

# COMMUNITY BENEFITnews



A PUBLICATION FOR STAFF

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John Balzer,  
Volunteer and  
Community Builder



**community education**  
Coordinator Earns  
UWM Partnership  
Award

## partnership IN ACTION

### High School Students Gain Life Experience at Froedtert

Expectations are sky-high for students at Carmen High School of Science and Technology, where classes and programming are geared toward college success.

As a Carmen School partner, Froedtert Hospital plays a critical role in Carmen students' academic and career development. Since the charter school opened in 2007, Froedtert has provided 12 students with an opportunity to build work experience and life skills while earning scholarships for higher education.

"Our students are getting their first professional experience before they even get to college, and that gives them a real leg up," says Bevin Christie, director of the Student Internship and Scholarship Program at Carmen. "The internship experience Froedtert Hospital offers is invaluable to our students and so appreciated by our school."

This school year, five Carmen students are interning one full day each week in a schedule divided between the GI Lab, Gift Shop, pharmacy, and nursing floors, most often providing clerical support. Students must be in 10th grade or higher and maintain at least a 2.5 grade point average for eligibility in the program. In addition, they must arrange to make up the schoolwork they miss on their internship day.

"Many of our students are interested in the health care industry," says Bevin. "Froedtert has placed them

in a variety of areas, including the emergency department, social services, and the birthing center. They get a chance to see all aspects of a hospital and understand the wide range of career options there."

Froedtert staff members say the students become a valuable, reliable resource within their departments. "The students are a big help in doing some of the clerical tasks we don't have much time for, and that allows us to focus on the work we need to get done," says Sandy Gregory, 3NW. "We appreciate their help tremendously," adds Judy Sablich, GI Lab. "We really want them in the GI Lab."

Patricia Hoben, Carmen's Head of School, notes that work experience is part of Carmen's mission to be a place where any student with a desire to attend college can build the necessary skills to do so. Carmen's approach to learning is patterned after a model created by Alverno College. Students develop 8 Abilities, such as communication, problem solving and social interaction, and apply them in both academic courses and "real world" internship settings.



*Carla Lopez, a senior at Carmen*

**JOHN BALZER**  
 Vice President, Facility  
 Planning and Development

## Volunteer and Community Builder



Like many who volunteer their time, John Balzer's commitment to community service comes from his heart. However, his passion for the mechanics and maintenance of buildings has taken him down a road less traveled in service activities. John has helped Milwaukee Public Schools evaluate its empty buildings for potential re-purposing, and the School Sisters of St. Francis develop smart maintenance strategies in apartment homes for the physically disabled.

John is vice president, Facility Planning and Development for Froedtert Health. He's been involved in dozens of design/construction projects over his 31 years at Froedtert, including the new Clinical Cancer Center. Not surprisingly, it was the completion of the original hospital in 1980 that led him here. "I was drawn to Froedtert's beautiful new hospital building," he says. "I was teaching math and science at the time, but I'd also been working in maintenance at the school for many years. I left teaching to become a maintenance supervisor on the night shift at the hospital."

A lifelong resident of Milwaukee, John has always made community service a priority. "I've learned that when you have time, it will fill up. So, if you're passionate about something, you need to set aside time to do it," says John. "Once you start doing that, it becomes part of your routine and your life."

John has served as a member and president of the board for the Wauwatosa Economic Development Corporation. Currently he is on the board of "Tosa

Tonight," where he enjoys organizing the free, family-friendly outdoor concerts in the summer.

As board vice president for Progressive Community Health Centers, John has a vital role in the Centers' policy and strategy for the future. With two city locations, the nonprofit health center is a critical health care resource for low income and uninsured individuals in the Milwaukee community. "One of the things I'm most excited about is that half of the Progressive board is comprised of users of the health center," says John. "Because of that, our dialog at our board meetings is great—really insightful. I love that we are all focused on one goal: doing the right thing for patients."

