SUMMER 2024

The unveiling of the Steve and Amy Van Andel Heart & Vascular Center celebrated the landmark success of the heart and vascular program and the Van Andels’ commitment to advancing health in West Michigan.

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PHOTO ABOVE: Steve and Amy Van Andel
Friends & Supporters,

As University of Michigan Health-West continues to evolve in new and exciting ways, our mission remains the same: we are here to relentlessly advance health in West Michigan and beyond. The Foundation activates and incubates change to support our nonprofit health system, while serving as a community anchor of our values and mission.

This means your Foundation support is put to work locally, serving our community and increasing equitable access to excellent care.

The pages of this newsletter highlight impactful events we have hosted, invaluable community partnerships and an organizational update.

Thank you for your partnership in the incredible growth happening at University of Michigan Health-West!

Gratefully,
Jaime Counterman
Foundation Director

Scan to support the work of the Foundation.

In April 2023, Sparrow Health System officially joined University of Michigan Health, expanding access to U-M Health across the state. Shortly thereafter, it was announced that UM Health-West and Sparrow would partner together to form a regional network, working in conjunction with the Academic Medical Center in Ann Arbor.

Over the past several months, this regional network has continued to take shape with the introduction of a leadership team led by Regional President Margaret Dimond, PhD.

Growing as a region has created many changes for staff members, but one thing that hasn’t changed is the commitment to our patients and our community. We understand that giving back to your community is vital, and we will continue to partner with you and ensure that your donations stay in West Michigan. Our hope is that through our connection with U-M Health, your generosity will have an even greater impact as we tap into the research and educational expertise of a world-class academic medical center, bringing cutting-edge medical advancements to our community.

For patients, the addition of Sparrow expands the reach of UM Health-West and will enable us to work together to expand access to high quality care for our patients. Increasing access for patients is critical, and partnering with Sparrow provides greater flexibility in helping our patients receive the essential care in the right place at the right time.

While there is still work to be done, we believe that our community will continue to benefit from this change far into the future.
As you may remember from the last newsletter, we shared the innovative nursing education partnership between UM Health-West and Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC), known as the Amy Van Andel Nursing Scholars Program.

Thanks to remarkable donor support, the Amy Van Andel Nursing Scholars Program is open to students who have completed one semester at GRCC. The students accepted into the program will have up to three semesters of their GRCC tuition paid by UM Health-West. Students will then commit to working for UM Health-West for two years upon completion of the GRCC nursing curriculum and becoming licensed as registered nurses.

Since the program’s inception in Winter of 2022, more than $200,000 in scholarship support has been awarded to 34 nursing students. To date, eight scholar students have been hired as RNs and more are expected to graduate into nursing service at UM Health-West.

For Katelyn Rahn, RN, the scholarship came at a perfect time. Katelyn had recently been in an accident that prevented her from being able to work in the last months of her nursing program. The scholarship alleviated financial stress and gave her the reassurance that she would have a job at UM Health-West after graduation.

“I was really able to put more effort into studying and getting everything out of the program that I could. The program gave me a good head start into my nursing career with the knowledge and critical thinking skills that you learn,” shared Katelyn.

In education, as in all areas of life, access matters. We are proud to share that the Amy Van Andel Nursing Scholars Program is alleviating financial stress and removing barriers to both education and employment for students in the Grand Rapids community.

This partnership is truly the beginning of how transformative philanthropy and innovative partnerships can change healthcare in West Michigan.
The Foundation hosted a special unveiling of the Steve and Amy Van Andel Heart & Vascular Center at University of Michigan Health-West. Steve and Amy Van Andel's transformative generosity to the Heart & Vascular Center at UM Health-West offers patients the most innovative lifesaving opportunities, including a state-of-the-art electrophysiology lab. This new lab allows the Cardiovascular Network of West Michigan to perform minimally invasive cardiovascular procedures in West Michigan with cutting-edge technologies and clinical trials.

Amy's nursing background and work as a mentor and patient advocate, coupled with Steve's 35 years of service on the Hospital Board of Directors has given them a passion to advance the landscape of health in our community. Their generosity, combined with the Stephen Klotz Family Foundation and other anonymous major donors, launched the open-heart surgery program in October 2022.

No longer is Grand Rapids, Michigan the largest metropolitan area in the nation served by only one open-heart surgery program. To date, more than 200 patients have received critical cardiovascular procedures at UM Health-West. This number of procedures far surpasses the projected first year estimate of 50 cases – confirming that there is a strong need for advanced cardiovascular care in West Michigan.

The unveiling of the Steve and Amy Van Andel Heart & Vascular Center celebrated the landmark success of the heart and vascular program and the Van Andel’s commitment to advancing health in West Michigan. UM Health-West President, Dr. Ronald Grifka, spoke during the event, proudly highlighting the impact the Heart & Vascular Center has had in the community. Dr. Grifka applauded Steve and Amy's landmark support and their dedication to improving access to health for all.

"Excellence Beats Here: Steve and Amy Van Andel Heart & Vascular Center"

Amy and I are proud to support UM Health-West’s mission to provide innovative treatment options and excellent care right here in our hometown. West Michigan patients now have even greater local access to leading heart experts, researchers, and surgeons – and that’s just the beginning.
VITALITY guests dressed in dazzling formal attire, enjoyed an evening that celebrated nursing excellence at University of Michigan Health-West. The evening featured impactful nursing stories, highlighting the resilience and beauty in the healing journey and how nurses are indispensable to our health system.

