UnityPoint Health® – Waterloo team members honored for making our FOCUS Values come to life every day.

ALL-STARS

OCTOBER 2018 – FEBRUARY 2019

Front row, L to R: Brenna Allen, 3-Heart; Paula Owens, Emergency Dept; Minnie Bennett, Radiology; Darla Orum, Radiology; Barb Jacobs, Ambulatory Services (Allen Hospital); Amy Meier, Medical Records; Hannah Truniger, 4-Surgical; Kayla Kramer, Volunteer; Ashley Day, Nutrition & Dining; Lori Jensen-Hoeg; Community Cancer Center

Back row, L to R: Christina Rolfes, Neurosurgery; Brent Raidin, Spiritual Care; John Ferrell, 3-Heart; Tony Harting, BHGMHC Integrated Health Home; Dr. Pankaj Nagaraj, Neonatology; Tom Eachus, BHGMHC; Dawn Biggs, 3-Heart; Jobi Bates, Patient Access; Dee Van Besien, Pediatrics; Tera Sheetz, Pediatrics; Abby Lukas, Social Svcs

Not pictured: Ahmed Alwassia MD, Pulmonology; Russell Buchanan MD, Neurosurgery; Isabel Ceras, 3-Heart; Tarek Daoud MD, Nephrology; Thomas Gorsche MD, Orthopedic Surgery; Gopi Kota MD, Radiology; Arun Muthusamy MD, Digestive Health Center
Brenna Allen, 3-Heart: Brenna helped care for a patient who had recently been diagnosed with cancer and the patient and family made the tough decision to move him to hospice. One particular day, Brenna was not his primary nurse but she checked in on his wife and family. He had a large family and they had been on the unit all day. Brenna noticed they hadn't eaten all day. She ordered pizza for the family out of her own pocket and refused to take any money from her team members. This is just one example of Brenna's commitment to her patients.

Ahmad Alwassia, MD – Pulmonology: Dr. Alwassia came to 3-Heart to see a patient who needed a thoracentesis and Dr. Alwassia asked the 3H team to assist him. He did an awesome job of explaining exactly what he needed for the procedure and was very patient with the nurses. He did a great job explaining the procedure step by step to the patient and when the patient told him it was hurting, he proceeded a little slower. We also had nursing students who were observing the process and he took time to explain to them why he was doing what he was doing, what he was looking for and what he suspected for a diagnosis. It was great to see a provider taking time not only with the patient but the nurses and students.

Jobi Bates, Patient Access/Guest Relations (Allen Hospital): A patient’s wife came to me yesterday and told me she had spent the night here with her husband. When she went out to check on her truck, the windows had all been cleaned off and there was a note that said go get a bite. The woman at the front desk.

Minnie Bennett, Radiology: One day last September I stopped at Allen’s X-ray department to pick up copies of my angiogram from 2016 to take with me for my Mayo Clinic appointment. It was my privilege to be helped by Minnie! I had a doctor appointment across town in 40 minutes. When the disc was not in her area, she called the Cath Lab, located it and requested a copy as soon as possible. When they called saying it was ready, Minnie said, "I'll go get it and be right back." I was in a wheelchair and getting a volunteer would take a bit of time. She was soon back with the disc and in a couple minutes a volunteer was there to take me downstairs to meet my driver. I made it to my appointment across town in the nick of time. Minnie is a wonderful ambassador for your hospital. She goes "the extra mile" with a smile and kindness. She is a positive ray of sunshine in a world that grows more negative every day. The lady downstairs at the information desk was also very pleasant and helpful; a very good first person for visitors and patients to meet. Keep up the good work! Kindness goes a long way but rudeness goes nowhere.

Dawn Biggs, 3-Heart: In July 2017, one of the nurses on Dawn’s unit, Crystal Permann, BSN, RN, was deployed to Kuwait for 14 months. She left at home a husband and four children under the age of 8. Fast-forward to September 2018 — Dawn’s daughter is a Kindergarten teacher at Starmont Elementary. Crystal’s daughter is in Dawn’s daughter’s class. When Dawn heard from her daughter that a Mom who has been deployed for 14 months was coming home and surprising her children at an all school assembly, Dawn put two and two together and figured out it was Crystal. Crystal was dressed up as the school mascot, a Star, and Crystal’s children were selected to have a special role to watch the mascot reveal. Dawn, with literally moments to spare, had gained permission to come to the assembly to surprise Crystal and welcome her home. The video she took is incredibly touching, the kids screaming and running to their Mom, the hug they shared, the music in the background, and the cheers that were deafening. What Crystal said to Dawn is also touching from a leadership perspective, “What are you doing here? I can't believe you came to see this.” That's how we live our FOCUS values – knowledge is the point of responsibility and we know that every life matters. It’s the power of moments. We celebrate with each other, share heartaches with each other, stand beside one another and walk arm and arm with one another each and every day. Thank you to Dawn for not only seizing an opportunity, but for capturing it on video so we could all share in the celebration. Thank you to Crystal for serving our country and to Dawn for caring so much about those she leads.

