Our Vision

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center volunteers are community ambassadors for healthy lifestyles and compassionate living. Volunteers serve patients, support families, and assist staff in striving to fulfill our mission with caring, competence, and dignity.

The Volunteer Services Department also serves as pathway for the development of community growth avenues for current and future employees through professional internship opportunities as well as sponsorship and scholarship programs.

People

Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center volunteers make up a diverse population from 13 – 90 years of age, from high school students to retirees in the Greater Bangor region, who are dedicated to giving back and supporting the Northern Light brand promise to make healthcare work for everyone. Our volunteers put patients and their families at the center of their service commitment, while also supporting staff so they can deliver top quality care. We celebrate each person on our volunteer team for all they do.

In FY21, 173 volunteers donated 17,777 hours of service across 58 service roles at the Medical Center. Additionally, nearly 800 community volunteers and 125 salaried employees donated 22,414 hours to the community vaccination clinics.

*Other includes 16 various assignments such as Library Services, Pet Therapy, Gift Shop and Caring Calls. Community Clinics are not included.*
These thoughtful community members provide their skills in clerical and administrative support, direct patient care and enrichment activities, and support tasks at the hospital on State Street; Northern Light Health Center, Union Street; Lafayette Family Cancer Institute in Brewer; and community vaccination clinics at the Cross Center and Union Street Healthcare Mall.

Additionally, we are proud to celebrate the diversity of not only our volunteers, but our patient and staff community as well. This year we were honored to partner with Patient Experience to design and distribute more than 1,000 preferred pronoun buttons across our Medical Center and offsite practices to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts being led by Northern Light Health.

**Honoring Extraordinary Service**

**Thanking Our Village**

Historically, spring is the time of year when we pause and celebrate the dedication and service of our volunteers with our Annual Recognition Dinner. Unfortunately, for the second year in a row, we were not able to gather as a group in 2021 due to COVID-19. Instead, we had to find creative new ways to pay tribute to our wonderful volunteers. We decorated the Community Kiosk on Grant 2 on State Street with our colorful “Maine Made Me Dedicated” banner and asked staff to write notes of gratitude that we could share virtually with our volunteers. Volunteers received a token of our appreciation and their contributions were celebrated in the employee newsletter, hospital intranet, and local media. We had so much fun celebrating all our volunteers’ service across the medical center and at the community clinics during Volunteer Week April 18-23 with gifts, accolades and volunteer features spotlighted on the HUB!

Additionally, 925 volunteers donated 22,414 hours of service to our Community Vaccine Clinics at the Cross Center, helping us save lives by vaccinating more than 100,000 members in our community. The efforts were recognized by the City of Bangor! And many of our volunteers continue to support the vaccine effort at the Union Street Walk in Vaccine Clinic, demonstrating that it truly does “take a village.”

**Larry Malone Luminary Award**

In 2020, we created the Larry Malone Luminary award to recognize one outstanding volunteer who inspires not only through their dedicated service at the Medical Center, but through their character as well.

**The Northern Light Larry Malone Luminary Award** celebrates our volunteer community by honoring an individual who demonstrates extraordinary compassion, dedication, kindness, and generosity of spirit, helping to light the way for improved patient experience through their volunteer service.

Phil Provost has been a steady and enduring member of the Medical Center’s volunteer community for more than 16 years, donating 3,700 hours of service between the Medical Center on State Street and Lafayette Family Cancer Institute. A warm and gentle presence to all he meets, Phil’s compassion and unique passion for service...
is only matched by his keen mind and curiosity. At Northern Light Cancer Care Research Institute, he has taught himself about genetics and learned how to best fit into the needs of the team and better serve the organization. Phil exemplified his adaptability during the pandemic when he stepped up to help our team onboard 1,000 community clinic volunteers. He took on this intensely manual clerical task with passion and curiosity, working quickly to keep up with applicant volume and finding new ways to streamline reporting.

