



WHA Foundation, Inc.

**2023** *Year in Review*

## *A Letter from the Executive Director*

It is easy, in day-to-day life, to forget the impact our work and efforts have on those around us. What we see as “just another day at work” can feel very different to the people we interact with. To them, it can mean...everything. I am honored and humbled to have a front row seat to witness the impact the work the WHA Foundation has on Wisconsin communities. This is due in part to the gratitude expressed by those who benefit from the Foundation’s funding programs. The Board of Directors and I never have to wonder if the work we dedicate to these programs is appreciated or recognized. The written thank yous, video thank yous and phone calls we receive are evidence the work is meaningful, impactful and valued. Especially in the challenging times that health care is facing, it is a reminder that this work makes a difference.



Regardless of your specific role in health care in Wisconsin, on behalf of the WHA Foundation Board of Directors, please accept our gratitude and thanks for all the tireless and sometimes unnoticed work that you do to improve the lives of the people you serve. The impact you make on others is considerable and appreciated beyond words.

Becoming a *Friend of Foundation* is a great way to support not only the work the WHA Foundation is doing, but also to support communities across Wisconsin. To learn more about how you can become a *Friend of the Foundation*, please reach out to me directly.

*Leigh Ann S. Larson*

Executive Director of the WHA Foundation

[llarson@wha.org](mailto:llarson@wha.org)

### 2023 Board of Trustees

Thank you to the 2022 WHA **Foundation Board of Trustees** for their dedication, commitment, collegiality and time. With job transitions occurring in 2023, the list below reflects the roster of Board members who were in place from January – June 2023.

- **Jeff Euclide (Chair)**, Chief Administrative Officer, Marshfield Medical Center, Ladysmith
- **Jan Bauman**, Chief Nursing Officer, Divine Savior Healthcare, Portage
- **Eric Borgerding**, President and CEO, Wisconsin Hospital Association
- **Jenny Derks**, System Director Total Rewards, UW Health, Madison
- **Kristie McCoic**, Chief Executive Officer, Gundersen St. Joseph’s Hospital & Clinics, Hillsboro
- **Joni Olson**, Chief Executive Officer, Gundersen Tri County Hospital & Clinics, Whitehall
- **Bruce Roesler**, Chief Executive Officer, The Richland Hospital, Inc., Richland Center

# Quality. Workforce. Community. The WHA Foundation's Funding Priorities

## The Focus of the WHA Foundation

Formed in 1968, the WHA Foundation, Inc. serves to support educational, research and charitable programs of the Wisconsin Hospital Association and its members.

Today, the Foundation focuses its grant-making priorities on initiatives that have a statewide impact on health care in Wisconsin.



## WHA Foundation Funding Programs

### 1. Health Care Quality and Safety Initiatives

The Foundation has supported a variety of quality and safety initiatives for more than 20 years, starting with the funding to develop, launch and upgrade [CheckPoint](#), the first public website to provide consumers with clinical quality measures and error prevention practices for all hospitals in Wisconsin. Since 2016, the Foundation has provided funding for clinical simulation training to more than 60 hospital teams, focusing training in areas of sepsis/septic shock, opioid crisis, high-risk OB scenarios and stroke.

### 2. Health Care Workforce Development

Addressing the workforce needs of Wisconsin health care providers has been a focus of the Foundation over the past decade. The Foundation supports the annual Foundation Scholarship Program, providing two annual scholarships to each of the 16 technical colleges in Wisconsin. The unique twist is the scholarship covers expenses incurred in the student's final semester to assist and encourage students to make that one final push toward graduation and a career in health care. Since its inception in 2003, more than 400 scholarships have been awarded, worth more than \$500,000.

### 3. Collaborative Community Health Initiatives

The WHA Foundation supports community health initiatives created in partnership with WHA members through its annual Global Vision Community Partnership Award. This award was established in 1993 to provide recognition and financial support to innovative and collaborative initiatives that meet a community's health needs. A total of 53 Global Vision Awards have been presented since its inception, and the award includes a \$2,500 unrestricted grant for each winning initiative.

# WHA Foundation's Impact Grows

## WHA Workforce Campaign: So Many Options

To help address the hospital workforce shortage in Wisconsin, WHA Foundation supported the development of a statewide campaign called [So Many Options](#) to promote the variety of career opportunities available in health care to young people. The campaign highlights not just clinical careers, but also non-clinical careers, such as culinary, facilities or administrative.

