

celebrate **GIVING**

Fall 2022 | Issue 13



COLLEGE STUDENT CHOOSES LIFE - for Herself and her Child - with Support from **NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP**



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Mercedes Moment Winner | Managing Chronic Conditions with UPMC Home Healthcare | WIC Farmers' Market | Family Hospice Keeps Loved Ones at Home



aligning excellence

A MESSAGE FROM PAULA THOMAS

Welcome to the Fall 2022 issue of *Celebrate Giving!* This is a bittersweet message, as it will be my final one. I started full-time in nursing in 1977 and had my first job in home health in 1980. I have 42 years of service credit with UPMC. The last six of those years have been in my current role in home health and hospice, which has always been my passion. As I read the stories in this issue, I was reminded why.

Home is where Willie Snyder learned to manage multiple chronic health issues through the guidance of her UPMC Home Healthcare nurse Kaitlin Grimes, whom Willie lovingly nicknamed “Bossy.” Deeply appreciative for the care and education that allowed her to remain independent, Willie made a Heart of Gratitude donation to recognize Kaitlin and make an impact on other UPMC Home Healthcare patients.

Home is where Bob Dunn was able to stay throughout his life with the support of Family Hospice. With his wife Kitty by his side and daughter Robin just minutes away, Bob had peace and familiarity until he passed away in June. Kitty and Robin chose to honor Bob’s life by directing memorial donations to Family Hospice. Given in Bob’s memory, these gifts will give comfort and assistance to other patients and caregivers.

Our UPMC Home Healthcare and Family Hospice play a vital role in helping people to remain where they want to be. Gratitude has compelled many of them to donate in making a difference for others to be where they want to be – not just physical location, but where they want to be in life. Oftentimes, that is in the form of a hand-up to support someone through an unexpected or challenging season.

Our community-based services are also evidence of this. The WIC program is continually searching for new ways for participants to access WIC benefits and enrich their lives, including bringing farmers’ market produce to WIC clinics. Another aspect of this is providing diapers and training pants for children’s first and second birthdays, thanks to donations through the Home Nursing Agency Foundation.

I was encouraged by the incredible story of Reana Moody, a Penn State student who chose life for her child because she had the mentorship of her Nurse-Family Partnership nurse Alise Christie. Now, Reana has realized her dream of becoming a counselor, and her daughter Avé is thriving.

Much like Reana’s journey, enduring hardships and adapting are inherent to success. It has not been an easy year for our organization, as we have made some changes to refine our focus and equip us for the future. Earlier this year, we made the difficult decision to transition our Private Duty Home Care and Pediatric Home Connection services to a non-profit organization called Bayada. This included our clients, patients, and staff who wanted to move forward with Bayada. We also helped our AIDS Intervention Project (AIP) to become part of PACT (Pittsburgh Area Center for Treatment of HIV). This translates into more support for staff and the clients served in Blair County and surrounding areas.

Within UPMC Home Healthcare and Family Hospice, we have gone through organizational restructuring that allows a standardized approach to patient care across our broader service area. Through this, there are many wins to celebrate. I am proud of our team for maintaining a focus on patients with the highest quality care, and I am grateful for the continued support of our community and the donations that make an impact on our patients, clients, and families.

Thank you for the privilege of being part of your story. It has been my great honor.

Sincerely,

Paula Thomas
President, UPMC Home Healthcare & Family Hospice

Congratulations to Charlotte & Paul Pletcher, 2022 MERCEDES MOMENT WINNER

Charlotte & Paul Pletcher of Osterburg held the winning number – 545 – for Home Nursing Agency Foundation’s 2022 Mercedes Moment fundraiser. As the winner, the Pletchers were offered the choice of the Mercedes A 220 or \$30,000 cash prize.



In the 20th consecutive year, Mercedes Moment raised more than \$88,000 to help support individuals and families who have needs beyond normal circumstances and who may need additional resources not covered by insurance. This year, the Home Nursing Agency Foundation has awarded \$181,670 in grants to directly impact the lives of Central Pennsylvania residents who are served by UPMC Home Healthcare, Family Hospice and Home Nursing Agency Community Services. The Home Nursing Agency Foundation supports patients and families in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Somerset counties.

