

Connections

BRIDGING CARE AND COMMUNITY



Center for
Hospice Care

From our leadership

As we reflect on 2025, I am struck by the extraordinary ways our community – and our global partners – came together to advance compassionate care. This year was filled with milestones that speak to the heart of our mission: *to improve the quality of living* for those we serve.

celebrating
45
years of
Center for
Hospice Care

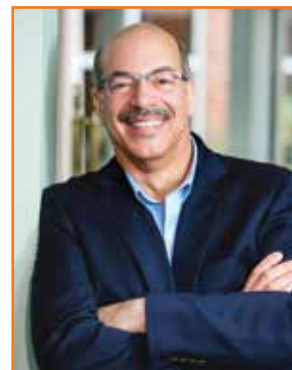
We continue to enhance access to our hospice services, our palliative care outpatient services and our home-based program, *Kaleidoscope*. We remain dedicated to our partnership with REAL Services in our work to care for those living with dementia at *Milton Village*. Beyond our core work, programs like *Camp Evergreen* and *After Images* remind us that healing is holistic. Camp Evergreen offered grieving youth and families a safe space to share and grow, while *After Images* provided adults like Allison Beyer a sacred place to process grief through art, transforming pain into hope. We also celebrated generosity and connection through events like the *20th Lube-a-Thon for Hospice*, which raised over \$10,500, thanks to Tom's Car Care Center and loyal supporters, and the *40th Helping Hands Award Dinner*, honoring Dan Fitzpatrick and raising \$340,000 to sustain our promise that no patient is ever turned away. The *Circle of Caring Award Dinner* was another highlight, where we honored Cindy Hawkins and raised more than \$650,000 for our "Now More than Ever" campaign to modernize Esther's House and strengthen care across Elkhart County.

This year, we were honored to be named a *2025 Top Workplace in Healthcare*, a recognition that reflects the voices of our dedicated team. We witnessed first-hand the commitment of our staff and volunteers, who consistently went above and beyond to meet the evolving needs of patients and families. Their compassion, collaboration and dedication to our mission are the foundation of everything we do.

Our commitment also extends beyond the nine-county area we serve in northern Indiana. Through our affiliate organization, *Global Partners in Care*, and the generosity of the Elea Institute, we hosted workshops in Dublin, Ireland and at the *8th International African Palliative Care Conference* in Botswana. The workshops and conference fostered palliative care innovation and collaboration across continents. In Uganda, we joined our partners, the Palliative Care Association of Uganda, at the 5th Cancer and Palliative Care Conference. Our combined team contributed to discussions on governance, technology and community-led care. These initiatives strengthen our position as a global connector and catalyst for improving access to palliative care across the globe.

All these activities, and more, highlight our commitment to the communities we serve. Thank you for standing with us, supporting us and trusting us in the care of your loved ones. Together, we are creating spaces of dignity, comfort and hope, as we celebrate lives well-lived in our local communities and across the globe.

With Gratitude,



John Mastrojohn III

John Mastrojohn III
President/CEO



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A Sacred Space for Healing

Allison Beyer's Journey Through Grief and Art



Allison Beyer isn't sure how she first heard about the *After Images* art counseling program offered by the Joel and Elizabeth Welch Life Transition Center at Center for Hospice Care. It might have been a friend of a friend, or maybe her therapist mentioned it. What she does remember is being drawn to something that could help her process the trauma of losing a stillborn child. Allison is a multidisciplinary artist and mother living in South Bend, IN, with her husband, Carlos. They have three living children and one daughter who died in utero, preterm stillborn.

She describes herself in this way, "I am a multidisciplinary artist. I write poetry and prayers regularly for Jesuit Media Lab and Sacred Space, and I write content for retreats and spirituality resources. I am a painter and illustrator. I am a singer and songwriter. I am the primary caregiver of our children."

While Allison was familiar with creative expression, this was different. "I was already in therapy," Allison recalled, "doing EMDR and talk therapy to process the trauma. But I was also pregnant again, and I worried about how my grief might affect the baby I was carrying." She knew she needed something different, something that allowed her to express the inexpressible. That's when she found the *After*

Images art counseling program offered by Center for Hospice Care.

After Images offers participants a way to express their grief through art, providing a path to healing. With an MFA from the University of Michigan and a master's in counseling from Indiana University, Dave Labrum is uniquely qualified to lead the *After Images* bereavement art counseling program.

Like Allison, those who take part in the program create their artwork alone in the program's studio space with Labrum's support and guidance. The studio gave Allison a safe, sacred space to explore her grief. "Every time I came in, I got to choose a fresh piece of paper and just go to town with colors and textures," she said. "It was a space just for me. I didn't have to think about anyone else's needs. I could just be."

Allison described the room as a "special container" where anything could come out – grief, terror, rage, joy, hope – and nothing was wrong. "There was no wrong way to do it," she said. "Some days, I went totally abstract. Other days, I used symbols or images. Every session was different, and every one was a gift."

"Allison left the studio empowered by her artmaking experience and full of gratitude for the



Artwork and poetry created during Allison's time in the *After Images* program

opportunity. I loved having her in the art studio each week," Labrum said. "Her presence, and especially her paintings, catalyzed other participants in creating their artwork."