The digital campaign, launched on Feb. 7, 2024, is funded so far to run for four months with ads on platforms where young people are, like social media and YouTube. The ads link to an online career resource hub where students, teachers and parents can explore information about health care career options and the variety of educational pathways.

As a 501 (c)3 organization, the WHA Foundation was a natural entity to direct campaign funding through. The campaign supports the Foundation's mission of addressing the workforce needs of Wisconsin health care providers. At the time of printing, the generous supporters of this initiative are the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative, Herzing University, EUA and Demi Healthcare Partners.



## Clinical Simulation Lab Scholarships

### Health Care Quality and Safety Initiatives

The WHA Foundation provided scholarship funding to support WHA hospital members' participation in clinical simulations labs. The labs, found throughout Wisconsin, in 2023 included:

- Gundersen Health System Integrated Center for Education, La Crosse
- HSHS Sacred Heart Hospital, Eau Claire
- Mid-State Simulation Center, Wisconsin Rapids

Applications were reviewed against a set of criteria, including the hospital teams' objectives for incorporating clinical simulation training into their multidisciplinary team. Applicants indicated their interest in either stroke, high-risk OB delivery, opioid crisis or sepsis/septic shock labs. These focus areas are decided upon by a collaboration between the WHA Foundation and WHA Quality department.

Five scholarships were awarded in 2023, in the areas of stroke, high-risk OB and sepsis/septic shock.



# Technical School Scholarships

## Health Care Workforce Development

The 16 technical schools in the state of Wisconsin were offered 32 scholarships for the 2022/2023 school year. Each scholarship has a monetary value of up to \$2,000. These scholarships, two offered to each school, are intended for the final semester of school for students graduating in health-related fields. These fields include:

- AODA
- Anesthesia Technology
- Biotechnical Lab Technician
- Cancer Information Management
- Cardiovascular Technology
- Clinical Lab Technician
- Clinical Research Coordinator
- Dental Hygienist
- Diagnostic Medical Sonography
- Dietetic Technician
- Echocardiography
- EMT/Paramedic
- Gerontology
- Health Care Business Services
- Health Information Technology
- Health Care Services Management
- Medical Lab Technician
- Midwife
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Pharmacy Services Management
- Physical Therapy Assistant
- Radiography
- Respiratory Therapist
- Surgical Technology
- Wellness and Health Promotion

Twenty-three (23) scholarships were awarded for the 2022-2023 school year. This totaled \$40,640 dollars disbursed to new health care workforce members in the state of Wisconsin.

Makaida Kilgas-Scheller, a May 2023 nursing graduate from Fox Valley Technical College, was very appreciative of the generous support from the WHA Foundation.



*"I can't thank you enough for this scholarship. It means I can not only achieve a degree in something I am so passionate about, but also create a better life for my son and me. Receiving a scholarship means somebody else believes in me other than myself and the feeling of that alone is priceless."*

Makaida Kilgas-Scheller  
Fox Technical College Student  
WHA Foundation Scholarship Recipient



Brian Competente, Director of Operations and Jennifer Mueller, Vice President and Privacy Officer, WHA Information Center

As a 2023 *Friend of the Foundation*, the Wisconsin Hospital Association Information Center (WHAIC), had the opportunity to name two scholarships for the 2022-2023 school year. Congratulations to Haley Spencer and Yeng Homan, who graduated with degrees in Health Information Technology from Western Wisconsin Technical College and Waukesha County Technical College respectively.

# Global Vision Community Partnership Award

## Collaborative Community Health Initiatives

The WHA Foundation awarded two Global Vision Community Partnership Awards in 2023. The purpose of the award is to recognize and reward community partnership projects that work with a WHA member hospital(s) to meet an identified community health need in an innovative or creative manner.

### **Center for Special Children Vernon Memorial Healthcare, Viroqua**

The Vernon Memorial Healthcare La Farge Medical Clinic was started in 1983, providing mostly primary and emergency care to families of the community of Plain. Over the years, members of this community increasingly started to be seen for genetic conditions. Driven by the vision and support of the community, the Center for Special Children was created in 2015. Over the past eight years, it has provided cost-effective care for this largely underserved and uninsured community. The focus of the work is to provide testing, diagnosis, treatment, and management of genetic disorders. These conditions are often rare and have remained largely undiagnosed, causing untold suffering and expense. Early identification and treatment of these conditions can lead to complete prevention of the consequences of the disorders with healthy children as a result. In other cases, the child's health can be improved, and disability lessened by knowledge and appropriate treatment. Some children are found to have terminal disorders, for which there is no cure and early death is certain. In these difficult situations, children and families can be spared painful and expensive diagnostic evaluation and hospital stays.

