

Dear Friends,

Your donations to MeritCare have impacted the full spectrum of life — from the premature babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit to those making end of life decisions under Palliative Care. Some examples of how your dollars were used are detailed in the following pages.

With your philanthropic support, achievements during this last fiscal year included:

- Partnership with the community for a 5.1 million capital campaign project that will make a major impact for babies and all the children we care for.
- Support for the Children's Miracle Network that brought in the largest amount ever raised locally — \$529,272.
- Selection of recipients for scholarships that focus on nursing and laboratory education.
- Acquisition of technologically advanced equipment that will aid in providing reduced healthcare costs, shorter hospital stays and fewer exams for patients.
- Growth in clinical research that gives patients access to the latest in promising treatments and drugs that would otherwise not be available to them
- Development of enhanced programs by MeritCare staff that will broaden the scope of care for our patients.
- Initiation of a palliative care unit which addresses end of life care.

Donors to MeritCare Foundation should be proud of the difference they make. It is with their donations that programs, education, technology, services and research are enhanced and available to a greater number of people in this region. The vision, generosity and commitment of our donors enables us to continue to improve the quality of healthcare we provide, making a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of MeritCare Foundation, I want to thank you for the gifts you have shared this year.



Sincerely,



Mary M. Johnson
Chair

5.1 Million Ways You Made a Difference

The *Making a Difference... Together for our Children* campaign raised an unprecedented 5.1 million dollars for the renovation of the Neonatal Intensive Care, the Pediatric Intensive Care and the Pediatric Unit.

When complete, the renovation will

- transform our facility into a state-of-the-art hospital for children;
- continue to develop and expand our Children's Hospital to meet the needs of children in our Upper Midwest Region; and
- deliver some of the finest healthcare available in America for our children.

Work has begun on the west end of the unit. The expected completion date for all of the Children's Hospital is September 2005.

This project was all about children," said Tom Dawson, Campaign Chair. "That really tugs at the heartstrings because many people have children or grandchildren in their lives. People realized, too, that MeritCare Children's Hospital is one of few designated 'children's hospitals' in the country and the only one in the region. Healthcare for children is expensive, and it can't happen without philanthropy."

*A new baby is like the beginning
of all things — wonder, hope,
a dream of possibilities.*
- Edna J. LeShan

Record breaking year for CMN

This year, MeritCare Children's Hospital began its 20th year as a Children's Miracle Network hospital. Children's Miracle Network (CMN) is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping kids by raising funds and awareness for 170 children's hospitals across North America. Each year, a televised celebration is held locally to thank donors and to share stories of children and their families who received care at MeritCare. The annual Children's Miracle Network Broadcast ended on June 5th, 2004 with the largest amount ever raised locally — \$529,272. As always, this money stays here and is used to support education, programs, technology and research for MeritCare Children's Hospital.



Get over the idea that only children should spend their time in study. Be a student so long as you still have something to learn, and this will mean all your life.
- Henry Doherty

Implementing Innovative Programs to Improve Patient Care

For the thirteenth year in a row, MeritCare Fund has provided internal grants to MeritCare associates and departments determined to make a positive difference. Internal grants provided programs and support for all ages by allocating funding for these programs or projects. All donations to the MeritCare Fund are directed to Internal Grants.

- **InJourney** is an eight-week group therapy program that promotes psychological health and spiritual growth for mentally ill adults. The program, created by local clergy and mental health providers, is a program that uses both group therapy and spiritual exploration for creating better mental health.
- **Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT)** is a comprehensive assessment of each patient's nutrition plan in the Eating Disorders Unit. Dietitians reassess patient status daily and work with patients to individualize each plan of care. Funding was provided for three dietitians from the MeritCare Eating Disorders Unit to attend a national conference. The conference provided information for dietitians to be able to recognize and identify the psychopathology associated with eating disorders.
- **Integrative Yoga Therapy** is a therapeutic approach to help alleviate suffering, support rehabilitation, and improve the quality of life. MeritCare's Exercise Physiologist, with internal grant funding, attended a two-week intensive training and gained the skills to teach a Yoga-based wellness program in a medical setting.
- **Intubating Scope** An internal grant allowed for the purchase a new type of intubating scope that is a lighted fiberoptic stylet. It allows the practitioner to view the patient's upper airway and vocal cords and allow visualization during intubation. This tool will be used during difficult intubations and as a teaching tool for medical residents who are just learning intubation skills.

