

Heartbeat

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

35th Annual Golf Tournament exceeds fundraising goal

The goal of the 35th Annual Unity Medical Center Foundation Golf Tournament was to raise \$25,000 for UMC staff recruitment and retention projects. On a clear, sunny day in July, 94 golfers (19 teams) and 69 sponsors raised over \$31,000, the highest revenue ever recorded in the event's history.



The Grafton Volunteer Fire Department provided its ladder truck for the ball drop. Russell Carignan was the ball drop winner.

The competition on the course was close as usual. In the end, the B&D Flooring & Furniture team—consisting of Parker Close, Trevor and Tyler Moe, John Schumacher and Tyler Seeba—earned first place with an 18-hole score of 57. The Burianek Law team took second place, while Hanson's Auto & Implement won a four-way tie for third among the Scheels, Kieley Electric and Custom Aire teams.

The tournament started with the fourth annual ball drop, thanks to the Grafton Volunteer Fire Department's ladder truck. Out of 173 numbered balls dropped on the practice green, only Ball 149 went in the hole, which Russell Carignan had purchased that morning. He kindly donated his \$865 in 50:50 winnings back to the Foundation. "UMC can spend it more wisely than I can," he said.



1st place finishers (left to right): John Schumacher, Parker Close, Trevor Moe, Tyler Moe and Tyler Seeba

See GOLF TOURNAMENT on page 3

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Dear friends,

It's hard to believe that September is already upon us! Where did the summer go?



Being in an agricultural area, it's good to see the harvest wrapping up, except for some of the row crops. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate

down the stretch.

Unity Medical Center continues to be busy and it's wonderful to see the diversity of care options we are providing, many of which are new or expanded ventures for us. The Pediatric Rehab program, which was established recently, continues to grow and serve the region. It is so heart-warming to see the youngsters here receiving services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. What makes the service delivery even more enjoyable is to watch their reaction as they "journey" down the corridor connecting the new building to the building that houses the pediatric program (the old PT department). If you haven't seen that space, the incredible mural painted by local

artist Melodie Alt is simply amazing and certainly helps to lessen any anxiety the young patients may be experiencing.

The Veterans Wall on the third floor continues to expand. Thank you all for your pictures that you have provided. As I am typing this, I know Maggie is looking to add more space (capacity for pictures) on the Vietnam era display as we have temporarily filled it. What a wonderful tribute to all our veterans and their families! We cannot thank our veterans enough for their sacrifices.

Unity Medical Center was honored to receive a "3-Year Acute Cardiac Ready Hospital" designation recently from the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (see Page 6). UMC is the third critical access hospital in the state to receive this award, along with the hospitals in Jamestown and Valley City. I want to thank all of the caregivers who made this possible and the leadership of Lindsey Gellner, registered nurse and manager of the UMC Emergency Department. Being in a rural area, it is so vital to have stabilizing care methods to help manage patients.

UMC was again honored to be selected by Modern Healthcare Magazine to receive a "Best Places to Work" in health care designation. We will find out exactly where we placed in early October at the annual awards banquet held in Nashville, Tenn., this year. UMC has finished as the No. 2 CAH in the U.S the past two years. Not bad, considering there are over 1,300 CAHs in the country. We will definitely provide an update as soon as we know where we rank this year.

All hospitals around the country are doing their best to get up to speed on the impact of the Big Beautiful Bill, which was signed by Donald Trump on July 4. There have been many discussions and financial models being created on what could be the overall outcome of this legislation. Rural hospitals (such as UMC and 36 others in North Dakota) are especially concerned. We will do our best to provide timely information to our patients as we learn more.

Thank you for your continued support of Unity Medical Center! It is our privilege to serve you and your family.

Alan O'Neil
Chief Executive Officer
Unity Medical Center



PHOTO SUBMISSION

VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL

Unity Medical Center continues to accept photos of area veterans for the Veterans Memorial Wall. Original photos can be scanned at the UMC Foundation office at 147 W 13th St., Grafton or a .jpg file can be emailed to Maggie Suda at msuda@unitymedcenter.com.



Please include:

- Name
- Rank
- Branch
- Years of Service (19xx-19xx)
- Hometown

Golf Tournament: Continued from page 1



Leif Olafson of Warroad, Minn., had the best poker hand of the day (four 4s).

