

EveryStep 
care & support services

Formerly HCI Care Services and Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa
Home of Amanda the Panda



EveryStep Partners to Fight Food Insecurity

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Kavanaugh House***

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*Megan Kramer, one of EveryStep's family
outreach consultants, makes a delivery to
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carematters is published three times per year for friends of EveryStep. Please send us your comments, suggestions and story ideas.

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Behind the Care

with Tray Wade, President and CEO



EveryStep has continued to step up and stretch in new ways to serve clients and patients throughout the challenging COVID-19 pandemic. We're also "stepping out" to fulfill vital tasks in our community, outside our 32+ programs of care.

Our people willingly leap beyond their everyday job responsibilities to do the next right thing. They helped deliver Meals on Wheels for Wesley Acres early in the pandemic. Last summer and fall, staff expertise in customer service and critical thinking went to work for IMPACT Community Action Partnership, helping derecho-affected Iowans apply for housing assistance. We delivered 1,000 COVID-19 care packages – sanitizing spray and wipes, toilet paper, paper towels and a list of precautions for COVID-19 – from UnityPoint Health and John Deere to the most vulnerable populations served by EveryStep and its partners in central Iowa. And, in a partnership with Eat Greater Des Moines, employees are taking boxes of food to the homes of hungry central Iowans.

An employee who moved to California to care for a family member continues to work for us remotely while also helping at a vaccination site there. On her own time, another staff member assists seniors in booking their vaccinations. EveryStep has been approved to publicly administer the vaccine against the virus if supply exists for us to do so, and Polk County Public Health has requested our assistance answering calls about vaccination availability. An EveryStep nurse is working at their call center location and another 10 have volunteered to work remotely at the task.

Being the organization that other entities turn to tells the public that our help is just a step away. Our organization's capacity to help meet human needs during a community crisis has further enhanced our reputation as a highly valued resource — and place to contact first — in our state.

— **Tray Wade, President and CEO, EveryStep**



Thank you, Donors to Kavanagh House Campaign!

Wonderful things happen when a generous and caring community combines with committed leaders and a valued and vital cause. EveryStep's \$3.5 million Kavanagh House Capital Campaign goal has been met and exceeded. Nearly \$3.7 million will provide the 27-year-old final home for so many central Iowans with major upgrades of medical equipment, technologies and patient and family amenities to improve patient care and comfort. Dollars raised also will provide annual income for future maintenance and repairs of the hospice residence through an endowment fund.

"Co-chairs Deb and George Milligan and a hard-working campaign cabinet brought it all together so beautifully, even in the midst of the pandemic," said Tray Wade, EveryStep president and CEO. "With major gifts from longtime donors Mary Kay and Doug Bruce and Suzie Glazer Burt, we're elated to be able to bring both interior and exterior enhancements to our compassionate care for patients and families. The renovation will be completed before the end of this year."

Kavanagh House Capital Campaign Leadership Donors – \$50,000 +

- Anonymous
- Doug & Mary Kay Bruce
- Suzie Glazer Burt
- WT and Edna Dahl Trust
- The Graham Group, Inc.
- Homesteaders Life Company
- Fred & Charlotte Hubbell
- William C. Knapp Charitable Foundation
- George & Deb Milligan
- Ruan Family Foundation
- Steve & Renee Schaaf
- Rich & Kim Willis

Spring Start for Kavanagh House Renovations

With the success of the Kavanagh House Capital Campaign, construction to restore, renovate and upgrade the 1993 Des Moines hospice house is about to start. In March, EveryStep began admitting patients to 14 private patient rooms at the Bright Kavanagh Center, 3000 Easton Boulevard. Current patients at Kavanagh House on 56th Street were also transferred to Bright Kavanagh Center.

The Bright Kavanagh Center in east Des Moines was built as a hospice house in 2008, but has recently been used for administrative purposes. Two wings of the building — the Maytag Wing and the Glazer Burt Wing — will be utilized to care for hospice patients through the fall of 2021. The building offers multiple family areas and is well equipped to provide peaceful care and comfort to patients, families and guests. The building's large lot includes a walking trail, community garden, benches and a play area.

"There's no reason for any interruption in our residential hospice care," said Rob Paulus, hospice team director of EveryStep's Kavanagh House on 56th Street. "Patients will be cared for on the east side of the city by the same compassionate staff. We expect to be back on 56th Street in the updated building later this fall."

