Inspire, Fall 2012, Volume 1

Aurora Health Care

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Aurora NICU provides special care close to home

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Having Aurora NICU services gave Tiffany a huge sense of relief.
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Aurora NICU provides special care close to home
Message from Cristy

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our first issue of Inspire. As I begin my second year as president of Aurora Health Care Foundation, I continue to be inspired with each passing day.

I am honored and humbled as I listen to donors, like you, who share stories about the wonderful care you receive from Aurora physicians and caregivers. In 2013, a lifetime donor – and one of the first open-heart surgery patients at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center – will celebrate 30 years since his lifesaving surgery. His milestone is an inspirational testament to the exceptional level of care provided throughout Aurora.

This is just one of many stories that inspired me to develop our new publication in which we will feature stories of hope, courage and the heroes who make exceptional health care happen.

If faced with a health crisis, it’s comforting to know the best and brightest caregivers are available right in our neighborhoods. Aurora Health Care Foundation is helping improve patient care and strengthen the communities where we live and work. We rely on our donors and community partners to make this possible. Thank you for being a champion for our patients. With your support, every gift can change a life.

Always,

Cristy Garcia-Thomas
President
Aurora Health Care Foundation

Message from Nick

Dear Friends,

At Aurora Health Care, our physicians and caregivers provide excellent, compassionate care each day to people in the communities we serve under the guiding principle of our purpose: We help people live well.

Our patients entrust us with their care, and each patient’s journey is unique. I am humbled by the challenges they face, yet I am equally inspired by their resilience. This inaugural issue of Inspire will provide you with a glimpse into the lives of our patients, caregivers and community members as they join together and embark on these journeys.

Our work is supported by donors, like you, and we are grateful for your generous gifts. Be assured that your faith in our commitment to help people live well is what inspires us in the dedicated care of each patient.

Sincerely,

Nick Turkal, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Aurora Health Care

Foundation president Cristy Garcia-Thomas meets with a young mother and her newborn in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Aurora Sinai Medical Center. NICU facilities at seven Aurora hospitals provide the highest level of care available for infants born prematurely or with health risks.

Always,

Cristy Garcia-Thomas
President
Aurora Health Care Foundation
The birth of a child is a time when families need support – particularly when a newborn is premature or has health complications. Many families in Sheboygan County travel an hour or more out of town for specialized newborn care. A hospital stay that spans days and weeks can be emotionally draining, not to mention the financial burdens for families driving many miles and/or staying in hotels.

Aurora Health Care recognized this challenge and opened a new Level II neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center on May 21. The first of its kind in Sheboygan County, the NICU provides advanced care for babies born early (between four and eight weeks premature) and those with other health problems. Parents remain close to their infants, close to home and close to the support they need.

Before the NICU opened, about 140 babies born in Sheboygan County each year were sent to NICUs in Green Bay or Milwaukee. Since it opened in May, the new NICU has cared for 44 newborns with an average stay of 9.5 days.

**First NICU baby**

Baby Mason was born at Aurora Sheboygan Memorial on May 29, weighing 5 pounds, 12 ounces. He arrived five weeks early, and the tiny newborn spent two weeks in the NICU before he was ready to go home. He was one of the first newborns treated in the hospital’s brand new NICU.

His mother, Tiffany Dicker, remembers, “Right after Mason was born, he was having some issues with his breathing and they needed to give him some oxygen. He also had trouble eating and had to have a feeding tube through his nose for his first few feedings.”

Tiffany said that having NICU services at Aurora Sheboygan Memorial gave her a huge sense of relief. “Having a baby arrive early is stressful, especially with a C-section delivery, when you need time for healing. Being close to home and close to my family helped relieve some of that stress. Also, the wonderful support of the NICU staff helped me get through the challenges in breastfeeding Mason, which would’ve been difficult in an unfamiliar place far from home.”

In addition to Mason, Tiffany has a 10-year-old daughter, Madison, and a 5-year-old son, Jack. With the children’s schedules and school, Tiffany said traveling for Mason’s care would have been a hardship – emotionally and financially – for their family. “I’m so thankful for the wonderful care we received, and so glad that other families now have access to the NICU,” Tiffany shared.

We would like to especially recognize ACUITY for their outstanding and unprecedented support and collaboration in Aurora’s fundraising efforts for Sheboygan’s youngest, most vulnerable patients.