Her creative journey didn't stop at visual art. Allison also wrote poetry, a lifelong practice that became deeply intertwined with her healing. Two poems in particular – one written before a memorial service for her daughter and one after – served as emotional bookends to her experience. "The art led the poetry," she explained. "It helped me find the words."

Though she's considered publishing her work, Allison remains unsure. "Some pieces are deeply personal, some are bizarre," she laughed. "I've thought about doing an exhibit just for myself, to see the timeline and tell the story. But I'm not sure who it would speak to."

Still, she recognizes the universal nature of grief. "It's personal, but it's also something we all experience," she noted. "Seeing other people's pieces in the room moved me. Even though their stories were different, they touched something in me."

For Allison, the *After Images* program wasn't just about creating art – it was about creating space. "Grief is strange," she said. "It's not chronological

Esme's Memorial Service

We did it.
We did what was ours to do
Our duty to our daughter as her parents
We celebrated her life
And death
We marked her entry and absence in our lives
Surrounded by family and friends
In our own home,
2.5 years – to the day! – after her stillbirth
Having a way to communally
Share the grief that has been
For the most part so private, so deeply personal
Helped me to release it in some way, to let it transform
To let life continue –
Ever altered,
But continuing
By honoring her
By saying her name,
Esme.

By singing, blessing, crying, praying, praising, recognizing
Here, you see on the right the lines of release:
The smoke rising up from our candles, our sage and palo santo,
Our prayers,
Our grief,
Her spirit and body, both
All lifted up.

On the left, you can see the earth blessing us
on the day of her memorial service
With a perfect blue sky light breeze,
Green shady trees. You can see the
Tutuma pouring out red wine into the earth,
to the west, the direction of the setting sun, of endings, closings, warmth
Blood poured out, mine and hers.
You can see colors and lines
You can see a sunflower at the center of it all – Esme
Life and death, her life and death, a repeating,
Circular, radiating radial pattern over and over
Again
The joy of her presence in our family and
The permanent shape of her absence in our midst.

or rational. Some days I felt hopeful, other days I was right back in the hospital room. The art helped me peel back those layers."

She also found inspiration in the works of others. "I remember someone did a biological heart, and that ended up in one of my pieces," she said. "Even though I didn't know the people who

made them, their marks on the wall influenced me."

Allison emphasizes that you don't need to be an artist to benefit from art counseling. "In some ways, it was better to turn off that part of my brain," she said. "To just create freely, without expectations. Anyone can do this."

She spent about two years in the program, through her pregnancy and beyond. "Going through labor and delivery again, and then taking care of an infant, brought up new things for me," she said. "And even after that, I'd reach out to Dave and ask if I could come in again. He was always generous." That openness was crucial. "Grief isn't linear," Allison noted. "The program understood that. It welcomed me back at different seasons of my journey."

Reflecting on her experience, Allison sees the art she created as a kind of memorial. "We didn't have a burial or a service right away," she explained. "But the art made something visible out of the invisible. It gave me something to hold onto."



She also found joy in the process. "We think of grief as hard and heavy," she said. "But creating something felt good. It was something I looked forward to. There's a celebratory element – celebrating the person you lost, yourself, your transformation."

In the end, Allison's story is one of resilience, creativity and healing. "This program saved my life," she said. "It helped me walk through something I didn't think I could survive. And it did so gently, joyfully and with so much grace."

Honor Song

How can we honor our daughter?
How and when would I be ready to do so,
to transfer her remainst to an urn,
to first even be able to select and purchase an urn?
How would I be able to plan a ritual, a memorial service?
What could I give to her?

These were the questions that took me two and a half years to answer, to be ready to honor our stillborn daughter. As I approached the date of her memorial service, I focused on what was most important to convey to her and what was the most important for me and my family: that she was and is loved. That her life, however short and mysterious, left a lasting impact. To recognize her place in our family – that no one forgets her or replaces her. To take up the duty that corresponds to us as her parents, to honor her life and death in ritual, to give thanks for her and to let her go, again.

Pictured here:

The sky
The milkweed growing in our gardens
My placenta
Four coca leaves
The stars
The soil, the earth
My drum, an honor song
Our Lady of Guadalupe, always present, always accompanying
A jar of water
Symbols of life and death, rebirth, expression of connection and separation, mystery

Center for Hospice Care Celebrates Lives Well-lived



Serious illness can touch everything in a person's life, from daily routines to their deepest-held traditions and beliefs. It also affects everyone who holds them dear. Each family experiences serious illness differently. In life's most profound moments, everyone deserves care that sees the whole person.

That's why Center for Hospice Care provides unique support for each patient and their loved ones. Unlike franchised, one-size-fits-all models where care is dictated from out of the area, we've grown from this community, for this community. We've spent 45 years as part of northern Indiana's fabric, learning what families here of all backgrounds and beliefs truly need. Sitting at your kitchen tables, walking these same hospital halls and celebrating lives well-lived as a part of our communities.

Since 1980, our promise has remained the same:

- No one in our community faces serious illness alone.

