



Debbie Robles, Second Degree-Second Career Nursing Scholar

Changing Course: A Second Degree and Second Career

Debbie Robles was always drawn to the nursing profession. But as an 18-year-old college student, a nursing degree just wasn't something she could pursue.

"I paid my way through college and had to work several jobs to pay the bills," Robles explains. "The nursing program required a lot of time, homework and use of a car that I didn't have. Instead I chose to pursue a math degree because it always came easy to me."

Robles graduated from Franciscan University with a bachelor's degree in math along with a teaching endorsement. She went on to lead a successful career teaching middle school and high school students.

Eventually, Robles decided to put her teaching career on hold while she and her husband started a family. Five children and 11 years later, Robles was ready to go back to work. She decided to take some biology classes in order to maintain her teaching certificate and expand the subjects she could teach.

That's when a career in hospice and palliative care began taking shape.

"I learned that Grand Valley State University (GVSU) offered an

accelerated second-degree nursing program, and the two classes I was taking were both prerequisites for the degree," Robles said.

GVSU's second-degree nursing program is offered through its Kirkhof College of Nursing and targeted toward individuals who have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university and wish to pursue a bachelor of science in nursing.

By the end of her first semester, Robles had made her decision to pursue the nursing degree when she learned her 69-year-old father had been diagnosed with late-stage sarcoma. With no treatment options available, her father died within weeks of diagnosis.

"As I reflected on this experience with my dad, it struck me that in the health courses I'd been taking, the focus was on treatment and saving lives. No one talked about death and what to do when treatment wasn't available," Robles recalls.

Shortly after her father's death, Robles learned that Hospice of Michigan offered a Second Degree-Second Career Nursing Scholarship through GVSU.

Responding to a shortage of nursing students interested in end-of-life care, Hospice of Michigan established the scholarship in 2009 to provide the funds – and the opportunity – for students like Robles to change their career path.

(Cont. on page 2)

A Message from Bob At Home Support: The Evolution of End-Of-Life Care



Bob Cahill, President and CEO

End-of-life care is changing. The baby boomers are aging. In fact, 14% of Americans are 65+, and people with terminal illnesses are living longer than ever, often two to three years longer.

While traditional medical care and hospice will always be needed, neither adequately addresses the

needs of this terminal population as they enter the last few years of their lives. For those terminal patients who continue curative care despite the progression of their disease, they often go from one crisis to another – cycling in and out of the hospital.

Our goal with the At Home Support program is to provide 24-hour supportive

collaborative services to these patients, as they continue their curative care.

While outcomes data indicate increased patient satisfaction, reduced hospital utilization and significant cost reduction, there is currently no benefit coverage to

provide this important approach to care.

We are reaching out to donors, insurance companies and health systems to assist in finding ways to pay for this needed coverage. It is our hope that with enough patient data, we will convince Medicare to make Advanced Illness Management services like At Home Support a defined benefit for all.

As a true mission-driven organization, we know these breakthrough initiatives are necessary to remain viable for the long-term, so we can all have access to the high quality, unrestricted care that Hospice of Michigan can provide at the end of life.

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A special thanks to our volunteer Board members!

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Changing Course (cont. from page 1)



Debbie Robles

"Since many students study nursing right after high school, the idea of a career in palliative care doesn't interest them," said Dr. Michael Paletta, executive director of the Hospice of Michigan Institute. "Offering the Second Degree-Second Career scholarship to those seeking nursing as a career change later in life allows us to reach students who may be more

interested and comfortable with a career in hospice and palliative care."

Robles applied and was delighted to be selected for the scholarship. She graduated from GVSU's nursing program last summer.

"The first-hand experience I've had working with Hospice of Michigan through my education has reassured me that this was the profession I was meant to be in," Robles said. "I'm very excited to begin my new career and couldn't be happier that it's with Hospice of Michigan."

Hospice of Michigan thanks generous donors like Rachael Hoffmann, The Brookby Foundation Edith Blodgett Legacy Fund, and the Wolverine Worldwide Foundation for their support of the Second Degree-Second Career scholarship program.

ACHC Accreditation

Hospice of Michigan is proud to announce that the organization has achieved statewide accreditation by Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC).

Achieving accreditation is a process whereby healthcare organizations demonstrate compliance with national standards. Accreditation by ACHC reflects an organization's dedication and commitment to meeting standards that facilitate a higher level of performance and patient care.



Only 40% of hospice care organizations obtain accreditation, and only 4% achieve ACHC accreditation, which the Center for Medicare and Medicaid recognizes as having the highest standards of the three accrediting bodies. This translates to making sure Hospice of Michigan patients receive the best quality of compassionate care possible.