Next year’s Mercedes Moment is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 25, 2023. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for Mercedes Moment, please call 1-855-GIVE-HNA.



LIGHTS OF LOVE | November – December 2022

The joy of the holiday season can be marked by sadness for those with loved ones who have passed away. Remembering these loved ones and including them in our observances keeps them alive in our hearts and celebrates their legacy that continues to live on.

The Home Nursing Agency Foundation Lights of Love tribute event invites you to “shine a special light” for someone you love. Make a donation to benefit Family Hospice & Grief Services and share a personal dedication that will be posted online at HomeNursingAgency.com.

Trees in Altoona and Ebensburg are lit with white lights to represent Family Hospice and blue lights to represent Grief Services for children, adults, and families. The trees will be lit from November 21 to January 6.



NEW! Donors of \$100 or more have two remembrance options:

- Three heart-shaped ornaments made of clothing or fabric from your loved one
- Beveled glass star Lights of Love ornament

Visit HomeNursingAgency.com or call 1-855-GIVE-HNA to participate in Lights of Love.

WAYS TO HELP

You can make a difference for residents of our West Central PA region who receive UPMC Home Healthcare, Family Hospice, or other services by donating to the Home Nursing Agency Foundation.

Return the enclosed envelope with your donation or give securely online at HomeNursingAgency.com. You can also call the Foundation hotline at 1-855-GIVE-HNA to donate by credit card. For more information about ways you can help, please contact Kim Helsel, Director of Development/ Marketing Communications, at 814-947-7024 or khelsel@HomeNursingAgency.com.

The official registration and financial information of the Home Nursing Agency Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact the Home Nursing Agency Foundation at 1-855-448-3462.



Centre County Nurse-Family Partnership® Enables New Mom to Strive for the Future

“Adversity does not build character, it reveals it.”

James Lane Allen

Caring, capable, and determined, Philadelphia native Reana Moody was enrolled at Penn State University and working toward her goal of becoming a counselor, thanks to the support of Philadelphia Futures. Everything was going as planned for the first-generation college student until she found out she was pregnant early in her sophomore year.

“I thought, ‘My life is over,’” Reana recalled. “I knew I couldn’t keep a child if I had no help.” She was physically distant from her family in Philadelphia, but she also lacked their emotional support as she weighed the decision of whether to keep her child.

A day after getting the positive pregnancy test, Reana sat in a Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) class as they worked through a unit on teenage pregnancies. Her professor shared Nurse-Family Partnership® as a resource for first-time moms, and Reana’s interest was piqued. After calling the Centre County

NFP program, operated by UPMC Home Healthcare of Central PA, Reana learned that the program is funded by state dollars and free to clients who are eligible.

“I knew I couldn’t do it alone, but with this program, I could have the baby,” Reana shared. “NFP was what gave me my final decision.”

EMBRACING THE FUTURE

After being paired with NFP Nurse Home Visitor Alise Christie, Reana embraced her future and worked harder than she ever had before. In addition to attending school full-time, Reana worked overnight and picked up a second job during the day. Her packed schedule was punctuated by weekly visits with Alise.

“I looked forward to her visits every week,” Reana said. “Alise was the right fit. We meshed really well, and it felt like I already knew her. Emotionally, I would have been distraught without



A REASSURING VOICE

Transitioning back to State College, Reana had a new set of challenges: finding off-campus housing, navigating public transportation with a baby, aligning schedules for Avé’s daycare and her classes, pumping between classes, and carrying a full course load. Amid these stressors, Reana also experienced the death of her mom. Alise remained a trusted and encouraging voice as Reana and Avé grew together.

“We talked about personal life, family relationships, what we were doing, and what we needed to work on,” Reana explained. “I would worry that Avé wasn’t doing what she should be at certain times, and Alise would reassure me, saying, ‘It takes time. She’ll get there.’”

