

COURAGE KENNY REHABILITATION INSTITUTE™

Onward

WINTER 2015

A newsletter from
COURAGE KENNY FOUNDATION
for friends of COURAGE KENNY
REHABILITATION INSTITUTE, which
is the merged Courage Center and
Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.



Betsy Hart

Your joy of giving fuels our future!

We hear it often at Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute: How can I give back? Grateful patients, clients and family members ask for ways they can give back after they have recovered or regained their health and independence.

For example, Betsy Hart, shown here on our cover and on *page 7*, is a former Transitional Rehabilitation Program patient. She couldn't wait to come back to Golden Valley this fall to show off her continued recovery to two of her favorite therapists.

We also share the story of donor Joe Rauscher, and explain how his joy of giving has inspired an annual ski race – Courage Kenny Cup – now in its tenth year. Read more about it on *page 4*.

Former patient James Rogers, *page 10*, explains how he is giving back after completion of a pain management program which helped him regain his life and well-being.

These and hundreds more stories make up the legacy and passion of Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute. Your gifts, large and small, fuel our vision for the future. Your contributions are helping us create the premiere disability service network in the nation, where medical and community services combine to make the most of each person's health and independence.

We sincerely thank you and wish you a season filled with joy and celebration!

Allina Health 

**COURAGE KENNY
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Our thanks for your generous spirit of giving

The generous spirit is a backbone of Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute. This bedrock principle is more than a way to be—it is who we are.

You can see the generous spirit at work as a therapist helps a child learn to walk again after major surgery. The therapist's patience and encouragement is a gift that goes beyond therapy. The generous spirit is easy to see in our employees as they gave more than \$81,000 to help our community during a recent fundraising drive. Volunteers provide thousands of hours annually to help clients and families reach their highest level of independence as tangible evidence of the generous spirit. Within these examples remains an untold story—of donors who provide funding to keep the breadth and depth of services that are necessary to achieve the right outcomes for the people we serve.

Donors come to Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute with gifts in all shapes and sizes. One of our loyal donors has been giving \$125 per year for the past 30 years. A donor couple whose family was helped decades ago during recovery from a stroke named Courage Kenny Foundation the beneficiary of their estate plan for more than \$1 million. And, yet another corporate donor renewed their \$10,000 support for adapted recreation. The common thread in these donor stories is clearly the generous spirit.



You, too, are part of this secret ingredient we like to call the generous spirit. The blending of therapists and other caregivers with clients, family members, volunteers and donors is what helps make Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute one of the best rehabilitation destinations in the country. No one piece of the puzzle is more or less important than the rest. All pieces are dependent on the others.

Thank you for being part of the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute story and for sharing your generous spirit with us. May your upcoming holiday season be filled with hope, joy and the generous spirit.

All my best,

Stephen Bariteau
President, Courage Kenny Foundation

McGough Construction, Three Rivers Park District team with Courage Kenny

This fall, McGough Construction, a longtime supporter of Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, dedicated their time and resources to build a new, accessible building for adaptive ski and snowboard equipment at Hyland Hills Ski Area in Bloomington, Minnesota. The final product will be a state-of-the-art, accessible building for storage of specialized ski equipment.

McGough Construction secured permits, provided inspections and supplied all building materials for the project, and several employees volunteered their time and labor.

“We are extremely grateful,” said Tom McDowell, associate superintendent for Three Rivers Park District. “The generosity

and commitment of McGough Construction to provide a storage building for adaptive equipment ensures that the long standing relationship between Three Rivers Park District and Courage Kenny will flourish in the new Hyland Hills Ski Area operation.”

“McGough is proud of our 20-year history of partnering with Courage Kenny. In addition to a long history of financial support, our partnership has included volunteer work on camp and headquarter projects as well as support for the adaptive water ski program,” said Paul Tragiai, project manager at McGough Construction. “We are particularly proud of the storage facility recently completed at

the Hyland ski area. This facility will enable convenient storage to support the downhill program. We know the program makes a difference in the lives of its participants, and we are happy to have been a partner with Courage Kenny to make it happen.”

Five local Rotary Clubs – from Edina, Golden Valley, Lake Minnetonka-Excelsior, Minneapolis City of Lakes and Plymouth – also contributed funds to purchase adaptive equipment and complete finishing touches on the equipment shed.

