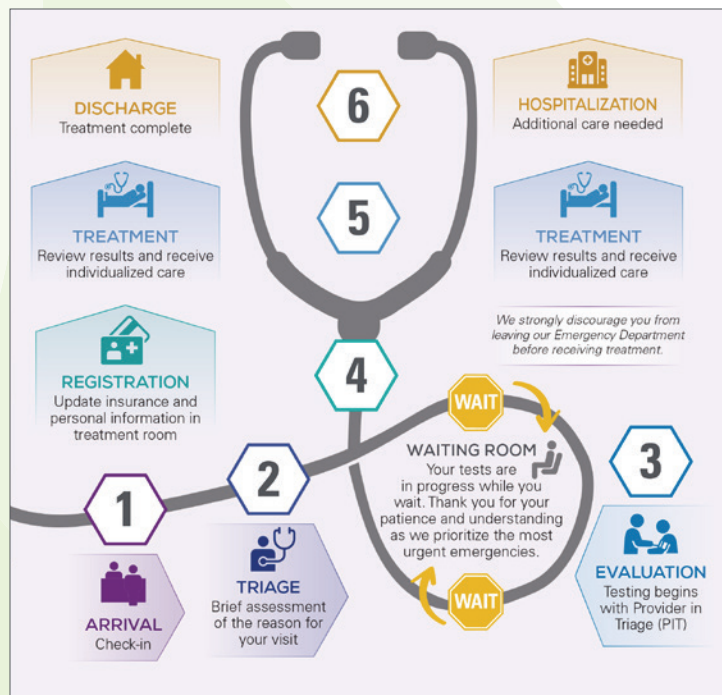
“Health care changed. We were faced with a choice—stay and feel powerless, or find a better way,” she said. “We chose the latter.”

Her team launched a series of improvements, alternating between patient and colleague experience. Their first project? A streamlined, easy-to-read patient “journey card” to explain the Emergency Department process.

“We can’t always shorten the wait—but we can change how it feels,” Amber said.

They included a Q&A section on the card to answer frequent concerns, such as:

- Why is someone else being seen before me?
- Why am I still in the waiting area after arriving by ambulance?
- How long will I be here?



The ER Changers developed this simple journey card to help patients understand the ED process and how they were proceeding through their care experience and to answer common questions.

“People don’t come to the ED every day—we do,” said Amber. “We need to meet them where they are.”

The change: frontline nurses see the impact

The changes are tangible—for patients and staff.

“Our patients understand,” said Tricia Haushka, BSN, RN. “They see how busy we are. What they appreciate most is being told what to expect.”

Tricia uses the patient card to guide conversations in real time.

“I haven’t had anyone ask, ‘Why am I not in a room?’ Instead, they tell me, ‘This feels so much better than before,’” she said.

Amber agrees: “Even when patients are in pain, being honest with them and reassuring them that they’re not lost—that we see them—makes a big difference.”



The ER Changers. Front Row (left to right): Sabryna Chapman, Amber Zanto, Sarah Vanderberg, Trisha Hauschka and Alexis Grabinski. Back Row (left to right): Justin Derks, Dr. Steven Van Rees, Shawna Bonillas, Erika DeJonge, Jeffrey Fleese and Colton Bodrie. Not Pictured: Tyler Burns, Jessica Fairbanks, Stephanie Fulton-Garza, Sarah Yonkman, Carly Gremore, Laura Gordon, Sue Grawbarger, Alyssa Peterson and Adera Merriem

The data: changing the perception of waiting

“The results speak for themselves. The redesigned process and materials helped improve patient perceptions in a matter of weeks,” said Justin Derks. “The percentage of patients who said they felt informed about delays in care is 51%. That is up from 37% from the month before, and that is a 38% improvement.”

Patients’ overall satisfaction with wait times also improved.

“These numbers reflect more than just process changes—they reflect the impact of frontline-led innovation. This team created a mechanism to address something we had not solved before: the perception of waiting.”

From confusion to compassion: an elevated ED experience

The ER Changers’ initiative has become more than a project—it is a mindset.

In the wake of unprecedented challenges, this group of Emergency Department nurses and staff came together with a shared belief that even in the most high-pressure environments, transformation is possible when driven by unwavering heart, dedication and collaboration.

What started as a simple question, ‘Are you with me?’ — has turned into a movement. “And, it’s only just the beginning,” said Erika.

