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An e-newsletter for friends of the
Allina Health Hospice Foundation



WELCOME TO OUR FIRST DIGITAL NEWSLETTER!

We know how important Shared Journeys has been to our community and we are so excited to share it with people like you who are passionate about hospice or who may want to learn about end-of-life care at Allina Health. As with the newsletter you have received in the mail in the past, we will continue to share stories of peace and comfort. The only difference is that they will come to your inbox instead of your mailbox. We will provide information on the extraordinary care that makes Allina Health Hospice so special. We'll offer thoughts on the hospice experience from our expert care team. We'll share inspirational stories of families that have been so moved by their experience that they want to give back and make a difference for other patients and families.



Whatever brings you to Shared Journeys, we are glad that you are here and hope that you find this newsletter and this work as important as we do. Thank you for your gifts, your words of gratitude for our team and for your commitment to the Allina Health Hospice Foundation. This community inspires me daily. My door...or should I say, my Zoom room is always open. I'd love to hear your story.

And, feel free to share this with friends and family so they can sign up to receive future digital newsletters!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Kerner".

Executive Director

Allina Health Hospice Foundation

**A PATIENT STORY ABOUT
PATIENCE**

**ALLINA HEALTH HOSPICE &
COVID-19**

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Marcy has worked in the medical field since her late teens. Starting as a nursing assistant, she got her nursing degree

and began her career as an OB nurse, then worked for the county and with an assisted living facility, a hospice home care case manager and now as a nursing supervisor. She lives and works in Owatonna.

Marcy's hospice experiences are all memorable, but the experience of her first patient death was a woman whom she had known prior to being her hospice case manager. This woman passed away peacefully with Marcy and the family at her bedside. It was at this point that Marcy realized death is not a scary experience, and saw that it can be peaceful. Deaths, similar to births, are very unique and intimate experiences.

Another story that had a great impact on Marcy is about a man who recently passed away at the Homestead Hospice House. This gentleman had last been in a skilled nursing facility. Prior to that he was homeless, had a history of drug and alcohol use and was estranged from his family. He had a cancer diagnosis as well as uncontrollable behavior. These types of situations can be complicated when determining the best plan of care, and Marcy felt anxious about the process and decisions regarding the best course of action.

After much discussion with colleagues, Homestead House in Owatonna agreed to admit him in his last days of life. It was normal for this gentleman to remain in a fetal position throughout much of the day and night. The day before he died was



Director of Hospice and Palliative Care at Allina Health, shares how Allina Health Hospice is pivoting during the pandemic and

how it affects our caregivers, patients and families. Click [here](#) to read.

SUPPORT ALLINA HEALTH HOSPICE TODAY!

Every patient at Allina Health Hospice receives compassionate end-of-life care. A gift to the Foundation ensures that their journey is filled with as much comfort, peace, and as many personal touches as possible. Can you help?

Give Now
Fast. Easy. Secure.

PATIENT AND FAMILY NEEDS

The TLC Fund was established to help hospice patients and their families who struggle financially while a loved one is in hospice. This fund covers costs for groceries, utility bills and, in some cases, funeral expenses.

Other Allina Health Hospice Funds include:

- **Honor Fund**
**Thanks to donors who attended our Virtual Dragonfly Gala in May and helped us raise over \$47,000 for Veterans.*
- **Music and Massage Therapy**
- **J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice**
- **Hospice Communities**
(Owatonna, Hutchinson/Glencoe, and New Ulm)
- **Area of Greatest Need**

To learn more about each fund click [here](#).

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his room, they saw him on his back and facing up. His head was gently laid back on the pillow.

To continue reading click [here](#).



You made a difference in 2019!

Click on the image to the left to see how you've helped.

Thank you!

HOW THE HOSPICE SOCIAL WORKER ROLE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Allina Hospice Caregiver Meridee Miller shared her thoughts on the role of social work in Hospice

How long have you been a social worker with Allina Health?

I have worked with Allina Health Hospice since 1989. When I started with hospice,

HERE'S WHAT WE'RE READING ...

Below are book and podcast ideas from our Foundation Board members and links to other resources that we have found helpful. Take a look and see what you think.

Foundation Board Member book picks:

- *We Know How This Ends. Living While Dying.* Authors: Bruce H.

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amazing to be a part of a growing, progressive program. I also did my college internship back in 1979 at Mercy



Hospital. During my internship, I first heard about hospice when they started a task force at Mercy Hospital.

What made you want to be a social worker in hospice?

The classes in college interested me and I had an advisor who was very encouraging and thought it would be a good fit for me. In the late 1970's a social work degree was just taking off. I worked at a SNF (skilled nursing facility) right after college and then took some time off when my children were born. I was looking to go back to work and responded to an ad for hospice director in the NW suburbs and my heart was drawn to it. I think a lot of hospice workers say they were called to this work. I am no different. It's been quite a ride!

Do you have any specific stories that stand out to you that you would like to share?

Several years ago we had a patient who was living with her disabled son, his disabled spouse and their young child. As our patient declined, the family was having a difficult time providing the care she needed. I worked with a program called Wings of Mercy to set up a flight to Chicago for her to live with her daughter at the end of her life and she was transferred to a hospice in that area. It took a lot of coordination to make it happen but was very rewarding to be able to ensure she got the care needed at the end of her life.

To continue reading click [here](#).

What Death Can Teach Us About Living Fully. Author: Frank Ostaseski

- *Being Mortal.* Author: Atul Gawande
- *When Breath Becomes Air.* Author: Paul Kalanithi
- *Final Gifts.* Author: Maggie Callanan
- *Final Journeys.* Author: Maggie Callanan

Foundation Board Members found these podcasts and online resources helpful:

- Minnesota Native & Author Nora McInerney talks about moving forward with grief - [Ted Talk](#)
- Looking for ideas and advice for funeral planning? - [My Wonderful Life.com Blog](#)
- Need help starting the conversation? - [The Conversation Project](#)
- Listen to Lauren Kirby discuss her experience as a hospice volunteer from The Hospice Experience on Apple Podcasts - [The Hospice Experience Podcast](#)
 - If you are interested in volunteering with Allina Health Hospice, information is found [here](#).
- The COVID Conversations - [Living With Podcast](#)

Meet our Board

Allina Health Resources

Organizations that Allina Supports:

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Click [here](#) to share your story, thoughts or questions with us - we're listening!

- [Honoring Choices Minnesota](#)
- [The End in Mind Project](#)

Allina Grief Support Resources:

- [Allina Health Grief Support Groups](#)
- [Allina Grief Book Recommendations for Adults and Children](#)
- [Dealing with Grief in the COVID Era](#)



Click here to print out the Dragonfly Story.

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