We don't know who we are until we see what we can do.
-Martha Grimes

Foundation Scholarships Continue Growing

Since 1987 over 155 scholarships have been awarded to area students to support their pursuit of health education.

This year MeritCare Foundation awarded the Albert Ronice Scholarship to Cathleen A. Nicklay Gausman of Fargo. The \$400 scholarship which will be used toward her bachelor's of science degree in nursing. Cathleen graduated from St. Luke's School of Nursing and is currently employed at MeritCare. Albert Ronice MeritCare Foundation Scholarships were established through a bequest. This scholarship is awarded to alumni of St. Luke's School of Nursing for the purposes of continuing academic education in the field of nursing.

Also awarded on an annual basis is the Alyce Ovidia Grangaard Scholarship. The scholarship was established by Alyce's husband, Charles O. Carroll, and is given annually to assist graduating North Dakota high school students who have a strong desire to enter the field of nursing. Three \$3,500 scholarships available for students who are accepted into a pre-nursing program at NDSU or Concordia, who have a serious need for financial assistance and have applied for financial aid at their educational institution. Katie Beth Hanson, Ruso, ND; Karlea JoAnn Opsal, Williston, ND; and Carissa Schatz, Linton, ND received this scholarship for the 2003-2004 school year.

The Mary Jo Langenwalter Scholarship was established by her family and friends. It is awarded to a current Clinical Laboratory Science student who has a great financial need. Two \$500 scholarships were awarded to Marie Bryhn, Fargo, ND and Kari Renee Kempel, Fargo, ND.

The Oswald Ronice Scholarship was set up to assist junior and senior students attending Tri-College University Nursing Consortium. It is awarded on the basis of scholarship, merit, financial need and extra-curricular activities. Awarded a \$2,500.00 Oswald Ronice Scholarship for the 2004-2005 academic year were: Sara Case, Watertown, SD; Cynthia Piekarski, Fergus Falls, MN; and Jennifer St. John, Billings, MT. \$2,500.00 is also provided annually for the MeritCare Nursing Council Education Fund.

In 2003 the Communicating for Agriculture Scholarship and Education Foundation made a donation to MeritCare Foundation to support nursing education. This gift was prompted through the leadership of Milton and Bergitta Smedsrud of Fergus Falls, Minnesota. The scholarship provides reimbursement of education costs for MeritCare associates to complete certification in their nursing specialty. In just the first year, 34 scholarships averaging \$250 were awarded.

Nurse Case Management Program Gains Support

In December of 2001, MeritCare Foundation approved funding to support a 2-year, full-time pilot position for a breast cancer nurse case manager. This position would provide a "care navigator" for breast cancer patients within MeritCare Health System.

The journey from diagnosis through treatment is different for each woman, and flexibility is key to the case manager's role. Any given day may find the case manager:

- Meeting with a newly diagnosed patient
- Visiting a postoperative patient in the hospital
- Discussing clinical research trials with a preoperative patient
- Offering support to an overwhelmed, frightened patient
- Reviewing pathology reports
- Discussing specific patient concerns with a physician
- Providing education for the patient and their family

Benefits of the Breast Cancer Nurse Case Management Program became evident soon after implementation. Benefits to patients include:

- The knowledge and comfort of knowing they do not face the breast cancer experience alone.
- Decreased waiting times for appointments due to coordination by case managers.
- The opportunity for the patient to meet with appropriate specialists prior to surgery, which can make a big difference.