- No family navigates these decisions without support and guidance.
- No person is reduced to their medical needs.
- And no one is ever turned away because they can't pay.

With Center for Hospice Care, patients and their families receive more support, relief and guidance sooner with comprehensive serious illness care that can begin months or even years earlier than hospice care alone. Even people with the most complex symptoms will receive expert care, thanks to our experienced clinical teams capable of managing high-acuity conditions, along with specialized care programs dedicated to meeting the unique challenges that each patient and family may face.

No one should face serious illness without skilled, compassionate support that honors the fullness of who they are. To us, people are not cases to managed but neighbors to be serviced, supported by those who consider it a privilege to walk beside them.



Dan Fitzpatrick Honored with the 40th Helping Hands Award

Family man, entrepreneur and philanthropist, Dan Fitzpatrick is one of our community's quiet heroes. He developed a simple mantra for his company: "Love the guest and help each other," which has become the cornerstone of Quality Dining, Inc.'s customer-centric approach. Center for Hospice Care recognized "The King of Quality" as the 40th Helping Hands Award recipient on May 7, 2025.

A common thread that ran through the entire process of planning this dinner – which emerged from the moment he was asked to accept the nomination – was Dan's insistence that he wasn't

Throughout his career, Dan has remained actively engaged in civic and nonprofit leadership across northern Indiana. He has held key roles with the Madison Center and Hospital, St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, the Morris Performing Arts Center and LOGAN Center. He currently serves as lead director of 1st Source Corporation and is a trustee at Holy Cross College.

At the heart of Dan's community involvement is his passionate support of Catholic education across the Fort Wayne/South Bend Diocese. Through the "You Can Lend a Hand" program,



deserving of the honor. His commitment to quality and history of giving back to the community prove that the opposite is true.

As founder, chairman and CEO of Quality Dining, Inc., Dan's vision and leadership transformed a small group of quick-service restaurants into a thriving multi-concept restaurant company that now operates more than 157 locations. These include franchised brands like Burger King and Slim Chickens, along with full-service favorites such as Papa Vino's Italian Kitchen and Uptown Kitchen. Under Dan's leadership, Quality Dining has become one of the largest franchisees of Burger King Corporation in North America.

Dan and his team have helped raise more than \$12 million for Catholic schools in northern Indiana and southwest Michigan.

This year's Helping Hands Award Dinner, chaired by Ann and John Firth, raised over \$340,000 to help Center for Hospice Care keep our promise that nobody eligible for hospice care will ever be turned away, regardless of their ability to pay – a promise we have kept since serving our first patient in 1980.

Learn more about the dinner by scanning the QR code.



Center for Hospice Care Recognizes Our Volunteers

Center for Hospice Care is blessed with many selfless individuals who volunteer their time to make our jobs easier. While many of these volunteers work with patients in their homes, at extended care facilities and at our inpatient units, there are many others who work behind the scenes. Volunteers can perform a multitude of jobs including working in our offices, making calls to patient's families to make sure they have all they need for a weekend, even helping out at special events. No matter what job they do, their time and talents are treasures to our organization.

During April, National Volunteer Month, we hosted the annual Volunteer Appreciation luncheon for these invaluable members of our team. It is a time for them to gather, share their experiences with one another and allow us to celebrate the remarkable contributions they make to Center for Hospice Care and the patients and families we serve daily.

Volunteers hitting milestones of service, including five, 10, 15 and 20 years, received a pin in recognition of their dedication to our mission. Each year, one volunteer is selected to receive the John E. Krueger, MD Hospice Caring Award. Named in honor of one of the founders and first medical director of Center for Hospice Care, the award is presented to a volunteer who exemplifies Dr. Krueger's traits of compassion, generosity and service.

This year's recipient was Lynn Blessing, who was nominated by Christina Gray, an aide at Raclin House. Christina was in attendance and read her nomination letter, which perfectly summed up why Lynn was a deserving recipient. Christina talked about Lynn's kindness and patience and her unique ability to relate to patients in their most vulnerable moments. Lynn is often found holding the hand of uneasy or frightened patients. "Her gentle presence has a remarkable way of easing anxiety and helping patients feel safe and supported as they navigate the challenges of end-of-life care. As a volunteer, Lynn goes above and beyond in her role. She consistently offers assistance to the IPU staff, acting as an extended hand whenever she can."

During the luncheon, John Mastrojohn III, Center for Hospice Care's president/CEO also read a letter he wrote for the volunteers which captured the appreciation our entire staff has for these wonderfully generous individuals. "While we are required by law to have volunteers, it is our honor to be able to call our volunteers colleagues. The contributions they make are invaluable to helping us provide unique support for each patient and their family."

Learn more about opportunities to volunteer at Center for Hospice Care



Camp Evergreen Helps Grieving Youth in Our Community

Since 1994, Center for Hospice Care has hosted Camp Evergreen, a program designed for grieving youth and teens in our community. Camp Evergreen consists of two components: a one-day grief camp held in early summer for youth and teens, and a Saturday workshop in the fall for youth and their parents or guardians. The camp is intended for young people who have experienced the loss of a significant person in their lives. It is open to any youth in the community – no prior connection to Center for Hospice Care is required.