! Donations toward the renovation work are still accepted. Visit everystep.org/kavanaghhouse to make a gift or view architectural renderings of renovation plans.

Names in the News



Jane Flanagan, EveryStep Foundation development coordinator, has retired after 20 years of service to the organization. Jane has worked with families to memorialize loved ones, brought patients' final wishes to fruition, addressed family emergency needs, run the organization's United Way campaign, built relationships with donors, written grants, championed the organization's community garden and stepped in wherever helping hands and a caring heart were needed. Thank you, Jane, for two decades of dedication to the mission of EveryStep!



EveryStep was named a 2021 Top Workplaces USA awardee in three national categories: Healthcare and Culture Excellence, Top Leaders and Communication. This is the inaugural award year for Top Workplaces USA recognitions by Energage, an organization with a 14-year history of surveying more than 20 million employees across

54 markets for the regional workplace awards. EveryStep is among 326 organizations nationwide with 150–499 employees named to the “Top Workplaces USA” list.



EveryStep was named Runner-Up Best Non-Profit by the *Des Moines Business Record* for the third time.

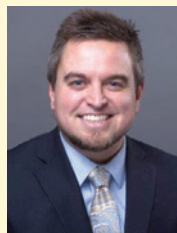
Tray Wade, president and CEO, was named to the *Des Moines Business Records'*

List of 25 most influential business and non-profit leaders of the year. Wade also was named Runner-Up: Best CEO by that publication.

New Volunteer Leaders



Jennifer Groos, MD, FAAP, has joined the EveryStep Board of Directors. A board-certified pediatric physician, Dr. Groos founded the Healthy Kids Program at Blank Children's Hospital. She practices at Primary Health Care, Inc. in Des Moines.



Billy Backer is newly elected to the EveryStep Foundation Board of Trustees. He is associate vice president of investment analysis and reporting at Sammons Financial Group in West Des Moines.



Renee Hamlen, F&G Annuities & Life, joined the EveryStep Foundation Board of Trustees in February. She is senior vice president and chief marketing officer for the Des Moines firm.



Jackie Rolow, executive vice president and chief human resources officer for Shazam began a three-year term on the EveryStep Foundation Board of Trustees in February.

EveryStep Foundation thanks those now leaving the EveryStep Foundation Board of Trustees: **Jeff Carpenter**, Wells Fargo Advisors; **Scott Johnson**, Johnson & Associates, PLC; and **Steve McGoldrick**, MGF Financial.

Children's Mental Health is 2021 Legislative Focus

This year, in lieu of an in-person “Day on the Hill” advocacy event at the Iowa Capitol, EveryStep took a different approach to promote its key priorities, outcomes and funding requests. Instead, the organization focused on children’s mental health in Iowa. A four-page publication was safely delivered in early February to legislators along with a small EveryStep-branded case of sticky notes. EveryStep staff have been following up with phone calls and virtual meetings to advocate for EveryStep’s legislative priorities.

The past year has been filled with adverse experiences for children. EveryStep has proposed a \$200,000 project to create awareness, prevention and expansion of trauma, grief and loss services in the state. Without appropriate support and access to comprehensive resources, experiencing a significant loss can result in profound stress and adversity for children.

“Loss can be the death of someone close, but it can also be caused by divorce, a parent’s incarceration, moving, changing schools, mental illness, abandonment, social isolation from friends and activities, and other losses associated with the global pandemic,” said Ashley Mori, program director of EveryStep Grief & Loss Services’ Amanda the Panda program. “Grief is a frequent response to loss, and youth need guidance and coping tools to process grief in a healthy way.”

For two years, the Amanda the Panda program has been using a group approach with six Des Moines-area schools to ensure that 83 at-risk children receive the care, attention and resources they need to navigate incidents of traumatic loss. Using a group-based approach to support, a facilitator provides healthy coping skills and opportunities for communication in an understanding environment.

In the classroom, students who’ve lost a loved one can have difficulty concentrating and become withdrawn. The quality of their work decreases and they are frequently absent and less reliable in turning in work assignments. With funding to provide for an additional facilitator, the program’s services could expand to Des Moines metro and surrounding areas, with a potential to serve an additional 375 young people each year.