Russel Buchanan, MD – Neurosurgery: Dr. Buchanan routinely allows many PT/OT students observe his Lumbar fusion surgeries throughout the year, teaching them during the procedure. Our students consistently
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give excellent feedback regarding Dr. Buchanan and these great learning experiences. I appreciate his willingness to have an active part in our student PT clinical internships Allen Hospital.

Isabel Ceras, 3-Heart: While working one day, I went in to visit a patient I had brought up from the Emergency Department earlier in the week. The patient asked me to recognize Isabel. He reported that Isabel was always "one step ahead." The patient raved about her and how thankful he was for her care. He also told me he felt as if Isabel, "knows what I need before I even realized I needed it. I know this care is not limited to just me." He reported Isabel showed him such amazing care and compassion, far greater than he had ever received in the past. He was hopeful I would share this recognition to show how great an impact Isabel makes on our patients.

Tarek Daoud, MD – Nephrology: A patient reflects upon a lifetime of compassionate care by Dr. Daoud in this beautiful letter which demonstrates the Art of Medicine is truly honorable. Thank you, Dr. Daoud for being a role model for all Physicians in Waterloo.

I am writing to laud one of the finest physicians I have met in my nearly 40 years as a nurse and as a family member – Dr. Tarek Daoud. Dr. Daoud has been caring for our family for a number of years, first as the renal specialist for my youngest brother, Mike, who was diabetic from childhood and, after his kidneys failed, was on dialysis until my oldest sister was approved and donated her kidney. After many years, that kidney failed and he again went on dialysis. Dr. Daoud always dealt with Mike with great expertise but also humor, and he and Mike were the best of friends. We were so overjoyed when Mike received a kidney/pancreas transplant in Iowa City, rendering him no longer diabetic. He has enjoyed good health since. However, my mother went into renal failure approximately 14 years ago when it was discovered one of her kidneys had never developed and was not functioning. It is remarkable she has survived and been able to live a quality life for so long and we attribute that to the attentive and expert care of Dr. Daoud. He is not only an outstanding practitioner, he is a great communicator, explaining actions and choices to our family, listening and being open to suggestions or requests. We consider him a part of our family, with our mother’s best interests at heart. Our deepest gratitude goes out to him; we know he is the reason she, at 87 years of age, is still able to enjoy life and share wonderful family times with us (her 10 children and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren). I would be remiss if I did not mention Renae, Dr. Daoud’s trusted nurse and colleague, who returns all the calls, uses her excellent judgment to sort things out, is in touch with Dr. Daoud for timely and pertinent orders, and follows him all over the area to serve populations in other towns. What a team they are and we are so very lucky to be blessed by their care and friendship.

Ashley Day, Nutrition & Dining Services: Ashley owns the moment every single day. I cannot think of one situation where she hasn’t gone above and beyond to help the patients, nurses and family members when she is answering the phones in the diet call center. Ashley makes everyone she comes in contact with feel important and you can feel her smile through the phone. She is also an awesome team player in the department. She has helped on the tray line in times of need, come back and worked an extra shift to help and even came back at 8 p.m. to take an employee home who agreed to work a double and had no transportation. I am very honored to have Ashley as a part of my team and I watch her exhibit all of the FOCUS values every day. Thank you, Ashley, for doing what you do and truly making a difference at Allen.

Tom Eachus, Black Hawk-Grundy Medical Health Center: Unfortunately, I do not the whole story. I wish I did. What I do know is, one day in November 2018, a patient left the ICU against medical advice and spent a good portion of time down in the waiting area by entrance 1 trying to obtain a ride. The patient was wearing hospital issue scrubs and socks. At one point, I observed Tom outside with the gentleman. I am not sure if Tom was familiar with the gentleman prior to this or if he just observed him outside with no shoes on. Later in the day, I saw Tom following behind this gentleman and a woman. I found out later that Tom had taken the gentleman to volunteer services and gotten him a pair of shoes and he also had literally given him the coat off
his back. The amount of compassion Tom demonstrated in this moment is truly a testament of his selfless devotion to helping all of mankind. We are truly lucky to have Tom as part of UPH.

