



**HSHS
St. Vincent
St. Mary's
Foundation**

SAINTS

Alive!
Miracles happen because of **you.**



SUMMER 2024

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Saints Alive! is a quarterly
publication, edited
by Katie Knapp.
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Brighter days ahead

CANCER CARE CLOSE TO HOME – IN DOOR COUNTY

When Debbie Olsonoski told her children she had cancer, they were shocked. “How could you be? You’re healthy!” they said.

But it was true. On January 4, 2016, Debbie was diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer.

Treatment started right away with surgery to remove a lump and five lymph nodes, two of which were cancerous. A month later, she started chemotherapy.

Debbie chose HSHS St. Vincent Hospital Cancer Centers at Door County Cancer Center and was confident in the care she would

receive. “I’ve told people there is a cancer center in Door County. Many people thought I traveled to Green Bay, but I tell them, ‘No, there IS a cancer center in Door County, and they’re great people, right in our neighborhood.’”

Debbie’s family was her rock during her treatment. Their visit to Door County, their first in more than ten years, reassured them that she was receiving excellent care close to home. The proximity of the hospital was a source of immense comfort. Debbie drew strength from their love and encouragement during this challenging time.

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During a particularly tough chemotherapy session, Debbie was feeling especially down and overwhelmed. A member of the Spiritual Care team visited her, bringing a small, beautifully wrapped gift—a soft, handmade prayer shawl donated by a local volunteer. The shawl was wrapped with a note that read, “You are in our thoughts and prayers. Keep fighting.” The chaplain spent some time with Debbie, offering words of comfort and reassurance. The warmth of the prayer shawl and the caring presence of the Spiritual Care team helped lift Debbie’s spirits, providing her with the emotional strength she needed to keep going. With your help, all patients can feel wrapped in warmth, support, and hope during their journey. You remind them that they are never alone.

Debbie’s treatment included 32 radiation sessions, concluding in 2016. Debbie feels assured that if she faced cancer again, she knows she would be in good hands. “Having the cancer center in your neighborhood is a comforting feeling of being closer to home.”

Debbie’s story shows how your support makes a big difference. Because of your generosity, patients like Debbie can get quality care close to home, surrounded by their community and loved ones. Your support to the HSHS St. Vincent Hospital Cancer Centers provides hope to those in need.



A desperate decision

HOW YOUR GENEROSITY GAVE EMILY* A LIFELINE

Emily* dedicated her entire career to caring for others as a nurse. For years, she worked tirelessly, rarely missing a day of work. But in September 2021, everything changed. Emily was diagnosed with advanced-stage ovarian cancer, and suddenly, she found herself on the other side of the hospital bed.

This diagnosis turned Emily's world upside down. After undergoing chemotherapy and surgery, doctors found a blood clot, which meant she would need to start a new medication and pay out-of-pocket.

Emily and her husband were both recently retired, and the financial burden of this new medication was overwhelming. Their income had significantly dropped, and they were just beginning to navigate this new phase of life when the unexpected medical expenses started. Emily felt the weight of the world on her shoulders, trying to manage new insurance, a change in lifestyle and ongoing cancer treatments all at once.

Emily met with the team at HSHS St. Vincent Hospital Cancer Centers where she learned about the options she had, including help from the HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Medication Assistance Fund. **This fund is completely supported by generous donors like you.** "I felt like I was drowning and couldn't come up for air. When I was told that there were options, I was so relieved," Emily recalls. "It is amazing not to have to think about the cost of that medication."

No longer having to worry about the cost of her essential medication, Emily could focus on what mattered most: her health and recovery.

Unfortunately, Emily's situation is not unique. In Wisconsin, thousands of people go without necessary medications each year because they simply can't afford them. This harsh reality shows why donors like you are so important. Emily's story is just one example of how your generosity is transforming lives, ensuring they can focus on their health and recovery without the added stress of financial hardship.

**The subject's name has been changed to protect confidentiality.*



Shine on!

