



# HORIZONS

*Community Newsletter*

Comfort, dignity and compassionate care

SUMMER 2024

## PROVIDING THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF CARE

We are honored to be entrusted with caring for our community, from the time someone is diagnosed with a chronic illness through hospice care. This past year, Hospice of the Valley served more than 26,000 patients and their families. We are enhancing quality of life with patient-centered care, education and innovative programs that anticipate healthcare needs and deliver specialized care. Your unwavering support enables and inspires us to carry out our nonprofit mission: *Bringing comfort, dignity and compassionate care to our community.*



*Isabel and her social worker, Judith Alcala.*



*Volunteer Nancy Kelso and Coco with Rich, an Adult Day Club member.*



*Adnan and his nurse, Tara Molina.*



## COMMITTED TO OUR LEGACY OF CARING



*Debbie Shumway*



*Beth Warne*

It's been a year of growth for Hospice of the Valley.

More families are turning to us for compassionate and personalized care at all stages of illness. On any given day, we are privileged to serve more than 7,000 patients and support their loved ones throughout their healthcare journey.

We are expanding in the Tucson area and creating unique programs to bridge gaps in our healthcare system. Our teams are raising awareness of the services we offer even before hospice care is needed.

Hospice of the Valley continues to earn national recognition for providing the highest quality of care. Committed to excellent care and continuing education, we are proud to have the highest number of staff certified in hospice and palliative care in Arizona. Our focus on education within our agency and community remains a top priority.

As the only nonprofit hospice in Maricopa County, our commitment to caring for all in need sets us apart. Our generous donors, volunteers and staff helped us provide \$14.4 million in charity care and community services this past year. We stand ready to meet our community's evolving needs — it is our honor.

Thank you for supporting the important work Hospice of the Valley started 47 years ago. We look forward to supporting our community for many years to come.

**Debbie Shumway**  
*Executive Director*

**Beth Warne**  
*Board President*



*We are honored to serve Tucson patients and families with a team that is part of the community.*

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## RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN CARE

Feedback shared from families and caregivers in Medicare surveys has earned Hospice of the Valley a prestigious honor that recognizes the best hospices in the country. All four clinical offices and nine inpatient care homes are recipients of **Hospice Honors/Honors Elite Awards** for setting the highest standard of excellence in patient care and caregiver experience.

“This speaks volumes to the countless hours of care our teams dedicate to deliver outstanding care that supports patients and their families with kindness, meeting their individualized needs,” Education Director Kathy Roat said. “It takes a team of highly trained and caring individuals to deliver this care consistently, day in and day out.”

## COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS SUPPORT PATIENTS' NEEDS

We provide a continuum of care to support people at earlier stages of illness and ensure a safety net for those in need. Our 1,800 employees and 1,600 volunteers are dedicated to serving our growing community with skill and compassion.



*Fernando and his nurse, Gloria Curtis.*

### Before hospice services are needed

**Geriatric Solutions:** Physicians and nurse practitioners make house calls and provide primary care services to patients who find it difficult to visit a doctor due to frail health or advanced age. This program also is a lifeline for high-risk patients living alone.

**Your Health Connection:** This in-home mobile practice brings medical services to home-limited patients wherever they live. Our skilled teams serve vulnerable children and adults who cannot easily access care.

**Arizona Supportive Care:** We work with patients' doctors and specialists to enhance care, manage symptoms and ease the struggle of living with a chronic illness. Our physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and social workers provide in-home support while patients are receiving treatment for their illness.

### Hospice care

Every day, families tell us they wish they had come to us sooner. Compassionate hospice care is provided in the home setting or in one of our inpatient units, helping patients live life to the fullest. Our doctors, nurses, social workers, nursing aides and chaplains specialize in individualized care to meet each person's unique physical, emotional and spiritual needs, while supporting their loved ones.



*Preschoolers and Day Club members at our Dementia Campus love spending time with each other.*

### Dementia care

**Supportive Care for Dementia:** In-home clinical and emotional support for families caring for a loved one with any stage and type of dementia. A dementia educator makes home visits to share helpful resources, teach new ways to communicate and reduce caregiving stress. This growing program is provided at no charge.

**Dementia Care and Education Campus:** Enhances quality of life by providing caregivers with education, support and resources, while their loved ones enjoy socialization and engaging activities like music, art and pet therapy. This fully integrated campus extends our dementia support out into the community and serves families with a Community Education Center, Memory Café, Adult Day Club, Assisted Living Center and the Levine Home for hospice patients. Our childcare partner, the YMCA, supports our intergenerational enrichment program.