EveryStep proposed a program with four components:

- 1 Education and engagement** to help key stakeholders (child care providers, teachers, parents, physicians/healthcare providers) identify individuals needing intervention
- 2 Assessment** using screening tools, data collection capabilities and connections for crisis response to achieve and report quality outcomes
- 3 Small group facilitation** to provide healing following tragic loss
- 4 Community support** via public health education, resources and referral services

EveryStep’s publication for legislators also addressed the need for a state-centralized direct care workforce data set, consistent MCO requirements, funding for Early Childhood Iowa and the elimination of the room and board pass through for hospice providers.

! To learn more about EveryStep’s legislative efforts and how you can help, contact Jim Knoepfler at jknopfler@everystep.org.



650 is 2021 Cheer Box Goal

Donations are already being accepted! Cheer Boxes, a holiday tradition of EveryStep Grief & Loss Services' Amanda the Panda program, have grown so popular that 557 boxes filled with 12 gifts of hope and healing reached 11 different states in 2020. There's already a list for 2021 recipients, created by a waiting list of names that came in too late for delivery last holiday season. For 2021, EveryStep has set an expanded goal of 650 Cheer Boxes filled with thoughtful gifts and delivered to families that have felt the pain of losing a loved one.

In addition to financial donations to purchase selected items in bulk, the meaningful contents sought by the Amanda the Panda program are:

- Jar Candles
- Board Games
- Puzzles
- Picture Frames
- Blankets
- White Dinner Plates
- Journals
- Floating Sky Lanterns
- Wrapping Paper (not child-themed)
- Black Sharpies

If questions, please call (515) 223-4847.



Even with COVID-19, corporations are holding workplace drives for needed Cheer Box items. Rock Valley Physical Therapy of Des Moines already hosted a Cheer Box donation drive and brought in nearly 100 items for 2021!

Setting a Place at the Table

A plain white dinner plate is wrapped in every Cheer Box along with this message: "It's often in little moments when we miss our loved ones the most. Please use this gift to create a special place for your loved one at the table." Cheer Box recipient Becky Brown's father Richard McMeins, an EveryStep Hospice patient, passed away in February of 2020. As a crafter, Becky created an intricate flower display on the front of the once simple white plate and adorned the back with memories and thoughts about her father's life.



The Lasting Impact of Cheer Boxes

"I lost my beautiful son on June 30, 2020. It brings tears to my eyes every time I think of him. I came home three weeks ago and there was a big box with a red bow on it. I was totally confused as to why it was in my front door step. I brought it inside looking for a name thinking it was for a neighbor. But then I read the little messages and I immediately knew this was something very special. The first package I opened was the children's book for grieving. I made it one-third of the way through and I couldn't go farther. It was simply too painful. I looked on the EveryStep website and then realized someone had sent it to me. I got hold of my son's mother and we opened the gifts one by one. We cut the little sayings and are making a scrapbook out of them. I can't even begin to express how touched I was to receive those hand-wrapped packages. I will forever be indebted to the fine people at EveryStep who put that package together. And I would like to continue to help out financially to Amanda the Panda so that other families know that someone is thinking of them and their loved one who is gone. God bless. Please pass my sincerest thanks to all involved."

— Bill Benskin, Des Moines

Employee, Caregiver and Vaccination Center Worker

Since November, EveryStep employee Debra Rodgers has been in California caring for her mother. The former team director for EveryStep Hospice's Greater Regional Hospice Home in Creston, Debra now works part-time, remotely monitoring EveryStep's available personal protective equipment inventory, checking the Medicare and CMS requirements for staff testing related to visits to nursing facilities and arranging for patient COVID-19 testing if a need arises.

And in addition to being a caregiver and tracking EveryStep's response to the pandemic, Debra is volunteering at a mass vaccination center in California.

Debra had a strong public health and epidemiology focus when obtaining her nursing license in California. Now with the flexibility of her virtual work, a back-up person for her EveryStep responsibilities and the assistance of a home health aide to care for her mother during the weekdays, Debra stepped up as a volunteer at the vaccination site in the gymnasium of Soka University in Orange, CA. Each day 3,000 vaccinations are completed there.

"Orange County has 3.1 million people, and that's the total population of Iowa," says Debra. In her first week of volunteering she totaled nearly 12 hours each of her two days at the site, and she intends to continue each week for as long as needed.

Debra said that the effort by Orange County Public Health was organized using the same incident command systems the state of California uses when out-of-state volunteers come in to fight wildfires. All volunteers wear PPE, there's social distancing and the doors remain open to help mitigate any spread of the virus.

"They have it down," she said. "We show up at 6:45 a.m., do a short overview, go through the command structure and ask questions. By 8 a.m. the first people walk through the doors to get vaccinated."