ACHC is a not-for-profit organization that has stood as a symbol of quality and excellence since 1986.

Share Your Time and Talents

Do you have a talent, hobby, or special skill? Have you ever thought of sharing it to help brighten someone's day? Or, have you recently retired and have some spare time on your hands?

At Hospice of Michigan, the need for volunteers is virtually limitless. There are countless volunteer opportunities, many in ways you may not even think of. For example:

- Professional and licensed massage therapists, hairstylists and manicurists
- Art and music therapists
- Musicians who can perform at a patient's bedside
- Volunteers with a pet. While a therapy animal license isn't required, the animal must be current on all vaccinations and will be observed by a staff representative prior to working with patients.



Cecelia with longtime Hospice of Michigan volunteer Kraig Haybarker

"Volunteers are valued members of a hospice team and exemplify the core of what hospice is," said Volunteer Program Manager Alison Wagner.

"We are particularly in need of volunteers who can share the beauty of music and art, the comfort of a new hairstyle or the companionship of a pet. Our patients and their families so appreciate these touches of grace, which are particularly important as life draws to a close."

Prospective volunteers are required to complete a training course during which they will learn more about Hospice of Michigan, the principles of hospice, the grieving process and how to help patients and their families.

"The best volunteers have a passion for helping others and for our mission," Wagner explained.

"They are dedicated, compassionate, nonjudgmental and flexible. In addition to sharing their skills, they have the time and the willingness to make a difference in the lives of patients and their families."

If you would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities or to sign up as a volunteer, visit www.hom.org/get-involved.

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

April is National Volunteer Month

A special thanks to our more than 500 Hospice of Michigan volunteers. Last year, our volunteers dedicated nearly 25,000 hours of service and drove over 175,000 un-reimbursed miles in support of our patients, families and clinical teams.

Hospice of Michigan volunteers are the heart of the organization and help us maintain the patient-centered care that is at the core of our mission.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, visit www.hom.org/get-involved for more information.

2015 Caring Circle Members

Smiles, gratitude and continuing appreciation to our Caring Circle members who contributed \$1,000 and above last year to Hospice of Michigan. The number that follows donors' names represent the number of years they have been a Caring Circle member. We appreciate the generosity and support of our Caring Circle members.

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Check Out Our New Website

Hospice of Michigan unveiled its new website design last November. If you haven't visited the site recently, we invite you to check it out: www.hom.org. The site offers easy navigation, whether one is a patient or family member, a health care provider, or an individual in search of services or information.



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2015 Caregivers Club

The Caregivers Club is made up of Hospice of Michigan employees who commit to contributing at a level of \$500 or above in 2015. We are grateful to all of our employees who give of their time, talent, and treasure.

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Wrapped in Love: Fashion accessories provide warmth, beauty and dignity

Inspiration often comes at life's most poignant moments. For Karen Mac Donald, her mother's last hospitalization before she died led to *Wrapped in Love*.

"It was the holiday season, and my mom didn't want any visitors as she felt she looked too bad in her state of illness. I felt helpless and wanted to cheer her up. I decided to buy her a wrap to put around her patient gown with a flower pin to make her feel special. The nurses said she seemed to light up with her beautiful wrap on, hiding the gown that reminded her of her illness — even for just a bit."

That is how *Wrapped in Love* was born. It makes a perfect gift for patients, new mothers, or anyone you want to wrap in love. The new line features two poncho styles, one with a cowl neck, and comes in five cheerful colors. Each comes with a complementary flower pin, "just like the one I put on my mom," says Mac Donald.

The design was created with patients in mind. It is sleeveless to allow medical staff easy access to the patient when delivering care. The washable fabrics have been carefully selected to provide warmth and style.

Matching head wraps and infinity scarves are also available, all with a distinctive flower pin.

Wrapped in Love debuted in February 2015 online at wrappedinlove.com. Mac Donald is also working to have the line appear later this year in hospital gift shops and boutiques. Through May 2015, a portion of the proceeds will go to support the important work of Hospice of Michigan.



The *Wrapped in Love* accessory line is made in Lansing, the home of Mac Donald's college alma mater. "I am pleased to manufacture the *Wrapped in Love* line in my home state of Michigan and support Hospice of Michigan."

Would you like to make a bigger impact?

As a nonprofit, mission-driven organization, Hospice of Michigan is committed to serving all patients who need and seek our care, regardless of age, diagnosis or ability to pay. That commitment – a program we call Open Access – has been at the core of Hospice of Michigan's mission for more than 34 years.