On October 10, volunteers from local rotary clubs helped move equipment into the new storage shed for the Courage Kenny Ski & Snowboard Program.



Joe Rauscher:

Preserving a legacy of giving back to his community

Giving back has been part of the Rauscher family legacy ever since his grandfather Joseph J. Rauscher began Joe's, a Buick repair garage in 1930. The garage soon evolved into a sporting goods store. Since then, four generations of the Rauscher family have been involved with Joe's Sporting Goods in St. Paul.

One of the current owners, Joe H. Rauscher, recalls his father telling him to always give back to the community – and he listened. When his father passed away from cancer, Rauscher created a memorial ski race in his memory to support organizations involved in treating cancer. The ski race raised more than \$333,000 for cancer charities in 20 years.

For many years, participants from Courage Kenny's adaptive ski program participated in the Rauscher Memorial Ski Race. Because of Rauscher's experience with his own ski race, he helped Courage Kenny get theirs off the ground in 2005. He provided prizes from his store and worked with his vendors to supply equipment for Courage Kenny's skiers.

The event, called the Courage Kenny Cup Ski Race at Trollhaugen, benefits the Courage Kenny ski program. Each participating race team is composed of three skiers paired with a Courage Kenny adaptive skier. The event includes a "fun race" for less experienced skiers and a competitive race for more advanced skiers.

"It's an inspiring day and fun to see the adaptive skiers have a great time



Joe Rauscher, left, Annie Hickman, center on ski bike, and volunteer instructors Kirk Dann and Rhonda Rae, at the 2015 Courage Kenny Cup. Joe's Sporting Goods donated two ski bikes to the Courage Kenny Ski & Snowboard Program in 2013.

with others in the ski community," said Rauscher.

Rauscher no longer hosts his own memorial ski race and is now focused on helping Courage Kenny expand the Courage Kenny Cup.

Just like their sporting goods store, the Rauschers' dedication to the community is a family affair: wife Jolene and his children are also very active with Courage Kenny Cup.

Who loves winter in Minnesota?

Skiers and snowboarders do! And, if you ask them, our winters aren't nearly long enough. The volunteers and students who participate in Courage Kenny's Ski & Snowboard Program can't wait to be on the hill each week.

Courage Kenny offers one of the largest and longest running adaptive ski programs in the country, providing more than 1,200 lessons per year. This season, we'll be at Afton Alps, Hyland Hills Ski Area, Trollhaugen and Welch Village in the metro, and Lutsen, Giant's Ridge and Spirit Mountain in the Northland.

Goals include instruction on ski safety and proper techniques as well as instilling a love of the sport.

Some Courage Kenny students have gone on to ski on U.S. Paralympic teams.

But, we couldn't do it without volunteers. And lots of them. We estimate volunteers will give 15,000 hours this year for Courage Kenny Ski & Snowboard Program.

If you ski or snowboard at an advanced level, we encourage you to volunteer. You'll receive instruction on adaptive equipment and techniques for teaching skiers and boarders with disabilities. Better yet, you'll have fun, make new friends and introduce someone with a disability to the world of snow sports, an activity they probably never dreamed they could do.

Non-skiing volunteers are also needed to assist with registration and assisting students into line at the chair lifts.

Contact sue.nyberg@allina.com for metro area volunteer information.

Contact lisa.lauzon@allina.com for Northland volunteer information.

Learn more about many other volunteer opportunities with Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute's Sports & Recreation department at allinahealth.org/adaptivesports.

Snowboarders Libby Jenson, David Moberg and Ryan Birkemeier are all smiles while waiting in the lift line at Afton Alps. Courage Kenny Ski & Snowboard expanded to Afton Alps in 2015.



John Riddle: *Support helps new athlete reach for his best*

John Riddle of St. Paul, Minnesota, said he discovered adaptive sports and recreation at a sports sampler event hosted by Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute's Sports & Recreation department. He decided to try out wheelchair rugby during a therapy session and fell in love with the sport.

Last season, Riddle joined the Courage Kenny Steelheads wheelchair rugby team. This year, thanks to a grant which helped him purchase a new, custom wheelchair, Riddle anticipates huge improvements in his confidence and speed.

"I have never been a part of a team in my life," he said. "Now, I have the opportunity to be a part of a team. It is a great feeling to have teammates and coaches that support me."