Camp Evergreen is facilitated by Center for Hospice Care's licensed bereavement counselors alongside trained adult volunteers. Many volunteers serve as "buddies" for the day. Each youth camper is paired with an individual adult buddy, while a small group of teens may share one. Activity volunteers are also trained to support camp programming as needed.

At camp, participants discover that they are not alone in their grief. Surrounded by peers who have also experienced the death of someone important to them, campers learn about the grief process and healthy ways to cope with the emotions they are navigating. In addition to offering opportunities for healing and sharing, Camp Evergreen provides a fun, camp-like experience that fosters connection and resilience.

This year's day camp, held on May 31, welcomed 19 youth and teen participants and was supported by 32 staff and volunteers. The fall family workshop took place on October 25 and included four youth and three parents or guardians. Thirteen staff and volunteers helped make the workshop possible. Our therapy dog, Teddy, also participated in both sessions.

Thanks to the Linda Lloyd Mission Endowment for Camp Evergreen and the many donors who generously support this program, Camp Evergreen continues to be offered free of charge to all attendees.



20 Years of Changing Oil for a Cause

When Tom's Car Care Center first came to us with the idea of doing a Lube-a-Thon for Hospice, we weren't sure what that even meant. But after changing oil in thousands of cars over 20 years with proceeds benefiting Center for Hospice Care, we sure are glad they came up with the event!

Located off of Bendix Drive in South Bend, Tom's Car Care Center offers oil changes and other car care services such as tire rotation, inspection and replacement of filters, belts, batteries, wiper blades and lights. They also have the Water Works Car Wash to keep your car looking great and the Coffee Spot Café to keep your appetite satiated. All of these services are a part of the annual Lube-a-Thon for Hospice. For a discounted price, you get a full-service oil change, car wash, a muffin or cookie and a coffee or fountain drink.

Along with everything Tom's had to offer, attendees could also get food from Fitzgerald's Smokehouse BBQ, who also donated part of their sales to Center for Hospice Care. Local radio stations were on site throughout the day, with live remotes from B100 and Michiana's News Channel 95.3.

The 2025 event was the 20th iteration, so Center for Hospice Care felt compelled to do something to show our appreciation to the great people at Tom's. The month leading up to Lube-a-Thon, we put a banner in our staff cafe that employees could sign and thank the staff for their continued dedication to our organization. The banner was presented to the team once they finished the nearly 150 oil changes at this year's Lube-a-Thon for Hospice. It is now proudly displayed in their oil change bay for all to see.

This year's event raised over \$10,500 through oil changes, donations and sponsorships. Over 20 years, the event has raised nearly \$125,000 to help Center for Hospice Care continue to celebrate lives well-lived!



Veterans Tribute Ceremony Honors Those Who Served



The Captain Robert J. Hiler, Jr. Veterans Memorial on the grounds of Center for Hospice Care's (CHC) Mishawaka campus stands as a lasting tribute to the men and women of our armed forces. Each year, a dedication event is held for new memorial items that have been added, including bricks and wall plaques. This year's speaker at the event was Major John LaDue, a former United States Marine Corps officer.

During his remarks, Major LaDue commented, "I had the opportunity to visit this veterans memorial awhile ago, and I'll tell you, it felt like sacred space to me." And we hope it is a sacred space for all of the families that have placed a brick or plaque in memory or honor of a loved one.

Major LaDue went on to talk about the ways in which CHC honors veterans through our participation in the *We Honor Veterans* program and tailoring care to meet the specific needs of veterans as they face the end of life.

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather – Colonel John Garrett LaDue, who was the hospital administrator in Honolulu following the bombing on Pearl Harbor and helped develop the first MASH units – Major LaDue has found ways to serve even after his active duty. Most recently he served as a board member for the Mishawaka Troop Town project that has developed transitional housing for veterans.

Following Major LaDue's comments, CHC Chaplain Rod Holmes dedicated the items that had been donated to the memorial, reading the names of those being honored. Guests were then invited to a reception inside, complete with a POW/MIA table.

If you would like to donate an item at the veterans memorial, scan the QR code.



Empowering Communities

Highlights from Uganda's 5th Cancer and Palliative Care Conference

An important component of the partnership between Center for Hospice Care and the Palliative Care Association of Uganda is their collaboration on improving access to palliative care across Uganda. Part of this work is their joint support of the biannual Conference on Cancer and Palliative Care.

The 5th Uganda Conference on Cancer and Palliative Care (September 10 – 12, 2025) brought together participants from eight countries. Leaders from government, civil society, academia and partner organizations gathered under the theme “Embracing Uniqueness and Empowering Communities.” The conference featured 17 plenary sessions, 12 guest speakers, and two legacy lectures – Prof. Charles Mark Lwanga Olweny on The Evolution of Cancer Care and Treatment in Uganda, and Prof. Anne Merriman on Pioneering Palliative Care in Uganda and Africa.

