



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services

November 2023

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

"Michael" was removed from his biological home due to neglect and deplorable conditions. His mother was unable to stabilize and regain custody of Michael or his sister. He was placed in four foster homes, but his behaviors, which included homicidal and suicidal ideations, lying, stealing, damaging property, and physical aggression, caused his removals. Subsequently, he came to the Oregon Group Home operated by Genacross Family & Youth Services in August 2019. His behaviors improved with the structure and support of the staff and his therapist. During his two years there, his maternal aunt worked to adopt him. He discharged and moved to California with her in July 2021. Although he received many services while there, his behaviors deteriorated and his aunt was unable to care for him. He returned to Genacross in February 2022 to the Anthony Wayne Group Home. While there, Michael stabilized again and showed significant progress toward his goals. This past summer, a foster family became interested in caring for Michael. He had a few visits and discharged in August. This has been very bittersweet for the staff, as Michael has grown immensely under their care. He was always a good role model for the other youth, and the younger ones always looked up to him. This fall, Michael was accepted at St. Francis De Sales High School, and he started his freshman year there. He is doing well and is thriving in his new environment and school.



HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

"Jane" resides at Luther Hills senior community, but she had been hospitalized and in a skilled nursing facility for a few months. The Genacross service coordinator at her housing site was involved with Jane's case and asked to observe one of her therapy sessions to see if Jane 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 Jane's apartment and sent them to the therapists so they could work on specific tasks to make her return home go smoothly. When Jane finally arrived home, she used a walker to get inside her apartment, which had been stocked with food and supplies. The service coordinator has helped Jane set up her follow-up doctor appointments. Jane also has home health care for physical and occupational therapies, nursing care, and aide services. In addition, Jane's medications are delivered to her home, and she has a life alert system in place. Jane'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. The Genacross service coordinator helped Jane overcome hurdles and obstacles in her way, giving her another chance to live her life to the fullest and to continue her journey at 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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GENACROSS AT HOME

“Connie” has been receiving periodic home health services from Genacross at Home. She is on the Medicaid Waiver program through MyCare Ohio and has re-occurring medical concerns that the home health agency has been able to assist her with, as needed. Connie is very independent and struggles to accept help when it is offered, but she has established a good relationship with the Genacross at Home staff. Recently, she called the home health office to share that her power had been shut off due to her inability to pay her bills and that she did not have transportation to her upcoming medical appointments. Office staff reacted quickly and obtained orders from Connie’s primary care physician for the agency’s Medical Social Worker to visit and help coordinate services. Subsequently, Connie enrolled in the Home Energy Assistance Program to help make her utility payments more affordable. By working with her MyCare Ohio Case Manager, ongoing medical and non-medical transportation services were also arranged, as well as counseling to ensure Connie is accepting help and getting the services she needs to remain in her home as long as possible.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Larry” loves to talk. He can be a one-man conversation, complete with card tricks for the willing and ready stories from his family or his small town back home. No matter the circumstance, it always reminds Larry of some tale, misadventure, or anecdote. He moved into assisted living on the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus a little over three years ago. He had been staying at a nursing care facility prior to that, recovering from a truck accident that left him permanently disabled. He walks with a limp and has persistent pain, but one would not know it to talk with him. He never complains. Maybe because he always has a story or his positive attitude, Larry has found a place in the community here. Residents who are anxious or confused enjoy his reassuring company – he takes their mind off of the worries of the moment.

Larry also has his place at the evening card table, be it Uno or Euchre. “I just try to make it better for everyone,” Larry said about his role in life. Assisted living staff see to Larry’s medications, provide good nutrition, and maintain a safe environment for his day-to-day living. He doesn’t need much, just a helping hand to be the person God made him to be.



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Andy” came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus after surgery to repair a fractured ankle. He was non-weight bearing for several weeks, and his doctors had told him that due to his age and multiple health issues, he might never walk again without assistance. Andy was determined, however, to walk out of the facility on his own, and the therapy team was ready to help him beat the odds. He worked incredibly hard in therapy, gradually improving his strength, balance, and mobility. After many triumphs and several setbacks, the day came when Andy put his walker aside and let the therapy team know he was going to be okay. Staff members gathered at the front door and clapped as he left the campus. Many of them wanted to say goodbye, of course, but many may also have wanted to be witnesses of God’s work, as they watched Andy walk away unassisted.

FOUNDATION

The Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation recently helped sponsor the annual memorial service held at the Wolf Creek Campus. The service’s program stated: “Today we reflect on those who have gone before us. We have permission to express our sorrows even while we are profoundly grateful for their presence among us.” The service drew upon the emotions of sorrow and gratitude through Scripture and jazz music. It went to that low place of calling out to God, and it went to that high place of celebrating gratitude and joy. Participants were asked during the service to share something special about their loved one on a musical note, which was then placed on a remembrance wall. The Foundation sponsored the refreshments for the service. In addition, the jazz trio’s music was specifically provided through the Wolf Creek Chapel Fund, which is maintained by the Foundation to support spiritual care activities and the physical space of the chapel.