And, as with most wheelchair team sports, specially made equipment such as sports wheelchairs, play a huge role in the athletes' experience and success. But, this type of custom equipment can be costly.

To help offset the cost of participating in adaptive sports, funds from grant-making organizations can help support athletes with physical disabilities to purchase equipment and to travel to tournaments.

A new rugby season is just around the corner. John Riddle is ready!



John Riddle looks forward to a new season of rugby with his new, custom chair.

Courage Kenny Classic play earns Jr. Wolves national tourney berth

The weekend of November 7-8 saw some of the best national youth wheelchair basketball teams compete in the 33rd annual Courage Kenny Classic at Hastings High School hosted by Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute's Sports & Recreation department. The Dallas Jr. Mavericks beat Courage Kenny's Jr. Rolling Timberwolves 54-48 in the Varsity Division finale. The Milwaukee Bucks beat out Courage Kenny's Rolling Rowdies 34-22 to win the Prep Division. The event serves as the 2015 National Wheelchair Basketball Association's (NWBA) Junior Division Northern Regional Qualifying Tournament for the national tournament in Louisville, Ky., April 7-10, 2016. Both the Jr. Mavericks and the Jr. Rolling Timberwolves received bids to the national tournament. A photo album from the event can be found on Courage Kenny's Facebook page.



Emilee Gustafson of the Courage Kenny Jr. Rolling Gophers makes a layup against the Dallas Jr. Mavericks at the annual Courage Kenny Classic wheelchair basketball tournament at Hastings High School.

Betsy Hart:

Meeting her recovery goal to dance at her son's wedding

You wouldn't know it from looking at her, but the woman walking easily down the hall with a warm smile on her face endured a life-threatening medical crisis less than a year ago.

In December 2014, Betsy Hart ended up in the emergency room. Hart already was dealing with two autoimmune disorders – rheumatoid arthritis and Type 1 diabetes. Advanced hypothyroidism and the flu pushed her weakened immune system over the edge. She experienced a lung infection, emergency tracheostomy and months of hospitalization.

In March 2015, when her condition stabilized, Hart was transferred to Courage Kenny's Transitional Rehabilitation Program (TRP) in Golden Valley. Her illness and lengthy hospital stay had left Hart so deconditioned that she couldn't walk or move her hands. She immediately began physical, occupational and speech therapies. Her ultimate goal was to dance at her son Bobby's fall 2015 wedding.

"I was really impressed with the level of knowledge the nursing staff in the TRP had for dealing with unique, complex medical issues, such as mine," said Hart. "They knew exactly what I needed."

"The therapists were so driven to see me improve – and it worked. I felt a real emotional tie to them. Their encouragement helped me push myself to keep making gains in my recovery."

By May, Hart was ready to go home and start outpatient therapy, much sooner than she and her family expected. Not only was she able to join her husband at their son's wedding, she was able to reach her goal by dancing the mother-son dance. And, to further show off her spirit and accomplishment, Hart and Bobby performed the iconic dance scene between Uma Thurman and John Travolta from the movie *Pulp Fiction* for wedding guests!



Betsy Hart, a former patient of the Transitional Rehabilitation Program at Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute – Golden Valley, recently visited her former therapists Angela Liuzzi and Sarah Meissner.

Courage Kenny Cards seeks artwork for 2016 holiday season

Since the first card was sent in 1958, Courage Kenny Cards has been a way to show you care about your relationships with business customers, friends and family – as well as people with disabilities. Since 1958, card purchases have raised more than \$6 million for patients and clients at Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

Courage Kenny Cards is now conducting its annual national art search to find designs for their 2016 holiday card collection. All artists, especially those with a disability, are invited to submit works to Courage Kenny Cards Art Search.

Art suitable for holiday cards includes traditional Christmas and Thanksgiving images, scenes from major U.S. cities, and world peace and ethnic diversity themes. Two-dimensional artwork is selected based on artistic merit, suitability of subject and color.



Chickadees. Original artwork by Deborah Ronglien. ©2015

A \$400 licensing fee is paid for each piece of artwork chosen, in addition to national exposure through the distribution of more than 600,000 catalogs and radio, TV, Internet and print advertising. Entries will be accepted through January 15, 2016. Visit

CourageKennyCards.org for more information or send an email request to artsearch@allina.com. Entries also can be submitted online at **CallforEntry.org**.