Emergency Department physician's insights: Dr. Steven Van Rees

Steven Van Rees, DO, Emergency Department chair, completed his residency in Muskegon, and knows the local emergency care landscape well.

"We would love to treat every patient in a private room, but that is not always realistic. What matters is that every patient feels seen, informed and cared for," said Dr. Van Rees. "The ER Changers are helping us get there."

Dr. Van Rees trained at our legacy campuses—Mercy and Hackley—back when Muskegon had two hospitals and emergency departments. "At either location, patients rarely waited more than 30 or 40 minutes," he said. "It was a different time."

When the legacy hospitals consolidated into the new Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital facility in 2020, the pandemic quickly followed. That stretched health care teams, causing many to leave the profession. Suddenly, waiting times increased. It was a national trend, but it hit Muskegon especially hard.

"Here, expectations were different," said Dr. Van Rees. "When wait times increased, it felt like a major disruption. Patients were confused and frustrated."

But the root cause of the discontent, the team learned, was not the quality of the medical care they were providing, it was the perception of waiting.

"Patients were not upset with the care they received. They were upset about feeling like nothing was happening. But care was



Dr. Steven Van Rees, Emergency Department Chair

happening—they just weren't in a private exam room," Dr. Van Rees explained.

Several strategies helped reduce waiting, including bringing patients straight to a treatment room upon arrival and placing a provider in triage to assess patients right after the nurse's initial evaluation.

But the breakthrough came when the ER Changers, these two teams of front-line nurses and colleagues, proposed something new. They "redefined the experience of waiting."

They suggested a visual journey for patients—a way to understand that they were progressing through stages of care, even when not in a traditional treatment room.

Now, patients feel that something is happening—not that they are just waiting."

Thanks to the ER Changers, this attention to our patients' perception of waiting is making a big impact on the Emergency Department care experience.

Community:

The Farm at Trinity Health Muskegon

Nestled in the McLaughlin neighborhood on the former Hackley Hospital campus, The Farm at Trinity Health Muskegon is more than just a garden—it's a vibrant hub of education and nourishment. With just five full-time staff members, two college interns and a whole lot of heart, the team at The Farm is transforming lives one seed at a time. They are proud to carry on this important work, which was originally McLaughlin Grows Urban Farm, a program of the former Community enCompass.

It is a model of community-centered care. From March through July 2025, the team provided more than 1,340 hours of K–12 education, Farm Mini Camps and Community Workshops. These programs provide hands-on learning and are planting healthy habits for the next generation.

The Farm cultivates over 90 varieties of fruits and vegetables, along with a stunning array of flowers. In a beautiful new initiative, the team began creating bouquets for patients at Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital, bringing color and comfort to many hospital rooms.

Nourishing patients and families

The Farm's impact extends far beyond its fences. Through The Farm Share program, 40 families currently receive fresh, seasonal produce each week. With a short-term goal to grow to 75 shares (long-term goal: 500 shares), the team is committed to ensuring that cost is never a barrier to healthy food. Thanks to a new referral system through EPIC (the health system's electronic medical record), patients from anywhere in the health system — oncology, cardiology, primary care — can now be enrolled in The Farm Share Assistance program at no cost.



Kaitlin Hermanson (left), manager of The Farm, and Savannah Cunningham (right), farmer, stand among vibrant summer blooms at The Farm on Laketon Avenue in Muskegon.

Another innovative program, Produce to Patients (P2P), provides crates of fresh produce to five local medical practices each week. These crates serve as a powerful, stigma-free way for providers to start conversations about nutrition and social needs. More offices are eager to participate, as funding and administrative support allows.

How you can help

Charitable giving plays a vital role in sustaining and growing this work. Current funding needs include expanding the available Farm Share Assistance (\$1,050 supports one family for 36 weeks), transportation support for school field trips and the purchase of coolers and cold storage for produce distribution.

Every gift helps grow a healthier, more connected Muskegon. To support The Farm, please contact Emma Peterson at emma.peterson@trinity-health.org or 231-672-4814.



Thanks to the support from the Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program, 750 gun locks were recently handed out at events in Muskegon. From left to right, Holly Alway, injury prevention coordinator; Melissa Reyes, CHW; Paula Harjer, performance improvement manager for the program; Lauren Dunn, pre-med student intern; Cassidy Hobby, CHW; Liz Chala Hidalgo, CHW team lead; and Dr. Brian Stork.