Before the pandemic, Phil was an active member of the hospital’s therapy dog program with his first dog, Rascal, and second dog, Dash, and along with his wife, Peg, has provided care and compassion to many patients. After all, even as an engineer, Phil knows that some things can only be fixed through empathy and canine companionship. Phil models what can happen when you approach each day with curiosity, compassion, and a mind for solving problems big and small.

Congratulations, Phil, on being selected for the 2021 Larry Malone Luminary Award, and to all of this year’s nominees!

In memoriam

Earlier this year, Volunteer Services and the Medical Center community mourned the unexpected passing of a special volunteer, Nancy Golding.

Occasionally, we welcome someone to our volunteer services community who goes above and beyond what’s expected. Nancy Golding saw the human need in all that she did at the Medical Center and spent her time working tirelessly for more than 2,000 hours of service, applying her joyous smile and can-do grit to all she tackled. But Nancy wasn’t simply satisfied to show up for her chosen shifts. She knew that she could apply her creativity and spirit to designing and launching new programs that would benefit our patient community, particularly Northern Light Cancer Care where she has spent the bulk of her volunteer time. Nancy pioneered a strong and lasting service partnership with the Cancer Care team, deepening our support for those in need. She helped found the Resource Ambassador Program and the Patient Lunch program. Nancy helped spearhead the Surgical Services Family Liaison program which serves to create a friendly and reassuring connection between loved ones, staff, and patients for outpatient surgery. Understanding how confused and lonely cancer patients can sometimes feel, she worked to help better our programs and the lives of all those she encounters. Prior to her time volunteering with us, Nancy spent more than 30 years at the Bangor Daily News, rising from a sales representative to advertising sales manager at the time of her retirement.

Nancy will be missed not only by Medical Center staff and her loved ones, but also by the countless lives she impacted during her time volunteering. Her enduring impact on the hospital and the many programs we offer will go on, carrying with it a glimmer of her special brand of kindness that we have all grown to cherish.

In December 2020, we were saddened to learn of the passing of Maizy, one of our beloved pet therapy volunteers. This beautiful black Newfoundland volunteered with her humans Larry and Deanna Wade for nine years and retired from service last spring after clocking more 1,500 hours and 700 visits between the hospital on State Street in Bangor and at Northern Light Cancer Care in Brewer. Maizy was well known by patients and staff alike for her calm, loving demeanor, and the joy she brought to our employees and patients, especially the children. One employee recounted a special visit she had with Maizy when a family member was being

2021 Luminary Nominees:

- Nancy Golding
- Phil Provost
- Herb Skidgel
- Larry Wade
- Maggie Wiken
cared for at the Medical Center. “Maizy came right over and plopped her big, soft, fluffy head in my lap and looked up at me with the most beautiful eyes,” recalls Brenda Gammon. “I wrapped my arms around her and slid to the floor to full on hug her and sobbed. She just let me cry and hold her. And Larry, too, was so nice and so kind. Everything felt ok after that interaction. I just needed a safe moment to let out my feelings and Maizy was exactly what I needed, and she knew it! I will never, ever forget it.” Thank you to the Wades for sharing your beloved four-legged therapy partners to bring comfort to our staff and patients, and to Maizy, for the love and light you brought to so many.

Four-legged Therapists

When you imagine comfort within the walls of the Medical Center, most people think of the caring presence of medical staff, unexpected laughter between a patient and a visiting family member, or the sun peeking through a cloudy Maine day bringing brightness into a dark room. But, to many of our patients and staff, comfort comes in the form of four paws and a wagging tail. Therapy dogs play an important role in fostering an environment of healing and emotional support. Since its introduction in 1999, our Pet Therapy program has grown into a beloved service bringing volunteers and their registered therapy dogs to our patients when they need an emotional boost.

