



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services



March 2024

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Recently, the service coordinator at Genacross' Luther Hills senior community in Oregon, Ohio, assisted a resident named "Sharon" who needed help with light housekeeping. Sharon has a medical condition that requires her to be on oxygen, and she was having a hard time cleaning her apartment. She approached the service coordinator for help finding some reasonably priced options. The service coordinator did the research and presented them to Sharon, who chose a company with affordable private pay rates to come in once a week and clean. So far, Sharon likes the cleaning services, and she is grateful to the service coordinator for the help. This is just one example of how the Genacross service coordinators can help residents age in place in the comfort of their own homes.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

"Gloria," an assisted living resident at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus, keeps a photograph of herself on the table beside her chair. It was captured several decades ago at a desk, and it shows a smartly dressed, approachable, and capable woman. Gloria was, along with being a wife and mother, a school secretary. For someone with self-sufficiency at the center of her identity, needing help with daily life has been an adjustment for Gloria. She has difficulty remembering things, and the decades took a toll on her joints. Moving her from a home of 60 years was hard for her family as well, but Gloria is flourishing at the Wolf Creek Campus. "The people around here, right away they made me feel at home," she said. Gloria has the support she needs with remembering mealtimes and activities, as well as administering medication. Most of all, Gloria has a community around her where she is valued. She has made friends with several residents of her hall and enjoys exercise and bingo. Gloria recently had her nails done in pink, matching a blouse she wears with pride from her days keeping a school running. She is still caring for those around her, putting people at ease, making each day a little better – she is still the Gloria captured on film all those years ago.



GENACROSS AT HOME

"Jackson" was receiving services from Genacross at Home when he had a setback and was admitted to a local hospital for care. Shortly after his admission, a Genacross hospital liaison visited with him to reassure him that Genacross staff would help with his transition back to his home when he was ready to leave the hospital. Jackson was very appreciative of the unexpected visit. In addition, the hospital liaison helped communicate with the hospital's staff regarding Jackson's care with Genacross at Home and other services he had in place in his home. When Jackson left the hospital, the transition home went smoothly. The day he was discharged, the Genacross at Home team met him at his home to restart his home health services. Jackson is doing well with his care. Considering the progress he is making in his recovery, Genacross at Home also expects to be able to release him from services in the near future.

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

More than 10 years ago, an 8-year-old, intellectually impaired little boy came to the Genacross Maumee Youth Center after years of sexual abuse and neglect by his biological family. "Caden" was violent and acted out aggressively toward caregivers. He made frightening threats. He even threw his own feces at staff and displayed significant inappropriate behaviors. Caden challenged even the most experienced staff and therapists, but they persisted until he stopped attacking. They worked through years of verbal aggression and helped him learn that even when Caden believed he was unlovable, staff would not give up on him. "That's what we do," one staff member explained. "Regardless of their behavior, we stand on that line and say 'No matter what you believe, you still have worth to us.'"

Caden is now 18 years old, and the Maumee Youth Center and Liberty Center Schools have arranged for him to attend an experiential job readiness program at the local Educational Services Center. The unmanageable child, who literally grew up in the Family & Youth Services program, now rides the bus to "school" every day, dressing nicely and with his hair neatly combed. Caden participates in real world employment. He comes back every day beaming and proud. Caden will have to leave the program at some point, but it will all have been worth it to see him ready to take on the world.



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Esther" came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus feeling very discouraged. She had been gardening when she fell and broke her leg, and she was worried about her ability to return to her home and garden. Esther stayed in the Health Center and worked with the therapy team for over a month. During that time, she made great strides and was determined to do whatever she could to heal. The therapy team's plan was to increase gradually Esther's ability to be on her leg without overdoing it. She worked on standing endurance and walking distance. Her therapists also helped teach her how to dress carefully until range of motion increased to her previous level. Therapy and nursing staff helped Esther build confidence in many daily tasks that would make her independent again. In addition, the Napoleon team kept Esther and her family involved in her care plan each step of the way, so everyone was apprised of her goals and progress. Before Esther returned home, the therapy team did a home safety assessment. This helps identify any barriers that might need to be addressed to ensure a successful transition. The therapy team recommended placement of grab bars in certain areas of the home, as well as removal of such trip hazards as area rugs. Esther transitioned home successfully and expressed gratitude for her rehabilitation stay at the Napoleon Campus.

FOUNDATION

Many times Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation receives gifts in memory of or in honor of someone special. These gifts are a great way to honor a living loved one or memorialize someone who has passed away. "Recently, a set of memorial gifts really stood out," said Mike George, Foundation Executive Director. We had a donor who assisted Genacross over the years by providing art supplies, cash gifts, books and crafts for the kids in the Family & Youth program. When this donor passed away, she asked that gifts in remembrance of her be sent to Genacross. The brief handwritten notes that accompanied those gifts told the story of how impactful this woman's life had been on many different levels. "Sometimes you may wonder if anyone is paying attention to all the wonderful things you do," he added, "but these gifts proved that people notice, and they know what a difference one person can make."