"It's very emotional, for me, for many of the people who received vaccine, and especially for their family members who brought them in, people who are the children of elderly, vulner-



able parents," she says. "A number of people told me this was the first time they've left their house since March 2020."

She spent one day drawing vaccination into syringes and worked with dentists, a periodontist, EMTs, fire fighters, and a pediatric NICU nurse. In addition to licensed healthcare workers, she noted the large number of "unlicensed" volunteers who are managing parking, directing lines, screening people and escorting them through the process. Debra said the camaraderie between volunteers was also special to experience.

"My heart is full, seeing all these people come through, so very happy to be getting their vaccine," she said, noting that the incident commander told volunteers to keep their lanyards and badges to show their grandchildren and to tell them, "I helped stop the pandemic."

Debra notes that her colleagues at EveryStep are also stopping the pandemic by allowing her the flexibility and opportunity to volunteer at the vaccination site.

"The rewards are incredible," she said. "It gives a sense of purpose and meaning to me."



Visit coronavirus.iowa.gov to find COVID-19 vaccination and testing sites in Iowa.



EveryStep Partners to Fight Food Insecurity



1 Typical weekly box contents for Operation Fresh Produce Drop

2 Volunteers with Eat Greater Des Moines load boxes of food to be delivered by EveryStep staff.

Every Wednesday, cars, vans and trucks make their way through the Des Moines Public Schools' operations warehouse to be loaded with boxes of fresh food. Since November, EveryStep staff and volunteers have been in many of those vehicles. They're getting food for nearly 120 families and individuals who participate in five of the organization's programs: 1st Five, Connections, Senior Companion, Intake and Maternal Child Health.

Known as Operation Fresh Produce Drop, the distribution of fresh food boxes is part of the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box initiative, which was funded through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. As part of that act, USDA is exercising authority to purchase and distribute agricultural products to those in need. The USDA awards contracts to different product distributors who package the fresh produce, meat and dairy products into family-sized boxes. The boxes are transported to food banks, community and faith-based organizations, and other non-profits serving Americans in need.

In Des Moines, the program is managed by Eat Greater Des Moines, a non-profit group that facilitates and builds connections to strengthen the food system in the Des Moines area, but doesn't deliver directly to individuals.

"We had an opportunity where there is really good food available," said Aubery Alvarez, executive director of Eat Greater Des Moines. "Eat Greater Des Moines doesn't serve people but there are groups and organizations that could use the food for their clients."

Since the USDA program began in April 2020, Eat Greater Des Moines has helped distribute more than 50,000 boxes through 100 organizations. EveryStep is one of those organizations.

“We’ve been partners with Eat Greater Des Moines on a lot of different things,” said Amber Schelling, EveryStep family support manager. “We’re really thankful for that. This food can be a big relief for clients. It can bridge the gap in assistance.”

Schelling noted that if a family or individual who relies on their local food bank is running short on food items before they are eligible to visit the food bank again, Operation Fresh Produce Drop can be a buffer during that time.

“The boxes are going to those who have been identified by us as struggling with food insecurity or other financial hardships. We give them a call and say we have a food box available if they are interested,” she said.

EveryStep staff and volunteers receive 113 boxes to distribute to nearly 200 individuals and families. After they drive through the warehouse, staff from EveryStep’s 1st Five, Intake, and Maternal Child Health programs meet to distribute boxes amongst their teams for delivery to their clients.

The staff members and volunteers have two hours to deliver the boxes to maintain food safety standards. Drop-off for each box is arranged with the client prior to delivery.

While the boxes come assembled, EveryStep staff and volunteers may make modifications based on our clients’ needs. For example, Schelling said that much of the meat provided is pork and some families don’t eat pork for cultural or religious reasons. In that case, the products would be removed and go to another family.

Additionally, many of the clients served by EveryStep’s Senior Companion program live alone, and would not be able to use all of the products available in the box before they go bad. In that case, the boxes may be split between a number of clients.

“The pandemic has been a challenging time to access food,” said Hannah Rivas, Senior Companion program manager. “We’ve had a lot of families looking for resources. This is an opportunity we can offer.”

The current round of food box distributions run through the end of March. At that time, the USDA will award another contract. Eat Greater Des Moines will continue to make sure those boxes are available to organizations like EveryStep.



3 Kevin McCarty, a volunteer with Eat Greater Des Moines, assists Stacey Blitz, EveryStep employee and member of the Nurse Family Partnership team.