Staff often find that a visit from a therapy dog might be helpful for a wide variety of conditions, including patients in rehab, those in end-of-life care, or those who have general anxiety about being in the hospital. While most of our therapy dog teams round on units like Acute Rehab, they also take requests. When our volunteers took a temporary hiatus from volunteer service at the start of the pandemic, some of those missed the most were our furry volunteers. Therefore, they were one of the most celebrated groups when our volunteers began to return to the Medical Center. We are proud to have a fantastic team of therapy dogs and their handlers, so we welcomed their return with the distribution of Therapy Dog Trading cards so our patients and staff could learn more about these special four-legged volunteers!

Recently, one of our pack members, Myles, beloved companion and volunteer partner of Mary Warner, MD, retired from service. Myles and Dr. Warner have been volunteering together at our Medical Center since 2018. Since 2018, Myles has provided 100 hours of service at our Medical Center, visiting staff and patients, before COVID-19 put a halt to his visits. When Dr. Warner was asked to share some of her fondest memories visiting with Myles, she recalls, “My favorite patient interaction has been with a woman in Inpatient Rehab for four months following a life-threatening illness. After months of weekly visits, we got to know the woman and her husband, who always looked forward to Myles’ visits. We’ve since remained in contact and have even visited them as the woman has gone on to enjoy an excellent recovery.”

One of Myles’ favorite things has been interactions with the nursing and support staff. “I think the nurses love the therapy dogs even more than the patients do,” Dr. Warner says. In addition to their visits here at the Medical Center, Dr. Warner and Myles also volunteered at Phillips-Strickland House, an assisted living facility.
According to Dr. Warner, his Golden Years will be full of naps, sofa time, and leisurely walks with his new brother, Dobby, a two-year old Portuguese Water Dog who just passed his Therapy Dog Certification and was recently welcomed as the newest member of our therapy dog team at EMMC! On behalf of the staff, patients, visitors, and the Volunteer Services team, thank you for your service, Myles; enjoy your retirement!

Student Volunteer Summer Program

Summer 2021 flew by and so did our annual high school Student Volunteer Program! Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we doubled the number of volunteers from last year, with 90 students from 13 area high schools.

In just eight weeks, our students dedicated over 6,000 volunteer hours to the Medical Center to help in various roles across the medical center. They transported materials, delivered surgical instruments, served patient trays, provided clerical support, lent a hand in the library, assisted in the Gift Shop, and rounded on patients throughout the hospital. They participated in a Stop the Bleed skill building workshop, explored future careers in healthcare during a Career Exploration Day, and even shadowed surgeries in the OR (thanks to the Sterile Processing Team)! In addition, they raised more than $640 at their two bake sales, with proceeds going to the patient library and outreach programming through Volunteer Services and Patient experience.

Over their eight weeks, our five Student Managers also developed Passion Projects, which focused on something in the health care sector that inspired their curiosity and would positively impact the Medical Center. Their projects ranged from creating career exploration pathways through shadow opportunities, informative department video interviews, and career days, to launching a Care Cart and designing a healing arts outreach program through Volunteer Services.

We are grateful to our hospital leadership and the 28 departments who welcomed students this summer to help them explore futures in healthcare. We had the privilege of witnessing many students who were inspired by their experiences throughout the hospital, and that would not have happened without our employees’ support.

Community

COVID-19 Vaccination Effort

In addition to the hundreds of healthcare workers and leaders who supported each of our Bangor clinics, nearly 100 volunteers served daily at more than 80 clinics, helping in a variety of roles. Our clinic volunteers represented various local businesses, organizations, schools, the City of Bangor and our own NLH employees, donating more than 22,000 hours to help vaccinate the Maine community. The success and sustainability of these clinics truly required a village!

Clinic volunteers served a variety of both clinical and non-clinical roles, such as COVID symptom screeners, line traffic
managers, appointment validators, check-in staff, pharmacy techs, clinical observers, and more.

