



# GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of  
Genacross Lutheran Services



August 2021

## GENACROSS AT HOME

About a month ago, "Frank" went into the hospital with a number of complex medical issues. One of his issues was a wound that had formed and had become infected. Frank's wife, "Sarah," went to the hospital daily until Frank was ready to be discharged. The hospital staff recommended that Frank go to a local nursing care facility for rehabilitation because of the possibility of complications due to the location of his wound. Sarah did not want Frank to go to a rehab facility, so she requested home health services with Genacross at Home. At first, Sarah struggled because help was not just a call light away. She went through in-home teaching and training to learn how to help care for Frank when the Genacross at Home staff members were not present. Now, Sarah has a better understanding of the complications facing her husband, and she has shared with the Genacross at Home staff that she wants to continue with in-home care. If Frank's wound does not heal more in the next couple of weeks, she will work with Genacross at Home to secure a short-term placement for him at a Genacross rehabilitation center.

## HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

It's that time of the year when fresh produce from gardens, farmers' markets, and local farms is plentiful. Residents of the Genacross senior communities in East Toledo/Oregon (Luther Grove, Luther Hills and Luther Ridge) have had the opportunity to participate in a variety of fresh produce programs. They were able to use farm market coupons offered by the Area Office on Aging (AOoA) or apply for weekly fresh produce boxes. Sprague's Farm Market has been one of the local favorites. Employees from the market deliver the fresh produce orders directly to the residents' doors and are paid with AOoA coupons. Having access to healthy, fresh fruits and vegetables is a real treat and a nutritional boost for the low-income seniors living in these communities. Residents have been busy trading recipes for smoothies, vegetarian dishes, and different ways of preparing the variety of produce. Utilizing these programs and other community resources managed through the site's service coordinators help the residents access items that are beneficial for their health and well-being.



## NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Mike," a member of the Napoleon community, resides in a local group home. He has diagnoses that require him to have a 24-hour caregiver. He is nonverbal but can make his needs known. Staff at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus became familiar with Mike's story after he was admitted to the campus from the hospital. He needed oxygen support, nutrition support, and therapy services. His first night on the campus was a restless one, but one particular staff member stayed with him in a gracious and caring manner that allowed him to feel safe in his new environment. After that first night, things improved quickly and his recovery began. Two weeks later, Mike had become a campus favorite. Each day, he received multiple visits from staff, ranging from the dietary manager to the chaplain and nurse aides. Recently, Mike had a very successful return to his group home.

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

“Sienna” was placed at the Genacross Maumee Youth Center at age 16. She had multiple diagnoses, including an autism spectrum disorder. Sienna’s family was very involved, visited often, and participated in Partners in Treatment weekends for several years. Sienna’s treatment plan, however, was not reunification, due to the threat she posed to her siblings. Her family attended all trainings offered to help them learn more about their daughter’s diagnoses and how to deal with her behaviors. Over time, as she learned more coping skills, Sienna’s behaviors grew less aggressive. She transitioned to the East Toledo group home and then into the adult program after she graduated from high school. Staff taught Sienna coping, independent living, and vocational skills. Now, at age 24, she has begun her first “real” job. She is reportedly doing well and really likes earning a paycheck. Her family remains active in her life. Her father had a novel published recently, in which the main character is autistic and lives in Toledo. In the dedication of the book, he thanks Genacross and specifically mentions caregiver Shari Jackson for everything that was done to help educate their family and to help Sienna live a happy and productive life.

## WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

When “Samantha” arrived at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus, she had many pieces of metal protruding from her leg. She had fallen in her home a few days before, and the metal device, called a “fixator,” assured that her broken ankle would remain stable prior to surgery. It also meant, though, that Samantha could not put any weight on her leg or do any of the self-care tasks she took for granted. With time before her surgeon could schedule the surgery on her ankle, Samantha needed a safe place to stay. While she had a network of friends and acquaintances in the apartment building where she lived, no one could provide the intensity of care she needed for as long as she needed it. That is where the rehabilitation unit on the Wolf Creek Campus came in. It provided a place for Samantha to have her daily needs met, receive supportive services to get stronger for surgery, and – because Samantha has struggled with addiction and many medical problems – safely manage her health and pain. Medical, dietary, and social services staff, as well as the chaplain, worked together to make Samantha as comfortable and prepared for surgery as possible. A few weeks later, Samantha was discharged to the hospital for surgery. She returned with the fixator gone and a soft cast on her ankle. It took several weeks before Samantha was approved to put weight on her leg and begin what many would consider “rehab.” Samantha still has many challenges, but she is moving closer to returning to her friends and normal life.



## TOLEDO CAMPUS

“Martha” is the kind of person most people would expect to do well in therapy, since one of her favorite activities while living in the assisted living unit at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Toledo Campus is group exercise. When Martha recently became ill and went to the hospital, she experienced generalized weakness and some problems with balance. Already a resident of the Toledo Campus, she came to The Labuhn Center for her rehabilitation. The therapy staff worked diligently with Martha and found her to be highly motivated. In fact, within two weeks Martha was able to return to her assisted living apartment. She credits the therapy staff for her quick recovery. She said they explained everything as they worked together and were all very positive. However, there is no doubt that Martha’s attitude contributed to her speedy recovery. “I’d only be hurting myself if I didn’t work hard in therapy,” she said. Martha is back in her apartment and happy to resume her regular routine.