A letter from a grateful mental health patient

Doctor makes case for basic needs assistance

Taking down cultural barriers to better health
Friends like you make Regions strong

At this year’s Wine Auction I was honored to spend time with Billie Young, a great friend of Regions Hospital. Billie served as a valuable member of the hospital board for many years and provided leadership for the HealthPartners Neuroscience Research Campaign. She continues to advocate on our behalf. As an accomplished author she has written books about our services, bringing our story to the community. She also donates generously to Regions Hospital Foundation and has made a provision in her estate plans to ensure Regions Hospital can meet the future needs of the community.

Community members like you and Billie allow Regions to continually improve. It was your advocacy earlier this year that encouraged the Minnesota legislature to approve the addition of 55 bed licenses at Regions. With the local population both growing and aging, the need for our unique services continues to increase. We have already started putting those beds into service to care for our most critically ill and injured patients.

We’re also grateful for your charitable contributions. Philanthropy funds programs, equipment and facilities that help fulfill our unique mission, which includes serving as your Level I Adult and Pediatric Trauma Center and the safety net for our community. Because of you, patients receive the best care, families are involved and engaged in care, and our experts can explore solutions to some of our most pressing health challenges.

People like you and Billie inspire me every day. Thank you for your tremendous support!

“...the need for our unique services continues to increase.”

Megan Remark, President and CEO, Regions Hospital, and Billie Young at the 2018 Wine Auction
A mental health patient says “thanks”

“I want to express my deepest thanks to Regions Hospital and all the staff members that helped me deal with my extreme depression and anxiety. Literally they saved my life.

“In mid-March I nearly took my life and viewed my friends and family as being better off without me. My son and a friend brought me to another local hospital, and I soon asked to be moved to Regions.

“The staff treated me with dignity and compassion and assured me they were there to help. Each and every one of them showed concern for me and my sickness. Each and every one of them tolerated my resistance to their help. Every staff member would approach me and listen to me talk. I can’t believe their patience.

“Judy, a nurse on the mental health units, convinced me that I should attend DayBridge to continue my care, and Dr. Wiger supported that as well. [DayBridge provides intensive therapy to adults who can stay at home.] About the fourth day, during a class session on negative thinking, an instructor said some things that penetrated my sick brain. From that day on I engaged in the program and gleefully accepted all the help everyone gave me. I graduated from the program on April 24, and Regions helped arrange for continued counseling in a local clinic.

“For 17 years I was an airline transport pilot and for the last 25 years I have been a real estate broker and developed subdivisions. I have always thought I was “Top of My Game” but now realize there are situations in life that require professional knowledge and help.

“I owe my life to the Regions Mental Health Department.”

—David Peters
Donations support hospital’s mission to serve everyone

For Jerome Siy, MD, the most fulfilling assistance you can give to other people connects with them on a personal level. That’s how he came up with the idea of providing patients with access to a washer and dryer at Regions Hospital to wash their clothes.

Dr. Siy is the department chair for hospital medicine at HealthPartners. One patient he was caring for repeatedly left Regions inpatient care against medical advice and then returned. During one of his visits, Dr. Siy asked him what he wanted to focus on for his recovery.

"He said he wanted to stop drinking and get his clothes washed," Dr. Siy said. "It’s such a human need: to feel clean in body and spirit. Why couldn’t we have a spot to let patients wash their clothes, especially for those who only have two sets, one for summer and one for winter?"

Underpinning Regions Hospital’s award-winning care is its long history as the East Metro’s safety-net hospital, serving everyone who walks through its doors. Charitable contributions play a key role in this mission by bridging gaps in care, providing comfort and easing burdens.

Philanthropy allows us to assist patients in need with food, rent, electric bills, clothing, medications and transportation expenses. Donations also support the training of staff in culturally-sensitive care, integrative therapies such as massage and acupuncture, and programs that help families grieve the loss of a loved one.

$16.3 million
The amount of charity care costs provided by Regions Hospital in 2017

52,535
The number of patients assisted by this charity care
“Providing these programs is the right thing to do,” Dr. Siy said. “We want all of our patients to feel respected and cared for. It is also the right thing to do for their health. We know that patients have better health outcomes if they are supported in these ways.”

According to Dr. Siy, the health of a community depends, in part, on hospitals like Regions that look out for everyone. “Our social fabric is stabilized by schools, churches, health care systems and parks, and everyone has a duty to stabilize the social fabric,” he said. “Supporting hospitals that serve everyone’s health is an important part of that mission.”

Serving everyone’s health can include the simple act of helping patients wash their clothes. Regions Hospital’s Rehabilitation Institute is making Dr. Siy’s vision a reality by making a washer and dryer available to patients. “It’s not the same as giving someone new clothes,” he said. “I want to give people the ability to help themselves.”

DIVA Mom speaks at Birth Center groundbreaking

Everyone deserves a fair shot at being healthy. Regions partners closely with communities of color and other too-often unheard voices to meet the different healthcare needs of different populations.

One organization Regions works with is DIVA Moms (Dynamic Involved Valued African-American Moms). Based at West Side Community Health Services, DIVA Moms is an innovative community program addressing disparities in birth outcomes among African-American women in St. Paul.