4 Stephanie Cassady, a family outreach coordinator with EveryStep, is greeted by a grateful client in February.

\$65,000 Technology Grant will enhance Senior Companion Program

It's been difficult during the pandemic for volunteers in EveryStep's Senior Companion program to provide friendship, support and transportation to elders in their communities. Thanks to a \$65,000 grant from the Iowa Department on Aging, that's changing in central Iowa.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, all in-person visits between EveryStep's Senior Companion volunteers and clients were suspended. Volunteers and program leaders began looking for unique ways they could continue to safely connect with clients. They made no-contact deliveries, wrote notes, and made virtual visits with clients via FaceTime and other video calling programs to mitigate isolation.

But not all volunteers have the technology to conduct such visits. Now, EveryStep's Senior Companion program is using the one-time grant to purchase smartphones for each of its volunteers in central Iowa. The phones will be owned and inventoried by EveryStep. Volunteers will return their phones if they choose to stop participating in the program. EveryStep will arrange for no-contact or small group trainings on the devices for volunteers.



Additionally, the grant will purchase tablets for some of its partnering organizations in central Iowa, such as assisted living facilities or senior housing operators so that residents can utilize the tablets to connect with Senior Companion volunteers.

"We did a survey at the beginning of the pandemic to see if volunteers would be interested in using technology to stay connected," said Hannah Rivas, EveryStep Senior Companion program manager. "Almost all of our companions, even if they weren't comfortable with technology, were excited and willing to learn."

While the grant is specific to EveryStep's central Iowa program, another funding option is being explored to secure similar technology for the same program in southwest Iowa.

Palliative Care Expands to Creston



EveryStep's seven-year partnership with Greater Regional Health has expanded to bring palliative care to patients in the Creston and southwest Iowa areas. Palliative care

is an interdisciplinary medical approach to caregiving that seeks to optimize quality of life and mitigate suffering for people with serious, complex illness. Such services now will be available for inpatient consultations at the hospital, as well as through Greater Regional's Visiting Provider clinic as an outpatient service. The Palliative Care outpatient clinics take place from 8 a.m. to noon the first and third Thursdays of each month at Greater Regional

Hospital in Creston. Patients are referred to the program through their providers.

"We are excited to partner with Greater Regional Health to provide this vital resource to those in our community who could benefit from another layer of organized care and support for patients and their families," said Misha Curtis, EveryStep Hospice team director and Palliative Care director. "By helping patients find relief from the burdens of illness and symptoms, as well as addressing their spiritual care and psycho-social needs, EveryStep and Greater Regional Health hope to fill care gaps for individuals in our community."

Since 2014 EveryStep has managed operations and patient care at Greater Regional Hospice Home, a trusted fixture in the Creston community since 2008.

EveryStep provides a wide range of free grief and loss services for individuals of all ages and families. Events and support groups are hosted by EveryStep Hospice and EveryStep Grief & Loss Services' Amanda the Panda program. To learn what services are available in your area, visit everystep.org or call an EveryStep location near you.

• **EveryStep Hospice offices:**

- Centerville: (641) 856-5502
- Council Bluffs: (712) 325-6802
- Des Moines: (515) 333-5810
- Knoxville: (641) 842-4312
- Mount Ayr: (641) 464-2088
- Mount Pleasant: (319) 385-4472
- Osceola: (641) 342-2888
- Perry: (515) 465-4705
- Winterset: (515) 462-5205

- **EveryStep Grief & Loss Services** (home of Amanda the Panda), West Des Moines: (515) 223-4847

Support Groups

VIRTUAL OFFERING Touching Our Grief is an ongoing, monthly virtual grief support group on the second Tuesday (5:30 to 7 p.m.) or Thursday (5:30 to 6:30 p.m.) of the month. The group is led by expert bereavement counselors. Open to adults who have suffered the loss of a family member or friend and are seeking support, education and a safe place to give and receive support from others. Join at any time to talk about your grief or listen. Call an EveryStep Hospice office near you with questions, or search for meetings at everystep.org/events.

VIRTUAL OFFERING Understanding Your Grief is an eight-week educational program hosted by EveryStep Hospice. Led by expert bereavement counselors, the program helps people learn how to use grief as an opportunity for growth. Participants receive a free copy of Alan Wolfelt's book "Understanding Your Grief" and learn about the 10 essential touchstones for finding hope and healing through loss. Call an EveryStep Hospice office near you for upcoming dates and locations, or search for upcoming meetings at everystep.org/events.

