



HOSPICE
MEANS
MORE CARE,
NOT LESS

Volunteer

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

Milestones on the Path to 5% & Beyond

As another year comes to a close, we are grateful to look back at the many ways our volunteers have helped support Bella Care Hospice this year. This newsletter has amazing examples, however, there are many more stories we could share. Massage therapists Kate and Julia bringing gentle touch to ease patients' discomfort. Administrative volunteers like Carol, Christina, and Gail providing support to our offices, calling families, and taking on special projects. University students like Kylie, Caleb, and Kaley earning hours of experience in healthcare while learning to provide excellent bedside support to patients. Teenagers like Lee, Zoie, and Olivia sharing their lives with the elderly and comforting the dying with their youthful presence. Spiritual care volunteers like Jeff, Beth, and Nate praying with patients and giving emotional support. Musicians like Todd, Lydia, and Shaneice playing music one-on-one at the bedside. Nurses like Catie, Linda, and Nora continuing to support patients while they are retired or working in administration. We have truly been blessed with an incredible team. It has been a great year for the Volunteer Department!



In 2023 we continued to focus on growing our team. Our goal remains to match 5% of employee care hours with volunteer service. This is a challenge as we need close to 500 volunteer

hours a month in order to keep up with our staff members. While some volunteers are able to serve multiple days a week, most serve occasionally in the midst of busy lives. A big thank you to volunteer Tom Hopper who has been our most active volunteer for years, serving faithfully for dozens of hours nearly every week! We are grateful for each of our volunteers and the sacrifice they make by giving of their free

time to help us care for patients and families at the end of life.

While we have not yet reached 5% as a statewide team, we have passed some important milestones on our way. This November we reached 100 volunteers on the roster for the first time! This accomplishment is a testament to the hard work of our Volunteer Coordinators and the dedication of our volunteers. We onboarded 78 new volunteers this year! Also, this May we had over 400 volunteer hours in a single month for the first time since before the pandemic! Almost every month in 2023 we had more volunteer hours compared to last year. We are still on the pathway to reaching the 5% goal, but we made significant progress this year and are so proud of everyone who

helped out. Above all we are grateful for the ways each volunteer contributes their unique talents. Our volunteers are a blessing to staff, patients, and families.

Ohio Council for Hospice and Home Care Volunteer Awards 2023

The Ohio Council for Hospice and Home Care (OCHCH) is a non-profit association that represents organizations like Bella Care and provides advocacy, education, and regulatory support. OCHCH held their annual conference on September 27. We are proud that two of our volunteers were honored with Hospice Volunteer of the Year awards: Michael Adomako and Joyce Misinec! A small group from Bella Care attended the luncheon; it was wonderful time and an opportunity to promote our amazing volunteer program. Congratulations to Joyce and Michael!



Michael Adomako has volunteered with our Columbus branch since January 2021. Michael is a pastor and serves as a volunteer chaplain. Michael has a gift to offer each patient a positive presence and meet them with sensitivity. Michael's spirit of compassion is shown through the time he spends with each patient: on average he visits each patient for 30-60 minutes each week and usually sees 4-5 patients at a time. Michael engages in conversation, offers prayer, reads scripture, and listens intently as a patient shares a life review. Sometimes he just offers a

positive presence at the bedside as they are actively dying. As a spiritual care volunteer, Michael is professional and respectful of each patient's religious beliefs and worldview. He is not pushy or awkward in his conversations with patients, but fully respects them. Michael allows each patient to feel at ease in sharing about their end-of-life journey. His kindness and care for our patients is a great representation of the service our volunteers provide; we are blessed to have him on our team.

Joyce Misinec has volunteered with our Ashtabula branch since February of 2020. During the pandemic, Joyce served by making bereavement calls to grieving family members. During those difficult years she had the opportunity to be a listening ear to many upset family members, some of whom did not get to be with their loved ones because of Covid-19. Joyce was able to extend much needed compassion and support. She has continued to faithfully make bereavement calls every month. Since the pandemic, Joyce also returned to making companionship visits with patients each week. She sits as comforting presence, holds hands, plays music on her phone, converses, and uses her compassionate listening skills to encourage patients. Joyce recently had the opportunity to share about her service with a local newspaper! Joyce said this about volunteering with Bella Care Hospice, "It's all about just spending time with people one on one. You're not going to fix anyone's problems, but when you sit down and listen it makes all the difference. I actually enjoy talking to these folks – I've had some lovely conversations and I've had some heartbreaking conversation. I've just had some remarkable experiences." We are so grateful to have Joyce on our team; she is a light to patients and families!