John Ferrell, 3-Heart: John attends Allen College and is a student nurse tech on 3-Heart. One night, John was scheduled to work and ended up being the only tech on the floor. He not only cared for our 20 patients but also played valet for a patient’s visitor. The visitor could not walk very well and needed to get to her car. John offered to go get her car and bring it up to entrance 5. John is a great tech and will be a great nurse. We are lucky to have him on our unit.

Thomas Gorsche, MD – Orthopedic Surgery: Dr. Gorsche routinely allows many PT/OT students observe his TKA surgeries throughout the year, teaching them during the procedure. He also offers the opportunity for them to observe another surgery after the TKA. Our students consistently give excellent feedback regarding Dr. Gorsche and his great learning experiences. I appreciate his willingness to have an active part in our student PT clinical internships at this facility.

Tony Harting, BHGMHC Integrated Health Home: Tony has recently been working with an IHH member who has been going through a difficult time with substance abuse and increased mental health symptoms. One afternoon in mid-November 2018, Tony went over to this member’s home to see how he has been doing. When he arrived, Tony noticed this member was quite depressed and not acting like he usually does. It turned out the member had overdosed on his medications due to worsening depression and suicidal thoughts. Tony immediately took him to the emergency department to have him evaluated as he had taken a significant amount of medication. He stayed with the member for several hours into the evening to make sure he understood what was going on and to provide support as needed. A few days later after the member was discharged from the hospital, Tony went over to the member’s home to see how he was doing. While there, Tony noticed several medication bottles that were full and hadn’t been touched, and the member’s insulin was being taken incorrectly. Tony immediately assisted the member with figuring out which medications he was to be taking and helped him contact his pharmacy to set up a weekly medication box that will be delivered to the member’s home to prevent this from occurring in the future. Tony assisted the member with collecting the extra medications and with properly disposing of them by taking them back to the pharmacy. He spent a lot of time with this member over the past month to make sure he is doing OK, feeling less depressed, and taking all his medications as prescribed. Tony has gone above and beyond in many ways, but providing extra support to this member has made a difference to him in many different ways. Thank you, Tony, for all you do each and every day.

Barb Jacobs, Ambulatory Services (Allen Hospital): Barb was scheduled to work January 31, 2019. Barb lives on a gravel road which had not been plowed as the trucks were taken off the roads due to extreme temperatures. Barb was drifted in her driveway but because of her dedication to Ambulatory, she walked a quarter mile to her neighbor’s house in bitter cold weather to get a ride to work. The shock and awe of the department when learning this was responded to with a humble response by Barb, “Well what was I supposed to do, I would feel bad calling in.” Thank you, Barb, for your dedication to your team and patients.

Lori Jensen-Hoeg, Community Cancer Center: I want to acknowledge Lori as an outstanding member of our team at the Community Cancer Center. She has a heart of gold and would go the extra mile for any patient. She found her calling when she came to join our team. Recently a patient came to our clinic after getting off the wrong bus stop. He was to be at a clinic down the road a few miles. After numerous phone calls to the clinic he had an appointment with and the bus department, we were unable to get transportation for him to get to his appointment. Although we may not have followed the correct policy, Lori did what was best for the patient at the time. Lori went above and beyond to get the patient what they needed and took the patient in her own car a few miles down the road to his appointment. You are amazing and I love working with you.

Gopi Kota, MD - Radiology: In December 2019, our ultrasound technologist scanned an infant inpatient. It was an abnormal exam and at about 6:45 p.m. she went to find a radiologist to review the exam. He very willingly looked at the exam and came to scan the patient himself “after hours”. He communicated with the provider and the necessary plans were made immediately for the baby. This was an example of excellent
patient care because of the quick turnaround time and immediate physician review. All of this took place with Dr. Kota in under half an hour, demonstrating his commitment to the Allen team and our patients.

**Kayla Kramer, Volunteer:** Kayla has been, above and beyond, such an important piece to our Young Parents Together program. She has taken her role and added wings. She was once a YPT participant and has shared she just wants to give back. She engages with the participants whenever there is an opportunity and never hesitates to take care of a task. She looks for what needs to be done at each YPT session and jumps in. Every Monday she has to make sure her children have childcare so she can volunteer. She recently recorded a video for us to share with our local Cedar Valley Empowerment Board of Directors to show the value of Early Childhood Family Education and Support. She is very reliable, and often stays longer than expected just to make sure all the participants’ needs are met, whether it is holding babies so parents can get their things together, or assisting them in carrying groceries out to the taxi. Recently, when told to take the day off, she made a special trip in any way to bring a birthday cake she made from scratch for a participant. She has no problem making our parents feel special. It was difficult to pick just one FOCUS value to credit her with when Kayla exemplifies all of them! Thanks to Kayla for her service and the smile that comes with it!