Prize putting continued to be popular, as well as the chipping contest on the driving range. Although no one stuck the ball in the pool, a prize was given to Tyler Seeba for bouncing it through.

Additional Contest Winners

Honest John (Hole 4): Parker Close, Pam Bertilrud

Longest Drive (Hole 6): Todd Burianek, Ainsley McLain

Longest Putt (Hole 7): Kyle Dukowitz (24')

Closest to the Pin (Hole 9): Zach Mahoney, Deb Whaley



Wally DeSautel was the Course Sponsor for the event. He took a spin around the course with UMC CEO Alan O'Neil.



2nd place finishers (left to right): Ryan Kalbrener, Mark Presteng, Bill Atwood, Todd Burianek and Kristina Petersen



3rd place finishers (left to right): Chad Sundby, Chris Mattson, Derek Paulson, Dylan Sundby and Cole Hanson

Clinic expansion signage installed

New signage was recently installed in the Grafton Family Clinic expansion, highlighting key areas of the facility, as well as generous donors who supported the project.

Immediately inside the clinic expansion, nursing staff at the Keith and Joanne Saville Nurses Station greet and direct patients to first-floor exam rooms (used primarily by Drs. Kristi Midgarden and Jennifer Shaw) or second-floor exam rooms used primarily by visiting specialists, including general surgeon Dr. Mike Bittles and mental health counselor Tanner Grimsley.



Keith Saville grew up in Hazelton, N.D., while Joanne grew up in New Leipzig, N.D. Keith sold farm equipment for 22 years and owned a windshield replacement company for 28 years. Joanne was a teacher and librarian in loca-

tions including Devils Lake and Grafton for 33 years. Both are now retired and enjoy traveling and playing cards. They have two sons and four grandsons.

The second floor of the clinic expansion includes the James & Jan Aasand Waiting Room for patients of visiting providers. James Aasand spent many years tilling soil and harvesting crops as a fourth-generation farmer west of Grafton, N.D., before he retired in 2020. His wife Jan worked as a data specialist for Polar Communications in Park River, N.D., until she retired in 2016. They have four children: two in Moorhead, Minn., and two in Chandler, Ariz., along with grandchildren. They enjoy their family, friends, weather and activities in both areas of the country.



For questions about naming opportunities within UMC, call Foundation Executive Director Jessica Sobolik at (701)379-3003.

Every year, the Unity Medical Center governing board approves its fiscal year capital budget, and then we at the UMC Foundation start lining up financial resources provided by donors to meet those needs.

The Foundation meets those needs in a variety of ways, including: 1) special events like the Harvest



Auction, 2) annual interest earned by its endowment funds, or 3) community members who make larger commitments or pledges that can be paid slowly over time, usually

five years, which may come with tax benefits. I thought I would focus on Item No. 3, our “major” donors, for this quarterly column.

Once we have UMC’s budget priorities, the Foundation identifies prospective donors, based on past giving history and personal conversations. If you, your family or

business has supported the Foundation since its inception in 1987 or through a major construction project such as the 2008 addition for the Medical Laboratory or Radiology Department, you may be included on this list.

First of all, this group of our greatest supporters has earned the right to receive a timely update each year on our financial priorities. This tells them how we have built on their past support and continue to move forward. We may then ask these donors if they are able to continue their support of UMC through a new or renewed pledge.

Sometimes a donor may respond that the time is not right, and that is OK. Maybe they have kids in college or limited income. Maybe they just need more information. As we continue having these conversations, we hope to reach donors at a point in their lives where they may have been thinking of making a philanthropic gift to their community to improve rural health care. Maybe

they have been thinking about naming a space at UMC in memory or in honor of a family member. It’s like the saying we’ve all heard: “You just never know until you ask.”

So that’s primarily what we do at the Foundation in between special events and seasonal giving days, starting with an introductory letter and moving into conversations over coffee or at our office. And each year, we reconfigure our prospective donor list to reflect the conversations that we’ve had with people as we learn what works best for them and what they feel strongly about. Ultimately we hope everyone appreciates these touchpoints, whether they result in a gift or not.

Of course, I have to add that if you haven’t heard from us but you would be interested in making a gift, please let us know! The “list” is never 100 percent right, and we are always happy to get to know all of our donors.