### **Taking Medicine to the Streets - St. Clare Health Mission Street Medicine Gundersen Health System, La Crosse**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the unhoused population of the greater La Crosse community has grown. Taking Medicine to the Streets is a program of St. Clare Health Mission Free Clinic in partnership with Gundersen Health System and the greater La Crosse community. This program provides medical care to unhoused populations outside of traditional health care institutions, quite literally on the street, in parks, parking ramps, under bridges, by the river and in transitional settings where people are surviving unhoused. The goal of the program is to engage people experiencing homelessness wherever they are, on their own terms, helping to reduce barriers to medical care and decrease health disparities. Since its creation in October 2020, Taking Medicine to the Streets has assisted in achieving higher levels of medical, mental health and social care through assertive, coordinated and collaborative care management.

Award winners each received a plaque of recognition and a \$2,500 grant to continue to fulfill the mission and activities of these valuable programs. WHA Foundation Inc. thanks all nominations submitted for the Global Vision Community Partnership Award.



*L to R: Mona Bader, RN, VMH Center for Special Children; Leigh Ann Larson, WHA Foundation; Dr. Katie Williams, Sheri Bohland-Hammond, and Jerry McGeorge, VMH Center for Special Children.*



*L to R: Leigh Ann Larson, WHA Foundation Executive Director; Jason Larson, Executive Director, St. Clare Health Mission; Sandy Brekke, Senior Consultant, Office of Population Health, Gundersen Health System.*

## Second WHA Health Care Leadership Academy Class Graduates with the Help of WHA Foundation Scholarship Dollars

The WHA Health Care Leadership Academy was developed to address the needs of WHA member hospitals, particularly the need for their leaders to better understand the “business of health care” so they can contribute in more meaningful ways to better patient care, cost management and effective service delivery. At the conclusion of the program, participants were able to demonstrate their knowledge to successfully navigate the complexities and opportunities of the future of health care.



2023 WHA Health Care Leadership Academy graduates with Bucky Badger.

The WHA Health Care Leadership Academy was developed in partnership between the Wisconsin School of Business Center for Professional & Executive Development (UW CPED) and the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA).

The second academy was held between February 2023 – June 2023. Topics included:

- The Business of Health Care: Leadership, Strategy, and Understanding the Business
- Understanding & Navigating Ethical Issues in Health Care
- Relationship Management: Communication & Influence Across a Matrix
- WHA Government Relations, Quality, and Information Center

With comments from the graduates such as “This program was more impactful than my MBA” and “This program has inspired me to complete my doctorate,” the 2023 program was an overwhelming success.

Through the generous donation of scholarship dollars from sponsors M3 Insurance and the WHA Foundation, participants were each awarded a partial scholarship of \$1,750, which was applied to their overall UW CPED tuition. In total, the WHA Foundation donated \$17,500.

Congratulations to the graduates of the 2023 WHA Health Care Leadership Academy!

Name	Title	Organization
Amar Ambardekar	Aurora Health Care	Internal Medicine Physician
Brenda Duke	Lakeview Specialty Hospital & Rehab	Human Resources Director
Webster Francois	Marshfield Clinic Health System	President
Thomas George	Fort HealthCare	Hospital Services Medical Director
Anthony Gould	Amery Hospital & Clinic	Director of Ancillary Services
Haydar Saleh	Ripon Medical Center	Medical Director
Brittany Shallow	Bellin Health	Ortho/Neuro Unit & Inpatient Rehab Team Leader
Jessica Small	Aurora Psychiatric Hospital	President
Molly Vandervest	Bellin Health	Vice President Bellin Health Foundation
Hannah Young	Prairie Ridge Health, Inc.	Director of Clinic Operations

## A Look Toward 2024

The WHA Foundation will continue to support **Health Care Quality and Safety Initiatives**, **Health Care Workforce Development**, and **Collaborative Community Health Initiatives**. It is our hope that these programming opportunities will provide support in the most meaningful way possible to WHA member hospitals and the communities they serve. The WHA Foundation Board of Trustees will also be exploring other funding opportunities to further accomplish its overall mission and goals.