VIRTUAL OFFERING Amanda the Panda Grief & Loss Camp is for children and adults. Camp will be held virtually, April 3-4. Call EveryStep Grief & Loss Services at (515) 223-4847 for details, or visit everystep.org/services/grief-loss.

VIRTUAL OFFERING Living with Loss Dinner Club is a group of guests enjoying their dinner over a Zoom call. Participants are guided by a trained facilitator through discussions that will foster connection in an atmosphere free of stigma and silence. Participants pick up a complimentary dinner from Amanda the Panda Grief & Loss Center in West Des Moines and then join virtually, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Call EveryStep Grief & Loss Services at (515) 223-4847 for details, or visit everystep.org/events. Held March 9 and July 27.

GRIEF & LOSS SOCIAL Socials are a one-time, self-care based activity or experience provided free of charge to current and past Amanda the Panda program participants. Socials do not incorporate grief-focused curriculum, but are instead a chance to get together and have fun to reinforce the idea that joy and grief are both valid and can coexist. Tentative date, June 24. Call EveryStep Grief & Loss Services at (515) 223-4847 for details, or visit everystep.org/events

*Because of You,
the Answer was "Yes"*

- A young mother was transported to Omaha with an EveryStep interpreter to attend her hearing with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.
- A financially supported stay-at-home mother could get a copy of her birth certificate in order to obtain a new driver's license.
- A family received assistance in decluttering their home so a hospice patient could better navigate the space.
- Young moms who had to take unpaid leave due to COVID had their rents paid to avoid eviction.
- Utility payments were caught up for several families at risk of losing those services.

*Your donations work
in four priority areas
within our organization:*

- 1 Innovative Aging**
Providing home and community-based care for the aging
- 2 Emotional Well-Being**
Building resiliency in trauma, grief and loss services
- 3 Family Empowerment**
Creating strong, healthy and thriving families
- 4 Community & Family Advocacy**
Offering education, access and support



Amazing FundRacer Set for May 15

Couples and families, gather your team and get ready to set off on a trek around central Iowa on the morning of May 15 to support the work of EveryStep! It's the organization's first Amazing FundRacer where teams will travel by car in a journey across Des Moines, unraveling clues and completing challenges to move on. Unlike "The Amazing Race" reality TV show, you won't be rappelling down roaring rapids or fighting gladiators, but you might expect to tackle some EveryStep-themed physical and knowledge-based challenges involving our 32+ health and human service programs!

Teams will compete for prizes, as well as enjoy a socially distanced gathering at the end of the morning.

For more details, to become a sponsor or register, visit everystepamazingfundracer.org or contact Maggie Mathiasen, EveryStep Foundation events coordinator, mmathiasen@everystep.org, 515-238-8098.

Save these EveryStep Dates



June 17, 2021 – Echo Valley Country Club (*Registrations numbers will allow for safe social distancing*)
goodgriefgolf.org

Art of Compassion **October 7, 2021** – (Details TBA)
artofcompassioniowa.org

Donor Bill of Rights

To assure that your philanthropy merits the respect and trust you place in us, EveryStep Foundation adheres to the Donor Bill of Rights, a national standard of not-for-profit organizations. EveryStep Foundation carries out its fiduciary responsibilities by:

- Informing donors of the organization's mission and how donated resources are used effectively for their intended purposes.
- Making public the names of the organization's governing bodies and expecting them to be prudent in their stewardship.
- Allowing access to the organization's most recent financial statements.
- Using gifts for the purposes for which they were given.
- Providing appropriate donor acknowledgement and recognition.
- Handling information about donations with respect and confidentiality.
- Maintaining professional individual relationships with donors.
- Informing donors if a volunteer, organizational employee or hired solicitor is contacting them when seeking donations.
- Offering to remove donor names from mailing lists.
- Responding promptly to donor questions with truthful and forthright answers.

About Our Care

EveryStep is a non-profit health care and support services organization offering compassion and guidance during life's most challenging moments. We were formerly known as HCI Care Services & Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa. EveryStep is also the home of Amanda the Panda. Our programs serve more than 67,000 people and every county in Iowa from our offices in Des Moines, Centerville Council Bluffs, Creston, Knoxville, Mount Ayr, Mount Pleasant, Osceola, Perry, West Des Moines, Winterset, and hospice houses in Des Moines and Creston. More than 32 programs offer services such as prenatal education, home visits, home health care, hospice care, grief support, flu immunizations, family support, connection to community resources and other services for infants, children, young mothers, immigrants and refugees, families and seniors.