Jessica Sobolik
Executive Director
Unity Medical Center Foundation



UNITY MEDICAL CENTER
foundation

27TH ANNUAL
Harvest Auction

NOVEMBER 14, 2025
MINTO COMMUNITY CENTER
114 Harvey Ave, Minto, ND

Online silent auction: Nov. 7-14

In-person live auction includes hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. Dress code: Business to semi formal.

Scan QR code for more information.



Provider Spotlight: Katelyn Desautel Thompson, FNP

Grafton native Katelyn Desautel Thompson recently joined Unity Medical Center as a family nurse practitioner. Although growing up in a farming family, Katelyn knew from an early age that she wanted to work in health care. She graduated from the University of North Dakota (UND) in 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and began her nursing career just as COVID was ramping up. She worked in the COVID intensive care unit (ICU) and adult intermediate ICU for about six months and then transitioned to the pediatric ICU where she worked for four years. As a PICU registered nurse, she also gained valuable experience in the neonatal ICU and general pediatric medical-surgical units. While working as an RN, she began her family nurse practitioner (FNP) education and graduated this past May with her Doctorate in Nursing Practice from Creighton University. She also teaches first-semester nursing students in the undergraduate nursing program at UND.

Katelyn sees patients of all ages but is especially passionate about



Katelyn Desautel Thompson

pediatrics. Last November, she had the opportunity to spend two weeks in Africa on a medical mission trip providing well-child visits in a small, rural, underserved community. It was an experience she will forever be grateful for and one that deeply impacted her both personally and professionally.

She loves how being an FNP allows her to grow with her patients, caring for them as children and continuing that relationship and care into adulthood. As one who greatly values family and connection, having the opportunity to care not only for a child, but for an entire family – siblings, parents, grandparents, even aunts and uncles – feels incredibly meaningful to her. Being an FNP in primary care, she gets to be the home base for her patients, and she sees that as both a privilege and an honor.

When asked why she chose to come back to Grafton, Katelyn said, “Practicing at UMC was something I always envisioned myself doing at some point in my career. I am loyal to this community, and to be able to offer health care right in my hometown to my peers, neighbors and people I’ve known my whole life is incredibly meaningful and a great gift.”

If you would like to make an appointment with Katelyn, please call Grafton Family Clinic at (701) 352-2000.



UMC Kids Clinic

Medical lab technician Hannah Braathen shows kids how Spider-Man gets swabbed at the annual UMC Kids Clinic in July. Various children attended the event, taking their stuffed animals through surgery, emergency care, X-ray, respiratory therapy, an obstacle course and an inflatable colon.

Rooftop Patio Party



The UMC Foundation hosted a Rooftop Patio Party for its Giving Club and board members. Here, UMC governing board member Tom Campbell visits with Foundation Board member Brad Schanilec, Dean and Bonnie Yantes, and Foundation Board member Ranell Hanson.

UMC earns Acute Cardiac Ready Hospital designation

Unity Medical Center (UMC) has received the full three-year Acute Cardiac Ready Hospital designation from the North Dakota Cardiac System of Care, part of the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services. UMC is the third hospital in North Dakota to receive this designation along with CHI Mercy Hospital in Valley City and Jamestown Regional Medical Center.



This means that UMC is recognized as

a STEMI referring center. A STEMI, or ST-elevation myocardial infarction, is a severe type of heart attack characterized by a complete blockage of a coronary artery, causing significant damage to the heart muscle. Rapid identification, treatment and transfer of STEMI patients offer the greatest chance of recovery.

"After a yearlong process of developing and refining treatment protocols, and performing internal reviews, in addition to developing a STEMI performance improvement program, we have received the highest recognition of cardiac care," said Registered Nurse Lindsey Gellner, UMC's Emergency Department manager (pictured). "Our function at UMC is to provide excellent stabilizing care and work closely with Emergency Medical Services and regional partners to provide definitive transport and management of our patients. We have always strived to provide excellent care for our patients. This recognition demonstrates our ongoing commitment to provide excellent care to not only our cardiac patients but all of our patients."

O'Neil receives Outstanding Rural Health Career Award

Alan O'Neil, CEO of Unity Medical Center, received the Outstanding Rural Health Career award at the 2025 Rural and Public Health Awards Banquet, which recognized outstanding North Dakota rural health and public health advocates for their accomplishments. The award is presented to a health care professional who has devoted his or her career to making significant contributions to improving health care in rural North Dakota. The awards banquet was held June 18 in Bismarck.



