



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services

May 2024

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Joey” came to Genacross Family & Youth Services after being removed from his mother’s home because of a lack of adequate supervision and unclean living conditions. While Joey and his brother were placed together in a foster home, Joey demonstrated significant negative behaviors necessitating a more restrictive environment. At the time Joey came to Genacross, his behaviors included frequently arguing with and instigating peers, having angry and emotional outbursts, and damaging property. Joey spent a year and a half at the Wynn Treatment Facility, during which he worked to address trauma, process family dynamics, identify feelings, develop and implement coping skills, and regulate his emotions. His former foster parent ensured that Joey was able to continue building a positive relationship with his brother through consistent contact. When Joey’s brother recently transitioned to a new foster home, the brothers were able to maintain contact.



As the new foster parents came to know Joey, they expressed interest in having him join their family. Phone and video calls progressed into in-person and overnight visits in March. Last month, Joey transitioned into the home with his brother, and he has been incredibly successful. He is enrolled in general education classes and is consistently earning high marks. He is also participating in such extracurricular activities as basketball and martial arts. Joey attends church each week with his family and enjoys offering the mealtime prayer at dinner each evening. He participates in family activities and has made several friends. The family describes Joey as kind, passionate, motivated, loving and patient. Joey is overjoyed to be reunited with his brother, and the foster parents shared that he has been a wonderful addition to their family. They are thankful for the support Genacross provided to Joey during his time in care, as well as the support offered to their family during Joey’s transition.

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

“Martha” and “Sam” have been married for 77 years. Recently, they sold their home and moved into Genacross’ Luther Haus senior independent living community in Temperance, Michigan. While they are both in their 90s, Sam is still driving. He was in the United States Air Force and has shared pictures of his time there with his Genacross service coordinator. He also likes to talk to other veterans living at Luther Haus about the war and their collective experiences. Sam worked for the post office, and Martha was a stay-at-home mom. They are fortunate to have a great deal of family support. Recently, their family presented them with a large plaque commemorating their marriage that hangs in their apartment. The couple says their secret to a long marriage is compromise. Living in their apartment and being part of the Genacross family has been a truly good fit for them. Martha and Sam appreciate that maintenance is provided and that there are many opportunities to socialize with other 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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GENACROSS AT HOME

“David” lives at a Genacross housing community and was struggling to coordinate transportation services to his doctor’s office for routine injections, as well as to the laboratory for his monthly lab work. Increasing unsteadiness also affected his mobility and made getting out for these trips more and more difficult. After the service coordinator at his housing site referred him, a representative from Genacross at Home contacted his doctor’s office for home health orders for his routine injections and lab work. In addition, therapists have worked with him in his home to increase his balance and strength. The services provided by Genacross at Home have alleviated David’s stress, made his life a little easier, and improved his health, as well.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

In a community of healing like the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus, sometimes a resident leaves an impression greater than even the substantial progress made during a rehabilitation stay. “Rachel” was that person. She arrived at the Wolf Creek Campus from the hospital with persistent heart and lung problems. She had also just received treatment for a blood clot in her lungs and was so weak she had difficulty getting out of bed. She could only



walk a few feet with assistance and needed significant help caring for herself. However, Rachel brought with her an enthusiasm for getting better and for all the people around her. She worked each day with gusto, making maximum use of physical and occupational therapy. She engaged functional therapy, which focuses on practicing skills that mirrored her daily needs. In one exercise, she picked up small traffic cones from the floor – mirroring safe retrieval of a dropped item. During her stay, she also received good rest, quality nutrition, and daily mental stimulation. After just 18 days, Rachel was walking two-thirds of a football field and could safely function at home with support from visiting aides. One day, toward the end of her stay, she even decided to practice skipping! Most of all, Rachel made a memorable and inspirational impression on Wolf Creek’s residents and staff with a joyous, grateful, and positive attitude.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Tracy” lived alone in the country and felt that the outside work at her home was becoming too much to handle by herself. She contacted the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus about moving into one of the Bavarian Village condominiums. She felt it was a good place for her retirement, and she was happy to let the Genacross team take care of maintenance needs. Bavarian Village also provided her with a new community and support system. “I enjoyed living there because I could be around people and there were more socialization opportunities,” Tracy said. Eventually, however, she needed more day-to-day help and had more clinical needs. Her physician also recommended that she should not live alone. The campus’ next level of care, Alpine Village assisted living, seemed to be the logical step. Tracy was willing to make the move. “The food is good, the activities are fun, and the employees all try to take care of my requests when I need something. It’s a good place to live.”

FOUNDATION

“Marissa” is 7 years old and lives in one of the Genacross Family & Youth Services group homes. She has never spoken a word in her short life. Prior to her arrival at Genacross, Marissa endured neglect and abuse that permanently stunted her abilities. The care (24/7/365) provided by the dedicated Family & Youth staff is very intensive. These front-line staff work with Marissa and all of the children in the youth group homes to make sure they reach their potential. Further, these individuals are the hands and eyes of God, providing spiritual comfort to kids who have been forgotten. The staff members’ love and compassion have helped countless children in care. That happens in part by support from the Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation and through donor’s financial support of it. Were it not for the generosity of donors, Marissa could be in a different setting, likely one that does not provide God-centered care.