EveryStep Giving Tree Volunteers Enjoy Community and Connections

They give their time to EveryStep's mission and in return feel valued and supported.

A few months after moving back to Iowa from St. Louis, Nonda Yates stood in line at the post office in Urbandale and looked out the window while waiting her turn. Nonda, who likes thrift store shopping, spied EveryStep Giving Tree thrift store across the street.

She recalls that on her first visit, she knew she wanted to volunteer there because — like the customers she now assists — she was impressed with the layout and the merchandise. Nonda had recently retired and giving some of her time to EveryStep Giving Tree was the perfect fit. Nearly four years have passed and Nonda volunteers three days a week or about 12 hours, running the register, sorting donations, pricing items or completing any other task that needs to be done. But her favorite part of volunteer is visiting with others.

“I really enjoy talking to people and other volunteers,” Nonda said. “This is my social outlet. It’s giving back to a great cause, and it’s a fun place to volunteer.”

Glenda Pohlpepter retired from her job at the same time her son — who she saw every day, frequently for dinner — was in a new relationship and not often around. She no longer felt that she was needed.

“I was sitting around not doing much,” said Glenda. Then she and a friend ventured into EveryStep Giving Tree. “They needed volunteers and I thought ‘I could do that,’” she recalls. “The people there were nice and the store was clean. It was a great opportunity.”

And with that, Glenda became a volunteer at EveryStep Giving Tree, where she’s been helping since 2017. “I’m kind of a jack of all trades,” she said. “I sort and price, I steam clothes, I work the register, and whatever is needed, I do.”

In fact, Glenda also helps with computer work, tracking volunteer hours when she’s not occupied with other tasks. And at home, she crafts one-of-a-kind items for the store from donated fabric and notions that don’t sell, returning with aprons or pet bandanas the store can sell.

While Glenda enjoys her time at EveryStep Giving Tree, she says it’s not the work that keeps her coming back. It’s the people.



Nonda Yates connects with customers at the check-out desk at EveryStep Giving Tree.



Glenda Pohlpepter readies an assortment of attractive women's tops to go onto hangers and out on the racks at the upscale resale shop.



Nonda and Glenda invite you to join them as volunteers. For those concerned about volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic, Nonda notes that she feels safe at the store as there are several precautions in place. “We wear masks, social distance, take temperatures and limit the number of people shopping,” says Nonda. If you’re interested, visit www.everystep.org and complete a volunteer application.

EveryStep 
Giving Tree

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EveryStep Honors Iowa's Oldest Living Female Marine

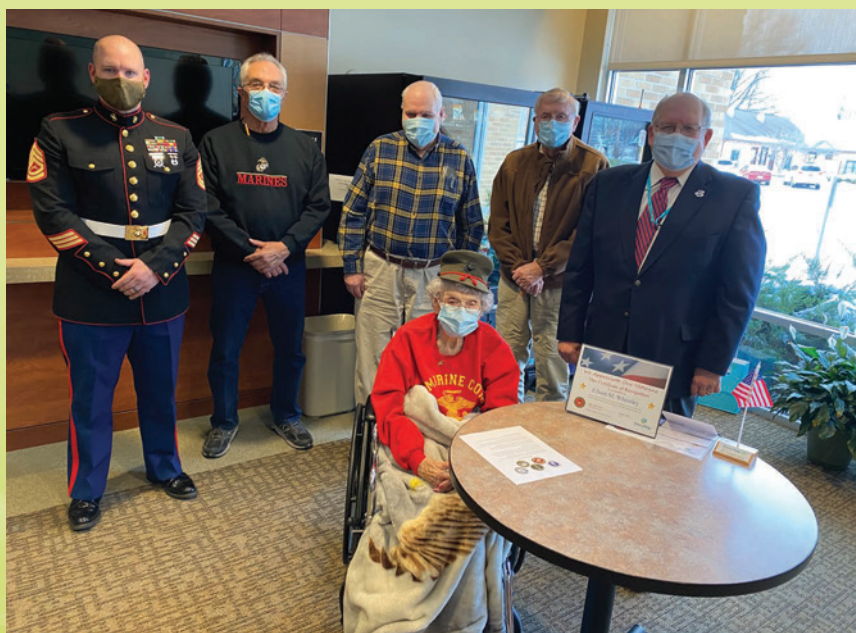
At the height of World War II, 24-year-old Elleen Smith (now Elleen Wheatley) was not content to stay at home while her twin brother served in the Pacific and her new husband served in Europe. So she joined the United States Marine Corps in 1943 and served until the end of WW II in 1945.