The program continues to evolve, making it a challenge to predict its future direction. Whatever the future may hold, the program certainly supports the MeritCare philosophy of working to provide each patient with the best healthcare experience possible.

Editor's Note: Thank you to Marlys Bohn, RN, MS, Linda Sveningson, MS, RN, AOCN and Kathy Hanish, RN, MS. This is an abridged version of their article *The Role of a Breast Cancer Nurse Case Manager* published in the May/June 2004 issue of *Oncology Issues*, a national publication of the Association of Community Cancer Centers. Funded by the Foundation as a pilot program, in just two years the Breast Cancer Nurse Case Management Program is now self-sustaining.

I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis...he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death.
-Thomas Paine

Palliative Care — Care Beyond Cure

"We're making great strides in the treatment of lots of different diseases, including different types of cancer, but I think at the end of the day, so to speak, we all have an illness from which we will die from," says John Tate, M.D., MeritCare oncologist.

Six years ago there were no hospital-based programs for dying patients in the United States. "This is the first really dedicated unit of this type in the region," said Dr. Preston Steen, MeritCare Oncologist, who is board certified in palliative medicine.

In September, the Palliative Care Unit opened at MeritCare South University. For patients who are no longer pursuing curative treatment, palliative care provides vigorous treatment of the pain, symptoms and stress of serious illness so they can maintain the best quality of life throughout their illness. (On the following page is one physician's observation of a family's experience with palliative care.)

Contributions from a number of individuals along with gifts during the 2003 **61for61** radiothon and the associate giving campaign made this new service possible. Since then families and friends have given gifts to have rooms named in honor of LeRoy Justesen, David Gibb and Dean Scott Bensen. Patient rooms remain that can be named in someone's honor with a gift of \$10,000.

The **61for61** radiothon is an annual event that raises money for programs at the MeritCare Roger Maris Cancer Center. This year the radiothon, broadcast on the Fox 101.9FM, will be held October 1, 2 and 3 and will benefit cancer research.



Above is one of the patient rooms in the Palliative Care Unit at MeritCare South University.

Detailed information about Palliative Care can be found online using the [Care Beyond Cure](#) link at www.cancer.meritcare.com.



www.foundation.meritcare.com

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Reflections from a Physician:

AT TIMES, NOTHING WE DO IN MEDICINE IS MORE IMPORTANT

Tonight I found myself standing next to a man in the hospital snack shop. Small talk began with the mutual recognition that we had passed in the hallway several times in the past couple of days here at South University. As the conversation continued, he shared with me that his mother is languishing in the Palliative Care Unit with terminal pancreatic cancer. We talked about her condition, her fortitude, the fact that life sometimes saves our greatest struggles for the end, and the emotional strain of the vigil. In the midst of this, he began to reflect on how his father died from bladder cancer at the age of 44. "Back in those days they didn't have places like this," he mused. He recalled lying awake at night, only 17 years old, helplessly listening to his father screaming in pain. This nice man carries the clarity of those final memories of his father's suffering with him yet today. After visiting with him, it was apparent that on some level he has feared having to endure a similar experience with his mother for a long, long time. Thanks to palliative care, that burden has been lifted from him. His current experience is not welcomed. But it could be much worse. Palliative care is not flashy. It isn't particularly technical. It isn't played out in a webcast. It isn't triumphant. But in an imperfect world where death always comes, there are times when nothing we do in medicine is more important. — Kurt Kooyer, M.D.

MeritCare Named One of America's Best



Selected from over 6,000 hospitals nationwide, MeritCare is proud to be the only North Dakota hospital named one of America's best in Solucient's annual study – *100 Top Hospitals®: National Benchmarks for Success*.

Published in *Modern Healthcare* magazine, Solucient's study recognizes hospitals that have achieved excellence in quality of care, operational efficiency and financial performance. Solucient estimates that patients receiving care at a 100 Top Hospital experience shorter length of stays, fewer complications and better survival rates.

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