

Gift^{of} Health

Our Philanthropy Magazine

FALL 2025

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SAINT MARY'S FOUNDATION

A Member of Trinity Health

In this issue of Gift of Health, we celebrate the many ways Saint Mary's Foundation is making a difference at Trinity Health Grand Rapids and in our community.

For Donors of
Saint Mary's Foundation



**Donna Betten's
Journey of Healing
and Giving**

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Dear friends,

As autumn turns to winter in West Michigan, we're reminded of the beauty of change—and the strength that comes from community. At Saint Mary's Foundation, this season brings a moment to reflect, celebrate, and express our deepest gratitude for your continued support.

In this issue of *Gift of Health*, we are honored to share the inspiring story of Donna Betten—a beloved friend, former trustee and breast cancer survivor. Donna's journey is a testament to resilience, hope and the healing power of compassionate care. Her voice reminds us why your generosity matters so deeply.

We also mark a significant milestone: the 20th anniversary of the Lacks Cancer Center. For two decades, this center has been a beacon of excellence and comfort for thousands of patients and families. Your gifts have helped shape its legacy—and continue to fuel its future.

This fall, we also celebrated our annual *Up on the Roof* event, where the community came together in joy and purpose to support life-saving cancer care. The energy and generosity of that evening were nothing short of inspiring.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to advancing health and healing in our community. Your partnership makes this possible. Thank you for standing with us, season after season.



In sincere gratitude,

Michelle Rabideau, CFRE, MPA
President, Saint Mary's Foundation

SAINT MARY'S FOUNDATION

A Member of Trinity Health

Trinity Health Mission

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

Our core values

REVERENCE

We honor the sacredness and dignity of every person.

COMMITMENT TO THOSE Experiencing Poverty

We stand with and serve those who are experiencing poverty, especially those most vulnerable.

SAFETY

We embrace a culture that prevents harm and nurtures a healing, safe environment for all.

JUSTICE

We foster right relationships to promote the common good, including sustainability of Earth.

STEWARDSHIP

We honor our heritage and hold ourselves accountable for the human, financial and natural resources entrusted to our care.

INTEGRITY

We are faithful to who we say we are.

Celebrating 20 years of hope and healing: Lacks Cancer Center marks a milestone

Over the past two decades, the Lacks Cancer Center has grown into one of the region's most advanced cancer treatment facilities. It offers a full spectrum of services under one roof—from medical and radiation oncology to genetic counseling, surgical oncology, and survivorship support. The Center's multidisciplinary team includes board-certified physicians, nurse navigators, dietitians, oncology social workers, and holistic practitioners, all working together to deliver personalized, patient-centered care.

Looking ahead, Trinity Health Grand Rapids is planning extensive renovations to expand



outpatient services and enhance the patient experience. These updates will be supported by the Cancer Network of West Michigan, a collaborative initiative with University of Michigan Health-West and Michigan Medicine, aimed at bringing world-class cancer care closer to home.

As we celebrate this 20-year legacy, we extend our deepest gratitude to the donors, volunteers, and community partners who have made this journey possible. Your generosity fuels innovation, compassion and healing—and ensures that the Lacks Cancer Center remains a sanctuary of strength for generations to come.



Grand Groups celebrate 20 years of hope and healing at Lacks Cancer Center

Grand Groups members came together to honor the legacy of the Lacks Cancer Center with an impactful grant. In recognition of its two decades of healing and hope, members voted to award \$195,636 to this flagship program — a place where countless individuals and families have found strength, support and compassionate care. This generous grant helps ensure that Lacks Cancer Center will continue to be a beacon of healing for years to come.

Open hands, full heart:

Donna Betten's journey of healing and giving

For Donna Betten, of Trufant, Michigan, Trinity Health Grand Rapids isn't just a hospital—it is home. Her story spans decades and stages of life, from childbirth to cancer treatment, and now to welcoming grandchildren into the world. "It's like family," she says. "Trinity Health Grand Rapids has been there for me through every chapter."