Serving Those Who Served: Veteran's Day 2023

Bella Care Hospice is proud to be a community partner with We Honor Veterans. This year the volunteer department took the lead in helping our organization become a level two partner! We accomplished this by continuing to ask patients about their military history, honoring Veterans with events and tokens of appreciation, providing education to our staff about Veteran-specific needs, and offering education to some partner facilities about fostering a Veteran-centric healthcare culture. One of the most exciting additions to our program this year was providing Vet-to-Vet cafes. These were opportunities for all the Veteran residents in a nursing home to get together. Bella Care provided refreshments, education handouts about VA benefits, and discussion questions. Above all, these were just opportunities for Veterans to get to know one another and share stories about their military experiences. Many Veteran residents expressed gratitude and desire to do it again. We plan to offer more Vet-to-Vet cafes in 2024!

We are also very grateful and proud to have had volunteers help with multiple Veterans Day events this year. Each Bella Care branch offered certificates and pins to all our Veteran patients with volunteers helping to distribute. In addition, we provided ceremonies at several nursing homes. In Cincinnati, Veteran volunteer Tom Hopper presented at multiple facilities, and was joined by musician volunteer Lydia Crone. In Dayton, Veteran volunteer Christian Hightower dressed in uniform to help the team with a Vet-to-Vet café and pinning ceremony. In Ashtabula, our team partnered with multiple nursing homes to host a large Veterans Day event: residents were shuttled from facilities to a central location and joined by Veterans from the community, friends, family, and staff to honor their service. Volunteers Staci Jacob and Linda Adams helped at the event where there was live music, food, and a formal ceremony. We are honored to be able to participate in these events as a small gesture of gratitude for the service of Veterans to our country.



Spreading Christmas Cheer!

At Bella Care Hospice, the holiday season is a nice opportunity to celebrate all the hard work our dedicated team has put in through the year! Each Bella Care branch hosts a Christmas party every year to get festive and have fun together. Since our volunteers are considered staff members and contribute so much to our work, they are invited to participate too. We were excited that every branch had volunteers at their Christmas party this year. This is a wonderful opportunity to treat our volunteers to some much deserved appreciation and to help integrate them into the larger Bella Care family!



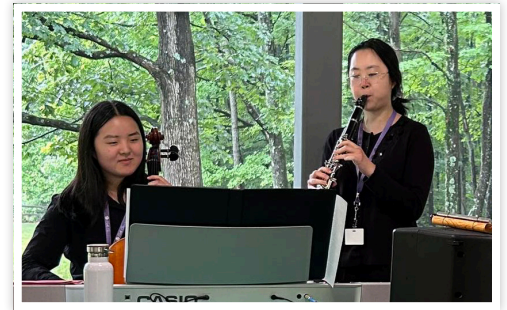
While enjoying some Christmas cheer ourselves, Bella Care wants to extend that holiday joy to our patients also during the time between Thanksgiving through New Year. The holiday season for many is a time for traditions, family, and celebration. However, the holiday season can also be a difficult time for some because of grief, severed relationships, or health concerns limiting the ability to participate in holiday activities. Many of our patients are dealing with these challenges. We encourage our volunteers to continue regular visits in this season and some volunteers make special visits to help celebrate the holidays and comfort patients during this

time. We also have volunteers help with holiday projects in the office. This year several volunteers in Columbus helped to wrap blankets that were donated to all our patients from St Matthew's Knitting and Crocheting Ministry. Administrative volunteers also helped to create Christmas cards to go out to the families of all our patients. In both Dayton and Cleveland our volunteers helped to create, decorate and distribute mini Bella Care Christmas trees to all our patients. Thank you to everyone who helped spread our holiday cheer to our patients and their families at the end of the year! These small acts of kindness and festivity can really make the season brighter for those facing life-limiting illness, to help them Celebrate Life and enjoy the time they have remaining.