ACUITY was the driving force and presenting sponsor for two significant fundraising events for this project in 2012 – “Cirque du NICU,” held at the insurer’s Corporate Headquarters on Oct. 13, raised more than $130,000 and the ACUITY Health Challenge, held in July, raised more than $15,000.

If you wish to make a donation for the ongoing needs of Aurora Sheboygan Memorial’s NICU, please call 877-460-8730.

A network of Aurora NICUs

The NICU has expert staff on-site and is accessible for all deliveries 24/7. NICU facilities throughout Aurora Health Care provide specialized care in the communities we serve.

**Level II NICUs** provide care for premature babies, including those needing short-term respiratory support, as well as full-term babies with noncritical health issues.
- Aurora Medical Center, Grafton
- Aurora Medical Center, Kenosha
- Aurora Medical Center, Summit
- Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center, Sheboygan

**Level III NICUs** provide care for newborns with more serious complications of prematurity, as well as other complex medical conditions, including those requiring long-term respiratory support.
- Aurora BayCare Medical Center, Green Bay
- Aurora Sinai Medical Center, Milwaukee
- Aurora Women’s Pavilion of Aurora West Allis Medical Center, West Allis
Donors’ spotlight

**Aurora West Allis Medical Center**

**Drs. Peter and Cathy Johnson – Betty Johnson Family Consultation Room**

With the recent unveiling of the Betty Johnson Family Consultation Room at Aurora West Allis Medical Center, Peter Johnson, MD, hopes to not only pay tribute to his mother, Betty, whose nursing career spanned 40 years, but to inspire others to give back to the community. “This is a gesture, on my part, to give back. Aurora has been very good to me,” said Dr. Johnson, a gynecologic oncologist at Aurora West Allis. The new room will act as a warm and comfortable space where medical personnel can provide updates to a patient’s loved ones. Dr. Johnson’s gift shows that a doctor’s positive effects on a community don’t just stop after his or her shift is done.

To make a gift in support of Aurora West Allis, please call 877-460-8730.

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**Aurora Visiting Nurse Association Zilber Family Hospice**

**Lauren Groshek – Young philanthropist**

Girl Scout cadet Lauren Groshek shows what an impact one individual can make. A regular volunteer at Aurora Visiting Nurse Association Zilber Family Hospice, Lauren decided to raise money for the center with a lemonade stand this summer in order to complete her Silver Award, the second highest honor in Girl Scouting. The funds she raised were used to purchase a bench outside the hospice for patients and their families to use. “I was able to raise $503 to purchase an outdoor bench! Thank you to everyone who bought lemonade at Cars & Guitars or sent money directly to Zilber. I appreciate everyone’s support,” said Lauren.

To make a gift in support of Zilber Family Hospice, please call 877-460-8730.

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**Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center**

**Bob James – Lifetime philanthropist**

Bob James is a philanthropist who is making a difference. When diagnosed with two life-threatening illnesses, Bob turned to Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center. Those illnesses and his experiences had a profound impact on Bob and changed his life. To express his gratitude for the care he received, Bob and his late wife, Pauline, created a charitable remainder unitrust to provide for their lifetime needs, as well as future patients. They also have given Aurora Health Care Foundation significant annual gifts and have been generous supporters of the Aurora Neuro-Oncology Program and the Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation Healing Garden at Aurora St. Luke’s.

To make a gift in support of Aurora St. Luke’s, please call 877-460-8730.

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How has Aurora Health Care made a difference in your life? Share your stories with us by calling 877-460-8730. We look forward to hearing from you.
Everyday hero: Larry Widhalm

For 12 years, Nashville resident Larry Widhalm sought to find a new heart, kidney and a transplant team who would help him get a second chance at life. Larry’s physicians in his hometown could no longer meet his increasing medical needs, so they started the process to advocate on his behalf to find a transplant center. Despite their efforts, several transplant programs would not accept Larry due to the complex nature of his condition, including the need for two organs.

Ironically, the same day he decided to give up the search, his physician received a call from a transplant physician at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center. Thanks to the generosity of many donors, transplant housing was available to Larry and he was able to accept the opportunity to come to Milwaukee.

Thanks to the Aurora St. Luke’s transplant team and our partnership with our donors, Larry celebrated his 58th birthday this September.