Trinity Health Muskegon expands youth gun violence prevention program

Trinity Health Muskegon, in partnership with the Muskegon County prosecutor's office, has received **a \$318,812 Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program grant** to expand its youth gun violence prevention efforts. The funding supports three Community Health Workers (CHWs) in local schools to implement SafERteens, an evidence-based program first launched in May 2023 at the hospital's Emergency Department.

About SafERteens

Developed in Flint with the University of Michigan, SafERteens uses interviews and goal setting to help at-risk youth envision safer futures. A CHW in the Emergency Department screens teens during crisis moments, offering brief interventions.

School and community collaboration

CHWs are now active in Muskegon Heights, Muskegon and Orchard View Public Schools, helping students and families navigate risk factors and access resources. "This collaboration with schools is essential to creating a network

of support," said Holly Alway, D. Soc. Sci., injury prevention coordinator.

Health care's role

Dr. Brian Stork and Dr. Patrick Carter of the University of Michigan champion health care's role in prevention. Carter helped secure the grant to expand SafERteens.

Looking ahead

With youth firearm deaths rising 46% from 2019 to 2022, leaders like Muskegon County Prosecutor D.J. Hilson and Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD) Superintendent Randy Lindquist support the program's potential. The team is also developing trauma-informed training for educators and community leaders.

"We're working to prevent violence by empowering youth and the adults who support them," said Alway. The initiative aims to build lasting tools and relationships beyond the grant period.

Trinity Health Grand Haven Hospital updates

Trinity Health Grand Haven earns Primary Stroke Center Certification

Trinity Health Grand Haven is proud to be entering its second year as a nationally certified Primary Stroke Center by DNV Healthcare USA Inc.—a continued recognition of our commitment to providing the highest standard of stroke care. The three-year certification, originally awarded on June 26, 2024, aligns with best practices from the American Heart Association and the Brain Attack Coalition.



Emergency Department physicians Nicholas McManus, DO, left, and William Deaton, DO, right, with the new stroke care technology made possible through community support. On screen is Patrick Pavwoski, DO, Neurologist.

This achievement continues to be made possible by the support of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation. Thanks to \$40,000 in grant funding from the Cornelia B. Wagener



and Ruth B. Hoek Fund and the Greatest Needs Fund of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation, Trinity Health Grand Haven acquired the Teladoc Health Lite™ 4—a leading-edge telehealth device that has transformed our stroke response system.

The Teladoc Health Lite 4 allows our emergency care teams to immediately connect with remote stroke neurologists via secure, high-definition video. This real-time collaboration helps ensure patients receive expert evaluation and time-sensitive treatment—when every second counts.

The technology continues to improve collaboration within Michigan's first regional stroke program that includes Trinity Health Grand Haven, Trinity Health Muskegon (Primary Stroke Center), Trinity Health Grand Rapids (Comprehensive Stroke Center), and Trinity Health Shelby (Acute Stroke Ready).

Support Trinity Health Grand Haven Hospital

*Your support is saving lives.
Thank you for helping us bring
world-class stroke care to our
lakeshore communities.*



Trinity Health Shelby Hospital updates

Donor support helps Trinity Health Shelby prepare for high-risk deliveries

Thanks to a generous \$20,000 grant secured through the West Michigan Perinatal Quality Collaborative (WMPQC), Trinity Health Shelby is taking a major step forward in protecting the health of mothers and babies in Oceana County and surrounding rural areas.

This funding—made possible by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and administered by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services—is helping launch specialized training programs for hospital staff. These programs focus on managing high-risk maternal and infant health scenarios, including preeclampsia, hypertension, hemorrhaging and congenital anomalies.

“We don’t always encounter high-risk deliveries, but we must be ready for them,” said John Foss, PA-C, senior vice president of operations. “This grant empowers Trinity Health Shelby Hospital to become experienced in managing complex maternal and infant cases, ensuring our patients receive the highest level of care, regardless of location or circumstance.”

The training will use simulation-based education to prepare emergency department staff and other care teams to respond quickly and effectively when every second counts.

In addition to clinical education, this grant supports community education that promotes prenatal care, shares available resources and distributes infant supplies.