Your planned gift to Hospice of Michigan will not only help provide the care patients and families need, but will allow us to continue our important research and training efforts as we strive to improve the state of end-of-life care.

Three ways you can make a bigger impact:

1. Honor a loved one by making a tribute gift to Hospice of Michigan in your will or estate plan
2. Name Hospice of Michigan as a beneficiary of your IRA, retirement or pension plan, or existing life insurance policy
3. Join the June B. Hamersma Planned Giving Society. Your example will inspire others to do the same.

If you would like more information, please contact Stephanie Le at (248) 346-4253 or email at SLe@hom.org.

Hospice of Michigan Institute

The Hospice of Michigan Institute is the catalyst that enables Hospice of Michigan to innovate, expand and re-invent ourselves in the ever-changing landscape for hospice care.



The Institute, which began with a generous \$3 million endowment from philanthropist Maggie Allesee, is the hub for research, education and community outreach initiatives.

Its aim is to improve care

Lisa Laubach, RN, CHPN, Clinical Leader for the SE region, demonstrates clinical expertise in venous access device management as part of the RN Simulation Pilot Program.



for people who are seriously ill and their caregivers. The Center also studies quality-of-life issues faced by older people, identifies ways they can live fully, and educates them on how to plan for their own end-of-life care.

The Institute offers a variety of educational initiatives, including the *We Honor Veterans* program, caregiver education tailored to the Jewish, Muslim and African-American patient, continuing education accredited courses, annual competencies, internships and fellowships, and much more.

Fall Events are Huge Successes

Excitement and fun surrounded Hospice of Michigan's fall events while introducing new friends to the organization and collectively raising \$350,000 in support of our mission.

Sheds & Chandeliers: A Crystal Rose Celebration was held at the Ford Piquette Avenue Plant in Detroit on October 2, 2014. This historic venue was the centerpiece of a rustic and elegant evening where more than 400 guests enjoyed a strolling dinner, cocktails and a short presentation to honor the evening's Crystal Rose awardees.



Attending the Sheds & Chandeliers event: Bob Cahill, HOM President & CEO; Jeff Schostak, Sheds' Committee Chair; and Justin Hiller of Hiller's Market, Crystal Rose Awardee.

The 24th annual **Puttin' on the Ritz** fundraiser took place in Rogers City, Mich. on October 4, 2014. Attendees enjoyed an evening filled with dinner,

an auction and musical entertainment by northern Michigan's own Mike Ridley. This event has become a tradition in the community. Our sponsors and attendees didn't disappoint this year, raising over \$9,000 for our Open Access Program.

Throughout 2014, Hospice of Michigan and Grand Rapids Ballet undertook a groundbreaking journey to bring a re-imagined version of

The Nutcracker to life. For the first time in more than three decades, this treasured holiday classic was re-invented, thanks to a powerful collaboration between beloved children's author (and Grand Rapids native) Chris VanAllsburg, Tony Award-winning set and production designer Eugene Lee, and sought-after choreographer Val Caniparoli.



Puttin' on the Ritz attendees.

The curtain rose for the World Premiere Gala on December 11, 2014 to an audience of over 1,000 captivated donors and guests. This successful partnership raised significant funds for Hospice of Michigan's Pediatric Program and generated greater awareness of Hospice of Michigan's services within the community.



At The Nutcracker HOM Foundation Board Chair The Honorable Sara Smolenski with attendees Mary Ann Barrett and Linda Burpee.



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Walk, Race, Remember



ALPENA 06.20.2015 DETROIT 06.27.2015 GRAND RAPIDS 06.18.2015

Lace up your sneakers and gather your family, friends and pets to join Hospice of Michigan as we walk, race and remember!

Our spring events give family and friends a fun way to commemorate and



celebrate the lives of loved ones they have lost, in addition to supporting Hospice of Michigan's Open Access program. This program allows Hospice of Michigan to serve all patients and families who need and seek our services, regardless of age, diagnosis, or ability to pay.

To register visit www.hom.org and click on the event logo to create a team or to walk or run as an individual.

Register today and start using the easy online fundraising tools available to reach out to your friends and family members to support your participation.



If you wish to remove your name from future fundraising solicitations, please contact the Donation Processing Center, 800-669-9335 or email: info@hom.org.

Locations

- Detroit
- Ada (Grand Rapids)
- Alpena
- Ann Arbor
- Big Rapids
- Bloomfield Hills
- Cadillac
- Clinton Township
- Fremont
- Gaylord
- Ludington
- Muskegon
- Rogers City
- Saginaw
- Southfield
- Traverse City
- West Branch