O'Neil has been a part of UMC since 2014. During that time, he has dedicated himself to shaping UMC into a growing and thriving hospital. He has created a health system that provides many services that often require rural residents to travel long distances to access.

Under O'Neil's leadership, UMC has grown, adding an Emergency Department, a surgery center, 11 private patient rooms, and a conference center/

rural medical education center. This physical expansion also increased the hospital's workforce and led to the acquisition of a Da Vinci surgical robot, the only one in North Dakota located at a critical access hospital.

"Alan's leadership has led to a positive organizational culture and work environment," said Jenny Holand, chief nursing officer at Unity Medical Center. "He deeply cares for his employees and ensures that all departments have the equipment and support they need."

Auxiliary donates \$1,000



The UMC Auxiliary recently donated \$1,000 to UMC to purchase new clocks for patient rooms and two telesitters for patients that need remote monitoring. Telesitters enhance patient safety by preventing falls, reducing the risk of self-harm and ensuring that patients receive necessary care promptly.

Lifetime Giving Wall additions

The Unity Medical Center Foundation recently added three new names to its Lifetime Giving Wall, which recognizes cumulative giving of its donors. All three new plates recognized donors who recently crossed the \$10,000 cumulative giving mark.

Dakota Medical Foundation was added for its support of Giving Hearts Day, its regional day of giving held each February. In addition to facilitating the event, DMF also gives back to medical nonprofits who participate. The UMC Foundation has participat-

ed in Giving Hearts Day for 10 years, raising nearly \$200,000 during that time.

The MDU Resources Foundation was also added to the Lifetime Giving Wall, thanks to its support of the 2008 Capital Campaign that added space for UMC's Radiology Department and Medical Laboratory, as well as its recent grant toward our Grafton Family Clinic expansion. This foundation is the philanthropic arm of what was formerly Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.

Wipfli LLP is a company based in Minneapolis that provides audit and IRS reporting support to UMC. Wipfli has sponsored many golf tournaments and Harvest Auctions.

Thank you to each of these donors and to all 94 donors recognized on our Lifetime Giving Wall.



UMC encourages mammograms in October

Unity Medical Center's Radiology Department recommends that all women over 40 years old schedule an annual mammogram to detect breast cancer. Breast cancer is the most diagnosed cancer in North Dakota women and the second leading cause of cancer death.

This year, anyone who schedules a mammography appointment at UMC in October will be entered into a weekly drawing for a pink silicone kitchen utensil set. At the end of the month, all mammogram patients will be entered into a grand prize drawing for a pink hand mixer. Call (701) 379-3050 to schedule an appointment.

OCTOBER IS

BREAST CANCER

AWARENESS MONTH

TOGETHER WE CAN



'WHIP' CANCER

Unity Medical Center is an Equal Opportunity Provider

Complete your annual 3D Mammogram during the month of October and be entered to win weekly giveaways and a grand prize! Appointments available Monday-Friday.

CALL 701-379-3050

Unity
MEDICAL CENTER

164 West 13th Street | Grafton | unitymedcenter.com

Memorials and Thank You To Donors (May 25-September 2, 2025)

The Unity Medical Center Foundation would like to take the opportunity to thank all of the donors who have donated to UMCF over the past years. It is because of donors like you that UMCF can continue to focus on its mission of supporting Unity Medical Center and improving patient experiences. Every effort is made to include all names accurately. Please notify UMCF if you discover any errors or omissions.

Duane Altendorf

Mike & Shannon
Kringstad

Clifford Bailly

Ron & Catherine Pich

Betty Cudmore

Mark & Colleen Alphson
Wayne & Nancy Bell
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Ron & Gay Risky &
family

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Terry & Julie Demester

JoAnn Gorder

Caleb Prushek

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Harvey Puppe

Chad & Julie Sundby

Howard Ray

Connor & Lark Oihus

Paulette

Richardson

LeaAnn Dolan

Donald Schuster

Len & Janet Wysocki

Foundation Mission

To financially support
Unity Medical Center, ensuring
quality health care close to home.

Philanthropic Priorities

1. Patients
2. Providers/staff
3. Programs
4. Facilities
5. Priority needs (unrestricted)



Donate Now

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