Both Dr. Nirav D. Shah and Governor Janet Mills visited our vaccination site in Bangor and had a wonderful, positive experience. During one visit, Dr. Shah shared, “This is really remarkable; it’s exactly what was needed at the right place, at the right time. One of the reasons I wanted to come here today was to learn, so I’m honored to come and learn about all this myself.”

Other community initiatives that our volunteers support are:

**Caring Calls** - Caring Calls is a free, statewide program for those who might benefit from a daily phone call from a friendly volunteer. Volunteers help staff the call center Monday through Friday from 8 to 9:30 am to greet and brighten the day of local seniors through a phone call, following protocols to ensure patient safety for those times when a volunteer is unable to reach a participant.

Last year, our volunteers helped the Caring Calls team make 23,205 well-check calls to local seniors, averaging 90 calls a day!

**Cancer Care Food Resource Program** - Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center is dedicated to expanding access to nutritional food resources for our patients. In 2020, we expanded our food resource program to encompass additional avenues to assist patients with food, including the Neighbors Feeding Neighbors Food Insecurity Program, Farm to Table Produce, and Northern Light Cancer Care Food and Supplement Pantry.

Assisting in these efforts, not only do our volunteers lend a direct hand, but Volunteer Services has supported a partnership between Cancer Care and Nutrition Resource volunteers from the Christine B. Foundation, whose mission is to build a community of support for those affected by cancer in Eastern Maine. In FY21 Christine B. Foundation volunteers donated more than 816 hours to the Nutritional Programs at Cancer Care in Brewer.

**Volunteer and Community Impact Team**

Our Northern Light Health promise is to make healthcare work for all Mainers. Building a brighter future for our state starts with identifying our top community health priorities across Maine and building a proactive strategy. Northern Light Health participates in the Maine Shared Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), which is completed every three years in collaboration with Central Maine Healthcare, MaineGeneral Health, MaineHealth, and the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

As Northern Light Health participated in the CHNA public forums for 2021, we began creating a Volunteer and Community Impact Committee this year to steer the outcomes of the data-driven health improvement plans into a localized action strategy for our Maine communities.

As we participate and evaluate the results from the CHNA process, the Impact Committee will help organize and develop our strategic goals of how we, at NL EMMC, can be a proactive community partner in improving the services we offer, while also driving new initiatives forward in the next three years.

We are excited to work together with a team of compassionate and energetic colleagues to help make healthcare work for our community, both inside and outside our Medical Center.
Auxiliary

Volunteer Services is proud to be the liaison for the Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center Auxiliary. Auxiliary members participate in social, philanthropic, and service activities which offer both personal and professional growth while supporting local healthcare.

Auxiliary members are ambassadors on a mission for comprehensive healthcare, acting as advocates for the community’s healthcare and patient needs at the Medical Center. Their activities raise funds for scholarships, Medical Center capital campaigns, and patient services.

The Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center Auxiliary is a committee of 11 incredible women who help raise thousands of dollars annually to support our smallest patients at the Medical Center – our NICU babies.

The Auxiliary was founded in 1893 – since then, they have raised a total of $3.9 million for the Medical Center. They purchased the first ECG machine the Medical Center ever had, established our OB recovery room, supported funding of the PICU, and so much more. In 2015, they fulfilled a $350,000 pledge to the Raish Peavey Haskell Children’s Cancer and treatment Center at NL Cancer Care. With the Remarkable Begins With You pledge fulfilment last year and their new pledge for Miracle 2, their donations to the NICU will top $400,000. Each year, they make a charitable gift through the EMMC Children’s Endowment through the Children’s Miracle Network. Additionally, they support the next generation of our healthcare workers through nursing scholarships – last year, they awarded $4,000 to nursing students at Husson University. Before the transition to Lori’s Gifts, the Auxiliary also managed the Medical Center’s Gift Shop.

