



# Donor Impact Report

## Mercy Offers Iowa's Only Emergency Nurse Residency Program (ENRP)

Megan Iiams set a lofty goal to make Mercy the first hospital in Iowa with an Emergency Nurse Residency Program. Generous support from donors like you helped her reach that goal in 2023.

Megan said, "I saw a presentation on this residency program from the Emergency Nurse Association and I knew we had to do it at Mercy!"

Since that lightbulb moment, Megan has guided 12 nurses through the 18-week program. What makes ENRP unique is that it uses a blended and collaborative approach. This provides a safe space for the new Emergency Department Nurses to learn and ask questions about emergency-specific content that isn't usually taught in nursing school.

Nurses develop skills using hands-on training, simulation, case studies and self-reflection. This helps them link critical thinking with nursing practice while improving communication skills and reinforcing organizational policies and protocols.

As the education specialist for Mercy's Emergency Department, Megan seeks out ways to support care providers and improve the patient experience. ENRP is doing just that based on the positive feedback the program's first graduates are sharing.

"We studied death and dying, delivering happy news to patients and how to take care of yourself after delivering difficult news. This program made me feel like I was finally a nurse," said Olivia Geiger, RN, BSN.

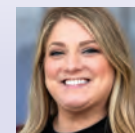
Olivia went through the first ENRP cohort with her colleague Emma Knuckey, RN, BSN in 2023.

"It not only impacted my skills, but my confidence to perform those skills," said Emma. "My clinical judgement was enhanced."

In addition to their work in the ED, nurses in the ENRP shadow several other experts within the hospital including a pharmacist, chaplain, social worker, house supervisor, member of the lab and peer supporter from Mercy's COPE Team. Megan said this helps create a good bridge between departments as colleagues develop a deeper understanding of how they can help contribute to a better patient experience throughout Mercy.



Pictured Above: Olivia Geiger, RN, BSN and Emma Knuckey, RN, BSN



"ENRP helps increase confidence and competence and improve patient outcomes. In addition, it has reduced new nurse turnover. Culture in the Emergency Department has shifted since having this program. They trust themselves and each other."

– Megan Iiams, RN, Education Specialist III.



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**Mission Statement**

To be the philanthropic catalyst in service to Mercy Medical Center's mission: to care for the sick and enhance the health of the communities we serve, guided by the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy.

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Megan explained how the ENRP is different than the general in-patient nurse residency program that other departments use.

**“This uses research-informed education specific to emergencies, develops critical thinking skills and provides a more structured approach of assessing patients,”** she said. **“It gives nurses a more standardized approach specific to the emergency department.”**

The ED is a different environment than an in-patient floor, which tends to be more specialized on one type of condition, body system or age group.

**“Nursing school is focused on med-surg (medical-surgical) or in-patient settings. Emergency is a different approach. I think the program helped me to see that before going on the floor,”** said Olivia.

**“In an emergency setting, we’re first looking if someone is critical versus not in critical condition,”** said Emma. **“The ENRP prepares us for that as well as preparing us for special alerts like sepsis, stroke and trauma.”**

Nurses who have completed the ENRP rate their communication and other skills throughout the program. Consistently, participants feel much more accomplished,

competent and confident by the end of the 18-week residency.

**“We require all new nursing graduates and new to practice to go through this residency program,”** said Megan. **“Seeing the growth of these new nurses, I think to myself if my loved one came here, I would trust them with these nurses because they will give the best care.”**

Emma and Olivia are proud to share how Mercy’s Emergency Nurse Residency Program impacted their daily interactions with patients and colleagues.

**“None of my classmates from nursing school had a program like this. I felt very supported,”** said Olivia. **“One of my favorite things about the program was shadowing other departments, seeing the perspectives of other departments helped to understand everyone else’s workflow.”**

And they’re proud to represent the first class of a one-of-a-kind training.

**“The donations that made this possible are so impactful beyond what donors could imagine. It enhanced my education to be the nurse that I am,”** said Emma. **“It’s groundbreaking to be the only hospital in the state of Iowa that has anything like this.”**

## Foundation Donors Bring New Interpretive Technology to Mercy

The prospect of surgery can be scary and stressful for patients and their loved ones. A lot of information is shared in preparation, which can be overwhelming. There are also important instructions to follow after surgery. Now, imagine not understanding or speaking the language your doctors and nurses are using to communicate with you.

Thanks to Foundation donors, Mercy care providers now have a new colleague that can interpret over 300 languages. That colleague happens to be video-remote unit called Propio and it is breaking down language barriers and helping communication with surgical patients.