John's years of service experience have taught him how he can be most effective. "It's good to give back, but be careful that you don't dilute your value by splitting your time and doing too much," he explains. "The more involved I've become, the more I realize how fortunate I am, and how great the need is in the Milwaukee community for a whole range of resources."

Jenni Sevenich, Progressive CEO says, "John Balzer is an incredible source of support for our health center and the people we serve. In addition to his role on the board and leading our CQI committee, John goes 'above and beyond.' He and his staff have provided occasional project management expertise and John even requested donations to Progressive in lieu of gifts for his 60th birthday! He is an advocate and a servant leader."

## Students Gain Life Experience

"We want to create an opportunity for students to rise to their true potential," explains Patricia, who is also one of the school's founders. "Students who attend Carmen know it's about preparing them for college, and most of them will be the first in their families to go. In our graduating class of 30 this year, all were accepted into four-year colleges."

In the four years that Carmen High School has been open, eighty-eight percent of its students have come from families that are at or below state and federal poverty levels. Most live in households in which English is a second language. Froedtert's financial contribution supports a college scholarship account for the interns as well as an after-school program for students who need access to computer labs or additional academic tutoring.

Carla Lopez, a senior at Carmen, has interned for two years at Froedtert. "I've really loved my internship experience, especially the work in the Gift Shop assisting with the balloon and flower arrangements," she says. Carla plans to attend college in Madison, Milwaukee or St. Louis after graduation this coming spring.

"The Froedtert staff provide our students a warm welcome, and in just a short time, they become like their second family," says Bevin. "The relationships our students form and the entire internship experience will have a lasting impact on their lives."

## Charity Care Meets Critical Need

Connie Osman has never been afraid of hard work. As the right-hand woman in her husband's home construction business in Burlington, she handles all kinds of jobs, from concrete demolition to mudding drywall. On December 20, 2010, they were working together on a large renovation project when Connie experienced abdominal pain so acute her husband rushed her to the local hospital. Her situation quickly became more complicated when two days later her kidneys began to fail.

"The cause of my illness was a mystery, and my life was slipping away. My condition became so critical that the doctors strongly recommended moving me to Froedtert," says Connie. "I was uninsured and I was dying, and Froedtert was willing to take me in. I will be forever grateful."

Connie was admitted to Froedtert Hospital's ICU on December 22. Medical teams from several specialties quickly began her care, including dialysis treatment, but they were unable to pinpoint a cause. By January 5, Connie's condition had stabilized enough for her to undergo laparoscopic surgery.

At that point, Froedtert's team made the diagnosis: Connie had a large, ruptured cyst on her ovary. With the removal of both cyst and ovary, the otherwise healthy 54-year-old was able to end her dialysis treatment and go home just five days later.

During Connie's stay, Froedtert's patient financial services team talked with her husband. The Osmans' construction business was struggling with the slow economy, and the couple had little opportunity to purchase health insurance or build savings. The team determined that Connie was eligible for 97% charity care for her hospital stay and follow up care at Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin, which totaled over \$200,000.

Connie returned to work just 10 weeks after her trip to the emergency room. Over the summer, she was able to enjoy one of her hobbies: planting and working her three gardens. And, nearly one year later, she's made a full recovery.

"I've always been a healthy, fit person, so this illness swept both my husband and I off our feet," says Connie. "My experience at Froedtert was incredible. Everyone I met was personable and kind. I could not have been more impressed."



**“The cause of my illness was a mystery, and my life was slipping away. My condition became so critical that the doctors strongly recommended moving me to Froedtert.”**

*Connie Osman*

## Education Coordinator Earns UWM Partnership Award



*Pictured (L to R) Laila Azam, intern Natalie Paly, Jane Hendricks, and interns Mashere Gainer and Katie Friese*

Education coordinator Jane Hendricks, R.N., coordinates the placement of nearly 350 college students in career-building internships throughout Froedtert Hospital each semester. Recently, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee College of Health Sciences honored Jane with its Community Partnership Award for her work. The internships are a requirement for students' graduation.