She did get there, and so did Reana. As Avé grew and met all her developmental milestones, Reana was excelling in college, earning a place on the Dean’s List every semester since her last trimester of pregnancy. The onset of COVID-19 prevented Reana from celebrating her graduation with a Bachelor of Science degree and her graduation from Nurse-Family Partnership in April 2020, but that didn’t stop her from enrolling in the master’s program to continue working toward her goal.

“Reana came with all the determination,” Alise praised. “My role was helping her to build her confidence and provide emotional support so that having a baby didn’t derail what she already had going. She can be successful in her career and be a great mom.”

CATCHING UP

Re-connecting more than two years later, Reana and Alise basked in the joy of four-year-old Avé’s robust vocabulary and animated personality as Reana updated Alise on life since graduation. Enduring the additional loss of her father

her. I would have been crying every night wondering if I had made the right choice.”

As the two connected, Reana felt comfortable to ask her questions about what was happening to her body, and Alise was able to provide the information, reassurance, and emotional support Reana needed.

“Half of our job is answering, ‘Is this normal?’” Alise shared. “I answer questions about what is happening to mom and baby throughout the pregnancy and as birth approaches.” Alise helped Reana to develop a plan for when the baby arrived, which included a return trip to Philadelphia, transferring to the Nurse-Family Partnership program in that area, and having the baby’s father present for birth.

Things did not go according to plan, and Reana went into labor during finals week. She delivered a beautiful and healthy baby girl named Avé in April 2018. After struggling with complications after delivery and difficulties with Avé latching, Reana used various community resources, such as the Pregnancy Resource Center and Children and Youth Services for specialized breastfeeding support and transportation to appointments. She was able to return to Philadelphia for the summer and appreciated the NFP nurse who mentored her during Avé’s first months.



while balancing her master’s program and motherhood, Reana continued to push toward the future. She earned her Master of Education in Clinical Mental Health Counseling in Schools and Communities this spring and fulfilled her goal of becoming a counselor, as she is now a mental health clinician for the elementary schools within the State College School District.

When Alise gently asked why Reana stuck with Nurse-Family Partnership considering everything she had juggled, Reana responded immediately.

“I felt like it was my only support,” Reana shared. “NFP was the reason I felt okay having her, and our visits were my ‘me’ time.”

Through the trials of pregnancy, motherhood, school, and loss, Alise helped Reana to see the caring, capable, and determined woman she already was – while becoming the devoted mother she is.

For more information about Nurse-Family Partnership, please visit homenursingagency.com or call 1-833-315-4358.

Pictured on cover: Philadelphia native Reana Moody has a full life with her now four-year-old daughter Avé because she had the support of her Nurse-Family Partnership nurse Alise Christie.

Pictured inside: Reana, Alise, and Avé recently re-connected to celebrate the progress that Reana and Avé have made since graduating from NFP in April 2020.



**UPMC HOME HEALTHCARE
NURSE EQUIPS BEDFORD
COUNTY PATIENT TO MANAGE
CHRONIC CONDITIONS**



Having managed her diabetes for 50 years, Everett resident Willetta Snyder, better known as Willie, is no stranger to taking charge of her health. Battling COVID-19 pneumonia in September 2021 and facing complications meant Willie needed some help. Affectionately nicknamed “Bossy,” UPMC Home Healthcare Sr. Professional Staff Nurse Kaitlin Grimes gave Willie the tools to get back on track.

Kaitlin had been seeing Willie for two weeks after her stay at UPMC Bedford Memorial from pneumonia when Willie called her attention to something concerning.

“I said, ‘Look at this,’ and lifted my shirt to show her my belly,” Willie said. “I looked like I was eight months pregnant.” Living with diabetes had caused liver damage, and the steroids and antibiotics administered in her pneumonia recovery were too much for her liver to process. Rather than her body eliminating waste and fluids like it should, the excess had gathered in her abdomen.

Kaitlin knew the fluid retention needed to be addressed immediately and contacted one of Willie’s sons to take her back to the hospital, where she remained for several days and had paracentesis to extract excess fluid.

“When I was discharged from the hospital the second time, I almost had a different nurse,” Willie said. “I said that I wanted to stay with Kaitlin. She was my nurse.”