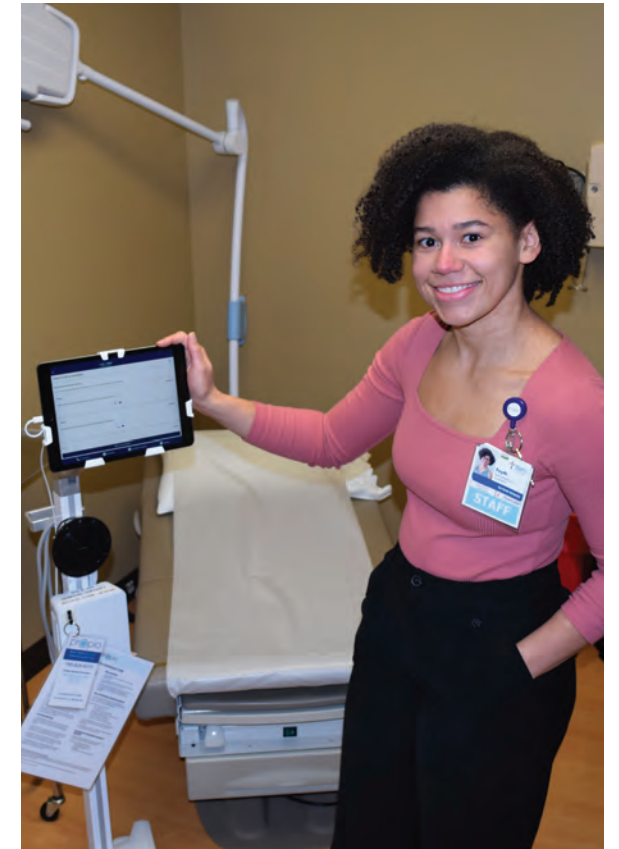
**“We can’t use family members as interpretive services for medical purposes.**

**The Propio unit helps ensure all our patients are getting great care from our nursing staff. It allows us to ensure accurate depiction of medical terminology and clear communication with patients, so they better understand their care.”**

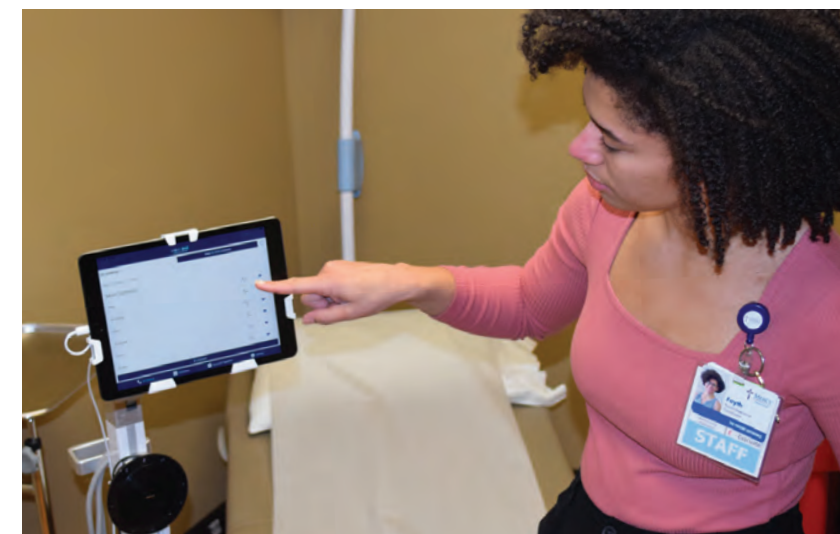
– Sara Kinhead RN, BSN, MBA Mercy, Nurse Manager, Outpatient Surgery Center & Post Anesthesia Care Unit

These devices enable video calling with a live interpreter in real-time. These shareable devices are available throughout the Mercy campus. They are available in pre-op and can be waiting for a patient to wake up in recovery following surgery. They are lightweight and easily transferred to where they are needed. Care providers can also use the Propio to communicate with a patient’s loved ones quickly and effectively in the waiting room.

Mercy is committed to addressing barriers, like language differences, that inhibit equal access to healthcare. The interpreters available through these devices have interpreted 33 different languages for Mercy patients. The Propio devices are contributing to more equitable patient care and better health outcomes. ♥



Fayth Prince-Johnson, Patient Experience Coordinator educates staff on how to use a Propio device and assists staff in locating a device when needed. Spanish, French and Swahili are the most commonly interpreted languages so far.