Memorial Concerts

We have multiple musicians across the state who volunteer to share their talent with our patients. Usually volunteers visit patients and perform one-on-one to bring comfort at the bedside. Sometimes they also play at special events. This year both Cincinnati and Columbus had musician volunteers play music at their annual Bella Care Hospice Memorial Services. This inspired two of the volunteers to put together another special event. Sisters Grace and Claire Hong have served with Bella Care Columbus since the April of 2023. Grace plays the clarinet and Claire plays the cello. This October they arranged for the orchestra class of Claire's high school (Olentangy Liberty) to put on a concert for the residents at Capri Gardens in memory of a patient who passed away on our hospice services there. This patient had enjoyed having the Hong Sisters play music for him in his last months and weeks of life. 15 students from the string section of the orchestra came to perform a variety of songs from different eras. Bella Care provided light refreshments as over 30 residents and staff listened to the beautiful music. The band teacher from the high school also had a personal connection with hospice as she had recently lost her mother to Alzheimer's. The teacher shared, "Music is a wonderful gift to share with people who are coming to the end of their life. I could see that today's performance was well received by the patients who attended. I know music had a positive effect on my mother's last days with my family."

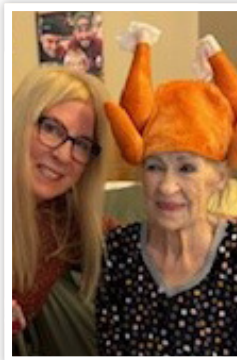
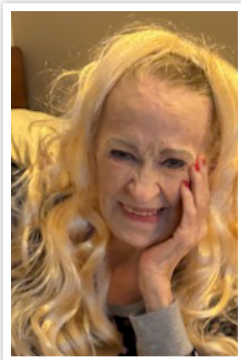


Volunteers and Patients Celebrating Life Together

Celebrate Life

The connections made between patients and volunteers can have a great impact on both of them. From the day our Cincinnati volunteers Jennie Rulli and her Mom, Jan Rulli, met patient Catherine, there was an instant connection. They visited many times this past year. Catherine's room at the nursing facility looked like a tiny apartment, with dressers from home and other items to make her feel like she had never left her house.

Catherine made visitors feel welcome like special guest to her home. Jennie and Jan did all they could do cheer her up and make sure she was having fun despite her condition. During their visits, Jennie and Jan discovered that Catherine loved Dolly Parton. They made a special visit for Thanksgiving and made Catherine a Dolly Parton themed wreath and Christmas tree! Catherine recently moved home to Texas, to be with her daughter. Needless to say, Jennie and Jan were both very sad, but they knew it was what she truly wanted. Catherine and her daughter called Jennie when they landed in Texas. What an impact they had made on one another's lives! This is one story that the Cincinnati office will never forget.



Volunteer Education

This year, several of our offices offered in-person volunteer meetings again for the first time since the pandemic. These are opportunities for volunteers to get to know one another and share experiences, while also learning about a specific aspect of hospice that applies to volunteers. In June, our Dayton branch hosted an education on our Music & Memory program featuring a video called "Alive Inside" about the impact of music on Dementia patients, and a discussion about methods for implementing it. This September our Ashtabula Volunteer Coordinator, Nichole, offered an education on working with Dementia patients including a video from Teepa Snow, a simulation of what it is like to have Dementia, and discussion on patient care. In December, Dayton Volunteer Coordinator Abby led an education on our Stepping Stones program, reviewing the process of sitting with an actively dying patient. These opportunities support volunteers in their service, and we hope to continue offering more in the coming year.



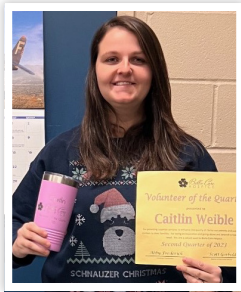
Volunteer Outreach: Refer a Friend

The Bella Care Volunteer Department likes to acknowledge staff members or volunteers for referring a friend or family member to join the volunteer team. In Columbus this fall, we recognized RNCM Eileen Huber with a "Refer a Friend" gift basket. Eileen referred a retired hospice RN who had served her own mother on hospice years ago. Catie Mawer went through the on-boarding process this past fall and is now serving patients at Country View of Sunbury. She has been a blessing to our patients and serves with compassion and care. Thanks, Eileen, for the wonderful referral!

Volunteer Outreach: Dayton Sewing Collaborative

This year the Dayton office formed a partnership with the Dayton Sewing Collaborative (DSC), a nonprofit located in downtown Dayton. Every other Saturday is "Sew It Forward" at the DSC and volunteers help with community service projects. Our Clinical Supervisor, Kelli Bess and Volunteer Coordinator, Abby Frederick, attended in April to make sensory blankets for Bella Care Hospice patients with memory impairment. These small lap blankets provide a variety of fun activities and sensory items that help keep restless hands occupied. Our incredible volunteer, Kelly Wolfe, initially took interest in volunteering for hospice after attending the Sew It Forward event in the spring. She came on board as a companion volunteer in June and has continued to bring peace and joy to Bella Care patients with her kind and gentle spirit. The DSC has since dedicated one more Saturday, November 11th, to creating these sensory blankets specifically for Bella Care! The Dayton team was joined at this event by Cincinnati Volunteer Coordinator, Karen Wittmer and volunteer, Judi Stoker!





