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NEWSLETTER | NOVEMBER 2019



Exalta Health reflects the spirit of Christ by providing compassionate, accessible healthcare.

## THANK YOU SPONSORS & PARTICIPANTS

### 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Luncheon

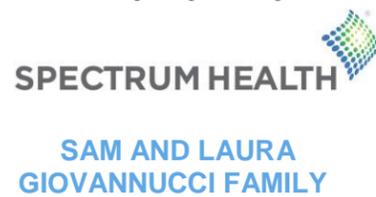
#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dan Butler	Laura Martzke
Amy Gerard	Jose Nietes
Scott Halquist	Martha Norden
Doyle Hayes	Ed Postma
Tom Hillegonds	Zayda Rodriguez
Kyle Hollemans	Jeff Stormo
Diane Knapp	Curt Van Solkema

#### I.C.N. Stewards Fund



#### The Joe Teater Imagination Fund



### GIVING TUESDAY

This year Giving Tuesday is on December 3, 2019.  
In the spirit of the season of giving, we ask that you consider giving a donation to your favorite charity

[www.exaltahealth.org/donate](http://www.exaltahealth.org/donate)

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## A LEGACY OF GRATITUDE

As many of you know, I'm planning to retire in a few months after 45 years of work in the nonprofit world. The occasion has me reflecting about the work with which I've been privileged to be involved. And it's got me thinking about "legacy."

Leaving a legacy means that what you've done in the past contributes to and impacts what others will do in the future. People want to leave a legacy. They want to feel that their life or work made a difference.

Caught up in the busyness of every day work, I have not spent a lot of time thinking about how I will be remembered, but at this time of my life, I have engaged in some self-reflection.

I suspect that many of you have perhaps done the same. We spend our God-given time, talent, and treasure in specific chosen ways, and we naturally begin to ask how this will be remembered. We want to think we have made a difference in people's lives now and in the future.

When you are in a survival mode, you don't have much time to think about legacy. In survival mode, future is measured in days—sometimes hours—rather than years. When people are fighting for survival, the questions about the

future are stark. Will I be able to get food for my children? To stay in this house? This community? This country? Can I stay healthy so I can support my children? Can I get healthcare for my children?

When, thanks to your support, health care is provided to our patients—many of whom are in survival mode—they they are grateful. This "attitude of gratitude" has been something really striking to me serving here at Exalta Health. While survival is often the dominant life theme, gratitude is what is expressed here at Exalta Health every day.

What I'm finding as I end my career here, in fact, is that I am leaving with more than I have left behind. The people we serve are leaving me a powerful legacy—a legacy of deep and enduring gratitude.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve my community here. I'm grateful for the staff, volunteers, and donors who ARE making a difference now and in the future. And I am grateful to the people we serve for living a legacy taught to us by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:18:

**"Give thanks in all circumstances."**

Now that's a legacy worth leaving.

Bill Paxton, Exalta Health President

Leave a Legacy: Donate at [www.exaltahealth.org/donate](http://www.exaltahealth.org/donate)

## PRAYING AND WAITING

For the past seven years Exalta Health medical director Dr. Laura Vander Molen has been seeing a patient who has struggled with chronic eye problems which, she says, “were generally under control.”

But this past year, Jorge (not his real name) started having significant pain in his eyes and, more ominously, began losing his vision. In a short period of time he was unable to even cross the street without assistance, and he had to stop working.

Working with local partners, Exalta Health was able to get Jorge scheduled for a surgery that would give him his eyesight back. And then, the day of the surgery, he was told it was cancelled unless he could pay cash.

**In the midst of his disappointment and grief he said simply: “I will pray and wait...”**

“He was in the room all ready to go,” says Laura. “He couldn’t understand it. He was heartbroken.”

Yet, Laura recalls, Jorge said something powerful that day as he sat with her and Exalta Health Chaplain Kristen Meyer.

In the midst of his disappointment and grief he said simply: “I will pray and wait until you tell me there



*Dr. Laura Vander Molen and Chaplain Kristen Meyer.*

is no hope for my eye surgery.”