Donna Betten grew up in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital, where her early experiences shaped a deep appreciation for community and resilience. She came to the United States to attend Calvin University. After graduating, she began her career as a special education teacher, driven by a passion for helping others thrive. It was during this time that she met her husband, Roger, and together they began building a family rooted in faith, love and service.

Her journey from Zimbabwe to Michigan laid the foundation for a life of purpose—one that would later include a cancer battle, family, volunteering, philanthropy and a lasting connection to Saint Mary's Foundation.

Donna's experience with Trinity Health Grand Rapids began in her early adult years, when she gave birth to her children. At the time, she didn't know much about the hospital or its legacy, but the care she received quickly made her a believer. Later, at just 34, Donna was diagnosed with breast cancer. What followed was a transformative experience—one



that shaped her view of healing and community.

"I went through chemo and radiation at Saint Mary's Hospital, and that was 20 years ago," she recalls. "I was the last patient to be treated by the radiation oncology team when they were still at the Wege Center. They moved the equipment to the Lacks Cancer Center where I completed treatment."

For Donna, healing began long before her cancer diagnosis. "Meeting with the doctors and nurses, I felt like the healing had already started emotionally. The treatment was just the aftermath," she says. "When you first hear the word 'cancer,' it's dark and scary. But they helped me feel like, 'We'll handle it. We'll deal with it. We'll approach it when we get to it.' That gave me peace."

Donna describes her healing experience as something divine. "You just know something bigger than you is at work, and it's going to



There are two ways to go through something like cancer—with deep fear and sadness, or with openness. I chose to walk through it with my hands open, ready to see where it would lead.

— Donna Betten, patient

be OK,” she says. “There are two ways to go through something like cancer—with deep fear and sadness, or with openness. I chose to walk through it with my hands open, ready to see where it would lead.”

Before the pandemic, Donna found deep meaning in volunteering at The Shoppe (the hospital gift shop) — a way to give back to the hospital that had given so much to her. “It felt like I was coming through the back door,” she says, “after so many years of entering through the front as a patient.” That shift marked a new chapter in her journey: one of healing, gratitude and service.

Over the years, Donna has supported Trinity Health Grand Rapids and Saint Mary’s Foundation in countless ways. “Each decade brings change, and I’ve been grateful to grow with the foundation and the hospital,” she shares. “Whether it’s volunteering, supporting campaigns, or simply witnessing transformation — like the beautiful green space as you look to Saint Andrew’s

Cathedral — I’ve felt proud to be part of it.”

Donna’s commitment extended to nearly a decade of service on the Saint Mary’s Foundation board. For nine years, she brought insight, compassion and a deep understanding of the patient experience. Her leadership helped shape key initiatives, strengthen community connections, and guided the Foundation through seasons of growth and change. “Serving on the board was an honor,” Donna reflects. “It allowed me to give back in a meaningful way and help ensure that others receive the same level of care and support I did.”

Her message to others is simple but powerful: “Be part of something bigger than yourself.” She knows that hospitals are often places people visit during their hardest times. But she believes that being involved—whether as a patient, volunteer or supporter—can bring hope and healing.

Today, Donna is a proud mother of three and grandmother of nine—three of whom were born at the Trinity Health Grand Rapids Birth Center. She began her career as a teacher. Now she supports her family’s hydraulic company and her Zimbabwe community.

Donna says her life verse, Jeremiah 29:11, reflects her journey: “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.”

Her hope for the future is rooted in faith and trust. “Sometimes you just have to step back, take a deep breath, and trust in where you’ve come from and who’s brought you through,” she says.

For Donna, that includes God, her family, the care team that stood by her during her cancer journey, and her Saint Mary’s Foundation family.

UP ON THE ROOF

A night to remember

This year's *Up on the Roof* event marked a powerful milestone—the 20th anniversary of the Lacks Cancer Center. The evening was a celebration of community, compassion, and commitment to advancing cancer care in West Michigan.

And what a celebration it was! The event shattered every previous record, raising more than **\$183,000** to support the life-changing work of the Lacks Cancer Center.

For two decades, the Lacks Cancer Center has stood as a beacon of hope for individuals and families facing cancer. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we've been able to provide comprehensive, compassionate care close to home—regardless of a patient's ability to pay.