**Abby Lukas, Social Services:** Abby spends her time at UnityPoint Health – Waterloo demonstrating her care and compassion toward others. For over a week, Abby had been providing care to a difficult patient with multiple life dynamics. While in the hospital, the patient refused to discharge to skilled care and was unsafe to return home. She appealed her discharge to remain in the hospital. One could see how easy it would be to become bitter toward this patient but Abby took a different approach. She sat with the patient and explained her mental health diagnosis, building a relationship and trust. Although the patient lost her appeal, Abby was able to discharge her to skilled care. This great story does not stop here. One of the barriers the patient identified was not having appropriate clothing to participate in skilled care. Abby had a box of clothing in her trunk she intended to take to Goodwill. Abby brought the patient clothing to wear and feel comfortable wearing while participating in therapies and care. Our social work team is so grateful and thankful that Abby shares her talents and love with our patients. Thank you, Abby.

**Amy Meier, Medical Records:** Amy owns the moment every day in Medical Records. When people come to the desk, they have a short form to fill out, but they are never too thrilled about it thinking it's going to be a hassle. I always tell them if they have any questions to leave it blank and Amy will be more than happy to help. Amy always comes out the door with a smile and a, "Can I help you?" Right away, the guest starts to feel at ease and they can tell Amy is the type a person who is caring, and understanding. She sits by them and answers any question for them they might have. A lot of our guests request records of loved ones who are deceased and the person is still grieving. Amy spent an hour with a young lady whose baby had died at three months of age. The young lady sat and talked and cried about the tragic passing of her child. Amy listened like she always does with compassion and empathy. Today we had a lady who lost her husband of 60 years and was trying to figure out how to go on with her life, and when she left we were both in tears. It's not always a depressing situation though. Amy always gets her customers laughing as well. She has never rushed anyone or made them feel like they were taking up too much of her time. She makes good conversation and makes receiving medical records a good experience.

**Arun Muthusamy, MD – Digestive Health (Logan):** Fridays are usually Dr. Muthusamy's office days and Dr. Patel scopes here at the hospital. One Friday in January 2019, Dr. Patel came in feeling terrible but being committed to his patients he refused to go home. Dr. Muthusamy was notified and within minutes he left the office and came to help scope at the hospital. He turned the day around so fast we didn’t even know what happened. The day went so much better with the friendly help from one doctor to another! We are so lucky to have this awesome doctor join our team and be more than willing to help when needed. Thank you for the expertise and knowledge you have brought to Allen. There have been many tough cases I have accompanied you with but one that particularly stands out is a 2 a.m. GI bleed. I appreciate the fact you prepared us the night before and gave a heads up. When we were doing the procedure you explained what you were seeing and although you say it helps you it really helps the whole team. We are able to better understand what we are seeing and what to look for in these emergency cases. I believe your way of scoping truly helps for better care.
for the patient. It not only helped that night but also for future patients. Knowledge is power and you are helping to build a powerful team – thank you!

**Pankaj Nagaraj, MD – Neonatology:** In June 2018, I had a baby eight weeks early. I had developed HELLP Syndrome which meant I needed to deliver. After our beautiful baby girl arrived, I got to hold her for about 30 seconds before she went straight to the NICU. My fiancé and I are first time parents we didn't know really what was in store for us. I can't thank the Allen NICU nurses and Dr. Nagaraj and Mbi enough. The care Dr. Nagaraj gives truly exemplifies our FOCUS values. Every day I would get there and no matter how busy he was he would greet me and say, "I will be in to talk to you soon." He talked to me about progress and he actually asked me how I was doing. I got to know the NICU nurses and learned so much from them! I even see them in the hospital and they ask me how our daughter is doing. Dr. Nagaraj gave me his cell and he still gets texts and calls from me. He has always put our baby and myself at top priority even with his busy schedule. We have been truly blessed for the great care we received in the NICU. Our daughter has now started daycare and is doing great. There are days I still think how did we do it? It was because of the staff and doctors. Our life has been changed but only in the best way possible. I wanted you to know how GREAT Nagaraj and staff are; the same with Hintz’s office. We can’t wait to come to the NICU reunion next year. THANK YOU Dr. Nagaraj, you truly are a life saver and we are forever grateful for everything!