All of this is done through their featured fundraisers: their Annual Kitchen Tour, Winter Beach Ball, and Lunch and Learns. Despite COVID-19 putting a halt to many of these in-person events, they have creatively fundraised with a calendar, Mother’s Day basket, and this year, a Kitchen Tour virtual experience. Individually and collectively, the Auxiliary Members go above and beyond for the patients and staff at the Medical Center. They are some of the most compassionate, considerate, and caring women, and we are so grateful to them for all they do!

This year the Auxiliary’s efforts totaled $40,300 in charitable gifts to fund projects for patient support, the EMMC Children’s Endowment, and nursing awards for selected Husson students.

Service and Quality

- Volunteer Services remains committed to delivering high quality service while following policy changes and guidelines, especially during the global pandemic.
- We created and streamlined the volunteer onboarding process to efficiently bring on nearly 1,000 community volunteers to support the community clinic effort, while also helping coordinate and organize volunteer roles and processes to sustain the clinics.
Recognizing our Caring Spirit

During hospital week, we were presented with the Team Caring Spirit Award as part of EMMC’s COVID-19 Vaccination Team alongside the Inpatient Pharmacy Team. Our collaborative efforts were recognized for pursuing effective means of improving every step of this complex process, and for educating and training the staff and volunteers to ensure all involved had what they needed to be successful for each clinic day. “Their compassion for this effort was evident in the time they committed to planning and executing the clinics, and they did all this with a positive, can-do attitude every day,” stated the nominating team.

Finance

Volunteer Services is a value-added service and is not revenue-producing. The department operates on a generous fixed budget which sustains our present needs. However, the Independent Sector currently values an hour of volunteer service at $28.54. Through their service, our volunteers provided $1,147,022 of added value this year.

Growth

The Volunteer Services department supports the Medical Center’s efforts in identifying, developing, and supporting pathways that help inspire and engage our future workforce through various community outreach initiatives and partnership opportunities.

Community Development

- We operate as the liaison for the RN Sponsorship Program (formerly Work and Grow) supporting mentor relationships, coordinating annual gatherings that assist professional development goals, and generate marketing and outreach opportunities to promote the program. To date, over 50 students have been sponsored in the program and we have celebrated the successful graduation of 18 of them as new registered nurses at EMMC.
- We work across departments to identify existing sponsorship and scholarship opportunities to help engage our future and sustain our present workforce. A long-term goal is to develop a centralized directory of these opportunities to share across the Medical Center and with our college partners.
- In FY21, we began a collaboration with the University of Maine Student Employment office to become one of their third part Work Study partners. At the end of FY21, we officially launched a Work Study pilot program, identifying departments with critical staffing needs to participate in the initial launch. We expect to welcome our first group of Work Study students in FY22.
• We partner with department leaders to create professional undergraduate and graduate internship opportunities at the Medical Center. During FY21, we welcomed five interns who helped support patient experience programming, coordinate the community vaccination clinics, and design and implement special projects.

Program Development

We have developed new service opportunities with department leads in the following areas:

• Inpatient Activity Program: This year Volunteer Services helped launch a new activities program to enrich the patient stay experience. The Inpatient Activity Program provides patients with cognitive activities to help reduce anxiety, boredom, confusion, depression, and delirium. Some of the activities we have to offer include: Board games, card games, word puzzles, books, magazines, arts and crafts, adult coloring, fidget toys, and someone to socialize with.

  The program piloted in FY21 as part of an internship project led by Bree Clayton. After graduating with a BS in Healthcare Administration & Public Health from Husson University in May 2021, Bree was hired on full-time as an Adult Life Specialist to continue building the program. The role of the Adult Life Specialist (ALS) is to identify patients who would benefit from this program and assign volunteers to implement enrichment activities for these patients. Sometimes patients may benefit from the program but require more than what a volunteer would be able to provide. In these cases, the ALS works directly with the patient to ensure they receive the support they need while in our care. When Bree is not managing volunteers or working with patients, she is analyzing data, creating presentations, and meeting with teams throughout the hospital to ensure the program reaches its fullest potential.