Support from events like *Up on the Roof* directly impacts our ability to:

- Expand access to life-saving treatments and clinical trials
- Offer integrative therapies that support healing of mind, body, and spirit
- Provide financial assistance and emotional support to patients and families
- Invest in leading-edge technologies and facilities that enhance care

Together, we've built more than a cancer center—we've built a community of care. As we look ahead, we remain committed to advancing cancer treatment and continuing the legacy of healing that began 20 years ago.

A heartfelt thank you to our incredible *Up on the Roof* sponsors and everyone who made this milestone celebration possible. Your support fuels our mission and brings hope to countless lives.

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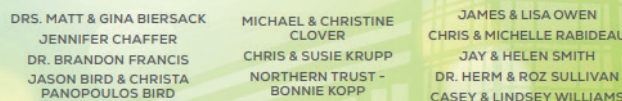
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Scan the QR code to see more images from the incredible night of celebration!





LACKS CANCER CENTER AT TRINITY HEALTH GRAND RAPIDS:

- was **Michigan's first LEED-certified cancer hospital**, featuring a rooftop garden, chapel and family spaces to support whole-person healing.
- delivers exceptional breast cancer care through its **Certified Breast Center of Excellence**, with the region's only program with two fellowship-trained breast surgeons. Patients benefit from early detection through the Mobile Mammography Unit bringing life-saving services to underserved communities.
- is one of the first in West Michigan to provide **dedicated nurse navigators**, helping patients through every step of their cancer journey.
- was the first in Michigan to use a GPS-like tool to **detect hard-to-reach lung cancer spots early and safely**.
- **was the first in West Michigan to offer CyberKnife**, a noninvasive, pain-free treatment that targets tumors with pinpoint accuracy.
- is among the first in the nation to launch **Virtual Connected Care™**, a model, connecting patients with nurses remotely to improve care and ease staffing challenges.
- offers **Genetic Testing**, including family history and tumor-specific, to guide personalized, targeted cancer therapies.
- introduced **HIPEC and liver artery infusion therapy**—advanced treatments once only available at major academic hospitals.
- through the **Cancer Network of West Michigan**, offers patients access to life-saving clinical trials and surgeries.
- has nearly **60% of oncology nurses at Lacks Cancer Center are certified**, ensuring expert, compassionate care.
- is among the **first in West Michigan to use the Da Vinci 5 robotic system**, enhancing surgical precision and recovery.

Trinity Health Michigan's breast cancer screening program is a **Breast Imaging Center of Excellence**, offering advanced 3D mammography and mobile access.

Community gift highlights

Advancing liver cancer screening through research and compassion

Thanks to a **\$10,000 grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation**, a resident physician at Trinity Health Grand Rapids is leading a groundbreaking initiative to improve liver cancer screening and awareness. This project focuses on educating primary care providers and reaching vulnerable communities with culturally sensitive outreach. By enhancing early detection and reducing disparities, this work is paving the way for a healthier future for all.

A gift of comfort and care for breast cancer patients

Joan Panopoulos and her family have made a transformational **\$100,000 gift to The Boutique at Lacks Cancer Center**. This heartfelt donation will expand access to personalized care items that bring comfort and dignity to breast cancer patients. Joan's generosity reflects a deep commitment to supporting others on their healing journey—and her impact will be felt for years to come.

60 years of impact: \$27K raised with Woodhouse match for Founders' Day

As Saint Mary's Foundation wrapped up a remarkable year celebrating their 60th anniversary in September, we raised an inspiring **\$27,903**— a testament to the enduring legacy of those who built the foundation that stands today. **A special thanks goes to Bob Woodhouse, grandson of an original Saint Mary's Foundation founder, whose generous \$10,000 match helped ignite this incredible response.** His gift not only honored his family's legacy but also inspired others to give in celebration of the past, present and future.



