



For Immediate Release

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Hospice of Michigan Seeks Volunteers in Southeast Michigan

Detroit, Michigan, March 27, 2014 – Hospice of Michigan, the largest non-profit hospice and palliative care organization in Michigan, is seeking volunteers in Southeast Michigan to help support patient care, office administration and a variety other programs.

Volunteers are an integral, yet often invisible part of a hospice team. Caregiving for a terminally ill loved one can be exhausting for family and friends, and a volunteer can provide opportunities to get away for a needed break.

For Royal Oak resident Katherine Salisbury, volunteering not only allows her to explore a career in health care as she pursues a pre-med degree at Oakland University, but it helps her feel connected to her mother who died while in hospice care when Salisbury was 19.

“I truly enjoy and feel rewarded by the time I spend with my patients, and I’m there in whatever capacity they need me in,” Salisbury says. “Sometimes it’s playing a game of cards, talking, listening or sitting vigil with a patient during their final hours.

“It can be difficult to connect with a patient at first, especially if their illness limits their communication, but it’s important to remember you’re making a difference and creating a positive experience for the patient,” she adds. “I just keep at it and eventually I’ll see a twinkle in the patient’s eye, a reassuring smile or I can tell there is some comfort in my presence.”

Volunteer Appreciation Week begins on April 6 and HOM applauds the work of Salisbury and the 800 other men and women who volunteer with the organization each year.

“Volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization,” said Catherine Klemish, director of volunteer services at HOM. “We are always in need of new volunteers who have a passion and commitment to helping people.”

Some of the ongoing volunteer needs at Hospice of Michigan include:

- Veterans who can reach out to their fellow servicemen and women through the We Honor Veterans program, which is designed to address the unique needs of military personnel at the end of life
- Bedside vigils to ensure that patients in their final hours will not die alone
- Care by professional massage therapists, hair stylists and manicurists
- Specialty programs, such as pet, music and aroma therapy
- Seamstresses, crafters and scrappers who can assist in making memory bears from the clothing of a lost loved one, creating birthday or other special occasion cards or leading other hands-on projects
- Baking and delivering cakes and cookies to celebrate special occasions
- MyStories Program™ where volunteers record special stories told by the patient

Klemish adds that all prospective HOM volunteers will go through a training course where they learn more about HOM, the principles of hospice, the grieving process and how to help patients, families and staff. There's an optional three-hour grief support session that, while not required, is recommended.

If you would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities for Hospice of Michigan or sign up as a volunteer, visit https://www.hom.org/?page_id=1239 or contact 888.247.5701.

For those who have experienced a loss, HOM encourages a waiting period of one year before becoming a volunteer in order to allow for the processing of grief.

About Hospice of Michigan

A nationally recognized leader in end-of-life care, Hospice of Michigan is the original – and largest – hospice in the state. The non-profit cares for more than 1,400 patients each day in 56 counties across Michigan, raising more than \$4 million each year to cover the cost of care for the uninsured and underinsured. HOM offers a broad range of services to enhance the quality of life at the end of life, including At Home Support™, our advanced illness management program, community-based palliative care and pediatric care programs. HOM provides grief support and counseling, caregiver education and support, and education programs for physicians and healthcare professionals through its research, training and education arm, the Hospice of Michigan Institute. For more information, call 888.247.5701 or visit www.hom.org.

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