## Donor Offers Comfort through Her Special Gift

In addition to including Mercy in her estate plans with a gift of life insurance, Tara Moorman Benson had the idea for a different kind of gift. Tara is an artist. She recently donated a collection of watercolor paintings entitled “*Letters to My Ancestors*.” Her donation was lovingly made in honor of her late husband Bob Moorman and as an expression of gratitude for the care Bob received at Mercy. Bob passed away in 2021 at the age of 87 due to kidney failure.



“*Letters to my Ancestors*” is a heartfelt series I am honored to present as a gift to Mercy Medical Center in memory of my beloved husband, Robert “Bob” Moorman. Bob was a remarkable individual who held deep roots in Cedar Rapids. He dedicated himself to serving others, both through his volunteer work at Mercy Medical Center’s Emergency Room and his numerous contributions to our community. In his battle with kidney disease, Mercy Medical Center and Dr. Yacoub provided exceptional care and support to Bob. Their compassion and expertise made a significant difference in his life, for which our family is forever grateful. May these paintings remind us of the resilience of our ancestors and provide a sense of connection and peace to all who encounter them. — Tara Moorman Benson, Artist

After retiring, Bob became a faithful volunteer in the ED, so the location of the paintings is fitting. You can find the works displayed in the hall outside of the Emergency Department at the main campus of Mercy Medical Center.

Tara said, “As an artist, you want your work to be seen. I’m very grateful that it’s here in Mercy. Hopefully, it will be of comfort to people that are in the hospital like Bob and I were so much.” ♥



Learn more about Tara and Bob and her special gift in this short video.



## First COPE Relaxation Room Opens as Respite for Staff



Dr. Lauren Wood

“Working with people gives us a purpose,” Lauren said. “We give and give in an overwhelming world. Any opportunity you have to recharge will help to reduce burnout. We’re all human and we have human moments. We need to reflect, remember our purpose and recharge.”

Dr. Lauren Wood, owner of 319 Therapy Group, is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, a former Mercy volunteer and a longtime supporter. Lauren is married to Mercy Oncologist Dr. Sam Wood. Through her practice, Lauren made a gift to sponsor the creation of Mercy’s first COPE Relaxation Room, which was dedicated in February. And she wasn’t done there.

At the end of the dedication ceremony, Lauren surprised the COPE Team with another donation to create the next COPE Relaxation Room. This one will be located in the Hall-Perrine Cancer Center.

“While volunteering I recognized you all truly care about your people,” Lauren said. “Mercy has blessed my family. Donors have a responsibility to bless those who have blessed them so that we can continue to live in this amazing community and support each other.”

Rev. Tammy Buseman, MDiv, BCC Mercy Chaplain/COPE Team Lead and Mallory Markwitz, Counselor, Mercy Family Counseling, collaborated for several months to create this quiet, reflective space. The first COPE Relaxation Room is in the Behavioral Health Unit. It’s designed specifically to allow staff a therapeutic space to process and recover from stressful events. Mallory and Tammy selected tools for the COPE Room to help care providers through meditation, mindfulness and breathing exercises.

“It delights my heart we could start this with Behavioral Health,” Tammy said. “Our BHS staff work diligently, often behind the scenes. This work is about taking care of each other. We do that with patients and their loved ones each day. Healthcare is tough, so if you want to do this work, you must also tend to yourself.” ♥



COPE Relaxation Room

## Caring for Our Own: Peer Support for the Medical Community

Mercy’s new COPE Team offers peer support from a specially trained volunteer group of Mercy colleagues who are prepared to:

- ✔ Provide emotional support to staff after unanticipated, traumatic and stressful events
- ✔ Help meet immediate needs after the event
- ✔ Make a “safe zone” of supportive listening available for staff
- ✔ Suggest positive ways to cope with stress
- ✔ Follow up and provide additional reassurance or referrals





You make a difference at Mercy!  
To show gratitude for your loyal support,  
Mercy Medical Center Foundation has  
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**STEWARD OF MERCY** recognizes annual giving of \$100 to \$999 and is achievable through one gift or multiple gifts\*.



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**SUSTAINER OF MERCY** is attained with lifetime giving of \$10,000 to \$49,999 and is reachable with one gift or giving over time.



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**CATHERINE MCAULEY CIRCLE** honors a prestigious group of donors whose lifetime giving totals \$500,000 or more, attainable with one gift or giving over time.