“At Trinity Health Shelby, we pride ourselves on our teamwork,” said Angie Schiller, trauma



program manager. “When a critical patient arrives, every department steps in. This grant strengthens our entire team’s ability to respond with confidence and skill.”

This initiative builds on the recent expansion of women’s health and OB-GYN services at Trinity Health Medical Group, Primary Care in Shelby, Michigan. It also directly addresses a key finding from the hospital’s 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment to improve access to maternal care in rural areas.

Shelby Hospital enhancements

Patient & Family Resource Center improvements

Donor support has helped us create the Shelby Hospital Patient & Family Resource Center, making a more welcoming and supportive space for patients and families seeking free, reliable health information during their care journey.

New recliner for recovering patients

Thanks in part to a grant from the William R. Lathers Foundation of the Oceana Community Foundation, we now have a Stryker TruRize™ Clinical Chair. During recovery, this stand-assist recliner promotes earlier mobility and increases comfort and safety for patients and clinicians.

Support Trinity Health Shelby Hospital

*Every gift helps us bring
life-saving care closer to home
for families in our community.*



Letter of gratitude from the Lymphedema Clinic team*

"We would like to extend our many thanks for the tools and educational opportunities that have been provided to our clinic through philanthropy. With three new treatment chairs, therapists have reported decreased back pain from bending or twisting while working with patients. The chairs allow us to work in more ergonomic positions.

"We also received the LymphaTouch, a helpful tool to work on scar tissue and fibrosis. We LOVE it!

"We have each been able to participate in at least one educational course. Because of the support, one therapist is now certified, another became certified in head and neck treatment, and three others have participated in oncology classes that help us better understand the disease, the complications and the side effects of treatment. Thank you!"

~The Trinity Health Muskegon Lymphedema Care Team

*Trinity Health Lymphedema – Muskegon Campus specializes in treating lymphedema, a condition causing swelling due to lymphatic system blockage. It is located in the Trinity Health Professional Building — Muskegon Campus.

Molly Paggeot, occupational therapist, and Kelsey Ploeg, rehabilitation aid, demonstrating the LymphaTouch.



New wheelchairs for Trinity Health Grand Haven

Thanks to a gift from the Women's Auxiliary, Grand Haven Hospital has new wheelchairs to better serve patients and visitors. These are already making a difference—improving comfort and accessibility.



The Grateful Patient & Families program is available throughout the year. Gifts may be made in honor of any medical staff member, nurse, colleague or department.



Child water safety: biggest risks by age

By Holly Alway, D. Soc. Sci., injury prevention coordinator, Trinity Health Muskegon

As Michigan heats up, families flock to lakes and pools—but water fun comes with serious risks. Drowning is the leading cause of death for children under 4 and the second leading cause for kids aged 5–14, according to the American Red Cross. Knowing the biggest risks by age can help prevent tragedy.

Infants (0–1 year)

Most infant drownings happen at home—especially in bathtubs. But even buckets, toilets and decorative ponds can be dangerous. Babies can drown in just an inch of water. Always empty tubs and containers after use and keep them out of reach. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends “touch supervision”—stay within arm’s reach during bath or swim time and avoid distractions like phones or chores.

Toddlers (1–5 years)

Young children are most at risk around home pools and hot tubs, often at a friend or relative’s house. Always assign a focused adult to watch the water—no phones or books. Fencing with self-latching gates adds a vital layer of protection.



Older kids (5–17 years)

As kids grow, natural water like lakes and rivers becomes the biggest risk. Even strong swimmers can underestimate currents or depth. Teach kids the difference between pools and open water and always use life jackets during boating or water activities. Look for posted warnings and red flags at beaches.

Extra safety tips

- Enroll kids in swim lessons—especially ages 1–4.
- Learn CPR and basic rescue skills like “Reach, Throw, Don’t Go.”
- Trinity Health Muskegon offers free life jacket loans at many public beaches.

Want to help? Volunteers are needed to maintain life jackets and rescue boards this summer. Contact Holly Alway at alwayh@trinity-health.org.

Realtors rally for water safety

Thanks to the **West Michigan Lakeshore Association of Realtors, the Schmidt Community Fund, and many generous realtors**, over 110 life jackets were donated to support water safety across Muskegon County. These jackets will help keep 15 life jacket loaner boards stocked all summer long as part of our Safe Kids West Michigan initiative. Special thanks to the Muskegon County Sheriff’s Office Marine Unit for their ongoing partnership. Together, we’re making our lakes safer for everyone.