"Jane is very efficient and effective in placing UWM Health Care Administration interns at Froedtert Health," says Mary K. Madsen, Ph.D., R.N., FAAIDD, professor in UWM's College of Health Sciences. She is an excellent resource for us." The Community Partnership Award represents UWM's appreciation for the support Jane and Froedtert provide to the College of Health Sciences and its students.

Jane has coordinated Froedtert's affiliation agreements with local colleges and facilitated placement of students from nursing, physician assistant and health care administration programs for nearly 16 years. "I'm always meeting interesting people, and I love being part of the great team here," says Jane. "It's rewarding to see the connections being made, and hear how the students and our managers are learning from each other."

Froedtert Hospital admitting manager Laila Azam first met Jane during her undergraduate internship in 2006 while working in the hospital's educational services department. Only the first step in her career at Froedtert, Laila went on to work in the nursing staffing office while in graduate school and then as an administrative fellow after completion of her master's degree. "Jane has always been very willing to answer my questions and share advice," says Laila. "She's a good communicator and a good mentor. And, my internship was the start of a great career!"



## HIGHLIGHTS



### Habitat for Humanity

Through the Froedtert Cares community service program, 38 staff from bone marrow transplant, urology and several other departments volunteered a total of 210 hours at Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity between August and October. The organization rehabilitates (or builds) homes, with low-income families along with other volunteers. By clustering the houses, they have the opportunity to renew the neighborhoods where the homes are located. Habitat builds houses primarily in the Amani, Harambee and Washington Park neighborhoods of Milwaukee. Their mission is to 'build and renovate simple, decent and affordable homes, in partnership with people in need.'

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Habitat and their homes are constructed almost entirely by thousands of volunteers that are mobilized each year. To date, over 425 homes have been built for Milwaukee families. "Milwaukee Habitat was honored to have staff from Froedtert Hospital volunteer with our organization on the build site," says Katie Kowolski, volunteer services director. "The volunteers worked hard; framing walls, hanging exterior siding and painting. Because of Froedtert's volunteer efforts, we were able to serve 75 families through our new construction and A Brush With Kindness programs. We look forward to working with more volunteers through Froedtert's community service program."

### Community Giving Campaign

Over 500 staff at Froedtert Hospital contributed to our 2011 Community Giving Campaign. We raised \$72,880 in support of the United Ways of Greater Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Washington Counties, and the United Performing Arts Fund. These organizations represent nearly 200 local community based organizations that provide safety net services to diverse populations, improve overall quality of life, and help strengthen communities.

The Froedtert Health system raised over \$180,000 for our communities and exceeded our system goal by nearly 25%! The top five United Way agencies receiving directed donations through the staff campaign were: Community Outreach Health Clinic, Jewish Family Services, Hunger Task Force, Sojourner Family Peace Center and The Salvation Army. Thank you for your participation in this very successful campaign!

### Blood Drives

2011 saw another successful year of drives with the BloodCenter of Wisconsin. Staff at Froedtert Hospital and Woodland Prime donated a total of 415 units of blood this year.

## WHAT IS COMMUNITY BENEFIT?

Community Benefit is most commonly defined as: "a planned, managed, organized and measured approach to a health care organization's participation in meeting identified community health needs. It implies collaboration with a "community" to "benefit" its residents—particularly the poor, minorities and other underserved groups—by improving health status and quality of life.

Froedtert Hospital's community benefit framework is to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve through healthcare programs and services that are measurable, accessible and culturally appropriate; recognizing the greatest opportunity for impact is in Milwaukee's underserved, urban population.

Froedtert's community benefit department focuses on addressing health disparities, community capacity building and programs that train the next generation of healthcare workers.

To find out how you can get involved with the **Froedtert Cares Community Service Program**, please contact **Jean Davis-Mallett** (805-0445 / [jdavisma@froedterthealth.org](mailto:jdavisma@froedterthealth.org))

Stay informed about Froedtert's community benefit programs by visiting **[froedtert.com / About Us / Our Commitment to Community](http://froedtert.com / About Us / Our Commitment to Community)**, or through the Intranet under **Inside Froedtert**.

