

Volunteer Services Newsletter

April 2024



It's National Volunteer Week 2024

This one's for you!

In honor of National Volunteer Week, we are excited to celebrate the 3,400+ volunteers who help make Allina Health #AllTogetherBetter.

Please take a moment to watch this video that celebrates volunteers across our organization.

[Watch the video here](#)



Christine Moore, Chief Human Resources Officer for Allina Health, kicks off volunteer video.

In this edition:

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- Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute Buffalo
- Hospice 11th Hour
- Adaptive Sports & Recreation
- Early Youth Eyecare (E.Y.E.)
- Owatonna Hospital

Featured Opportunities

- 2024 Art of Possibilities
- Coon Rapids Clinic
- PT/OT student volunteers
- Susan Hodder Volunteer of Excellence
- EMPOWER Scholarship – apply now!

April is now Minnesota Volunteer Month

Governor Walz officially proclaimed April 2024 to be "Volunteer Month" in Minnesota

This recognition is a testament not only to our incredible volunteers at Allina Health, but also to our staff Volunteer Coordinators who recruit them and engage them to become integral members of our teams.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Celebrating 18 years

Jill Connolly, Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute in Buffalo

Jill Connolly spreads positive energy everywhere she goes. She began volunteering in 2007 with Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute (CKRI) in Buffalo.

According to Jill, volunteering is her way of paying it forward for the care she received there following a stroke.

After her stroke, she was told she would never walk again and would need the care of a nursing home. She has proven the experts wrong by not only walking, but even enjoying her favorite pastime of riding and showing horses.

We wish her the best in her future endeavors!!!



After a remarkable 18 years of volunteer service, Jill (center) retired from her volunteer role on March 20, 2024.



There in a time of need

11th hour volunteers

11th Hour volunteers provide care for patients who are actively dying; in other words, patients who are within their last 24-48 hours of life. They sit with patients when families need rest or when patients are afraid and do not want to be alone.

Volunteers travel long distances to sit with someone they have never met for hours at a time, day and night.

Recently, the spouse of a hospice patient had been sleeping on the floor next to his wife's bed, alert to any sound or movement. He hadn't had any real sleep for days.

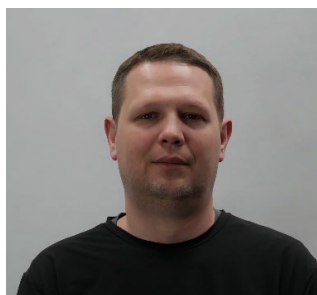
When the 11th hour call came in, Gina, Eric, and Cassie answered. They sat with her from 6:00 pm until 6:00 am. Their presence gave the spouse reassurance his wife would not be alone, and he was finally able to get a good night's rest.

“The magnitude of our 11th Hour volunteers' gift is immeasurable.

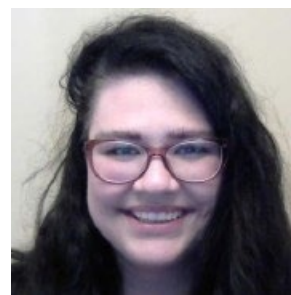
Thank you to Gina, Cassie and Eric for your continued care and compassion as well as to all our devoted 11th hour volunteers.



Gina



Eric



Cassie



Assistant Coach George Kiefner (left) and Head Coach Doug Dixon (right)

Trailblazing Coach Retires

Doug Dixon leaves a legacy for Wheelchair Basketball in Minnesota

Doug Dixon has been a volunteer coach with the Courage Kenny wheelchair basketball program for the past 15 years. He came to the Junior Timberwolves after being volunteer coach of the rival Minnesota Royals Wheelchair Basketball team for 11 years.

During his tenure, the Jr Rolling Timberwolves have never finished lower than 7th in the nation. Since 2014, Doug and his assistant coach, George Kiefner, have led the team to an overall record of 183-64, winning 3 of the 5 national championships they've played in.

Three of Doug's athletes have gone on to become Paralympians and many others have played on the US National Team.

Thank you, Doug, for your leadership, passion and determination as you served our players, volunteer coaches, families and the Courage Kenny adaptive community for the past 15 years!