Voices from the conference co-hosts

Mark-Donald Mwesiga, executive director of the Palliative Care Association of Uganda (PCAU) emphasized the vital role of civil society in shaping Uganda's cancer and palliative care landscape. He highlighted PCAU's partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI) in extending care into communities and homes. Mark called for stronger government support for hospices and launched the Compassionate Communities Initiative, envisioning every village empowered to support people facing serious illness. He also paid tribute to Dr. Samuel Guma of

Kawempe Home Care and expressed gratitude to the Center for Hospice Care (CHC) and other partners for advancing palliative care in Uganda.

Dr. Jackson Orem, executive director of UCI, underscored the importance of coordination and collaboration among government, PCAU and academia. He highlighted progress in oncology training with 28 fellows graduated, the expansion of regional cancer centers and the need for continued infrastructure development. He called for pooling of resources and greater partner engagement to strengthen facilities and research capacity.

Commitment and collaboration

Vice President of Uganda Jessica Alupo, represented by Hon. Anifa Kawooya, state minister for health (general duties), reaffirmed the government's commitment to scaling up cancer and palliative care and announced a contribution of five million Uganda shillings (approx. \$1,400) to PCAU for patient support.

CHC was represented by Mike Wargo, vice president & COO, and Denis Kidde, international programs coordinator. CHC received a commemorative plaque recognizing its partnership and long-standing support. Wargo served as a panel discussant on governance and innovation, while Kidde co-chaired sessions on technology and community-led innovations. Their participation reinforced CHC's ongoing collaboration with PCAU toward expanding access to compassionate, inclusive and sustainable cancer and palliative care across Uganda.

Collaborating for Global Impact

Building Momentum in Botswana

Since its founding in 1999, Global Partners in Care (GPIC) has been dedicated to enhancing access to compassionate hospice and palliative care across the globe for individuals and families facing serious illness, death and grief. The organization has been an affiliate of Center for Hospice Care since 2017.

In September, GPIC, in collaboration with Elea Institute, hosted a dynamic workshop in Botswana ahead of the 8th International African Palliative Care and Allied Health Services Conference. The event brought together over 40 participants from across Africa and around the world to explore new ways to strengthen palliative care through global collaboration.

This workshop built on the energy and ideas sparked earlier this year in Dublin, Ireland, where GPIC launched its “Collaborating for Global Impact” initiative with its first workshop. In Botswana, participants refined and tested project concepts developed in Dublin using human-centered design (HCD), an approach that emphasizes empathy, creativity and co-creation. Through small-group sessions, attendees explored the feasibility of ideas, challenged assumptions and identified next steps – helping the concepts advance while also gaining tools they could take back to their own settings.

One participant shared, “The process of designing with, not for – seeking feedback and leaning on curiosity – was very palliative in nature.”

GPIC's exhibit booth served as a hub for connection and conversation. Staff and partners engaged with attendees, gathering insights to inform the next steps of the work. GPIC also hosted a partner breakfast, bringing together representatives from over 20 programs across 10 countries to celebrate partnership and deepen relationships.

GPIC also co-hosted a Roundtable for National Association Leaders with the African Palliative Care Association (APCA), creating space for leaders to share challenges and successes. Plans are now underway to formalize this network for ongoing support and learning.

As a long-time APCA partner, GPIC was honored during the conference for 20 years of collaboration. CEO John Mastrojohn and Executive Director Lacey Ahern also addressed ministers of health, emphasizing the importance of integrating palliative care into national health systems.

The Botswana workshop reaffirmed GPIC's role as a global connector and catalyst for innovation. With participants from Latin America, Europe, Asia and the U.S., the event fostered cross-regional learning and built lasting relationships.

In Mastrojohn's words: “The spirit of collaboration that emerged in Gaborone renewed our collective commitment to advancing palliative care globally. We're excited to build on this momentum and continue creating meaningful impact for patients and families worldwide.”



Circle of Caring Award Recognizes Cindy Hawkins

The third Circle of Caring Award Dinner, held at The Lerner in Elkhart on November 5th, felt more like a family reunion than a formal event. It was a true celebration of the life of Cindy Hawkins, who embodied the theme for the evening, "A Crowded Table." There were never too many people at Cindy's table.

The room was full of Cindy's family, friends and people she had met through her many endeavors, including working at Jayco – the RV company her family founded – coaching volleyball at Bethany Christian High School, serving as interim youth pastor at Clinton Frame Church and organizing recreation events for national church events. Her greatest joy was bringing people together.

John Mastrojohn III, Center for Hospice Care (CHC) president/CEO, welcomed everyone to the event noting, "We are honoring Cindy Hawkins posthumously. The theme 'Crowded Table' reflects how Cindy always made room for others. We're really excited to honor her, her family members and members of her care team. It will likely be an emotional evening, but a meaningful one." He was correct, as Cindy greeted guests soon after this remark through a video she had previously recorded telling of two times of crisis during her life.

While the event was about recognizing Cindy, it was also a fundraising event to ensure CHC can continue providing compassionate care to anybody in need of their services, regardless of their ability to pay. Following a delicious meal, a tribute video played,

leading into an auction and paddle up. Led by auctioneer Neil Saffer and dinner co-chair and CHC board member Jodi Spataro, it included vacations to Finland, Mexico and other other exotic locales, tickets to sporting events and dining experiences within the Elkhart community. This part of the evening brought in over \$400,000 towards CHC's "Now More than Ever" initiative to bring Esther's House – our inpatient unit located in Elkhart – up to modern standards. Opened in 2008, it is in need of structural improvements as well as updated furnishings and technology such as a nurse call system, WanderGuard technology and secure access for employees.