### Care for all

All programs are supported by our after-hours clinical teams. This critical service gives our patients peace of mind, knowing we can meet urgent needs any time of day or night, including weekends and holidays. For questions on any of our programs, visit [hov.org](http://hov.org) or call (602) 530-6900.

## STRENGTHENING PATIENT CARE FOR ALL

With robust educational programs and innovative partnerships, we share our expertise with health providers, invest in the next generation of healthcare professionals, and equip caregivers with knowledge and resources. Here are some of our unique offerings.

### Immersive experiences

Our Hospice & Palliative Care Social Work Fellowship offers community social workers a chance to shadow Hospice of the Valley social workers visiting their patients. They learn firsthand the vital support social workers provide to patients and caregivers living with chronic and terminal illness. One fellow shared: “The time spent with seasoned hospice social workers watching how they do their work, how they relate to patients and family members, was invaluable.”

We also offer direct experience to nursing and medical students through rotations, internships, additional fellowships and college curriculum developed by Hospice of the Valley.



*Nurse practitioner Belinda Ordoñez mentors students.*

### Making meaningful connections

Hospice of the Valley medical and clinical directors teach a special course at University of Arizona and Creighton University medical schools. Fourth-year students are paired with our hospice patients to learn crucial skills while spending time together — fostering empathy, building relationships and developing human connection in medicine.

“The opportunity to engage with a patient on hospice has been inspiring,” one medical student said. “What a privilege it is to be able to reflect on one’s legacy and find joy in life.”

### Dementia Care Fellowship



*Improv enhances communication for people living with dementia. Dementia Care Fellows delight audiences of all ages during intergenerational programs at our Dementia Campus.*

In 2018, Hospice of the Valley began awarding annual fellowships to assist community leaders in developing and implementing “change projects” that broaden knowledge about dementia. Some of the 2024 Dementia Fellows are translating dementia-education materials into Spanish and offering bilingual training; working closely with African American churches and bringing workshops to the community; providing dementia training to 911 operators; teaching communication techniques through improv; and educating hospital nurses.

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Our hope is to deepen an understanding of living with cognitive impairment. We have seen numerous change projects positively impact the lives of families touched by dementia.

— *Kristen Pierson, Education Director,  
Dementia Care and Education Campus*

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*Celebrating our newly certified staff at Desert Botanical Garden is an annual tradition at Hospice of the Valley.*

### Professional development

We are grateful for our employees' dedication to earning certification in hospice and palliative care. Hospice of the Valley has more than 130 certified staff, including nurse practitioners, registered nurses, nursing assistants and social workers. Certification demonstrates expertise in their specialties and a commitment to providing exceptional care. We are proud to be the leading hospice in Arizona in certifications and to support our staff in their professional growth.

### Community outreach

Our programs offer education to professionals and family caregivers — teaching best practices, elevating patient care and providing compassionate support and vital resources. Classes, workshops and support groups are offered virtually and in person — at the Dementia Campus and throughout the Valley. We also created 11 videos to demonstrate how a personalized approach is more effective in preserving dignity, instilling trust and enhancing quality of life. Now, we are producing these videos in Spanish, to meet needs in the Hispanic community. Many resources are available online. Visit: [hov.org](http://hov.org) and [dementiacampus.org](http://dementiacampus.org)



*Pastor Karen Stewart, a dementia outreach educator, provides support and resources in the African American community.*

“

I have avoided getting help as a caregiver, thought it would be too hard and sad. This was the opposite. Dementia education has empowered me to do better with my mom.

— *Family caregiver*

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#### **Horizons Editor**

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### 'Choose Your Person' initiative

Sharing your medical wishes and choosing a healthcare advocate give families immense peace of mind. We continue to host community events with Contexture to help hundreds of Arizonans complete and register their advance directives. We also partnered with Banner Health on National Healthcare Decisions Day, April 16, with two educational workshops. Details: [chooseyourperson.org](http://chooseyourperson.org)

## VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF OUR AGENCY

Dedicated volunteers started our agency in 1977 and remain foundational to our mission. Our 1,600-plus volunteers enrich our care and serve as ambassadors for Hospice of the Valley.

### Volunteer Appreciation Events



*Honoring some of our longtime volunteers.*

Every spring, we look forward to celebrating our volunteers — from those new to our agency to others who have served for over 45 years!

