



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

*Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services*



September 2020

GENACROSS AT HOME

"Linda" experienced a fall in her home and needed surgery. After her rehabilitation at an area facility, she was ready to return home to complete her recovery with health services from Genacross at Home. For a month, Linda received skilled nursing care, along with physical, occupational, and speech therapies, as well as the services of a home health aide. She recovered steadily at home, but before being discharged, Linda shared that she did not have reliable transportation to get to and from her appointments and could not afford her needed medications and food. Genacross at Home's Medical Social Worker then connected with Linda to arrange for medical transportation, food stamps, and assistance with paying for her medications. The Genacross home health agency was able to help Linda with much more than her physical recovery.

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

At times during the coronavirus pandemic, the residents of Luther Crest senior community in Toledo have felt isolated and bored. To help alleviate social isolation, the Genacross Service Coordinator at the site went online and found free crossword puzzles, word search games, and a memory game to put in a packet and pass out to residents. In addition, the Service Coordinator worked with Harbor, a local community service organization that operates a Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (WISE) program. Luther Crest has utilized healthy aging courses through the WISE program in the past. Harbor created a care package for residents that included insulated lunch bags, snacks, mini hand sanitizers, and wellness fliers. The Genacross Service Coordinator delivered the items to the residents, who were very grateful for the surprise gifts. These small acts of kindness have meant a great deal during this time of isolation. Sometimes the littlest things can mean the most!



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

Residents of the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus enjoy a variety of activities. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic began, residents have not been able to enjoy large group activities. The activities staff began brainstorming fun ways to engage residents in smaller groups. One staff member came across an idea that looked like it would be fun. The game was an adapted version of the children's game called Hungry Hungry Hippos. Activities staff asked four residents and four staff members in the east wing of the Health Center to give the game a try. It is played in a way similar to the board game, except participants use broom sticks, balls, and small laundry baskets. Residents wheel themselves back and forth with the help of aides and activity assistants. The resident who collects the most balls wins the contest. Everyone could see the excitement in the players' eyes. Other residents watched the game from a safe distance and cheered on the participants. It turned out to be a fun activity for everyone, while fitting into the guidelines for social distancing and small gatherings of residents.

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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TOLEDO CAMPUS

At the Genacross Lutheran Services-Toledo Campus, the residents are considered members of the family. Recently, “Patty,” a beloved resident who had been part of this family for many years, passed away. She was a very loving lady who enjoyed helping others. In recent years, her dementia had actively progressed and she required increasing care. Dedicated staff always took that job very seriously. Patty would spend a great deal of her time at the nurses’ station, where staff would engage in conversations, talking with Patty about her likes and dislikes, food, pets, and family. Staff would paint Patty’s nails and, on some occasions, had Patty paint their own. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Patty had weekly visits from her family and would also go on numerous outings. Her family always clearly expressed their appreciation of Patty’s care. With visitation being put on hold for months, Patty’s family relied on the Toledo Campus staff more than ever to care for Patty. Regular calls, sometimes daily, were their main way of keeping in touch. They would often drop off some of Patty’s favorite food items and sometimes would bring enough for the staff working on Patty’s unit. Most recently, the Toledo Campus received a \$200 donation and a letter from Patty’s family thanking staff for her great care. They were grateful that they never had to worry about Patty because they knew she was in good hands. Patty is missed greatly and remembered fondly.

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

Shortly after graduating from high school, “Javier” entered the Bridges program, which provides services to young adults who have aged out of foster care in Ohio. While his biological home life had been chaotic and unstable, he had found stability and support with his girlfriend’s family. They gave him a home until he graduated and entered the Bridges program in July 2018. Since that time, Javier has switched from a part-time job at Little Caesars to working full time while taking classes at Owens Community College. Javier proposed to his girlfriend, and together they petitioned the court for custody of his three younger siblings. They were granted custody earlier this year. Javier and his fiancée have expressed that they would not have been able to do this without the help of Bridges and his liaison through Family & Youth Services. The Bridges liaison worked to find a larger apartment for the family and to increase the financial help needed to feed and clothe three additional people. Since gaining custody of his siblings, Javier has also changed his Bridges goals to reflect being a better parent figure to his siblings. He has joined the YMCA so that they can all live an active and healthy lifestyle. He has also set a goal to do well in school to role model the importance of education to his younger siblings. While the Bridges program has provided additional financial support, Javier’s liaison has offered emotional support both to him and his fiancée during this transition. When completing home visits with the family each month, the Bridges liaison has observed that the new family is happy and adjusting very well.



WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

Due to a car accident, 53-year-old “Brandon” had numerous broken bones and a collapsed lung. He was in the hospital for a week after receiving titanium rods in his femur and hip. Following the surgery, Brandon could not move or feel his right leg, and he said it was as “heavy as a tree trunk.” He came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus for his rehabilitation. Soon after he began physical therapy, Brandon had feeling in his leg. Then he was able to raise his leg and bend his knee. Brandon was elated over these changes. He had feared that he would never be able to use his leg again, but now he knew that his leg was coming back and the therapy was working. His doctor was extremely pleased with the increased strength in Brandon’s leg and his overall progress. Brandon is highly complimentary of the Wolf Creek therapy staff and says he would recommend the Wolf Creek Campus to anyone because “they do a great job.”