The award was accepted by Cindy's husband, Dave Hawkins, and their family. Wrapping up his comments, Dave implored the audience, "If nothing else, hopefully we can leave here tonight taking a little bit of Cindy with us, thinking about what you have in front of you. Who are you going to make a difference for in their life like Cindy did for so many people." Cindy set an example for all around her on how to live well, and die well – an embodiment of CHC's goal to celebrate lives well-lived.

Overall the event raised over \$650,000 for Center for Hospice Care, including sponsorships, donations and the auction and paddle-up. We would like to thank the Hawkins family for allowing us to honor Cindy. It was our privilege to care for her in her final weeks. Just as she did throughout her life, she made her caregivers feel welcomed at her table.



Learn more about the 2025 Circle of Caring Award Dinner, including to see the two videos from the event.

Center for Hospice Care Earns 2025 "Top Workplace" Honor in Healthcare

In a time where workplace culture is as critical as the services organizations provide, Center for Hospice Care (CHC) has distinguished itself as a leader in employee engagement and satisfaction. The organization was recently named a 2025 Top Workplaces Industry Winner in the healthcare sector – a recognition that speaks volumes about its commitment to fostering a people-first environment.

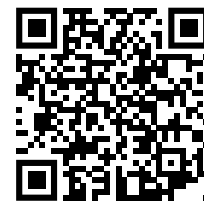
The award, presented by Energage, is based entirely on employee feedback collected through a research-backed engagement survey. Unlike many other awards that rely on external evaluations, this honor reflects the voices of those who work at Center for Hospice Care every day. Energage CEO Eric Rubino emphasizes the significance of this approach: "Earning a Top Workplaces award is a badge of honor for companies, especially because it comes authentically from their employees."

For Center for Hospice Care, this achievement is more than a title – it's a testament to the organization's mission-driven culture. President and CEO John Mastrojohn III shared his pride in the recognition, "This award is especially meaningful because it reflects the voices of our dedicated team members. Their compassion, commitment and collaboration are the heart of our mission."

The Top Workplaces program, now in its 17th year, celebrates organizations that prioritize employee well-being and engagement. Award winners are recognized not only for operational excellence but for creating environments where staff feel appreciated and empowered to make a difference.

For people who are seeking a career in healthcare, this award positions Center for Hospice Care as an employer of choice, one that understands the connection between a thriving workplace and exceptional patient care. As Mastrojohn notes, "Creating a workplace where people feel valued and supported is essential to delivering the exceptional care our community deserves. Our objective is to offer our staff a place where they can rediscover the joy of delivering one-on-one care and help us keep our promise that no one in our community faces serious illness alone, regardless of their ability to pay."

View our profile on the Top Workplaces website.



Caring for those with Alzheimer's and related dementia and their loved ones

Milton
VILLAGE



Home to two of the area's leading organizations for Alzheimer's and dementia patients and their caregivers



For Patients:

- Structured setting for adults needing health, social and support services during the day
- A caring, warm and compassionate place that encourages each guest to flourish
- Flexible attendance based on needs of the participants and their caregivers
- All staff members are certified, licensed or hold a degree in their field of expertise

For Caregivers:

- Support services and education crucial to providing superior care to your loved ones
- Caregiver activities offering relaxation, a welcome break and a fun hour or two
- Over 20 different, professionally facilitated support groups to help reduce stress levels
- Meet with a trained professional one-on-one or as an entire family to gain understanding and plan for your loved one's future care needs

Milton Village, created in cooperation with the Netherlands-based Vivium Group, is a revolutionary concept in care. The environment provides a home- and town-like setting where guests have more regulated independence and less institutional-style programming

Milton Village

MiltonADS.org • 574.232.2666 • alzni.org
111 Sunnybrook Court • South Bend, IN 46637

41st Helping Hands Award Dinner to Honor Drs. Holly and Jim Harris



Center for Hospice Care (CHC) will honor Drs. Holly and Jim Harris with the 41st Helping Hands Award on Wednesday, May 6, 2026. Since 1985, the Helping Hands Award has honored individuals, couples and families who demonstrate civic and charitable stewardship to improve the quality of living in the communities served by CHC. The award recognizes the recipients for exhibiting exceptional generosity, outstanding community achievements, direct financial support or by motivating others to give.

Holly and Jim have made a career of helping the community they call home. Holly, board certified in dermatology and surgery, and Jim, board certified in allergy and pulmonary medicine, moved to South Bend in 1986 and joined the South Bend Clinic. Since then they have woven their lives and careers into the fabric of the healthcare industry and philanthropy in the area.

Throughout their time here, Holly and Jim have served on many boards, chaired a variety of fundraising events and been on the front lines of creating new events, as well as establishing foundations and creating new pathways for individuals interested in a career in medicine. Jim is also the co-founder of Vyagra Falls – the docs of rock – a band of physicians who have played for multiple charitable events over the years, helping raise millions of dollars for organizations such as Center for the Homeless, Pet Refuge and the South Bend Symphony Orchestra.