**Darla Orum, Radiology (Allen Hospital):** Darla noticed an elderly couple and their son had been in our waiting area for a while and went to find out what they were waiting for. The wife was originally a Hold & Call CT patient awaiting results, but also told Darla she was having unrelated surgery after the CT. The CT results were reported and then the family was waiting to be taken for the direct admission for surgery. In the meantime, Darla had gone to lunch and returned only to find them still waiting, so she went over to admissions inquiring why she hadn't been admitted yet. Come to find out, the doctor's office had put the patient on the schedule, but hadn't told patient access this lady was coming today. There was a date change due to all the bad weather we had recently. Anyway, Darla found out for the family what was going on, helped make the appropriate phone calls, kept them informed, of which the son was so appreciative, and was a big part of getting them where they needed to go. I observe Darla do similar things like this for patients almost every day, but to this family it was a very big deal, as you saved them from waiting any longer than they did! Thank you so much for treating them like they were your own family!

**Paula Owens, Emergency Department:** A patient presented to the Emergency Department not to be seen but looking for someone to show her how to use her crutches as she had an upcoming surgery the following week. Paula came out happy to help the patient. She adjusted her crutches and showed her how to use them. This is Paula every day! She is always there to help out and does whatever needs to be done. When you come in and see she is working you always know it will be a great day no matter what. Paula is very appreciated!

**Brent Rairdin, Spiritual Care:** During a code blue, I was able to witness the impact staff can have. The daughter of the patient referred to Brent as her angel. She stated, "You are truly our angel. You were here when my mom had a stroke months ago and you are here now. Whenever things were going bad, you were there for us." The daughter was so appreciative of the compassion, reassurance, empathy, and presence of Brent. It meant the world to her that he was there to support her during her mother's last breath. Brent always does a great job providing patients, staff and families with compassion, empathy and a listening ear. I am so grateful for him being here to provide comfort to anyone who needs it. I agree with the daughter, he is truly an angel.

**Christina Rolles, Neurosurgery:** I helped fill in at the CVMS Surgery office. I have not done office nursing for a VERY long time plus I am not proficient with the Epic office system. Christina was a life saver! She unselfishly helped me when I needed it. Believe me, there were MANY times! EVERY TIME I sought her out she would drop what she was doing without hesitation to help me. (I know she had her own work to do.) Something else I also noticed about Christina is she truly has a smile in her voice. She Fostered Unity by helping out a hospital nurse in an office setting so we could get the patient what they needed. Christina definitely Owned the Moment on many occasions dropping her work to assist me and she Championed Excellence by sharing her office expertise when I needed it. Christina Seized EVERY Opportunity to help me. Overall, every time I needed to
be in the office, I was comfortable because I knew Christina would be there if I needed her. You are a true asset Christina!

**Tera Sheetz, Pediatrics:** Tera had taken on a new role within our department as a home health nurse. She takes all her previous experiences and uses them to excel at this position. We get patients she see at home admitted to the hospital and she is always checking up on them and willing to assist them in any way they need. We recently had a patient on the pediatric floor who had nothing but fantastic stuff to say about Tera – "Tera is like part of our family. Our other kids just adore her. She weighs the girls baby dolls, always has fun lotion for them to try and is continuously educating and supporting us." Tera will do anything and everything to make sure her patients receive the best care. Her positivity is contagious. Not only does Tera educate her patients but she is a great educator to the nurses on pediatrics. She has great tools in her toolbox that she is eager to share with us. All in all, Tera is going above and beyond and is a great addition.

**Hannah Truniger, 4-Surgical:** Hannah is a new tech to UPH and since day one she has been a rock star! Hannah is recognized daily during patient rounding for her great sense of humor, her care and compassion toward our surgical patients and for always having a smile on her face and a positive attitude. Hannah is also frequently recognized by the RN's on the unit for always being a step ahead and can always be counted on for completing her work timely and accurately. Lastly, Hannah is frequently seen in patients' rooms who are not technically assigned to her but when she sees a light go on she'll answer it knowing her team mates are busy. Hannah is every manager's "dream" team member!

**Dee VanBesien, Pediatrics:** This is from a Daisy Award Nomination: "My daughter was admitted for severe asthma attack and viral lung infection. She needed to be placed on a machine to support her breathing and she needed fluids. Staff were amazing and tried for several hours to establish an IV access. Dee was called from home around midnight. She came with a smile on her face. She was greeted by my husband informing her that this will be attempt #13. She replied that is our lucky number. Yes it was. She got the needle in on first attempt. She was kind enough and came another time at 7 a.m. to place another one after the first went bad. Thank you, Dee, for shining light on a dark situation. We are very grateful. Pediatric staff were awesome but Dee was the star during that night.