Supporting Our Littlest Patients with Specialized Bassinets

Nancy Boruta's generous \$25,000 gift is helping transform care in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Trinity Health Grand Rapids. Her donation funded six specialized bassinets designed to improve outcomes for newborns who need the highest level of care. These bassinets also foster stronger bonds between parents and babies, while supporting the dedicated caregivers who serve them.

Trinity Health Academy: A new lens on innovation and impact

Saint Mary's Foundation board trustees and colleagues participated in the second Trinity Health Academy. This immersive, one-day program provides a rare, behind-the-scenes look at the extraordinary work happening at Trinity Health Grand Rapids. Through engaging sessions, they explored the innovative care processes, compassionate mission efforts, and impactful programs that make our health care system a vital part of our community. Participants experienced tours of Lacks Cancer Center, Hauenstein Neurosciences, the Simulation Lab, Radiation Oncology, and heard from leaders at Trinity Health Grand Rapids.



CreateMyTee Brings Comfort to Emergency Department Patients

Trinity Health Grand Rapids Emergency Department has a generous partner in **CreateMyTee**, a Michigan-based apparel company. Since 2023, they've donated thousands of new T-shirts and sweatshirts—over \$120,000 in value—to support patients in need. The donations, which come from overruns and misprints, arrive several times a year in large batches.

"A majority of these donations go to our homeless population, and receiving clean new clothing is a luxury to them," said Steve Costello, Nursing Supervisor in the Emergency Department. "We also use these donations for patients whose clothing must be cut off during treatment. Being able to provide something for them to wear home is greatly appreciated. Especially in the colder months, it means a lot to our team to offer even a small comfort to those being discharged into the cold."

CreateMyTee appreciates that their donations directly impact the local community, and the Emergency Department team often shares with them the difference they make to patients. One unhoused patient, after receiving several layers of warm clothing in winter, later washed and passed the items on to another person in need—a powerful example of compassion in action.

Saint Mary's Foundation welcomes donations of new clothing, especially sweatpants, shoes, and cold-weather gear on behalf of the Trinity Health Grand Rapids Emergency Department. Interested donors can contact Kelly Obenauer at kelly.obenauer@trinity-health.org or 616-685-1427.

Together, we can continue to care for our community with warmth and kindness.



Saint Mary's Foundation is pleased to announce FY2025 grants for Trinity Health Grand Rapids

Ultrasound Guided Peripheral IV Insertion

Program: \$22,960 to replace ultrasound machines to improve IV placement accuracy and efficiency for patients with difficult venous access.

Gynnie Stretchers: \$16,725 to support the purchase of three stretchers to enhance patient safety and comfort during gynecological exams.

Pediatric Interprofessional Education:

\$58,798 to provide high-fidelity pediatric simulation manikin to improve emergency response training for clinical teams.

Sun Nuclear DoseCHECK – Additional

Algorithms: \$54,000 to expand software capabilities for more precise dose calculations in CyberKnife and electron radiation treatments.

MIM Protégé AI Auto-Contouring in Radiation

Oncology: \$78,750 to automate anatomical contouring in radiation therapy planning to improve precision and efficiency.

Boutique at Lacks – Complimentary Wigs and

Breast Form/Bra Prosthesis: \$50,000 to provide free wigs and prosthetic items to cancer patients, addressing gaps in insurance coverage and boosting confidence.

Kidney Transplant and Cardiac Rehabilitation

Shared InBody Analyzer: \$31,385 to purchase a body composition analyzer to support surgical readiness and recovery for transplant and cardiac rehab patients.

Gentle Response Training: \$18,000 to fund verbal de-escalation training for Emergency Department staff to improve patient and staff safety.

IV SmartPump Analytics Pilot Program: \$50,000

to implement a platform to analyze infusion pump data and enhance medication safety.

Safe Patient Handling and Mobility Equipment

Optimization: \$40,217 to purchase mobility devices to reduce patient falls and support safer transfers beyond in-room lift systems.

7 Main Bladder Scanner: \$10,334

to add a bladder scanner to improve urinary assessments and reduce catheter-related infections for an inpatient unit.

Medical Grade Blanket Warmer for Cardiac

Testing: \$5,658 to provide a blanket warmer to enhance patient comfort during cardiovascular testing procedures.