Shauntae Thompson, a perinatal care navigator with the DIVA Moms team, spoke at the groundbreaking of the new Regions Hospital Birth Center on October 3 (see the back cover for more details on the new facility). “DIVA Moms builds on the long standing partnership between Regions Hospital and the community clinics,” Thompson said. “As Regions breaks ground on a new building, it is also time to break down old patterns of distrust and to build inclusion and cultural creativity. Through grounded community partnerships, like that with DIVA Moms, the hospital creates meaningful spaces where all members of our community feel welcome.”
Life-long connection to Regions inspires estate commitment

Regions Hospital has always been a part of Carol Lundstrom’s life. Her father taught anatomy to students of the Ancker Hospital School of Nursing, which was located on the hospital’s campus before closing in 1976. At 13, Carol began volunteering at Regions. After a 42-year career at the hospital and HealthPartners, she was inspired to make an estate commitment through Regions Hospital Foundation.

“Regions is a fabulous organization,” Carol said. “I know how much a contribution to the hospital can make a difference and want to encourage others to give as well.

“It’s my experience as an employee that gives me such loyalty to Regions,” Carol said. During her career she experienced many facets of the hospital, working as a clerk, ER nurse and nurse practitioner in outpatient clinics. She retired in 2014, finishing her career as the director of information services for HealthPartners Care Delivery Systems. “I worked in so many places and saw all the good work being done here.”

Carol’s family is jam packed with members who worked at Regions. In addition to her father, Carol’s long-time partner was an ER physician, as is his daughter, Rachel Dahms, MD, who also helps educate ER residents. Before deciding on the designation of her estate commitment, Carol consulted closely with her sister, Nancy Miller, who has worked at Regions for 40 years.

Half of Carol’s estate commitment will go toward the greatest needs of Regions Hospital patients. “Contributions to Regions Hospital Foundation fill many gaps that exist in the world today. To me, that’s important,” Carol said. “In contributing to the foundation, patients in need can get prescriptions, a cab ride home, or a lift to a shelter. As an ER nurse I saw a lot of that.”

The other half of Carol’s gift will help fund the Gloria Fox Nursing Scholarship and Ancker Hospital School of Nursing Memorial Scholarship. These awards help Regions Hospital employees either pursue a career in nursing or further their current nursing career.

Your savings, your legacy

If you are 70½ years or older, you can use your individual retirement account (IRA) to support our cause while avoiding taxes on transfers of up to $100,000. To learn more, call us at 651-254-2376 or visit our planned giving website at rhflegacy.org.

THANK YOU for contributions to our nursing scholarships!
Anne Mkalama, RN was honored in 2018 as one of Regions Hospital's "Nurses of Excellence" by her peers and leaders. A native of Kenya, Anne has been a nurse at Regions since 2009 and is passionate about her work. "I like to make a difference in people's lives," she said. "I gain satisfaction when I see patients improve and get back to their normal lives."

In 2014, Anne received a Gloria Fox Nursing Scholarship to help continue her education. At the time, Anne's mother was ill and required increased medical care, creating an additional financial burden for Anne.

With the help of the scholarship, Anne received a bachelor of science in nursing degree and is currently a doctor of nursing practice student at Augsburg University. She also stepped into a leadership role as a charge nurse on Regions Hospital's S8 unit, which primarily serves cardiology patients.

"The additional education has improved my clinical, research and leadership skills and critical thinking, which has helped me provide high-quality care to patients and their families," Anne said.

Carol notes two reasons she gave to the scholarship funds. "I wanted to recognize my Dad. Teaching nursing students was near and dear to his heart. I also wanted to help give nurses the knowledge they need to provide the best care."

"I had so many wonderful opportunities in this organization. I'm very grateful and I want to give others the same opportunities."

Scholarship recipient becomes Nurse of Excellence

Anne Mkalama, RN was honored in 2018 as one of Regions Hospital's "Nurses of Excellence" by her peers and leaders. A native of Kenya, Anne has been a nurse at Regions since 2009 and is passionate about her work. "I like to make a difference in people's lives," she said. "I gain satisfaction when I see patients improve and get back to their normal lives."

In 2014, Anne received a Gloria Fox Nursing Scholarship to help continue her education. At the time, Anne's mother was ill and required increased medical care, creating an additional financial burden for Anne.

With the help of the scholarship, Anne received a bachelor of science in nursing degree and is currently a doctor of nursing practice student at Augsburg University. She also stepped into a leadership role as a charge nurse on Regions Hospital's S8 unit, which primarily serves cardiology patients.

"The additional education has improved my clinical, research and leadership skills and critical thinking, which has helped me provide high-quality care to patients and their families," Anne said.
New birth center to open in spring of 2020

On October 3, Regions Hospital broke ground on a new birth center. Designed with the families we serve in mind, the birth center will allow us to provide exceptional care to mothers, babies and visitors alike, all in a warm, welcoming environment. It will include larger birthing suites, dedicated spaces for families and visitors and expanded care for moms and babies that need it most. The new birth center will also allow us to better honor the birth traditions and cultures of all women, allowing them to have their birth their way.