

OCTOBER 2025

GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of Genacross Lutheran Services

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

The Activity Department at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus is a creative hub for the whole community. Activity aides go out to the floor to lead programming, but the central activities room has tables, art supplies, and even a cooking oven for residents to drop in and express their creativity. For several months now “George’s Box” has been a feature of that room. “George” is one of the more frequent users of the space and his box is stuffed with beads, wire, books and other crafting supplies. “I was making a lot of jewelry,” George said. “One of the aides helped me make a rosary that I wear.” He also has made dreamcatchers. One of his friends is part of the Native American community, and he showed George how to make them correctly. George has recently transitioned from nursing care to assisted living on campus. He works to overcome several challenges in his daily life, including mobility, speech and dexterity. A long-time fan of comic books and fantasy art, George said he takes inspiration from the work of Frank Frazetta — an artist and illustrator of the genre. In later life, the artist overcame challenges similar to George’s to continue his art. For now, George is looking ahead to Christmas and the holiday cards he will create for family and friends.

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES



“Laurie” has been in a Juvenile Detention Center twice due to her behaviors and thoughts of self-harm. When her parents made the difficult decision to relinquish custody because they were unable to manage her behaviors, Laurie was referred to Genacross Family & Youth Services. When she arrived, her behaviors included physical aggression, angry outbursts, oppositional behavior and suicidal ideations. The structure, routine and consistency provided by her caregivers and therapists allowed Laurie to achieve significant progress. Most noteworthy is her improvement regarding the use of coping skills. This was an area of substantial concern when she arrived, as she would often resort to physical and verbal aggression toward staff members and peers when she was upset. With encouragement and consistency, as well as individual, group and family therapy, Laurie came to recognize and use coping skills. This also helped improve her peer interactions and staff relationships, and her interest and engagement in social activities soon followed.

While at Genacross, Laurie worked toward family reunification with on-site and weekend home visits. Within 19 months, her progress was sufficient for her to return to her family. Genacross provided six months of aftercare services, of which Laurie’s stepfather has been an active participant. Her stepfather reports that she has had few angry outburst episodes since returning home. When outbursts do occur, family members have learned from Genacross the skills they need to support Laurie effectively. Outbursts are successfully processed and managed through therapeutic services, and Laurie continues to work on anger management and coping skills. Laurie’s stepfather is impressed with the progress she has made, and he thanks the Genacross personnel for their hard work.

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Genacross senior independent living communities frequently partner with other agencies and programs to offer educational opportunities for residents. Recently, Luther Pines senior community in Lima, Ohio, held a Wellness Initiative for Senior Education (WISE) program through a local nonprofit group called Prevention Awareness Support Services (PASS). This six-week program celebrates healthy aging and discusses ways to make healthy lifestyle choices and avoid substance use. Many different topics were discussed, including aging risk factors, prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse, diversity in the community, nutrition, and effective ways to manage health care choices. A unique part of the workshop was that it was led by other senior citizens. This made the topics and discussion more relatable to the Luther Pines residents. The program always included a catered lunch, as well as a gift for the residents who attended each week. It was very informative and rewarding. The residents who attended the workshop over the six weeks said they loved it, because new information was presented and discussed in ways that made it very relevant to them.



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Mary” came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus following complications from a fall at home. When she arrived, she had a fractured pelvic bone but was still able to begin therapy. She was also experiencing a great deal of anxiety. During her stay on the Napoleon Campus, Mary worked hard in therapy. “The therapy staff has turned my life around, and I’m so glad I can go back home,” she said. Her husband mentioned that the nursing staff had shown true compassion even in high-stress situations. “The nurses were very kind and compassionate during her stay,” he explained. Soon Mary will be going home after several months of rehabilitation on the campus. She is looking forward to a healthier lifestyle that she has learned about from the Genacross staff. They also worked with her on how to be safer in her home. Therapy has performed a home assessment, evaluating her bedroom, bathroom and common areas, and has recommended equipment to ensure her safety. Mary feels confident she will have a successful return home.

FOUNDATION

On September 18, nearly 80 supporters gathered at Providence Lutheran Church in Holland, Ohio, for the Donor and Congregation Appreciation Event, hosted by Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation. Guests enjoyed delicious food, warm fellowship, and heartfelt stories highlighting the remarkable impact their generosity has made throughout the past year. The evening was filled with gratitude as attendees learned how their gifts are transforming lives across Genacross ministries. Featured speakers included Genacross President/CEO Rick Marshall and Alesia Frerichs, President and CEO of Lutheran Services in America, who shared updates and future visions for faith-driven service and collaboration. Perhaps the most touching speaker was MaKennya, a recent graduate of the Genacross Family & Youth Services program, who shared how the loving environment she was in at Genacross helped her overcome many obstacles in her life. The event gave Genacross the opportunity to recognize the faithful partnership of donors, congregations and friends whose support makes the organization’s mission possible every day.