Planning gifts today & for the future

Simple, tax-wise ways to give today

Many donors choose to **give appreciated assets—such as stocks or mutual funds**—rather than writing a check. This may allow you to avoid capital gains taxes while making a larger impact.

If you're 70½ or older, you can **make a direct gift from your IRA** to Trinity Health Muskegon, Shelby, and Grand Haven through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). This type of gift can count toward your required minimum distribution (at age 73) and may reduce your taxable income—while making an immediate difference in the lives we serve. It's a smart and simple way to support your favorite health care program, with potential tax benefits for you.

Planning a future estate gift

Leaving a legacy doesn't have to be complicated. Many donors choose to name **Trinity Health as a beneficiary of a retirement account, life insurance policy, or bank account**. Others include a specific gift amount or percentage in their will or trust. These options are easy to set up, flexible, and can be changed at any time. Your gift ensures that your support continues far into the future.

Let's talk about it

We're here to help you explore the many ways you can leave a legacy. Our philanthropy team can work with you and your advisors to find a giving option that aligns with your goals and honors your intentions. If you've already included us in your plans, please let us know so we can **thank you and welcome you into our Heritage Society!**



If you are interested in planning a current or future gift to Trinity Health Muskegon, Shelby and Grand Haven, contact Emma Peterson, director

of philanthropy, at 231.672.4814 or emma.peterson@trinity-health.org.

Trinity Health Muskegon is a qualified 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Tax ID 38-2589966.

Transformative gift honors a life and inspires hope

Trinity Health Muskegon has received a remarkable donation from an **anonymous donor in support of patients served by the Johnson Family Cancer Center**. This deeply personal gift was made in memory of the donor's husband, Skip, who passed away just days after receiving a cancer diagnosis.

Motivated by her experience and a desire to make a difference in the Muskegon community, the donor hopes to remove financial barriers that prevent individuals from seeking timely screenings, advanced diagnostics, and life-saving treatments. Her generosity will fund patient financial assistance, support the salary and benefits of a new oncology nurse navigator, and potentially launch a future public colorectal cancer screening initiative.

Her gift is a powerful reminder of how compassion, when shared, can grow into something life changing.

Trinity Health Muskegon named one of Michigan's best hospitals

We're proud to share that Trinity Health Muskegon has been ranked No. 15 in Michigan on the *U.S. News & World Report* 2025-2026 Best Hospitals list. This prestigious recognition places Muskegon among the top hospitals in the state for delivering exceptional patient care.

In addition to this honor, Trinity Health Muskegon earned High Performing ratings—the highest possible designation—in 10 procedures and conditions, including:

- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Repair
- Spinal Fusion
- COPD
- Heart Attack
- Hip Replacement
- Hip Fracture
- Heart Arrhythmia
- Pneumonia
- Knee Replacement
- Pacemaker Implantation



These accolades reflect the dedication of our medical teams and our commitment to improving health outcomes for the Muskegon and lakeshore communities.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us provide compassionate, high-quality care to every patient we serve.

Inspiring the next generation of health care heroes

Trinity Health Muskegon partnered with the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center (CTC) to host an immersive career exploration event for 77 local high school students. Held in March at the hospital, the event gave students a firsthand look at nearly 50 health care careers available right in their own community.

The interactive experience, titled “A Day in the Life of an Injured Student,” followed the journey of a fictional football player from injury on the field to recovery in the hospital. Along the way, students met professionals from emergency services, surgery, radiology, lab work, and more—each sharing insights about their roles, required education, and career paths.

“This event opened students’ eyes to the wide range of opportunities in health care—many of which they didn’t even know existed,” said Dr. Jerry Evans, immediate past chief of staff at Trinity Health Muskegon. “We want them to see a future here, with us, in Muskegon.”



The event is part of Trinity Health’s Growing Our Own initiative, which aims to inspire local students from elementary through high school to pursue careers in health care. With support from partners like CTC, the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District, Boys and Girls Club of the Muskegon Lakeshore, and Michigan Works, the program continues to build a strong pipeline of future health care professionals.