• Care Cart: Volunteer Services and Patient Experience teamed up over the summer to pilot a Care Cart Program that officially launched at the end of FY21. The cart is filled with snacks and treats for employees to enjoy, as well as a variety of comfort items and activities to enrich the experience for patients and visitors during their hospital stay. Volunteers round with the cart throughout the week; additionally, leaders and staff members can self-schedule to round with the cart as well. The Care Cart is a great way for teams across departments to express their gratitude for the hard work their colleagues are doing here at the Medical Center.
Goals for FY22

- Continue to improve patient care by offering expanded volunteer roles to support departments and designing new programs that directly enrich the patient experience.
- Design and implement music and art programming that helps process trauma, decrease anxiety and depression, improve mood and aid in the healing process for patients, their families, and our Medical Center staff.
- Partner with Patient Experience and Spiritual Care to create a bereavement program that will provide support and guidance to bereaved individuals and families following the death of a loved one at the Medical Center, as well as to those in the community seeking support.
- Improve the health of our populations by helping the Medical Center become a collaborative community partner by building relationships with local nonprofits whose programs and services align with our mission and values.
- Implement community outreach projects led by the Volunteer and Community Impact Committee that directly address the goals developed from the CHNA forums.
- Coordinate Volunteer and Community Impact Team volunteer opportunities with staff to promote team engagement and community involvement.
- Expand our partnership with Work Study programs through state colleges and universities.
- Implement a multi-faceted recruitment plan to steward community volunteers and expand our Medical Center volunteer team.
- Prioritize and expand patient-facing volunteer service roles to help improve the patient experience.
- Extend our Culture of Caring goal through ongoing appreciation of volunteers as well as forging new opportunities to bring our volunteer community together through virtual workshops and social gatherings.
- Distribute department service menus to all in-patient rooms and include them in Hospital to Home folders.
- Continue to create and develop internship opportunities to help design and implement new programs and services to enhance patient care at the Medical Center.
- Develop virtual and onsite career exploration programming in partnership with local high schools and colleges.
- Distribute an Educational Catalog as a centralized resource for Medical Center staff and college communities to learn about the various opportunities available through NL EMMC.

To learn more about any of the programs or initiatives shared in this Annual Report, or to support the team by becoming a volunteer, please contact Volunteer Services at 207.973.7850.
This year marks more than seven years that Stacey and Katelyn have worked together as a team in roles that serve the Greater Bangor Region. For the past two years, they have led the volunteers at NL EMMC, helping them support the patients and staff at the Medical Center while coordinating new outreach programs and initiatives to expand the services offered to the community.

Stacey holds baccalaureate degrees in communications and sociology from Syracuse University. In 2009, she graduated from Husson University with a Master of Business in Nonprofit Management and worked at Bangor Humane Society as Director of Development/PR from 2011-2020. Bringing fifteen years of nonprofit professional experience, she has specialized in advocacy, fundraising, marketing, development, outreach, volunteer management, event coordination, and community and capacity building. Stacey’s dog Koda, has volunteered as part of our Pet Therapy team, serving the staff and patients for 50 hours this past year. In her spare time, Stacey enjoys hiking with her dogs, traveling, and live music.

Katelyn graduated from the University of Maine with a bachelor’s degree in biology in 2017 and worked at the Bangor Humane Society until 2020 as the Director of Volunteer and Community Outreach. Coming from a long line of healthcare workers, many of whom worked at the Medical Center, the transition to volunteer service in a hospital was a natural one. In the nearly two years since joining EMMC, she has found endless joy getting to know and bond with all of our volunteers and overseeing the high school student volunteers she fondly calls “her kids” every summer. In her free time, Katelyn enjoys spending time with her niece, exploring Maine with her husband and dog, and snuggling with her two cats.