Volunteers say their experience is rewarding in immeasurable ways. “Seeing how Hospice of the Valley supports patients and families inspired me to volunteer 15 years ago,” Judy Purdy said. “Numerous friends have been blessed by the care they received.”

### Expanding into Tucson



*Our new Tucson volunteers.*

We recently welcomed our first Tucson volunteers. “They are filled with compassion and will truly make a difference in the lives of our patients and families, providing companionship, music therapy and respite care,” Volunteer Services Director Stacia Ortega said.

### Saluting Our Veterans



*Ned, 101, is saluted by volunteer Rodney and son-in-law Sam.*

Vietnam War Marine veteran Rodney Dehmer joined our Salutes volunteer program over 10 years ago to personally thank our veteran patients for their service and sacrifices. “There’s a brotherhood and we appreciate each other.” He recently paid tribute to Ned, a World War II Army veteran whose unit won a Bronze Star for heroic actions on D-Day 80 years ago.

### Enhancing Quality of Life



*Volunteer Mike is like a best friend to Lin, an Assisted Living resident.*

Mike Ondracek found his calling volunteering at our Dementia Care and Education Campus. He loves spending time with our Assisted Living residents, listening to their life stories, coloring and reading together, and taking walks in the courtyard. “The smiles that I see on their faces fills my heart. This is the place where I need to be each and every day.”

## GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND TO CREATE MOMENTS OF JOY

Our care teams thrive in celebrating their patients and discovering what is meaningful to each of them.

### Symphony gift strikes a chord



*Violinists played songs that Stuart longed to hear.*

Nurse Kirsta Johnson knew Stuart would be thrilled by a live performance in his home. She partnered with the Phoenix Symphony to send two acclaimed first violinists to play his favorite songs: “If I Were a Rich Man,” “The Phantom of the Opera” and many more.

“Dad had a day that will never be forgotten,” daughter Heather said. “We were reminded that there are people in this world who go out of their way to make miracles happen.”

Stuart is now attending live concerts again with his daughters. “I’ve rediscovered music, and it has awakened me to the fact that there is still so much good in my life.”

### Celebrating a centenarian



*Our team surprised Glenna and Walter with a birthday party.*

Walter’s care team celebrated the 100th birthday of the World War II veteran in style. First, he and wife Glenna were serenaded by our music therapist. Then, he was surprised with a letter from another veteran, U.S. Sen. Mark Kelly, who said: “A trip around the sun is always something to celebrate.” The former astronaut added that Walter’s “selfness, patriotism and courage... have long defined the character of the United States.”

### Wedding bells in the park

An ordained minister, nurse Bobbee Noland was honored to renew the vows of her patient, Larry, and his wife, Paula, on Valentine’s Day, their 38th anniversary.

The couple shared their heartfelt gratitude for their care team. “They’ve saved my life,” Paula said. “They’re not only professional, they’re loving and caring. We love them like family.”

### Storyteller finds an ‘agent’

When declining health made it hard for our patient, Trenton, to complete his novel, chaplain Keith Voss turned to Information Services for a solution. The team refurbished a laptop and showed Trenton how to use dictation. That’s all it took for the former nurse to complete and self-publish his book, “Song of the Mime.”

Trenton jokes his chaplain is more than an advocate: “He is my agent!”



*Trenton and his wife, Toni, appreciate chaplain Keith’s spiritual support.*



*Larry and Paula were remarried by Bobbee on Valentine’s Day.*



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## Special *Events*

A sold-out crowd raised a record \$700,000 to support Hospice of the Valley's charity care programs, including \$280,000 to help families living with all stages of dementia. Auctiontainer Letitia Frye sparked excitement as generous bidders vied for exquisite art, luxury trips, fine wines and unique experiences, then danced the night away to Nate Nathan and the MacDaddy-Os. The signature fundraiser was held April 27 at the JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn.



### Hospice of the Valley Pro-Am Golf Tournament



Presented by Cigna Healthcare, the 26th annual tournament raised \$53,000 to help provide compassionate care to patients and families in need. The March 28 event drew 30 wonderful threesomes and 30 talented pros to Grayhawk Golf Club. The tournament, created and chaired by volunteer Jay Hoselton, has raised over \$1 million since 1998. Heartfelt thanks to all of our sponsors and players!

*View photos at [hov.org/events](http://hov.org/events)*