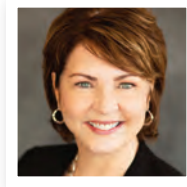


**LEGACY CIRCLE** recognizes those making a planned gift to Mercy through a will or trust, as beneficiary of life insurance or a retirement account, or through another means.

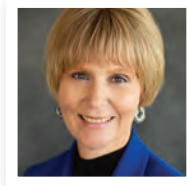
To learn more, or to notify Mercy of your planned gift intentions, please contact us at (319) 398-6206 or [mmcf@mercycare.org](mailto:mmcf@mercycare.org).

*\*Membership is renewable each year with continued support.*

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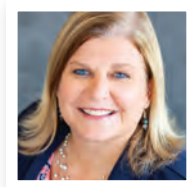
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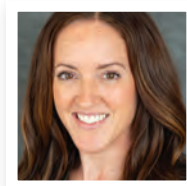
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## Grateful Husband Honors Wife's Memory



**“When you get the diagnosis of cancer for the first time, you’re scared to death. You get through that because a lot of people help you along the way. I want to give back to Hall-Perrine Cancer Center because Hall-Perrine gave us so much,”** said Gene Fisher.

Gene is sharing his gratitude and honoring the memory of his wife Crystal by donating funds to purchase a new infusion chair for the Hall-Perrine Cancer Center. His gift will sponsor one of the 27 chairs in need of replacement.

Infusion chairs are where patients receive life-saving chemotherapy, immunotherapy, injections and iron infusions – treatments that fight cancer and address other critical health needs. More than 15,000 appointments required the use of an infusion chair at the Hall-Perrine Cancer Center in 2023. Gene knows firsthand how much use these chairs receive.

**“You sit there for hours, sometimes three, four or even six hours. That’s a long time,”** said Gene.

Gene and Crystal were married for 42 years. She fought cancer twice before passing away in 2023. After her first experience, she started volunteering at Mercy to support others facing cancer. This is something Gene now does in her memory. He finds helping others is also helping him through his own grieving and healing process.



To hear more from Gene and other Grateful Patients, visit our website at [mercycare.org/giving/grateful-patient-giving](https://mercycare.org/giving/grateful-patient-giving).

**“I hate cancer,”** said Gene. **“I hate what it does to somebody. I hate what it does to their family and friends. I hate what you have to do to beat cancer and I hate what it does if you can’t beat cancer. I hate it.”**

A breast cancer patient can spend 60-70 hours sitting in an infusion chair over the course of treatment. For a lymphoma patient, it can be 40-50 hours.



**“In 2023, we saw 2,144 patients. We see many, if not most, of our patients multiple times.”**  
– Alissa McEowen, RN, Director, Hall-Perrine Cancer Center Hematology and Oncology Unit.

The infusion chairs at the Cancer Center are nearly 12 years old and showing their age. New chairs, like the one provided by Gene, offer advancements in design and features that improve patient care and comfort. ♥

Gene and Crystal's bucket list included visiting all the National Parks. They made it to 52 before Crystal's passing.







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## Volunteer is Known as the Crochet Lady

Sue Humphrey creates gifts for Mercy's tiniest patients. She's known as the crochet lady because she creates hats and blankets for newborn babies in Birthplace & NICU. Each one is unique and special.



**"I make it personal so parents can choose,"** said Sue.

Sue has been a member of the Mercy Auxiliary for 14 years and recently exceeded 7,000 volunteer hours.

**"I feel pretty darn good! Volunteering keeps you sharp and active,"** said Sue. **"Mercy was a good employer. This is a way to give back."**

Much of that time is spent helping in the gift shop and making these sweet sets for newborns.

**"Every one of them is well loved and heavenly sent,"** said Vanitha Noronha, Patient Care Technician, Mercy Birthplace & NICU.

Sue learned to crochet while working at Mercy Medical Center. Another nurse taught her how in 1976 and now, making hats and blankets for babies is her passion. She crafted 89 sets in 2020, which is a personal record for her.

**"I keep 30 totes of yarn in my basement,"** said Sue. **"It makes my husband crazy!"**

Sue comes from a family of nurses. Her mother, Vi Sutter was also a Mercy nurse and now her granddaughter is studying at Mount Mercy University to represent another generation of caring. Sue spent 32 years working as a nurse at Mercy where she cared for patients in the oncology and radiation departments. She started volunteering in the gift shop just a few weeks after retiring and enjoyed seeing former co-workers and the patients in a new way.

**"I believe in Mercy. I was proud to work here,"** said Sue. **"I wanted to give back. We care. I still see it happening with the nurses today."**