BRINGING LIGHT TO CANCER PATIENTS WITH THE BRIGHTER SIDE BOUTIQUE

We know that cancer treatment can be tough, especially when it changes how you look. Physical changes can affect a patient's confidence, but it also affects their sense of self. How we style hair and what we wear is self-expression - and cancer limits that. That's why HSHS St. Vincent Hospital Cancer Centers offer The Brighter Side Boutique—a special place for women facing cancer.

The Brighter Side Boutique offers a range of items designed to help women feel more comfortable and confident during their cancer journey. From wigs, hats, scarves, and turbans to mastectomy bras and prostheses, every product is carefully selected to meet the unique needs of each patient, helping them feel like themselves again.

This boutique is more than just a store; it's a community partnership. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the numerous volunteers who contribute their time and resources to ensure The Brighter Side Boutique is a warm and welcoming environment for every visitor.

Whether it's trying on a new wig, finding the perfect hat, or receiving a personalized fitting for a mastectomy bra, every experience at The Brighter Side Boutique is aimed at bringing a brighter outlook to our patients' lives.

Your support continues to provide these invaluable resources to women undergoing cancer treatment. Together with our community partners and dedicated volunteers, we are making The Brighter Side Boutique a place of hope and positivity for all who walk through its doors.



Your gifts in action

CELEBRATING YOUR IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY!

Your generosity recently brought new equipment to HSHS St. Vincent Hospital and HSHS St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center, advancing the care our patients receive. Here are some of the remarkable updates your donations funded:



A breath of life for our littlest fighters

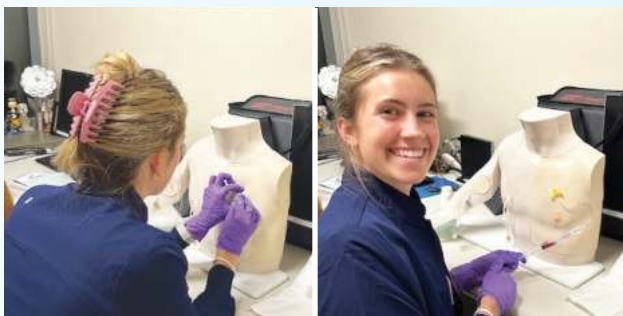
Our neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) has recently been equipped with an advanced transportation isolette featuring a new ventilator – all thanks to donor dollars. This life-saving equipment ensures infants in need receive the best possible care during their most vulnerable days.

Last year, the NICU team at HSHS St. Vincent Hospital completed 61 transports from other hospital facilities to bring infants to our NICU. **This year, the team has already done 45 transports, demonstrating the ongoing need and impact of your support.**



Fighting Parkinson's with every punch

Your generosity has equipped our Rock Steady Boxing participants with new speedbags, empowering them to fight the progression of Parkinson's disease. This program boosts their physical fitness and overall well-being through invigorating boxing routines.



Mastering care with Chester Chest

Because of you, our pediatric nurses have the **Chester Chest, a vital training tool for perfecting chest port access and central line dressing changes.** This hands-on device ensures they provide safe and effective care to our young patients.



From conference to compassion

Thanks to your generous support, one of the therapists in the HSHS St. Vincent Hospital NICU attended the National Neonatal Conference (NANT). This opportunity allowed them to learn the latest evidence-based practices and bring new ideas back to the team. **Your donations help us stay at the forefront of neonatal care!**



Cool comfort for a young cancer patient

This summer, one of our young cancer patients is finding some much-needed relief from the heat thanks to a new window air conditioner unit for their home funded by your donations. By maintaining a cool and stable environment, it helps them manage treatment side effects more effectively, reduces stress, and supports their overall health. **Your support ensures that this kiddo has a more conducive space to rest, recover, and stay resilient!**



Ring in hope

A moment of triumph deserves to be celebrated, and now patients concluding their treatment at HSHS St. Vincent Hospital Cancer Centers can ring in their success with new bells, thanks to you. **These bells symbolize hope, resilience, and the end of a challenging chapter.**

Every dollar you contribute to the HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Foundation is carefully stewarded to create meaningful change and impact. We deeply appreciate your partnership and are excited to continue sharing the inspiring stories that you help make possible.