

Helping Hands

A newsletter for the Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers

Summer 2022

Re•Tag•It

1901 Milton Ave.
Janesville, WI
(608) 754-5133
Monday-Saturday
9 am-4 pm

Due to volunteer shortages, the thrift shop will be temporarily closed on Mondays.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

at Re•Tag•It Thrift Shop

We greatly appreciate new and gently used clothing, furniture, gift items, seasonal décor and household goods. Proceeds from the store support charitable programs such as Wigs for Patients, the House of Mercy Homeless Center and scholarship funds.



Front-of-store volunteer services include:

- Checking-out customers
- Replenishing merchandise
- Arranging displays

Back-of-store volunteer services include:

- Flexible hours
- Intake of donations
- Sorting and pricing
- Readyng merchandise for sale
- Organizing

Castaways Thrift Shop relocated to 1901 Milton Ave. (formerly Payless Shoes) in late 2020 and was renamed and rebranded as Re•Tag•It Thrift Shop. It was a challenge to navigate relocating and opening the shop during the pandemic, but safety protocols such as masking and distancing were put in place to keep everyone safe. Volunteers were also offered the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as Mercyhealth employees.

The new space offers more room for displays and backroom storage, the large front windows are a great way to display merchandise, but also allow natural light to brighten the store. The new location, less than a mile north of the old, gives the store much more visibility on Milton Avenue.

The shop has been very successful despite the challenges of the pandemic and is need of more volunteers. Would you consider joining our team?

If you'd like to learn more, please call (608) 756-6739.

 Join our Facebook page @MercyhealthReTagItThriftShop

Volunteer opportunities and Helping Hands are back!

I'm sure we can all agree that the pandemic turned our worlds upside down. We were incredibly sad to temporarily pause our volunteer opportunities for a time, but your health and safety were our number one priority.

Now that the situation has improved, we're happy to announce many volunteer activities have returned. Patients, families and staff alike have been delighted to see your smiling faces in blue uniforms again!

We're also happy to bring back the Helping Hands newsletter! You can expect to receive this newsletter twice a year.



Welcoming new Volunteer Services Manager

Hello volunteers,

My name is Tricia Nicoll and I'm honored to be the new Volunteer Services Manager. I'm excited to work with you as you share your passion for making a difference at Mercyhealth.

A recreational therapist by background, I've worked at non-profit organizations for over 20 years, both in clinical and community-based settings. During my professional experiences, the one thing I've enjoyed most is being able to work alongside so many amazing volunteers and facilitating opportunities for engagement. I've seen the countless ways volunteers positively impact services and supported communities, and am looking forward to meeting and working alongside all of you!

I'm a Madison native and looking forward to exploring Rock County. My family and I enjoy being outside hiking and camping and are always looking for some new trails to explore so let me know if you have suggestions!



Tricia Nicoll
Volunteer Services Manager

Mercyhealth Association of Volunteer Team

The volunteer team is a small but mighty team that in addition to Tricia Nicoll also includes Cara Arena (right) and Brenda Wolter (left). They are available Monday-Friday, 8 am-4:30 pm and can be reached through email at volunteerservices@mhemail.org or by calling (608) 756-6739. They assist in the development and coordination of volunteer programs and services throughout Janesville, Harvard and Walworth, and provide support for the Mercyhealth Association of Volunteer Board and committees.



Letter from Association President



I started working for Mercyhealth in the late 1950's, as a high school aide. After high school, I attended Mercy Hospital School of Nursing, graduating in 1969. I worked on the medical floor, operating room and utilization management. I retired in 2000, but returned to work as a senior review coordinator at MercyCare Health Plans. I stayed in that position for fifteen years, retiring again in 2016 and then became a volunteer.

I started as a weekend volunteer for Meals On Wheels. Then I took on a volunteer board position as the Health Education and Scholarship Chair. I also help with scheduling for our thrift store, Re•Tag•It, and working at the front desk. Volunteering is very important to me. It is a way of giving back for all the good fortune that I have had in my life.

I took the position of President in January of 2021. It was a time of change due to COVID. The hospital volunteer staff was furloughed, board meetings were done by phone and activities were cancelled to keep everyone safe. Understandably, several volunteers decided to stop volunteering over the past two years to shelter in place, stop the spread and stay safe.

Now that vaccines and boosters are available and activities have slowly started to resume, we are trying to rebuild our volunteer program. If you are willing to volunteer again, we would so greatly appreciate it. There are several openings we are looking to fill as highlighted in this newsletter. Thank you for your consideration.

Suzanne Kumlien

Visitor Guidelines

Current hospital visitor guidelines allow patients to have two visitors age 18 and older. All visitors will continue to check in at the main desk in the front lobby before proceeding to the respective unit.

Project SEARCH

Mercyhealth was excited to host the 2022 Project SEARCH graduation ceremony on June 3 at Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center–Janesville.

Project SEARCH is a nine- to 12- month program that provides training and education leading to competitive employment for individuals with cognitive disabilities. The selected students work in three internships throughout the year, supervised by a Mercyhealth mentor and supported by a program skills trainer. Over the course of the program, interns participate in a total work emersion experience, which includes classroom instruction, independent life skills and career exploration. Each intern works with a team that includes their family, an instructor, a department mentor, rehabilitation counselor, skills trainers, job developer and a school district case manager to create their employment plan as they transition from school to work.