This holiday season . . . SEND COURAGE KENNY CARDS

Your purchase helps people with disabilities live more independently.

Courage Kenny Cards are available at all metro area Lunds & Byerly's, Bachman's, Rose Floral in Stillwater and County Market in Hudson. Or visit **couragekennycards.org** to order personalized, fine-art holiday and greeting cards.

PROUDLY SUPPORTING COURAGE KENNY REHABILITATION INSTITUTE FOR MORE THAN 57 YEARS.

Kianna Lehman:

Achieving independence through full-time work

By the time she was 16, Kianna Lehman was a hard-working teen, already a manager at Burger King. Her life changed dramatically when she started experiencing physical changes including vision loss. Lehman found out she had optic neuritis – inflammation of the optic nerve – and was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at age 18.

Despite her new challenges, Lehman was determined to move ahead with her educational goals and become the first in her family to earn a college degree. She completed her associate degree in Business Management at Minneapolis Community and Technical College and her bachelor's degree from Metropolitan State University in 2013.

After college, Lehman turned to Courage Kenny's Vocational Services department. She began with a vocational evaluation which helped her address some personal challenges and develop new job goals. She also completed the Institute's Work Readiness and Pre-Placement Services.

"The hardest part was realizing that my earlier visions for myself would have to wait and I needed to consider different types of work right now. But when I realized I could help others, especially others like me, I thought, 'I can do this!'"

And, she did! Lehman was hired as a receptionist at Metropolitan Center for Independent Living in St. Paul. At first she worked part-time, but she quickly moved to full-time work. Today, Lehman participates in Courage Kenny's Extended Employment Services to help her remain on the job. She meets with a Vocational Services staff member twice a month to support her and address any job



Kianna Lehman

issues. The meetings have been especially helpful when she is feeling overwhelmed, she said, and has helped solve job modifications like a new lumbar support for her work chair.

"The staff at Courage Kenny are friendly and go above and beyond to help you," she said. "As hard as it may seem, you will like your results."

Expanding resources for a healthier community

You are invited to an

Open House

Join us in celebration of the remodel of

COURAGE KENNY REHABILITATION INSTITUTE – ST. CROIX



THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2016

**4:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. | Short program at 5:30 p.m.
1460 Curve Crest Blvd., Stillwater**

**Tour our new accessible fitness center, spacious
therapy gym and new conference center.**

We appreciate you and hope you will join us!

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James Rogers: *Learning to live through pain*

James Rogers grew up in a musical household. He discovered his love for the bass guitar when he was eight years old. Cultivating his love into a talent, he traveled the world as a professional musician. Then, at age 31, Rogers woke up with extreme pain in his arm.


“It felt like someone had dipped my arm in lava,” Rogers said. The pain, he found out, was caused by a genetic nerve disease – hereditary neurologic amyotrophy – which causes extreme pain and damage to the nerves in his shoulders and arms. The condition makes it difficult for him to play bass and lift with that arm. Roger’s mother and brother have the same disorder.

After a few years of chronic pain, Rogers became addicted to narcotics and alcohol. He entered Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute’s residential pain management program in 2011. He credits the program and therapists with saving his life and says he would not be where he is today without the help he received.

“It taught me how to handle the pain without constant pain medication. There is definitely a time when you need medication to get through the pain, but I’ve found meditating daily, breathing exercises, music therapy and other eastern practices to be very helpful.” The pain management program taught me many of these techniques.”

Chronic pain is challenging mentally and physically. Rogers comes back once a month to speak to people going through the pain management program. He said he finds it beneficial for his spirit and well-being. “It probably helps me more than it helps them. We all have experienced what it’s like to be in constant pain. It’s hard for people not experiencing pain to know what it’s like, so it’s comforting to share with others who can relate.”

Although Rogers can’t do all the things he used to, he feels happy and lucky. He just celebrated his one year wedding anniversary and recently bought a new home. Life is good.



James Rogers now relies on daily meditation, breathing, music therapy and holistic practices to help control his chronic pain

Thank
YOU!

To our event sponsors!

At Courage Kenny Foundation, we are thankful for the organizations that support us through benefit event sponsorships. There are many community organizations that share our vision 'that one day all people will live, work, learn and play in a community based on abilities, not disabilities'.

Some of our 2015 sponsors included:

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