

JULY 2026

GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of Genacross Lutheran Services

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

For nursing care resident “Iona,” admission to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus has meant stability and better health. Her previous living conditions were less than ideal, and she credits living at the Wolf Creek Campus for bringing her out of depression. “I feel healthier and stronger,” Iona said. She has made new friends. The aides help her with daily activities of living, encourage her and make sure there is nothing she needs. They also ensure that Iona has fun with some of the activities offered on campus. Some of her favorite activities are going on outings for ice cream and touring the countryside on the Wolf Creek bus. She loves horses and looks for them in pastures. Support from therapy and consistent nursing care has helped Iona maintain and build her strength and balance. “When I came, I couldn’t stand for five minutes without my back hurting,” she said. “Now I don’t feel that pain anymore. I can stand and walk with my walker. I feel like I was healed.” Living at the Wolf Creek Campus has also renewed her interest in writing. Iona is a published Christian novelist, and she enjoys having a worship service on campus and living in a community with a Christian identity. “Just knowing my faith is still strong, that might be the best part of all,” Iona confirmed.



HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

In May, residents at Kettle Run senior community in Bucyrus were given the opportunity, like many older Ohioans, to apply for the 2026 Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program operated by the Ohio Department of Aging. The program gives older adults access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, fresh-cut herbs, and raw honey. Some Kettle Run residents are unable to drive or acquire transportation to use their benefit cards, so the site’s service coordinator arranged for a local farmer who accepts the Senior Farmers Market card to come once a month to Kettle Run to sell fresh produce. This season, residents have been able to use their cards to obtain such fresh fruit and vegetables as cabbage, leaf lettuce, asparagus, beans, onions, summer squash, and several types of berries. The produce variety will change as the growing season progresses. The monthly event is also open to the public and brings people to the senior community. Most importantly, however, the coordinator’s initiative is providing Kettle Run residents with on-site access to fresh produce that helps keep them healthy and stretches their money further.

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Alicia” was 11 years old when she came into the care of Genacross Family & Youth Services. Her young life had already been shaped by tremendous adversity, including possible prenatal substance exposure and parental mental health concerns. She frequently displayed verbal and physical aggression and engaged in property destruction. Significant developmental needs combined with years of challenges had left Alicia functioning at approximately the level of a five-year-old child. Her speech was heavily slurred, making it difficult for others to understand her needs and wants. Even simple directions were challenging to follow. Many described Alicia’s behaviors as chaotic and unpredictable, like those of a child who had learned to survive more than to trust. Yet her gentle spirit always shone through. A sweet girl at heart, she loved animals, coloring, and collecting pinecones and sticks outdoors. Bananas never failed to bring a smile to her face. With dedicated support from Genacross caregivers and close collaboration with her family, the storms gradually settled. Her oppositional behaviors decreased, her aggression softened, and she began to engage more positively with others. By the time she left Genacross, she had become a pleasant and engaging youth ready to return home to her parents and older sister, who was lovingly raising three children of her own. Now, at almost 15 years old, Alicia continues to excel at home and in school. Her journey from chaos to a happy, thriving life with her family is a powerful testament to resilience, dedicated care, and the strength of family partnerships.



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Michael” came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus for skilled care during a challenging season in his life. As his condition waxed and waned, his family began to face the difficult possibility of hospice care. Yet through the compassionate support of skilled therapists, nursing staff, family, and friends, hope began to grow. Step by step, Michael started to regain his strength and rebuild the life his loved ones remembered so well. His family often shared how active he had been before hospitalization, and how deeply they longed to see him ride his bike again and enjoy meaningful outings with his children. Through perseverance, encouragement, and dedicated care, Michael successfully completed his skilled stay. Today, he is once again able to ride a bike, and his family is enjoying special moments with him, including small outings to his favorite local restaurant. Michael’s story is a beautiful reminder that healing often happens one step at a time, surrounded by faith, support, and compassionate care.

FOUNDATION

Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation is proud to administer the Youngbauer Scholarship, which recognizes graduating seniors from four high schools in our service area. Scholarship recipients must be pursuing careers in a social assistance field. The Youngbauer Scholarship has a special history rooted in gratitude and generosity. As a young girl, Adele Laramie found care and support while living at the former Lutheran Orphans Home, the forerunner to Genacross Family & Youth Services. The compassion she experienced left a lasting impact on her life. As an adult, Adele and her husband, Lawrence Youngbauer, established a generous gift to the Foundation. Their legacy continues to inspire students who are committed to making a difference in the lives of others. We are pleased to recognize this year’s Youngbauer Scholarship recipients: Alexandra Welch, Anthony Wayne High School; Olivia Ford, Cardinal Stritch High School; Quinn Bailey, Liberty Center High School; and Taylor Beamer, Clay High School. Congratulations to these outstanding students, and best wishes to them for continued success as they pursue their education and prepare for careers dedicated to serving others.