

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALLINA HEALTH  
HOSPICE FOUNDATION | SPRING 2018

# Shared Journeys



Pianist Kevin Branting  
with his service dog Iliad.



## Playing for comfort: Meet Kevin Branting

Music has been an integral part of Kevin Branting's life since he was a small boy, and he has used it for inspiration and for healing. For the past year, this Minnesota composer and pianist has shared his gift with the patients, families and staff at the J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice home in Brooklyn Park.

Branting, who has been blind since birth, says that the type of music he composes is reflective, meditative and calming which are features that helped him heal from a traumatic childhood. It seemed natural to share his music with others who have need of comfort, such as those in a hospice setting. He began performing for patients at Hospice of the Twin Cities about a year and a half ago, and in April 2017, started performing at the Wedum home.

"Kevin is a blessing," said Karen Naus, volunteer coordinator for Allina Health Hospice & Palliative Care. "He has a huge, tender heart and is totally committed to playing for the patients, families, staff and volunteers. Not only does his music soothe and comfort patients and families, but volunteers have commented that they have felt supported and lifted by his playing."

Branting performs on Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to noon. When he, and his service dog, Iliad, arrive at Wedum, Branting checks in with nursing staff to find out what is happening that day. He uses that knowledge to adjust his playing to match the mood of the facility. If someone has just passed, he wants to be supportive and not interruptive or distracting.

"I'll play something that supports what is happening at that moment, to suit the circumstances," said Branting. "I respect that this is a very serious stage of life, and all I can offer is my talent and let others take from it what they will."

His dedication and generosity of talent are greatly appreciated by the patients, families and staff at J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice.

# Why I give: Venetia Kudrle,

Allina Health Hospice Foundation Board Chair and hospice supporter

**How long have you served on the Allina Health Hospice board?**

About 10 years.

**How long have you been involved with Allina Health and in what capacity?**

For most of the last 37 years, starting when I was an administrative student at Abbott Northwestern Hospital, and then in my subsequent work there and in three other Allina Health hospitals.

**Why do you give to Allina Health Hospice Foundation?**

Because it is the care that I would want for myself and those that I care about, and because many important parts of hospice care are not paid for sufficiently by insurance. When my mom was nearing the end of her life with a tough illness, these services were not available to her.

**What do you want others to know about Allina Health Hospice Foundation?**

We are a hard working group of people with a passion for spreading the word about hospice care and helping raise funds to provide care to patients and families when they need it most.



Venetia Kudrle

*Venetia - thank you for all you do for Allina Health Hospice patients and the families we serve! Your generosity of time, talent and monetary donations are appreciated!*

My wife and I wanted to drop you a short note to thank the Hospice Foundation for the TLC gift card we received from our Allina Health Hospice social worker yesterday. It was needed, especially this time of the year, and we appreciate it!

We also want to say thank you for running such a fine hospice program. We don't know what we would have done without their support.

Best personal regards,  
*Dale & Sue Lindwall*

Allina Health Hospice Foundation established the TLC Fund to help hospice patients and their families who struggle to cover additional expenses outside of hospice care. This fund covers costs such as groceries, utility bills or funeral expenses.

To make a donation to the TLC Fund, use the enclosed envelope or give online at [allinahealth.org/HospiceFoundationGiveNow](http://allinahealth.org/HospiceFoundationGiveNow).

## Give a little TLC



It started with your  
*generosity.*

*In 2017...*



**\$2,318,297**

donated to support  
Allina Health Hospice programs  
and services, patients and the  
communities we serve.



Provided  
compassionate care  
for **4,226** patients.

**117**

patients received financial  
support of almost **\$300,000** from  
the Wedum Compassion Fund allowing  
round-the-clock care in a home-like  
setting at J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice.



Served **373** patients  
at the **J.A. Wedum  
Residential Hospice.**

Served patients living in **33** Minnesota  
counties, making Allina Health Hospice the  
**largest non-for-profit hospice**  
in **Minnesota**. Also served patients  
living in **3** Wisconsin counties.



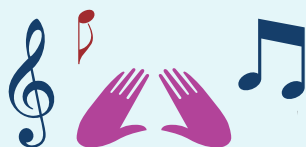
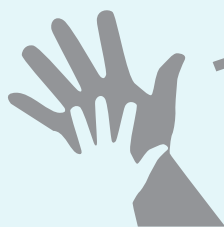
**583** hospice volunteers provided  
**27,618** hours of companionship  
and care to hospice patients  
and their families.

Provided comfort to  
patients through  
**13,382**  
integrative  
therapy visits.

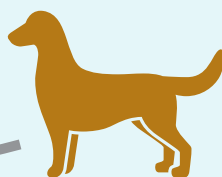
Through the We Honor Veterans  
Fund, **\$47,800** was used  
to assist **22 veterans** with  
hospice room and board expenses.



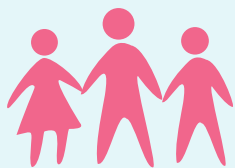
**70 families** received more than  
**\$24,000 in TLC grants**,  
providing financial relief for items  
such as groceries, utility bills and  
funeral expenses.



Provided comfort to  
patients with **5**  
pet therapy dogs.



Grief counselors provided  
**2,164** counseling  
sessions to **574**  
grieving loved ones.



*and so  
much more!*



*Your 2017 gift made an impact!*

Whether you designated your gift to the area of greatest need, patient care, the TLC fund, the Wedum Compassion fund, music/massage therapy, or a fund of your choice, you helped to make a difference for thousands of people in your community.

Thank you for your investment in Allina Health Hospice.

**Together, we are providing end-of-life care that provides peace, dignity and comfort.**

[allinahealth.org/HospiceFoundation](http://allinahealth.org/HospiceFoundation)



## Shared Journeys

We serve patients and families by raising funds for end-of-life care that provides peace, dignity and comfort.

### *Blizzard Blast Charity Event*

The 12th annual Blizzard Blast Charity Event took place on Feb. 2 at Glencoe City Center and had record attendance! Thanks to the generosity of attendees and supporters, nearly \$40,000 was raised for the music and massage therapy programs for hospice patients in McLeod County and surrounding areas.

The event featured catering by Chef Craig, music by South 40 and Doug Stuedeman, emcee Dr. Bill Dunbar and special guest speaker Ron Stuedemann. Thank you to everyone who contributed! Save the date for the 2019 event on Friday, Jan. 25!

Sincerely,

#### **Blizzard Blast 2018 Committee members**

*Joanne Chrast, Rachel Clausen, Judy Hecksel,  
Leslie Johnson, Sara Kramer, Lona Oltmann,  
Judy Peterson, Gail Rolf and Sherri Stamps*



This year, we are celebrating the 15th annual Dragonfly Gala – Cultivating Compassion.

We'll share an evening together Cultivating Compassion with an hors d'oeuvres reception, dinner with wine, hospice program, and silent and live auctions benefiting the Allina Health Hospice Wedum Compassion Fund.

Reserve your spot today by calling **612-775-2512** or visiting us online at:  
[allinahealth.org/HospiceDragonflyGala](http://allinahealth.org/HospiceDragonflyGala).