To make a gift in support of our transplant housing program at Aurora St. Luke’s, please call 877-460-8730.

“Everyone at Aurora St. Luke’s has helped me as much as they can – it’s just been a great experience.”

Awards and accomplishments

U.S. News & World Report has recognized four Aurora sites as among the best in its 2012-13 Best Hospitals rankings.

In its 23rd year, the annual rankings showcase more than 720 hospitals out of about 5,000 hospitals nationwide. Each is ranked among the country’s top hospitals in at least one medical specialty and/or regionally ranked among the best hospitals in its metro area.

**Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center was nationally recognized**

This year, Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center ranks among the top 50 hospitals in the nation in four specialties: cardiology and heart surgery, gastroenterology, neurology and neurosurgery, and pulmonology. This recognition places these programs in the nation’s top 1 percent.
Aurora Lakeland Medical Center

McGMO Golfing for Cancer Care fundraiser

The 15th annual McGMO Golfing for Cancer Care event in July at Delbrook Golf Course in Delavan raised nearly $55,000 to support Aurora Cancer Care – Vince Lombardi Cancer Clinic at Aurora Lakeland Medical Center in Elkhorn, Aurora.org/LakelandVLCC.

McGMO was established in memory of Dean McGregor, Ivan Grover and Calvin Monroe, who lost their battles with cancer, and Kim O’Keefe, a courageous cancer survivor. It benefits cancer patients throughout Walworth County and surrounding communities by enhancing patient services, acquiring equipment and investing in new technology at Aurora Lakeland.

This year’s proceeds will help purchase three ERBE machines, used in gastrointestinal procedures, such as colonoscopies. Patients benefit as physicians have a better view of polyps during removal, decreasing likelihood of regrowth and risk of bleeding.

“It’s so inspiring how the community unites to support patients who are battling cancer. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, golfers and volunteers, nearly $562,000 has been raised since the event’s inception,” said Mike Grover, McGMO founding member.

Organizers of the annual McGMO golf event display a check for $55,000 to the Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation at Aurora Lakeland Medical Center in support of cancer care services. They include, from left: Tim McGregor, Lori Grover, Mike Grover, Vicki Lewis, president of Aurora Lakeland Medical Center, John Monroe and Kim O’Keefe.

This year also included a $54,705 check, matching funds from proceeds raised last year, presented from Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation to Aurora Lakeland Medical Center.

To make a gift in support of cancer care services at Aurora Lakeland, please call 877-460-8730.

Aurora Family Service

Family-to-Family Thanksgiving

Since 1882, Aurora Family Service has helped families face crisis, find solutions and attain self-sufficiency. For the past 17 years, Aurora Family Service has provided hope to families in our community enduring financial hardships during the holidays. This year, Aurora Family Service’s Family-to-Family Thanksgiving program provided 3,100 families with a complete set of groceries so they could savor a home-cooked holiday meal and spend time with loved ones.

Donations from generous individuals, corporations and foundations make this program possible. We gratefully acknowledge our media partner, 94.5 The Lake, and generous sponsors. They include: Deloitte, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation’s Johnson & Pabst LGBT Humanity Fund, Humana, Joy Global, and Quarles & Brady, LLP.

Donations for Family-to-Family Thanksgiving are accepted year-round. Your $35 gift provides one family with everything they need to prepare a traditional holiday meal. To make a gift or learn more about this program, please call 877-460-8730.

Teamwork in action – caregivers, from left, Karen Jackson, Heather Rivard and Laura Galic of Aurora Family Service brave the weather each year to coordinate the distribution of meal baskets for 3,100 families.

Aurora Walker’s Point Community Clinic

Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee honor Aurora Health Care

Aurora Health Care recently received the Corporation of the Year Award from the Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee in recognition of our work at Aurora Walker’s Point Community Clinic. Established in 1992, Aurora Walker’s Point is a free clinic for uninsured, low-income and homeless people in Milwaukee.

Since opening its doors, the clinic has been at the forefront of Aurora Health Care’s purpose to help people live well. This award recognizes the commitment and dedication of our caregivers and volunteers as they support more than 12,000 patient visits a year – with most of those served coming from the Hispanic community.

To make a gift in support of the Aurora Walker’s Point Community Clinic, please call 877-460-8730.