In the remainder of her visits, Kaitlin earned her nickname “Bossy” as she taught Willie about the importance

of nutrition with reduced sodium intake and how to track her vital signs to prevent another hospitalization.

“We went through her cupboards and refrigerator looking at nutritional facts and getting rid of anything with too much sodium,” Kaitlin shared. “We worked on preventative maintenance and logging her weight, blood sugar, and blood pressure each day.”

Tacked on her refrigerator is a detailed list of Willie’s morning routine, penned by her “Bossy” to reinforce those essential daily practices.

“Everything she asked me to do, I did, and I still do,” Willie said.

After being discharged in May 2022, Willie couldn’t help but offer a glowing review as she made a donation to the Heart of Gratitude program. While her donation will be used to help future UPMC Home Healthcare patients, Willie was also able to recognize Kaitlin with a special pin.

“I really am at a loss for words to describe my journey the last nine months with Kaitlin (Bossy),” Willie wrote. “My health would not be what it is if it wasn’t for my ‘Bossy.’ She is compassionate, professional, loving, kind, funny, and as I call her ‘Bossy’ because she made me understand that I had to do as she said!”

To learn more about UPMC Home Healthcare, visit upmchomehealthcare.com or call 1-800-445-6262.





WIC INNOVATES to Improve Participation, Access to Healthy Foods

For pregnant women and young families with demands on their time and finances, purchasing nutritious foods may not be a priority. Through the Pennsylvania WIC (Women, Infants and Children) nutrition program, these income-eligible women and families have more ways and reasons to get healthy foods.

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides checks for WIC participants to purchase locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables at their local farmers' market. After noticing the program was not fully utilized, the WIC team in Blair County decided to bring the farmers' market to participants instead.

Partnering with local farmers' markets, the team has a selection of produce available weekly during growing season for clients to stop by their familiar WIC clinic to purchase their fresh produce.

"I prefer farmers' market produce over the mass grocery store produce, and the bags provided have been so helpful," shares WIC participant Jessica Messick. "It saves me an extra trip into the store and makes it an easier option for my daughter to help choose fruits and veggies for our home."



Having used WIC when her daughter Evelyn was born in 2017, Jessica recently re-enrolled when she was expecting their second child.

"If it wasn't for WIC giving us a wide variety of tools and information, we would have been lost as new parents," she says. "Even as experienced parents, we still learn something new every appointment!"



In addition to accessing nutritious foods, WIC families receive vital education and support, but many families drop out after children turn one or two years old.

"This is such a critical time in children's growth and development," explains Amy Gorsuch, Nutritionist II-WIC. Recognizing the importance of keeping families engaged, the WIC team requested Home Nursing Agency Foundation grant funds to purchase diapers/training pants that are distributed on a child's first or second birthday. "These are a costly necessity for babies/toddlers, and we have received a lot of positive feedback from our clients who are grateful for the help with diapers."

To date this year, more than 170 packs of diapers/training pants have been given through your support of the Home Nursing Agency Foundation, and continued participation has increased. Home Nursing Agency operates WIC in Blair and Centre counties.

For more information about WIC, including information on appointment openings, visit www.pawic.com or call 1-800-WIC-WINS. The Pennsylvania WIC program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider.

Pictured on previous page: Top - Blair County WIC (Women, Infants and Children) partnered with local farmers' markets to make local produce accessible for WIC participants to use their farmers' market checks.

Bottom - Evelyn Messick was happy to help her mom Jessica choose their fruits and vegetables through WIC's "Grab and Go" farmers' market options.

Pictured on this page: Breanna Pratt is grateful for the diapers she received for her daughter Kaia's first birthday. Donations through the Home Nursing Agency Foundation help families to receive a small supply of diapers/training pants for their children's birthday to meet a vital need and keep them engaged in the program.



FAMILY HOSPICE Equipped Juniata County Family to Keep Cherished Husband, Father at Home

After 30 years of working together in business and 63 years of marriage, Kathryn “Kitty” Dunn thought she knew all there was to know about her beloved husband Bob. What she didn’t know was what to expect when his body started failing.