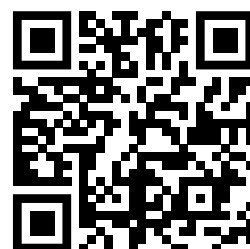
Professionally, Holly and Jim have not only been tireless advocates for their patients, but have directed over 300 clinical research trials at the South Bend Clinic for new medications, many of which have come to market and are now helping people in our community and across the world.

Holly and Jim were also instrumental in initiating and organizing the South Bend Clinic Foundation that supports the training of students in healthcare-related fields at Ivy Tech Community College. Along these lines, they were also part of the initial group that organized the Indiana University South Bend Medical School's first Medicine Ball to support the school.

During all of these activities, Holly and Jim somehow found the time to raise a family of three children – Dr. Ashlynn Clark, a surgical dermatologist in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Dr. Rachael Harris Sprunger, a pain interventionist now with the South Bend Clinic; and David Harris, an entrepreneur who built the largest clinic in the country for underserved medical conditions like long COVID.

We hope you will join us in honoring Drs. Holly and Jim Harris for their tremendous contributions to the medical field and their ongoing support of our community.

To support the 2026 Helping Hands Award Dinner, scan the QR code.



Calendar of Events

We look forward to your participation in and support of these important events. Please check our websites, CFHCare.org or FoundationForHospice.org, for more information and event dates throughout the year.



March 2026

- **March**
National Social Workers Month
- **March 26**
Community Leaders Breakfast

April 2026

- **April 6**
National Healthcare Decisions Day
- **April 14**
Vera Z. Dwyer Fellow in Hospice and Palliative Medicine Reception
- **April 26**
Spring Coffee Cruise In for a Cause FoundationForHospice.org/coffeecruisein
- **April 27**
NPHI Pre-summit Field Trips to Milton Village and University of Notre Dame
- **April 28 - 30**
NPHI Summit 2026 [Marriott Marquis, Chicago, IL](https://MarriottMarquis.com)

May 2026

- **May 6**
41st Helping Hands Award Dinner honoring Drs. Holly and Jim Harris
- **May 6**
National Nurses Day
- **May 25**
South Bend Sod Buster Spring Mud Bog
- **May 30**
Camp Evergreen Day Camp

June 2026

- **June 2**
Gardens of Remembrance & Renewal Memorial Item Dedication and Elkhart Campus Renovation Open House
- **June 11**
National Certified Nursing Assistant Day

July 2026

- **July 31**
21st Lube-a-Thon for Hospice

September 2026

- **September 26**
Camp Evergreen Family Workshop

October 2026

- **October 3**
South Bend Sod Buster Fall Mud Bog
- **October 4**
Fall Coffee Cruise In for a Cause FoundationForHospice.org/coffeecruisein

November 2026

- **November**
National Hospice and Palliative Care Month
- **November 11**
Veterans Day

Find us on:



Time, Treasure, Talent

Local Foundations Support Kaleidoscope Robustly

In June 2024, Center for Hospice Care (CHC) launched our Kaleidoscope program, which provides comprehensive in-home palliative care to patients with serious advanced illness. Kaleidoscope's compassionate care strives to improve their quality of living by managing symptoms and relieving pain and discomfort. The program also assists patients and caregivers by supplying them with emotional, psychosocial and spiritual support to help them navigate the daunting daily challenges of serious illness. During its first full year of operation, Kaleidoscope has been a resounding success, more than doubling in enrollment since the end of 2024 to its current 177 participants across CHC's nine-county service area.

Kaleidoscope offers our community the right care, at the right time, in the right place. Similarly, three local foundations – the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County, the Robert P. and Clara I. Milton Charitable Trust Foundation and the Florence V. Carroll Charitable Trust – have collectively furnished “the right philanthropic support, at the right time” to empower Kaleidoscope to flourish. Each of these charitable entities is dedicated to improving quality of life for citizens of St. Joseph County, which harmonizes beautifully with CHC's mission. As a result, each has a long tradition of providing funding to advance CHC, dating back

to our inaugural capital campaign in 1995 to build St. Joseph County's first hospice inpatient unit.

The Community Foundation of St. Joseph County (CFSJC) awarded a \$60,000 grant to CHC for Kaleidoscope under the auspices of its Senior Living Initiative, which supports programs and services that local seniors need to remain healthy, safe, independent and engaged. CFSJC funding helped CHC to add a second nurse practitioner to our Kaleidoscope clinical team at a critical juncture in the program's development.

The Robert P. and Clara I. Milton Charitable Trust Foundation and the Florence V. Carroll Charitable Trust presented \$50,000 and \$10,000 grant awards, respectively, to assist CHC with Kaleidoscope's general operating expenses. This type of support is especially welcome, because a significant portion of CHC's cost for providing in-home palliative care services is not reimbursable by payers such as Medicare and private insurance.

CHC is grateful to this trio of St. Joseph County-focused foundations for their generous funding of Kaleidoscope, and for our enduring partnership. During the years ahead, as CHC enhances Kaleidoscope and works to meet our community's rapidly increasing need for in-home palliative care services, philanthropic support will continue to be an important source of sustenance for the program.