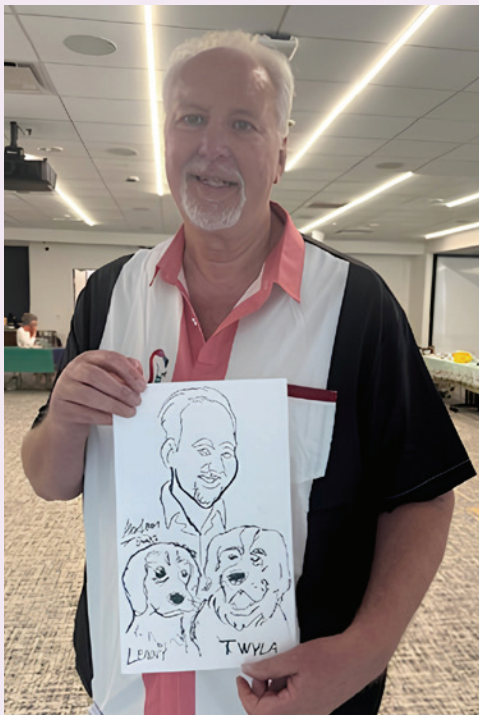
Brooke Sullivan, volunteer, prepares to visit hospital patients and offer personal-care items from the Patient Hospitality Cart, a new volunteer initiative at Trinity Health Muskegon.

Volunteers bring comfort, one personal care item at a time

Thanks to donations from our community, our Patient Hospitality Cart has become so much more than a delivery of comfort items—it's a symbol of compassion and connection. Whether it's a hand lotion, puzzle book, or simply a friendly smile, these small gestures are making a big impact during some of our patients' most vulnerable moments.

What's even more inspiring? The volunteers behind the cart. "Many are aspiring health care professionals, and this hands-on experience is giving them a meaningful glimpse into the power of human connection in healing," said Marla Touzel, manager, Volunteer Services and Gift Shoppe.

"Our volunteers' dedication and empathy are helping us create a more comforting, personal-care experience—one patient at a time."



Volunteer Ron Wolff shares his caricature that includes his therapy dogs, Lenny and Twila.

Thank you, volunteers! A luau of appreciation

We celebrated our incredible Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital volunteers in true island style at this year's Volunteer Month Recognition Luncheon! With a festive Hawaiian luau theme, the event was filled with tropical vibes, delicious food, and heartfelt appreciation. Guests were treated to a special surprise—a talented caricature artist who captured smiles and laughter in every sketch! From colorful leis to lively music, the afternoon was a joyful tribute to the generous spirits who give their time and hearts to our Muskegon hospital community. Thank you to all our volunteers—you truly make a difference every day!

If you are interested in volunteering with Trinity Health, please visit trinityhealthmichigan.org/foundation-and-giving/volunteer/grand-rapids-and-muskegon



Community engagement

A healing harmony from Timberland Charter Academy

The halls of Trinity Health Muskegon Hospital were recently filled with the uplifting voices of the **Timberland Charter Academy 5th–8th Grade Choir**. Under the direction of Brenda Jeisy Conklin, these talented young performers brought joy and comfort to patients, visitors and staff alike. “I could see the joy the students’ singing provided,” shared Colton Bodrie, Emergency Department director. We are deeply grateful to Brenda and her students for reminding us of music’s power to heal and connect.



Kicking for a cause with Salomon’s Karate Studio

At Salomon’s Karate Studio, every kick counts—literally! During their recent Kick-a-Thon, 14 dedicated students delivered an astonishing 10,864 kicks, raising \$565 for diabetes education. This annual tradition blends discipline with compassion, showing how martial arts can empower youth to make a meaningful difference. Thank you to Salomon and these inspiring students for their strength, heart, and commitment to community wellness.



Oakridge students share kindness through art

Inspired by the message “Be the Change,” **Heather Greene’s 6th grade class at Oakridge Upper Elementary** created a heartfelt project for the Johnson Family Cancer Center. Students crafted a banner of encouragement and hand-decorated clay butterflies and hearts—symbols of hope and transformation—to brighten the space for patients and families. These beautiful gifts, presented by Heather to our team, are a powerful reminder that kindness knows no age. Thank you, Oakridge students, for your compassion and creativity.



