



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services



June 2021

GENACROSS AT HOME

"Bud" fell ill and spent several weeks in the hospital, before going to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Toledo Campus to continue his recovery. Much of Bud and his wife's savings went to pay for his hospital expenses and rehabilitation. When Bud was well enough to leave the Toledo Campus, he went home with Genacross at Home health services. The Genacross at Home nurse had been treating Bud for several weeks when she began to notice the couple's tight financial situation. One day, the nurse noticed that there was no water in the home. She shared her concern, and Bud's wife confided to her that the water had been shut off due to the inability to pay their bill. Subsequently, the nurse reached out to her clinical manager, and Genacross at Home was able to get medical social services involved to provide options to support Bud and his wife. Genacross at Home nurses and therapists continue to treat Bud and will offer additional services as needed. The couple can rest easy with Genacross' commitment to serve – once individuals become part of the Genacross family, they will not be denied care or services due the inability to pay.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

One of the goals of the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus is to honor the dignity of its residents. This effort takes an intriguing form in the campus' Village Store, a small shopping space in the assisted living wing. Established by the Auxiliary many years ago, activities staff and a resident volunteer presently maintain operations. The store is not about making money, but maintaining independence for residents. While families may supply many items for their loved ones, residents can buy their particular preferences in the Village Store. "It is convenient to get items here. I can choose what I want," said resident "Lorelai." She noted that the shop will sometimes special order specific things – a crucial service during pandemic travel restrictions. Another resident, "Warren," has a long list of preference items he gets from the store – including Bounce dryer sheets, Tide laundry soap, Dawn dish soap; and good ballpoint pens. "Three for a dollar!" he said. "You get a really good deal – better than a regular store – I was shocked." The store adds life to the resident community. Residents often talk about what new items the store is carrying and what they want to see there. According to the store's principal shopper, "If an item makes me smile or giggle, I know it will be a hit with them."



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Jane" has lived in her assisted living apartment at Alpine Village on the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus for several years. Living at Alpine Village provides her with plenty to do throughout the day, including church services on Sundays. One day, Jane was surprised when a group of people she knew walked by her apartment. It was one of her best friends touring with her family! Jane and "Betty" grew up in Napoleon together, and both raised their children in that community. The apartment across from Jane had become available, and her friend was considering moving in. The Genacross admissions team was able to make it happen. Now, three months later, the two friends eat every meal together, take walks around the campus, enjoy activities, and have coffee in the afternoon. Their friendship has come full circle.

Although pseudonyms are used in the above ministry stories, Genacross follows HIPAA guidelines and has either obtained permission from our residents, patients, or clients, or has sufficiently concealed their identities, thereby enabling us to use their stories of God's grace.

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FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

In February 2018, “Lydia” became Genacross Family & Youth Services’ first client through the Bridges program, which provides services to young adults who have aged out of foster care in Ohio. She was enrolled at the University of Toledo when she was approved for services. Throughout her time in Bridges, the Genacross liaison has helped Lydia learn to budget and comparison shop. Genacross also has helped pay her rent and utilities and bought her textbooks and a laptop. Just a few days prior to her 21st birthday, Governor DeWine extended the Bridges program, and Lydia was granted four extra months of case management and financial help from Family & Youth Services. Then in December 2020, legislation (H.R.7947 Supporting Foster Children and Families through the Pandemic) was passed by the federal government, extending Bridges for those who had aged out of the program. Lydia was able to re-enroll into Bridges again in February, becoming the first client to re-enroll under the act. Lydia graduated from the University of Toledo in May with her bachelor’s degree in social work. Her Bridges liaison is working with her to find employment in the same field that has helped her most of her life. Lydia has been inspired by people such as the liaisons from Genacross who helped her for the past three years or so, and she is determined to help others in a similar manner.

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

“Lucy” resides at Luther Hills senior community, but she had been hospitalized and in a skilled nursing facility since the beginning of the year. The Genacross service coordinator at her housing site was involved with Lucy’s case and asked to observe one of her therapy sessions to see if Lucy was strong enough to return home to live independently. The service coordinator was also involved in a care conference determining next steps. With permission, the coordinator took pictures of the bathroom and bedroom in Lucy’s apartment and sent them to the therapists so they could work on specific tasks to make her return home go smoothly. Lucy finally arrived home on her birthday. She looked good and used a walker to get inside her apartment, which had been stocked with food and supplies for her. The service coordinator has helped Lucy set up her follow-up appointments with her primary care physician, neurologist, and orthopedic specialist. Lucy also has home health care for physical and occupational therapies, nursing care, and aide services. In addition, Lucy’s medications are delivered to her home, and she has a life alert system in place. Lucy’s family is involved, and they will also help with appointments and other needs. When everyone comes together to work as a team and all providers are involved to make the process go smoothly, it really does make a world of difference. Wholeness of Life is one of the Genacross Core Values, and the service coordinator helped Lucy overcome the hurdles and obstacles in her way, giving her another chance to live her life to the fullest and to continue her journey at home. What a great birthday gift!



TOLEDO CAMPUS

“Sherry” was part of the Genacross Lutheran Services-Toledo Campus family since August 2018. Fun-loving and charming, she loved to dance, sing and be a part of many activities. She was also a hugger, and, amidst her challenges, she was always thankful for all of the gifts that God had given her. Sherry had been receiving dialysis for many years, but over the past few months she had been growing tired. She was considering stopping dialysis, but worried about leaving her family. As Sherry continued to grow weary, she spoke with the campus’ chaplain, social worker and nurse practitioner. Together, the three of them held Sherry’s hands through one of the most difficult decisions she ever had to make in her life. They arranged a meeting with her family, where she told them about her decision. Knowing that she was “serious,” they made her feel very comfortable about it, and peace was felt throughout the room. The next day, Sherry was admitted to hospice care. While at hospice, she had five good days where she was able to plan her funeral and even picked out her own music. She fell asleep peacefully with her family at her bedside. Sherry is missed deeply by the Toledo Campus team. Several members attended her funeral, and her family shared their thanks for the amazing love and care she received at the Toledo Campus.