For several years, Bob required blood transfusions for anemia, and his family later found out his liver was damaged. Because of his age, there were no options for surgery offered, and Bob lived with the condition, gradually becoming more tired but maintaining his sense of humor and love of birthday celebrations.

As owner and Administrator of North Ridge Center Personal Care, their daughter Robin Naylor knew when it was time to call for more help, and she knew who to ask.

“I have used Family Hospice at my facility and found it to be one of the better ones for getting help,” Robin explains. She reached out to Family Hospice, and the family was connected

with nurses and aides who provided the physical and emotional support and education they needed in Bob’s final weeks of life.

“They took care of him and made him laugh,” Kitty recalls. “He was a jokester, and he loved everyone who came to see him.”

As Bob’s case manager, Senior Professional Staff Nurse Morgan Narehood enjoyed their banter during visits when she checked on Bob and shared information with Kitty about what could happen.

“Morgan explained everything to me, and I was so glad for that,” Kitty says. “Because of his anemia, she said he may start bleeding unexpectedly. One day he began coughing up blood clots. If I hadn’t known that could happen, I would have been horrified. Instead, I could stay calm and help him.”

As Bob’s primary caregiver, Kitty was relieved to know that she wasn’t shouldering the responsibilities alone.

Robin was present as much as possible, and the Family Hospice team was always a phone call away.

“They were always there when we needed them,” she shares. “I couldn’t do it myself. Anything I asked of them, they answered. I don’t know what I would have done without them.”

Bob passed away peacefully at home on June 3, 2022, with his devoted wife by his side. Extending Bob’s legacy, his family chose to have donations directed to Family Hospice in his memory. These donations are used to make a difference for future Family Hospice patients and caregivers.

For more information about Family Hospice, visit upmc.com/FamilyHospice or call 1-800-445-6262.

For more information about memorial contributions, please contact Kim Helsel, Director of Development/Marketing Communications at khelsel@HomeNursingAgency.com or 814-947-7024.

RECOGNIZING OUR SUPPORTERS

The generosity of community partners – individuals, businesses, local governments, and organizations – helps to ensure that our mission of providing care and services for those in need will continue.

Every dollar matters. Every gift has a story.

The following donations of \$25 or more were received January 1, 2022 – July 31, 2022.

Thank you to the following donors who have helped make a difference in the lives of our neighbors and our communities.

We apologize for any errors or omissions to this list. Every effort is made to assure that proper information is recorded. Please call the Home Nursing Agency Foundation at 1-855-GIVE-HNA to make us aware of any corrections or changes.

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Colerain Township
Curtin Township
Daisytown Borough
Derry Township
Dublin Township
Ehrenfeld Borough
Freedom Township
Montgomery Township
North Woodbury Township
West Providence Township

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Centre Foundation
Estate of Joanne Yvonne Winstead
Estate of Melva Collary
Estate of Mildred Port
United Way of Huntingdon County
United Way of Southwestern PA

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UPMC shall accept referrals and provide services to all persons in need in its defined service area regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, creed, limited English proficiency, handicap or disability, ability to pay, ancestry, sexual orientation, diagnosis, infectious disease, or DNR status, if applicable.

upcoming events

CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS DAY

Thursday, November 17, 2022



Wear blue to show your support for grieving children! Take a photo of you, your family, or co-workers, and share it with the Healing Patch Children's Grief Program Facebook page. You can also donate to support the free and hope-giving work of the Healing Patch by visiting HomeNursingAgency.com.



PATCHED TOGETHER: A DAY OF MUSIC TO BENEFIT THE HEALING PATCH

Saturday, November 19, 2022

Bavarian Aid Society

Patched Together is a day of live music, fun, raffles, and giveaways to benefit the Healing Patch Children's Grief Program. We are extremely happy to be back in person this year. All-ages are welcome (under 21 requires parent or legal guardian).

FLASHLIGHT EGG HUNT

Friday, March 31, 2023 (Raindate: Saturday, April 1, 2023)

Altoona Curve

Mark your calendar for the Home Nursing Agency Foundation's first ever Flashlight Egg Hunt. This is open to adults 18 years of age and older. Registration is \$20 per person.