PortaCount N95 Respirator Fit Testing:

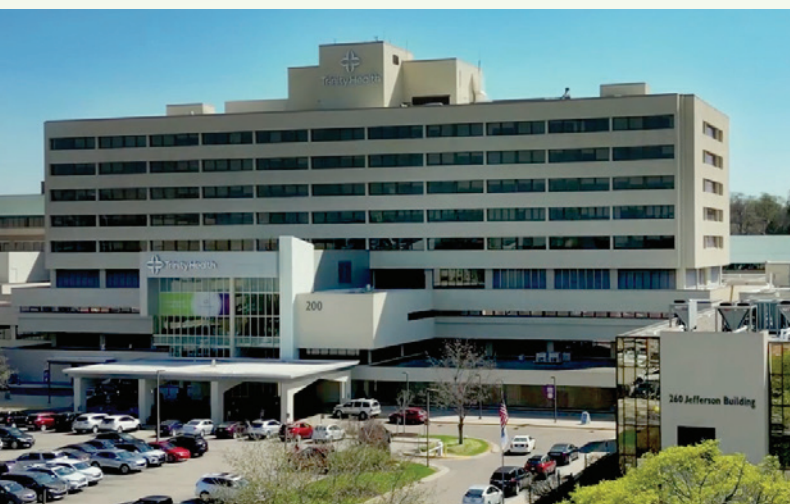
\$22,085 to support fit-testing for clinical staff to ensure safety while caring for patients with airborne illnesses.

Varian Advanced Triggered Imaging Package:

\$54,991 to upgrade imaging technology to improve accuracy and comfort during breath-hold radiation treatments.

Improving Diabetic Control Program: \$13,277

to launch a lifestyle-based diabetes remission program to improve outcomes for patients with elevated A1c levels.



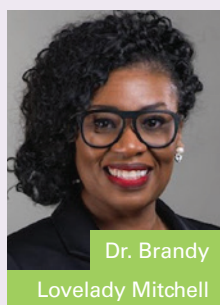
IV Ultrasound Equipment for Lacks: \$11,500 to acquire an ultrasound IV machine to reduce delays and improve care quality in the oncology inpatient unit.

Comfort and Coping Resources Expansion: \$12,000 to expand emotional support resources hospital-wide, including the Emergency Department and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), to meet growing demand and ensure equitable access for pediatric patients.

Cardiology EKG Machines: \$122,313 to replace EKG machines with the GE MUSE system to improve diagnostic accuracy, patient safety, and workflow efficiency in cardiology care.



Andrew Martin



Dr. Brandy
Lovelady Mitchell



Madelaine Lane



Dr. Jim Passinault

Welcoming new trustees!

Saint Mary's Foundation is deeply grateful for the dedication of our **board members**—respected community leaders who generously share their time, expertise, and influence. Their exceptional leadership and strong ties to the communities we serve help advance our mission and amplify our impact.

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Share Your Gratitude

The Share Your Gratitude program is available throughout the year.

If you wish, you may make a gift (optional) in honor of any medical staff member, nurse, colleague or department.



DEC. 2

Giving TUESDAY

This GivingTuesday, make twice the impact! Your gift will go further with a matching gift from LMCU—doubling your impact in meeting our community's greatest needs. **Scan to Give Today!**



Saint Mary's Foundation is dedicated to building relationships that inspire financial support from the community to advance the Mission of Trinity Health Grand Rapids.

**Interested in becoming
a volunteer?**

Laura Conners | 616-685-6084
connerla@trinity-health.org

**Interested in planned gift
opportunities?**

Cathy Mersman | 616-685-1484
cathy.skene@trinity-health.org

**Interested in becoming a
member of our Grand Groups
program?**

Kelly Obenauer | 616-685-1427
kelly.obenauer@trinity-health.org

**Interested in your company
becoming more involved?**

Ashley Owen | 616-685-1426
ashley.owen@trinity-health.org

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*If you do not wish to receive information
from Saint Mary's Foundation in the
future, please call 616-685-1892.*



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