“ Don't be afraid to volunteer... It's changed my life. I get way more out of it than the kids do.

To me, it's the best job in the country that you don't get paid for.

[Watch a video on Doug here](#)



Vision is key to learning

Children are not always aware that they have a vision problem.

Routine screening helps to remove poor vision as a roadblock to school performance and success in other areas of daily life. The Early Youth Eyecare (E.Y.E.) Community Initiative of the Phillips Eye Institute provides vision screenings - along with coordination and funding of vision care - to elementary and middle school students in Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools. A small staff of six - and 233 volunteers - wrapped up this massive undertaking in March.

E.Y.E. program impact (2023-2024 school year):

- 233 volunteers conducted vision screening on nearly 24,000 children in more than 100 Minneapolis and Saint Paul Public schools.
- More than 4,500 (19%) children were referred for follow up vision care

Thank you to our community partners for volunteers: University of Minnesota Medical School and UMN Center for Community-Engaged Learners, nursing programs at Inver Hills Community College, Normandale Community College and St. Catherine's University, and EPPA scribes.



Owatonna Hospital volunteer helps find missing guest



Volunteers are integral to safety

Alision Lueck is an information desk and surgery desk volunteer at Owatonna Hospital.

On March 7, 2024, a man, along with his elderly mother, brought his daughter in for a test. While assisting his daughter, his mother wandered away and he could not find her. Worried and stressed, he asked Alision for help. She acted fast, asking him targeted questions to help identify his mother, then called security.

Because of Alision's quick thinking and attention to detail, the man's mother was soon found and reunited with them. We are grateful for Alision's quick action and caring support of this family in their time of need.

“ I felt that I needed to help in any way I could to alleviate any more stress on him.

I always put myself in the position of being a patient and or a loved one who has a family member or friend dealing with a medical problem.



Featured Volunteer Opportunities



2024 Art of Possibilities

The Allina Health Foundation is excited to host the 61st annual Art of Possibilities Art Show & Sale. The opening reception is on Thursday, **May 16 from 5:30 -7:30 p.m.** at Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute in Golden Valley, MN.

We invite anyone from the community to volunteer or come enjoy this fabulous event showcasing the talents of hundreds of inspiring artists this year!

[Sign up to volunteer here](#)



Coon Rapids Clinic

We are excited to announce a new volunteer program at one of Allina Health's busiest clinics. Volunteers are needed to escort patients to and from their appointments, and assist staff with various helpful tasks.

[Learn more here](#)



PT & OT students

Do you know anyone going to PT or OT school who needs volunteer hours? We are currently taking applications for summer volunteer opportunities at several of our Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute locations throughout the metro.

Contact: Eileen McCarthy Harness at Eileen.Harness@allina.com

Allina Health volunteer areas:

- Hospitals & Clinics
- Rehabilitation
- Aquatics & Fitness
- Hospice
- Adaptive Sports & Recreation
- Youth Vision Screening

Please invite your friends, family members, and coworkers to join you in volunteering with Allina Health.

[Click here](#) to view all Allina Health volunteer locations and opportunities.

You are our very best volunteer recruiters!

[ALL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES](#)

volunteer@allina.com

Susan Hodder Volunteer of Excellence

Rhonda Rae, Adaptive Ski & Snowboard

Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute is honored to announce Rhonda Rae as the recipient of the 2023 Susan Hodder Volunteer of Excellence award. She has volunteered for 27 years in [Adaptive Sports and Recreation](#).

- Read more about Rhonda and her many contributions [here](#). Thank you, Rhonda!
- Learn more about the award and past recipients [here](#).



**Thank you for
volunteering
with Allina
Health!**

Now Accepting Applications for the EMPOWER Scholarship

Application deadline is April 30, 2024.

The EMPOWER Scholarship is for applicants with plans for education related to direct patient-focused healthcare. EMPOWER stands for Encourage Minority Participation in Occupations with Emphasis on Rehabilitation. At Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute recognizes the importance of encouraging culturally diverse students to enter a patient focused healthcare field. Due to the generosity of the David M. Hersey family, recipients of this scholarship will receive \$2,000.00 toward their higher education.

[Learn more and apply here.](#)

volunteer@allina.com