From left: Maria Estrada, Steve Ohy and Awilda Lozada of Aurora Walker’s Point Community Clinic
Aurora is involved in hundreds of interdisciplinary and collaborative research projects, and more clinical trials than any other health system in the state. This leading-edge research is an integral part of Aurora’s fabric and a key component of our mission. It is respected in the scientific community and vital to quality patient care.

“If you think about innovation, discovery and what we do for our patients based on research – that is exactly what a good health care system should be investing in. And I am really proud of the wonderful researchers we have here,” said Aurora president and CEO Nick Turkal, MD, who greeted hundreds of attendees at Aurora’s third annual Greater Milwaukee Clinical Research Recognition Event on Sept. 12.

“I am able to provide a therapy or send for a procedure that didn’t exist when I started in practice. And, these treatments are all based on clinical research, with some of these important studies done right here at Aurora,” said Dr. Turkal.

Aurora’s Research Awareness Committee organized the event to recognize the importance of research at Aurora Health Care and honor the contributions of caregivers who were nominated by their peers for their outstanding dedication and commitment to research.

“We do tremendous good for society,” said Peter Johnson, MD, clinical professor of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and medical director of Gynecologic Oncology at Aurora. “As loving, compassionate, empathetic caregivers, it is our privilege and obligation to provide the very best practice to our patients.”

“Comprehensive care is not possible if research is not being conducted from a quality standpoint, from a competition standpoint, from a business standpoint and, most important, from a patient standpoint.”

Randall Lambrecht, PhD, senior vice president of research and academic relations, said, “There are a lot of reasons why we do research. Ultimately, the most important reasons are our patients. We want to take those latest discoveries and the newest potential therapies and treatments to give our patients options so that there are opportunities for better outcomes.”

It is the synthesis of researchers, clinicians, donors and patients that will help grow a research community. In the words of Dr. Johnson, “We need to grow. Growth means change. The only way we truly change is by doing the studies and showing the data. With data, we can convincingly effect change.”

Research is possible because of support from individuals, corporate and private foundations, and members of the communities in which we serve.

In 2011, fund disbursements from Aurora Health Care Foundation included more than $1.1 million in philanthropic support of clinical research. We can only achieve success through engaging friends and partners in these projects. Together, we are making a difference. Every gift can change a life.

“*To make a gift in support of research projects at Aurora Health Care, please call [877-460-8730](tel:877-460-8730).*

Event attendees included Arshad Jahangir, MD, research physician, and Randall Lambrecht, PhD, senior vice president of research and academic relations.
**Calendar of events**

**Dec. 5**
Aurora Visiting Nurse Association Zilber Family Hospice – Tree of Angels (snow date Dec. 6) | For more information, please call Judi Strout at 414-615-5935.

**Dec. 6**
The Healing Center – 4th Annual Hope Shining Gala | To register online, visit Aurora.org/healingcenterhopeshining.

**Feb. 2**
Aurora Memorial Hospital of Burlington – 10th Annual Crystal Ball | For more information, please call 877-460-8730.

**March 2**
Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation – 23rd Annual Award of Excellence Dinner Ball | To register online, visit LombardiFoundation.org.

If interested in attending an event or to learn about sponsorship, donation or volunteer opportunities, please call Aurora Health Care Foundation at 877-460-8730 (toll free).

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*The fourth annual Aurora 5K Walk/Run for Cancer held this summer raised nearly $32,000 to support Aurora Cancer Care – Vince Lombardi Cancer Clinic in Oshkosh. More than 425 walkers and runners participated in this event.*

*Show your support for Aurora Health Care Foundation by attending any of a number of special events or get involved by joining a planning committee, donating an auction item or sponsoring an event. For more information, please call Aurora Health Care Foundation at 877-460-8730.*

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**Event profile: The Healing Center’s 4th annual Hope Shining Gala**
Affiliated with Aurora Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee, The Healing Center has offered adult sexual abuse survivors and their loved ones opportunities for healing by providing support, advocacy and community education since 2000.

This year, The Healing Center will host its fourth annual Hope Shining Gala in honor of those we serve. The event theme is Sharing Stories for Healing – a tribute to survivors who have the courage to tell their stories about overcoming obstacles, working through fears and learning to thrive so that others may have hope. The night also will feature a silent auction, delicious food and live music.

To purchase tickets, provide sponsorship or learn more, please contact Elaine Maly at 414-219-7827 or email elaine.maly@aurora.org.