Center for Hospice Care's Inpatient Units A Home Away from Home

Skilled, compassionate care in a home-like setting

Center for Hospice Care's two inpatient units, the Ernestine M. Raclin House in Mishawaka and Esther's House in Elkhart, were designed to help patients and their families feel at home – even when they're not.

Our inpatient units offer an alternative for patients in need of short-term medical care, symptom management or respite care



Nurse's station at Ernestine M. Raclin House



Family room at Esther's House

When is inpatient care appropriate?

- When supervised, around-the-clock care is needed
- When short-term medical care is needed for symptom management
- When a caregiver needs a brief respite

What do CHC's inpatient units offer?

- Multi-disciplinary care team including hospice physician, nursing, social work and chaplaincy
- 24-hour a day visitation, including pet visitation
- Private patient rooms with comfortable, extensive seating areas
- Spacious family areas that include a kitchen, family room, children's play area, workspaces and outdoor walking areas
- Spiritual reflection room
- Short-term private-pay stays are also available

Ernestine M. Raclin House
535 Comfort Place • Mishawaka, IN 46545

Esther's House
22579 Old US 20 East • Elkhart, IN 46516

LEARN MORE

574.243.3100 • cfhcare.org/inpatient

Community Corner

Center for Hospice Care (CHC) is grateful for the generosity of the many groups that support our mission through their independent fundraising efforts, grantsmanship and donations. Although we cannot recognize every effort, we are pleased to take this opportunity to recognize the following and thank all those in the community who support our organization. *All gifts to Center for Hospice Care are made through and managed by the Hospice Foundation.*

Tri Kappa Elkhart Alpha Rho gave a donation of \$1,000 to CHC to be used towards the arbor repair on the grounds of Esther's House in Elkhart.

\$300 was donated by the **Dunlap Lions Club** to CHC.

A \$240 sponsorship for a camper to Camp Evergreen was given to CHC by the **Beta Gamma Chapter of Kappa Kappa Inc.**

Fraternal Order of Eagles #2083 in Mishawaka donated \$1,000 to CHC.

\$250 was donated to CHC by **Tri Kappa, Beta Delta Chapter, in Plymouth** to help with our efforts to promote education, culture and charity in our community.

South Bend Sodbusters donated a total of \$3,725 to Center for Hospice Care from their 2025 Mud Bog Event.

The **South Bend Maennerchor Club** held a Golf Outing, and gave \$1,300 to CHC.

Written notes of appreciation and encouragement were provided to all CHC employees by the **Trinity Church** family, hoping to uplift and inspire all who received them.

Due to Internal Revenue Service tax regulations, we may only issue written acknowledgement for donations made payable to and/or processed directly by Center for Hospice Care or the Hospice Foundation. Donations made and/or processed via a third party may not be eligible for a charitable tax deduction. If you have any questions regarding charitable contributions, contact Mike Wargo, chief operating officer, at 574.243.2059 or WargoM@FoundationForHospice.org. For specific tax advice, you should visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov or contact your tax advisor.



ST. JOSEPH VALLEY STREET RODS

For many years, the St. Joseph Valley Street Rods have supported CHC by selling Barnaby's Pizza coupons, with all proceeds benefiting our organization. This year, the group contributed \$10,000, bringing their lifetime giving to more than \$190,000.

In recognition of their longstanding generosity, we placed a commemorative rock on the south lawn of our Mishawaka campus and named it in their honor.

MICHIANA PICKLEBALL CLUB

The Michiana Pickleball Club hosted a second tournament benefiting CHC, the Mishawaka Parks Department and the Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Joseph County. CHC received \$1,000 from the tournament. Proceeds donated to the Mishawaka Parks Department will go towards upgrading the pickleball courts just outside of CHC's Mishawaka campus.



You Have a Choice!



Serving the community since 1980, wherever you call home.

- Palliative care
- Hospice care
- Specialized care for heart, lung and neurological conditions
- Veteran-centric services
- Bereavement services
- Over 49,000 patients served
- Over 37,000 bereavement clients

When quality of care and experience matter the most
CHOOSE Center for Hospice Care



The area's most experienced hospice care provider is just a phone call away!





Circle of Caring

To further our mission to improve the quality of living for those we serve regardless of their ability to pay, the Hospice Foundation implemented a donor giving program: Circle of Caring. Membership in the Circle of Caring entitles donors to benefits based on the level of the donor's cumulative annual support. Center for Hospice Care and the Hospice Foundation express their appreciation and honor our members in the following societies:

Recognition in this issue covers gifts received from July 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025.

Champion \$25,000 and above

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Adler Carris and his family have experienced that compassionate support first-hand. Sixteen-year-old Adler is seen by the team from our home-based palliative care program, Kaleidoscope. He was diagnosed with a rare form of pediatric brain cancer as a child. As his mother, Elizabeth, noted, "his tumors and their locations are married to pain. With a child who needs this level of care, this type of care, what palliative care offers families – and particularly parents of pediatric patients – is an extension of your family. It's an extension of love. It's comfort and compassion."

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