UM Health-West was pleased to present this year's Bill Barkeley Pinnacle of Achievement Award to Margo Schlewitz, manager of multispecialty practice of academic ambulatory at the UM Health-West Community Health Center. Margo’s exceptional contributions to our community transcend the boundaries of her role, embodying a spirit of inspiration. As a passionate advocate, she stands unwaveringly in support of our diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, championing equal care for all patients.

The Foundation welcomed 940 guests at DeVos Place, raising more than $950,000 together! Guests enjoyed a delicious dinner and signature drinks throughout the evening. The always favorite Afterglow party closed the night out with music and dancing. This year also featured a separate Afterglow party lounge for guests to enjoy a quieter experience to mingle and play LED games.

Thank you to all the guests and sponsors who made the event an amazing success! A special thank you to our presenting sponsor, Buist Electric.

SAVE THE DATE: MAY 3, 2025!
Foundation Welcomes Two New Team Members

Luna Dulin is the Foundation's new Development & Events Assistant. In this role, Luna is a liaison to the Foundation Board and oversees development and stewardship implementation while providing event support. Prior to joining the UM Health-West Foundation team, Luna worked with Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan to improve environmental health for families and ensure healthy development for the children of Kent County. Luna is passionate about improving access to equitable health in our community. Luna graduated from Wayne State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree with a concentration in Urban Studies. Her interest in community development began with her work at Community Development Advocates of Detroit to improve the network of grass roots organization and non-governmental organizations in Detroit, MI. When Luna is not working, she enjoys live music, yoga, reading, and spending time with her dog. She is most excited to bring a "people first" attitude to the UM Health-West Foundation team and to continue supporting the Foundation's work in connecting people with innovative healthcare. If you see Luna on the UM Health-West campus or in the community please feel free to stop and say hi... you most definitely will be greeted with a warm smile.

Sara Imhoff is the Foundation's Annual Giving & Event Specialist. Prior to starting at University of Michigan Health-West, Sara worked at Clark Retirement in a blended role that specialized in donor database work and social media and communications. Sara is not new to working in a healthcare setting. Before her time at Clark she worked almost 10 years at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine in Grand Rapids in the field of development with a focus on stewardship. As a Grand Valley graduate, Sara has a Bachelor of Arts degree in writing. She is proud to be the Foundation's chief storyteller as she feels everyone has a story to share. Sara is also looking forward to becoming an event expert and continue the Foundation's impactful work and amazing community partnerships. In her free time, you can find Sara caring for her houseplants or reading a book while spending time with her Pomeranian Chihuahua mix, Tinkerbell. Sara enjoys traveling and in the summer, exploring Michigan lakes with her husband, Max, on their boat.
The impACT Board’s signature event, Bid & Benefit, celebrated UM Health-West nurses who skillfully blend the art of care and the science of medicine to deliver a world-class patient experience. Guests enjoyed bidding on silent and live auction items, in addition to the always popular craft beer pull. To commemorate the night, Glitter Booth photo booth captured smiles and fun poses and Anthony Wells Art sketched 2-minute guest portraits.

UM Health-West Chief Nursing Officer, Dr. Kate Veenstra, spoke on the vital role that nurses play within our health system. Dr. Ronald Grifka provided an organizational update and celebrated the dedication of our nurses. We are excited to share that the event raised over $130,000! Thank you to our generous sponsors and attendees who made the evening a wonderful success.

Metro Way 5K
July 31 | UM Health-West

Put on your running shoes and join over 700+ runners and walkers to support community health and wellness programs. This family friendly event also has a kids race and fun opportunities to connect with our sponsors. Your Metro Way 5K support helps patients and their families cope with chronic illness, teach healthy habits and promote safety.

Don’t miss out on this fun event!
To learn more, visit uofmhealthwest.org/5K

Bid & Benefit
September 18 | Goei Center

The Office for Health Equity and Inclusion leads vital initiatives to grow an inclusively excellent workplace, healthcare system and community. Join the Foundation’s impACT Board of Directors for their signature event, celebrating the work of UMHW advancing equitable and inclusive clinical care experiences for under-served patient populations. Bid & Benefit features both a silent and live auction with proceeds benefitting the work of the Foundation.

To learn more, visit uofmhealthwest.org/bidbenefit

2025 VITALITY Gala
May 3 | DeVos Place

Join us at our annual VITALITY Gala as over 1,000+ community members gather to support the work at University of Michigan Health-West. You don’t want to miss this impactful and exciting evening!
ImpACT Board Member, Brandon Faber, is always going above and beyond. Brandon is a real estate agent and has made a heartwarming pledge to donate toys to the UMHW Child Life Services Department for every property closing in 2024. From volunteering at the Foundation’s Thank-A-Thon, to delivering sweet treats to the hospital night shift, we are truly grateful for Brandon’s commitment to UM Health-West and the community.

Our Child Life Services Department is always collecting toys to help children cope with medical visits as a patient or visitor, using toys and games at the bedside to relieve stress, distract and educate.

To learn more and shop our Amazon wish list visit:
https://uofmhealthwest.org/about/um-health-west-foundation/child-life-services-toy-drive/