Now, at 103, Elleen is the oldest living female Marine in Iowa, maybe the entire United States. She's an EveryStep Hospice patient now residing at the Greater Regional Hospice Home in Creston, and she was honored this year with a veteran pinning ceremony attended by family, friends, EveryStep staff and staff at Madison County Memorial Hospital in Winterset.

But back in 1943, she simply wanted to do her part for her country, and so she enlisted on July 1. After basic training at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, Elleen was assigned as a quartermaster at the Marine Corps Auxiliary Air Station

Mojave in California. When she and her husband were discharged in 1945, they returned to Iowa, first to Iowa City and later settling in Lamoni. The couple had one son, Monte.

After her husband was killed in a small plane crash, life was difficult for Elleen and her son, but she maintained that God took care of them. She later remarried and enjoyed life on her husband's farm before he died of a heart attack. She found love again when she was seated next to her future son-in-law on a flight to Iowa from St. Louis. Gerald Wheatley took her contact information and passed it along to his father Lester, who invited Elleen to go dancing. The couple was married for 32 years before Lester's death in 2015.



EveryStep Hospice patient Elleen Wheatley, 103, was honored with a veteran pinning ceremony recently, recognizing her service in the U.S. Marine Corp. during World War II. Elleen was joined by GySgt James Meaney, USMC, (Des Moines Recruiting Station), Nick Nicotero, friend (former USMC), Jerry Sieck, family member (former US Army), Dr. James Kimball, family member (former US Army), and, Chris Nolte, volunteer coordinator, EveryStep Hospice Osceola/Winterset (Former US Air Force). The ceremony was conducted at Madison County Memorial Hospital in Winterset Iowa.

Elleen, who continued to live on the Wheatly farm in Marne for many years, enjoyed living each day, and she gives thanks for all that she has experienced, even the difficult times.

EveryStep's veteran pinning ceremonies provide honor, dignity and recognition to veterans at the end of their lives. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, family members and friends were often on hand with EveryStep staff and volunteers during the celebratory events. The ceremonies included the Pledge of Allegiance, a prayer of thanks, the awarding of a veteran service flag pin, the singing of "God Bless America," a reading of "What is a Veteran," and the presentation of a certificate of recognition. During the pandemic, the ceremonies have been adjusted to adhere to safety precautions, enlist the use of virtual participation options, and honor social distancing protocols.

Pam and Dan Sargent: 30 Years of Providing Donor Support



In the 1980s when JoAnn Zimmerman, program founder of EveryStep Grief & Loss Services' Amanda the Panda program, told stories of children needing an outlet for grief after a loss, it impacted the heart of Pam Sargent. She

and her husband Dan have now supported the healing journeys of others for more than three decades.

"I heard her speak through a program I was involved in at the time," Pam said. "It struck me that this was important. So I proceeded to donate through the years."

Whether joining in at an Amanda the Panda Grief and Loss Camp, donating to the program or arranging for support group dinners, the Sargents have always been willing to lend a hand to the program. Pam has even driven from her home in Ames to ensure that the dinner she's providing for a grief support group arrives safely at the EveryStep Center Grief & Loss Center in West Des Moines. More recently, the Sargents have been contributing to the Cheer Box program both with gifts and monetary donations.

Since being introduced to the Amanda the Panda program Pam has known and connected with many people who have been impacted by it, including many grieving Iowans who have attended support groups or received Cheer Boxes during the holidays.

Pam recalls an instance when she realized the impact the program could have on someone's life. A widow who married a family friend had attended Amanda the Panda Grief and Loss Camp with her children. As she interacted with other adults at camp, the remarried woman realized how different her journey was from someone who hadn't had grief resources available to her.

"Death is a part of our life, but we are so unprepared for it," she said. "That told me that we need this. People aren't getting the help they need."

It's Amanda the Panda's mission to serve others that continues to fuel Pam's support.

"It's important for people to have somewhere to go after someone dies," she said. "I know Amanda the Panda started for kids and now has expanded to adults and whole families, that's good. It's so important for kids to have an outlet, I love that."

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