“We are passionate about enabling young adults with special abilities to gain employment through training and career exploration,” said Alen Brcic, Mercyhealth Vice President of People and Culture. “Throughout this process they have worked on numerous clinical and non-clinical projects to prepare them for and ignite their passion for a future career in health care. As an organization, we are better by having them part of our teams.”

Seven individuals graduated from the program, culminating a year of collaboration between the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Aptiv, Beloit School District, Brodhead School District, Janesville School District, Milton School District, UW-Whitewater and Mercyhealth.



Foundation Golf Play Day

The Mercyhealth Development Foundation Golf Play Day was a success, thanks to the support of golfers, volunteers and numerous corporate sponsors led by Rohlik Financial Group. This event raised over \$21,000 for the Mercyhealth Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Scholarship Fund, which was established in honor of Dr. Michael Kellum, a longtime emergency medicine physician and EMS medical director at Mercyhealth. Dr. Kellum was instrumental in EMS services with his research and devotion to increasing cardiac arrest survival rates.

Fundraisers

Our fundraising efforts continue at our hospitals. Stop by to say hi as we raise money!

Nothing Bundt Cakes

August 24, 11 am-2 pm: Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth, gift shop

August 25, 10 am-2 pm: Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center, room G206

October 26, 11 am-2 pm: Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth, gift shop

October 27, 10 am-2 pm: Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center, room G206

The Nutman Company fundraiser

September 19, 9:30 am-4 pm: Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center, room G206

September 20, 9:30 am-2:30 pm: MercyCare Building, ground floor

September 21, 10 am-2 pm: Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth, room G380B

December 5, 9:30 am-4 pm, Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center, room G206

December 6, 9:30 am-2:30 pm: MercyCare Building, ground floor

December 7, 10 am-2 pm: Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth, room G380B

Volunteers needed! Contact us at (608) 756-6739 if you can help.

Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association

Sue Kumlien, Arlene Knudson and Judy Jaggard represented Mercyhealth at the spring Southern District meeting in Madison in May. In addition, several board members participated in the Virtual Advocacy Day meeting in April. You can visit partnersofwha.org to see what is happening with hospital volunteers around Wisconsin. Be sure to look at the 2022 newsletters to learn creative ways hospital volunteers are providing volunteer services.

Donation and scholarships

The Mercyhealth Association of Volunteers board just approved a donation of \$183,606 to Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center. Watch for updates on the important items that will be purchased with that money.

We awarded 13 high school and 3 adult scholarships this year, totaling \$16,000.

Current Volunteer Needs

There are a wide variety of volunteer opportunities available throughout Rock and Walworth counties in Wisconsin and McHenry County in Illinois. If you are able to help, please call (608) 756-6739 or email volunteeroffice@mhemail.org.

Harvard, IL

- Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Harvard
 - Bingo in the Care Center
- Meals on Wheels drivers

Lake Geneva, WI

- Mercyhealth Hospital and Medical Center–Walworth
 - Gift Shop

Janesville, WI

- Re•Tag•It Thrift Shop
- House of Mercy Homeless Center
- Board positions
- Safe Connect Testers
- Mercyhealth Hospital and Trauma Center–Janesville
 - Gift Shop
 - Inpatient units
 - Oncology
 - Escort
- Meals on Wheels
 - Drivers
 - Coordinators



Farewell from Jill Ayres

Dear volunteers,

As you may know, I retired as Manager of Volunteers this past spring. I personally would like to thank all of you for your endless support through my tenure in the Volunteer Department. All of you have become my second family. I can't thank you enough for your many years of service and commitment to the Association of Volunteers.

In my 39 years at Mercyhealth, the most rewarding job was to work alongside all of you. Your passion makes such a difference in the lives of others. Thank you for your time and talent to the wonderful cause of helping people. I will forever be so proud of all of you.



Jill Ayres
Former Volunteer Manager
Current retiree

2020-2021 summary

December 2020

Re•Tag•It Thrift Shop opened at new location

April 2021

Volunteer appreciation drive-up lunch (in place of the annual lunch at the Janesville Country Club due to COVID)

December 2021

Volunteer appreciation drive-up lunch event honoring Meals on Wheels drivers.
The LoveLight Tree Lighting Ceremony was held outside with beautiful vocal music provided by Jacob Schmidt, grandson of Karen Fuhrmann.

December 2020-fall 2021

Board meetings were held virtually.
Advocacy Day, Southern District Meetings and Partners of WHA State convention were held virtually. Several members attended from home.

Fall 2021

Volunteers were treated to a "Thanks for Giving" buffet meat at Mercy Center
The House of Mercy Charity Ball was held at Glen Erin Golf Club. Several board members attended.
Volunteers were welcomed back to the gift shops and as patient escorts.

The holiday market was held for two days in the Janesville gift shop and one day in the Walworth gift shop.
Mercyhealth hosted an in-person luncheon to honor the volunteers who had come back to service.

April 2022

Volunteer appreciation drive-up lunch prepared by Chef Peter from the Mercyhealth kitchen and a special 'thank you chocolate' gift.

Mercyhealth Mission Statement

Exceptional health care services with a passion for making lives better.

Volunteer Department Mission Statement

- Perform the highest quality of volunteer services for improved health care.
- Act as ambassadors of goodwill for Mercyhealth in the southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois area.
- Provide financial assistance through fundraising projects in the quest for health care at the lowest possible cost without sacrificing the quality, service and convenience.