In Jorge’s strength and courage, Laura and Kristen, and many other Exalta Health staff members and volunteers, also found strength and courage. And they continued to advocate for him. Recently some possible options opened up, and there is hope now for a positive outcome.

“True power comes only through the grace and movement of my Savior, Jesus,” says Laura, “but I also know he uses people every day as His instruments of change.”

That’s a problem. Catching up a patient at the point they come to Exalta Health meant they would have an x-ray plate in their mouth 18-20 times, and that is a challenge for many patients. The panoramic x-ray machine reduces the number of images taken and cuts the amount of time for x-rays in half. Additionally it is the standard of care for children where there are concerns about teeth not coming in straight.

Adds Daniel: “I see a lot of wisdom teeth here as well and a panoramic x-ray is the standard of care when it comes to decisions regarding wisdom teeth.”

Daniel began volunteering at Exalta Health in 2013 and joined the staff later that year. Making life better for Exalta Health patients by making their mouths and teeth healthier is what has always undergirded his work. Thus, he says, having access to such an excellent tool for patient care is “a beautiful thing!”

## A PANORAMIC VIEW IS A BEAUTIFUL THING!



primary purposes). In that time the machine has been used over 300 times.

“I have heard on numerous occasions when I am introduced to a new patient that this is their first time ever with a dentist,” says Exalta Health Dental Director Dr. Daniel Armstrong.

## THE COLLISION OF FAITH



Early in his career, Jim Samuelson began volunteering half day a month as a physician at Exalta Health.

“It was Sam Giovannucci who invited me to check it out,” Jim recalls of what was then called Health Intervention Services.

That was 21 years ago, and Jim has missed maybe three shifts since. He’s also spent two stints on Exalta Health’s board. And he has no designs on leaving the clinic anytime soon. Why?

“If you read 1 Corinthians 13,” he says, “it talks about faith, hope and love. To me Exalta Health is the collision of all of that.”

Exalta Health President Bill Paxton says volunteers like Jim make it so.

“Jim serves from the heart,” Paxton says. “He has a wide range of interests and skills and serves us and, most importantly, our patients in so many effective ways.”

**“I think the best medicine is hope”**

How Exalta Health serves patients is what Jim most appreciates.

“What’s really important in life,” he says, “are relationships. We get to know our patients. We have social workers and a chaplain. We care for the whole person. It’s incredibly rewarding, and there are many days where I think I get more from Exalta Health than it gets from me.

“I think the best medicine is hope. And that’s given in many different ways at Exalta Health because of who we are as a faith-based organization.”

*Know someone who might like to volunteer?  
Visit [www.exaltahealth.org/volunteer/get-involved/](http://www.exaltahealth.org/volunteer/get-involved/)*

## STEWARDSHIP MATTERS

Do you remember hearing “Do Something” by contemporary Christian musician Matthew West? It is a powerful reminder to Christ-followers about what it means to make a difference in the world.

West says children of God have a responsibility to be His hands and feet in all circumstance. But, he sings, “it’s often easier to say than to be,” to live telling ourselves that somebody else will do something.

At Exalta Health we have hundreds of people—staff and volunteers—who know what it means to do something. We are grateful to be surrounded by people who understand that it is often easier “to say” than “to be” but who have chosen “to be” nonetheless.

As we draw closer to Thanksgiving, we are thankful for people who work tirelessly each day to create a collaborative community where accessible, quality healthcare promotes wellness for all.

## EXALTA HEALTH WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS



**Tom Hillegonds** is an attorney at Varnum and has served as a national board member for myTEAM TRIUMPH, a non-profit assisted athletic program. Tom is actively involved with his family and enjoys a variety of sports.

**Jose Neites** has worked as a planning aide in the Burton Heights area and has served on Exalta Health’s Young Professionals Advisory Committee. He is a financial advisor for a local bank and serves as a Young Life Leader.

**Martha Norden**, a current patient of and a long-time community advocate for Exalta Health, has experience on other community boards and is an active member of Central Reformed Church.

**Zayda Rodriguez** brings to Exalta a degree in Health Education and is a Community Connector at Molina Healthcare of Michigan. She is active in her church and serves on the Latino Advisory Board at Michigan State University’s Research Department.