



# GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of  
Genacross Lutheran Services



September 2024

## FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Marcus” was removed from his biological home at a young age because of domestic violence and substance abuse. He also experienced physical abuse while there. At the age of 6, Marcus and his siblings were adopted. After more than four years in the adoptive home, however, the family was no longer able to manage Marcus’ behaviors, and the adoption was dissolved. Subsequently, he was placed at Genacross Family & Youth’s Oregon Treatment Facility in 2022. His behaviors at the time included angry outbursts, verbal and physical aggression, property damage, self-injurious behaviors, leaving supervision and stealing. Over the course of two years, Marcus was able to address trauma and develop the coping skills needed to effectively regulate his emotions. Negative behaviors in both the residential and educational settings decreased significantly over time. He established positive relationships with peers and staff members, demonstrating noteworthy improvement in self-esteem and optimism. He also was able to transition from the alternative educational setting for youth with behavioral needs to a mainstream junior high educational setting – a testament to his behavioral and academic progress. In April, Marcus was introduced to a potential adoptive family. He enjoyed getting to know them over the next several months, before they welcomed him into their home. Marcus’ adoption transition has been a very positive one. The adoptive mother recently shared her joy she experiences when spending time with Marcus and her two other children.



## WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Bea” has spent her life volunteering to help others. She has won recognition and awards in a large health care organization, where she has served for over 40 years in a customer-facing role. “You meet a lot of interesting people,” Bea said of her volunteering. “They give us the stories of what has happened in the past. That is what we are there for – to listen.” A person with developmental disabilities, Bea does need some support with her daily life. For many years, her parents helped her. As they aged, however, that was no longer possible in the same way. Now, an assisted living apartment at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus has become Bea’s home. Staff helps Bea with medication tracking, meals, and occasional transport to a grocery store. She is even able to continue her volunteer work using local transportation services. Bea finds life at the Wolf Creek Campus to be peaceful and fulfilling. She often connects with others during activities, near the puzzle table, or during the two days a week she – true to her calling – volunteers at the campus’ Village Store.

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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## NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Sarah” was active in her community, where she had lived for many years before needing assisted living services. Although she was nervous to leave her long-time residence, Alpine Village assisted living on the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus quickly became her new home. Soon, she was involved in activities, including Bible study, and became friends with many residents. When Sarah had a health scare, she reluctantly went to the campus’ Health Center for rehabilitation services. She was not sure what to expect, but she dedicated herself to her recovery and learned the Health Center was different than she imagined. Staff members were friendly and helpful, and there were other residents there for short-term recovery stays. Sarah worked in therapy consistently, but felt discouraged at the decline her health had taken in the hospital. She was comforted by visits from assisted living staff, and her therapists helped her learn to focus not on what was lost, but on what she could gain back. After weeks of therapy, Sarah was ready to return to her assisted living apartment. Her departure was a little bittersweet, as she had grown comfortable at the Health Center. Sarah’s therapists continued to work with her once she was settled back in assisted living, and Health Center staff promised to visit her as well. Sarah is very happy that the Napoleon Campus can meet her daily needs now and in the future.



## HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

“Abigail” is a 92-year-old resident at Genacross’ Luther Oaks senior community in Norwalk, Ohio. She has numerous medical issues that were creating complications. The Luther Oaks’ service coordinator was very concerned about Abigail’s deteriorating health and encouraged her to go to the emergency room. When Abigail did, she was immediately admitted and diagnosed with congestive heart failure. While in the hospital, Abigail expressed concern about her care and medications. The service coordinator was able to speak on Abigail’s behalf with hospital contacts and resolve the issues. Abigail began to improve and was eventually able to return home with home health services that included skilled nursing care, physical therapy and occupational therapy. The Genacross service coordinator played an important part in Abigail’s recovery, advocating on behalf of her needs. Service coordination, which is offered at all Genacross senior housing locations, plays an essential role in helping residents’ maintain their independence to the fullest extent possible.

## GENACROSS AT HOME

“Roberta” was living at Creekside Condominiums on the Wolf Creek Campus when she experienced a stroke that caused many health complications. After she left the hospital, she received short-term therapy services at the Wolf Creek Campus’ Health Center, in preparation for returning home to her condo. Wolf Creek caregivers, however, expressed concern about whether Roberta and her family would be able to provide the care she needed. The family decided to bring Roberta home with home health services through Genacross at Home. She received nursing, therapy and aide services. Genacross at Home staff shared similar concerns as those Wolf Creek staff had expressed earlier. Roberta’s health was deteriorating, and the family was struggling to provide continuous care. One health episode ended with Roberta going back to the hospital. Genacross at Home staff will continue to work with Roberta, her family, the Wolf Creek team, and the hospital to ensure Roberta receives the services she needs.

## FOUNDATION

Baseball is an American pastime that creates fellowship and memories. Baseball church is a concept that Genacross Lutheran Services, Zion Lutheran Church in Waterville, Luther Home of Mercy in Williston, and the Northwestern Ohio Synod, ELCA, created a few years back to facilitate ties between the organizations by attending a Toledo Mud Hens baseball game together. Thanks to a microgrant from the Synod, the organizations attended the August 6 game versus the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp and were joined by five additional Lutheran congregations for an evening of food, fun and baseball. A youth in care from Genacross Family & Youth Services and a resident from Luther Home of Mercy even threw out first pitches to start the game, eventually won by the Mud Hens.