Community engagement

Subaru Loves to Care

Thanks to the generosity of My Lakeshore Subaru and their partnership with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, patients at the Johnson Family Cancer Center received 80 cozy blankets, 30 care kits and dozens of “Messages of Hope.” Now in its fourth year, this donation brings warmth and encouragement to those facing cancer. We are so grateful to the Subaru team and their customers for their continued support and compassion.



A milestone year for Cars for Cancer!

The 2024 Cars for Cancer Labor Day Car Show & Cruise was one for the record books, drawing an incredible 1,000 cars—the largest turnout in the event’s 20-year history! Thanks to the dedication of organizers, volunteers and community supporters, the event raised an outstanding \$56,436 for the Johnson Family Cancer Center at Trinity Health Muskegon. During the past two decades, Cars for Cancer has contributed \$500,000 to support local cancer patients. We’re deeply grateful to everyone who helped make the 2024 event such a meaningful success! Highlights from the 2025 event will be featured in our next issue.



Driving support for cancer care

We’re grateful to the Great Lakes Full Size Chevy Club for their generous \$500 donation to the Johnson Family Cancer Center. Represented by John and Nancy Nauta and Roger Wiitanen, this passionate group of car enthusiasts supports local causes through their gatherings and annual holiday events. Thank you, GLFSCC members, for helping fuel hope and healing in our community!



PetSmart brings joy to young patients

Thanks to the generosity of PetSmart customers more than 3,200 toys were donated through the Chance & Friends Toy Donation Program last holiday season. These toys were distributed across 24 Trinity Health locations, bringing comfort and cheer to children visiting our hospitals, urgent cares, and emergency departments. Special thanks to the Muskegon Police and Fire Departments and Trinity Health EMS for helping deliver smiles. Together, we made the season brighter for our youngest patients!



Investing in Excellence: Essex family gift continues to elevate cardiac care in Muskegon

Trinity Health Muskegon is pleased to announce an additional gift from the **Bruce and John Essex family for a Terumo Heart Lung Bypass System—a vital technology for open-heart surgery**. This is advanced technology for cardiac perfusion and the second heart/lung system the family has purchased for Trinity Health Muskegon.

Their latest gift builds on a previous donation from Bruce and Yvonne, who earlier supported cardiothoracic care by funding two Philips EPIQ CVx cardiac ultrasound systems. These systems enhance precision and diagnostic capabilities for every open-heart surgery patient.

Bruce's personal experience with open-heart surgery in 2022, performed by Dr. Tad Boeve, left a lasting impression. Grateful for the exceptional care he received, Bruce has become a passionate advocate for ensuring that Trinity Health Muskegon has access to the most advanced technology and support.

Thanks to the Essex family's vision and generosity, Trinity Health Muskegon continues to strengthen its commitment to excellence for our open-heart surgery program.



Office of Philanthropy
1500 E. Sherman Blvd.
Muskegon, MI 49444

Our Mission

We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel, as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

Philanthropy Council

Our Philanthropy Council is comprised of local community members, physicians and hospital colleagues. They serve as ambassadors for the health care system, working to raise funds to enhance the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

Kay Olthoff, <i>Chair</i>	Megan Doss	Scott Musselman
Gary Allore	Jackie Engel	Mary Price
Tim Arter	Mark Fazakerley	Roger Spoelman
Sharon Behm	John Foss	Ginny Sprague
Shelley Brocci	Karen Kayes	Dr. Rem Sprague
Dr. Don Crandall	Dr. Janice McDonald	

Office of Philanthropy Staff

Claudine Weber, *Chief Philanthropy Officer*

Emma Peterson, *Director of Philanthropy*

Joan Kessler, *Manager, Philanthropy Communications*

Allison Dile, *Stewardship & Donor Relations Officer*

Trinity Health Office of Philanthropy is dedicated to enhancing the superior care provided by our health system through financial support from the community. This support sustains our Mission to be a compassionate healing presence in the communities we serve.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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6401 Prairie St., Suite 1000, Norton Shores, MI 49444
231-672-4890 | trinityhealthmichigan.org/giving

If you do not wish to receive information from Trinity Health Office of Philanthropy in the future, please contact us at 231-672-4890 or officeofphilanthropy@trinity-health.org.

Trinity Health Muskegon, Shelby & Grand Haven are qualified 501(c)3, not-for-profit organizations. All gifts stay local and honor our donors' intent. Gifts are tax deductible as allowed by state and federal law. Tax ID: 38-2589966

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