



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services



February 2022

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Caleb,” who was just 9 years old when he was referred to Genacross Family & Youth Services, had several mental health issues. His diagnoses included conduct disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder. He had been living with his father because his mother had been unable to handle his behaviors. When those behaviors continued to escalate, and Caleb pulled a knife on his father and threatened him, a children services agency took custody of Caleb in order to get him treatment. He was placed at the Oregon Group Home in October 2019. Initially, he did not respond well to the structure and limits set by staff. He often became violent toward them and his peers. Staff were diligent in keeping others safe from Caleb’s actions.

Eventually, after individual and group therapy, Caleb began learning coping skills to help self-regulate his anger. During this time, his father took a job out of state. Genacross worked with the father to maintain contact, with dad coming to Ohio once a month to visit Caleb and his siblings. Due to the suspension of the Partners in Treatment program because of the pandemic, reunification activities were limited to family therapy and visits. Caleb continued to improve, however, and when his case went to juvenile court for a review, the judge returned custody to Caleb’s father. Genacross worked with his father, who was ecstatic to have Caleb return home, to get services set up in a very short timeframe. Psychiatric and medical service providers were located and appointments scheduled so that there would be no lapse in services or medications. Genacross and Caleb’s father worked together in a short amount of time to prepare Caleb for a successful reunification.

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Monthly health clinics and chair Zumba classes are offered at seven of the Genacross affordable housing sites. A Genacross Senior Level Service Coordinator, who is also a licensed practical nurse, leads both activities. These health clinics give residents the opportunity to have their blood pressures, temperatures, blood oxygen levels, and heart rates



monitored, as well as a chance to compare the nurse’s blood pressure readings with the electronic devices they use in their homes. Health tips are also included, with this month’s health topic being cold weather preparation. Residents appreciate the opportunity to have their vitals checked without having to leave their homes. The residents also seem to enjoy thoroughly the chair Zumba classes. “Residents are able to do strengthening exercises from their chairs, while listening to such upbeat music as 70s disco,” the coordinator said. “Chair Zumba is also a perfect time to socialize and reminisce with neighbors.” Many laughs and much enjoyment have come from the health clinics and chair Zumba. In addition, both allow the coordinator to connect with residents monthly and identify further service needs.

Although pseudonyms are used in the above ministry stories, Genacross follows HIPAA guidelines and has either obtained permission from our residents, patients, or clients, or has sufficiently concealed their identities, thereby enabling us to use their stories of God’s grace.

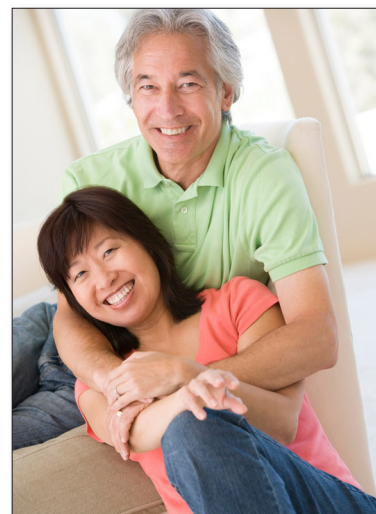
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WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

New residents at the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus usually arrive from the hospital with a detailed summary of their medical challenges. When “Samantha” came to the Wolf Creek Campus for skilled nursing care in the spring of 2019, she had a very long list of challenges. In addition to a fall that left her dependent upon a wheelchair to get around, Samantha had COPD, diabetes, heart problems, frequent infections, and mental health disorders that had played significant roles in her life and health. In spite of these challenges and the pandemic, Samantha has thrived at the Wolf Creek Campus. She is one of the most active residents on her floor, attending nearly every event and activity on the calendar. She loves concerts, church, bingo, games and even exercise classes. “They have simple exercises I can do, like raise your head up and put it down, [then] turn it from side to side,” she said as she demonstrated. Samantha credits the consistent care she receives at the campus for her newfound stability. She especially enjoys working with one of the nurses usually assigned to her floor. “I feel like he has helped me. He keeps us, not laughing at ourselves – just laughing.”

GENACROSS AT HOME

“Joan” is a woman in her 50s who experienced complications after a surgery. She went to a skilled nursing facility for rehabilitation services and help with the feeding tube she needed after the surgery’s complications. Joan and her husband were going to receive training for her care at home, and she needed strengthening before her discharge from the skilled facility. After many setbacks, Joan was finally strong enough to return home. At that time, Genacross at Home nursing staff met Joan and her husband, along with the company delivering her medical supplies, at their house. The Genacross at Home nurse helped the couple get everything set up and started Joan’s feeding tube and her first dose of IV medication. They were very nervous, but the Genacross at Home nurse reassured them. She explained that she would check in with them in the morning, and therapy staff would be in contact to schedule visits. Joan has a long recovery ahead of her, but with the Genacross at Home team she will achieve her new normal very soon.



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

One of the hardest things in long-term care is growing to love a resident and their family and then having to let them go. A while back, the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus had a resident named “Elaine,” whom everyone grew to know well. She walked everywhere, all day long. She was always on the go, but still had time for a smile for each person she encountered. She was happy and had a quick wit, and she loved animals and could talk about them for hours. Recently, Elaine had a change in condition, and the family decided to move her to inpatient hospice care since it was a better choice for them. Staff members were saddened by this turn of events, but they knew that what counted was whatever was best for Elaine. Staff members work tirelessly to create trust with families, as it is an honor to care for the residents. There are difficulties that must be worked through together, and each time the bond strengthens. Care conferences are held when needs change to determine the best plan of action for moving forward, and staff members focus on residents’ safety and well-being. Elaine had become like family, so like family, everyone put her needs first and helped her get to the best place.

FOUNDATION

Many times residents need special equipment or supplies to make their time with Genacross even more productive. The Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation is able to help connect donors to those special needs. Recently, one corporate donor, Medical Mutual of Ohio, stepped up to assist the Family & Youth Services program by purchasing equipment for a sensory room in one of the group homes. This home serves youth with serious emotional disorders who have experienced severe traumatic situations. Many of them have severe ADHD, sensory deficits, and sensory processing disorders. They require both tangible stimulation and a quiet, calm place of retreat when overstimulated. High-quality sensory equipment that is strong and durable is extremely expensive. Thankfully, the Foundation was able to utilize its connections in the community to help make this sensory equipment a reality. Medical Mutual of Ohio was ready and willing to assist the youth. Genacross donors, both individual and corporate, continue to be amazing. Their generosity is unending and much appreciated.