Caitlin Weible (Dayton)

Caitlin joined our Dayton team in February of this year. She recently moved for work and had prior experience as a hospice volunteer in Maryland. Caitlin has a passion for serving hospice home patients. She has been visiting a Bella Care patient consistently for many months, helping with household tasks like gardening and cleaning, while also developing a supportive friendship. Caitlin is dedicated to her volunteer service and is great example of the difference that volunteers can make on the end-of-life journeys of our patients!



Staci Jacob (Ashtabula)

Staci joined the Ashtabula team in September of 2019. During the pandemic Staci began making tuck-in calls to patient families. These calls are a way to check in on our care and help our team address needs quicker and more efficiently. Staci has consistently made these calls nearly every week for the last 3 years, along with assisting special projects and events. This fall Staci recruited her mom Linda to join our volunteer team too, and both of them have started to visit patients in person to provide companionship and support. We are so grateful for Staci's faithful service, she is amazing!



Alex Karev (Cincinnati)

Alex joined our Cincinnati team in July 2022. He is the son of our former Medical Director, Dr Karev. Alex joined as a college student looking for volunteer experience in healthcare. Initially, Alex helped only on occasion during breaks from school. This summer he increased his volunteer time with us while applying to medical schools. He has become one of Cincinnati's most consistent volunteers. Alex is wonderful at connecting with patients: offering conversation and a friendly presence. Alex also participated in our mock audit this fall and did a fantastic job representing Bella Care well. He is an example of the experience we can provide students, while also being a blessing to our patients and staff.

Welcome all the new volunteers who joined our amazing team in the last 6 months!

Ashtabula

Cheryl Calderone-Companion
Linda Adams- Companion
Kaleigh Kuzenig- Youth
Olivia Morris- Youth

Cincinnati

Reilly Cochran- Companion
Jenni Buschmann-Reiki
Marci Goodrich- Companion

Cleveland

Jill Chambliss- Companion
Christina Yancey-Admin

Columbus

Randy Smith-Companion
Sherry Smith-Companion
Brenda McCort-Admin
Charmila Manivannan-Admin
Dan Smith-Companion
Bridget Fitzpatrick-Companion
Myron Welch-Companion
Amer Charif-Companion
Lisa Early-Reiki
Diya Dewangan-Companion
Brenda Wilken-Reiki
Kymtra Zahn-SW Intern
Tamara Boggs-SW Intern
Clarence Pedroche-Lynn-Companion
Paromita Tiwari-Musician
Mona Said-Companion
Erik Olson-Companion
Catie Mawer-Companion
Wietske Merison-Musician
Olivia Desio-Companion
Jonah Clark-Companion
Nora Berry-Companion
Abbey Reinhard-Companion

Dayton

Christina Hightower-Veteran
William Berroddin-Musician
Kelly Wolfe-Companion
Adriana Gray-Companion
Maureen Hansen-Companion
Ashley Stiles-Companion
Kaley Wolfe-Companion
Kate Butterbaugh-Massage
Shaneice Johnson-Musician
Ashika Desai-Youth
Gail Sims-Admin
Kyle Marler-Musician
Leticia Drane-Companion
Alicia Manning-Companion



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Please help us celebrate all our volunteers with
Bella Care Hospice anniversaries in the last 6 months!

Ashtabula

Staci Jacob-4 years
Kylie Klug-2 years

Cleveland

Nancy Parker-2 years

Dayton

Zoie Drummond-1 year

Columbus

Julia Sims Haas-2 years

Dawn Poremba-1 year

Susan Meehan-1 year

Sami Tayim-1 year

Julia Vang-1 year

Jena Peters-1 year

Marsha Browning-1 year

Sarah Bridgeport-1 year

Cincinnati

Tom Hopper-7 years

Alex Karev-1 year

Elizabeth Drews-1 year

INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM?

We are always looking for compassionate and committed individuals. Hospice volunteers bring their unique personalities and talents to bless our patients and staff. There are many different ways you can help! Volunteers help us improve the care we provide, while also receiving a sense of fulfillment for serving. Perhaps you or someone you know could be our next volunteer?

Inquire at:

<https://www.bellacarehospice.net>