### 2024 WHA Foundation Board of Trustees



**Kristie McCoic  
(Chair)**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Gundersen St. Joseph's  
Hospital & Clinics,  
Hillsboro



**Jan Bauman**  
Chief Nursing Officer,  
Divine Savior Healthcare,  
Portage



**Michael Bergmann**  
President and CEO  
Ascension Fox Valley  
hospitals



**Eric Borgerding**  
President and CEO  
Wisconsin Hospital  
Association (WHA)



**Joni Olson**, Chief  
Executive Officer,  
Gundersen Tri County  
Hospital & Clinics,  
Whitehall



**Gail Pasard**, Regional  
Vice President, Human  
Resources, SSM Health –  
Wisconsin & Post-Acute



**Bruce Roesler**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
The Richland Hospital,  
Inc., Richland Center

## Thank you to our 2024 *Friend of the Foundation*



We thank the generous support of the **Wisconsin Hospital Association Information Center (WHAIC)** as they continue to be a Friend of the Foundation member in 2024. For the third year in a row, the WHAIC will have the opportunity for sponsorship recognition at two WHA events, provide naming rights for two scholarships, as well as many other benefits.

Please see the “Friend of the Foundation Annual Giving Levels” insert for details on how you can become a *Friend of the Foundation*.



# “Friend of the Foundation” Annual Giving Levels



You can make a positive impact on Wisconsin health care! Contribute at one of the giving levels below and become a “*Friend of the Foundation.*” Your support ensures the WHA Foundation can continue its current funding programs, as well as possible future initiatives that can benefit Wisconsin communities.

## \$1,000 Sponsor

- Company/individual name recognition on WHA Foundation website
- Company/individual name recognition on WHA Foundation signage at events, including at WHA’s Advocacy Day, the Wisconsin Rural Health Conference, and WHA’s Physician Leadership Development Conference
- Two (2) complimentary enrollments in a WHA-sponsored webinar

## \$2,500 Sponsor

- Company logo/individual name recognition on WHA Foundation website
- Company logo/individual name recognition on WHA Foundation signage at events, including at WHA’s Advocacy Day, WHA’s Rural Health Conference, and WHA’s Physician Leadership Development Conference
- Two (2) complimentary enrollments in a WHA-sponsored webinar
- Sponsorship recognition of one (1) WHA event or webinar

## \$4,000 Sponsor

- Company logo/individual name recognition on WHA Foundation website
- Company logo/individual name recognition on WHA Foundation signage at events, including at WHA’s Advocacy Day, WHA’s Rural Health Conference, and WHA’s Physician Leadership Development Conference
- Two (2) complimentary enrollments in a WHA-sponsored webinar
- Sponsorship recognition of two (2) WHA events or webinars
- WHA Foundation Technical School Scholarship naming rights for two (2) scholarships awarded to one (1) Wisconsin technical college during the academic year

The WHA Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax-deductible.

## Be a “Friend of the Foundation”

In order to continue focusing its grant-making priorities on initiatives that have a statewide impact on health care in Wisconsin, the WHA Foundation Board of Trustees continues its fundraising efforts each year. Every contribution to the WHA Foundation is appreciated and will be recognized appropriately. Thank you for considering a contribution to the WHA Foundation. See “*Friend of the Foundation Annual Giving Levels*” for more details.

### Questions:

Contact Leigh Ann S. Larson,  
Executive Director  
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[llarson@wha.org](mailto:llarson@wha.org)  
[www.wha.org/AboutWHA/WHA-Foundation](http://www.wha.org/AboutWHA/WHA-Foundation)

## 2024 WHA Foundation Fundraising Campaign

### Contribution Form

My organization/I wish to support ongoing efforts of the WHA Foundation with a contribution of:

- \$4,000\*       \$2,500\*       \$1,000\*  
 \$500       Other: \$\_\_\_\_\_

\*contribution will make you “*Friends of the Foundation*.”

Organization Name

Address

City

State

Zip

First Name

Last Name

Job Title

Email

Telephone Number (with area code)

Please make check payable to:  
WHA Foundation, Inc.

**Send Contributions to:**  
WHA Foundation, Attn. Leigh Ann S. Larson  
5510 Research Park Drive, Suite 200, Fitchburg, WI 53711

Your contribution is tax deductible as specified in IRS guidelines.