



Members of the employee Blue and Gold Teams get together before the Memphis to Peoria Run begins in July. Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter is at the far right.

465 miles for the patients and families

BY KATHRYN BERRY CARTER, Volunteer Services director

Another Memphis to Peoria Run has come and gone quickly, leaving me feeling recharged, motivated and ready to direct our volunteer efforts toward programs that improve the experiences of our patients and their families. This year 25 employees volunteered to run the 465 miles to Peoria, Illinois. Fifteen of those were first-year runners. When asked why they wanted to run and what made the experience so treasured, several quickly responded:

"I went on the run because there was this mystery of potential excitement I wanted to experience. I wanted to be a part of something that had history and meaning for the hospital and to contribute all that I could. This really pushed me out of my comfort zone."

Chandra Savage

"The St. Jude Memphis to Peoria Run was one of the best experiences I've had in the past year as an employee at St. Jude. I had the opportunity to fundraise as a team, learn about fellow employees and how they contribute to St. Jude, and meet the Peoria family that dedicate so much time and energy each year. It is rare to have the ability to step away from the day-to-day work and have the type of experience where you are reminded of our institu-

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Spotlight: Nienhuis award winner 2015

"She is very cheerful and friendly with the families, patients and staff. She spends time with patients and gives the families much-needed breaks. She is a wonderful asset to the St. Jude family." These words by Amye Walker, RN, of the Inpatient Unit, describe Helping Hands volunteer Gayatri Mamidanna, this year's winner of the Sheryl K. Nienhuis Memorial Volunteer Service Award. Volunteer Services gives many awards each year to honor and celebrate dedicated St. Jude volunteers, but this one stands out above all others.

The award, created in 2002, honors St. Jude volunteers who exemplify the qualities that the late Sheryl Nienhuis brought to her volunteering. She never considered any job too unimportant for her to do. She gave from the heart, lifting countless patients and families and motivating those around her to dig a little deeper and give a bit more of themselves.

Nominees for the annual award have made volunteering at St. Jude a priority and each has demonstrated a strong commitment to the St. Jude mission. This year, a record 17 volunteers were nominated, including Roletta Ammons, Betty Anderson, Fannie Brown, Pat Canale, Mary Driscoll, David "Paw"

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Top photo: Helping Hands volunteer Gayatri Mamidanna.

465 miles for the patients and families

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tion's mission and the people's lives who that mission affects. It was a remarkable experience that I look forward to doing again next year." **Kellie Clark**

"The Memphis to Peoria Run was such a humbling experience for me. I was blown away by how passionate and excited the runners and people of Peoria are about what we do here at St. Jude. It made me realize that I should never take for granted my role here or the work that I do. It is truly all about the patients and their families." **Kristy Gibbons**

"Once on the run it was amazing to see all of the support from people driving by or even standing on the side of the road at all hours of the night cheering us on. The honks, the waves, the signs and even those pulling over and giving us donations were priceless. Without any of these amazing people we would not have such a wonderful hospital dedicated to saving lives. And because of these supporters I am forever grateful. Their donations and encouragement are the reasons we are here and able to save a child's life and try to end childhood cancer."

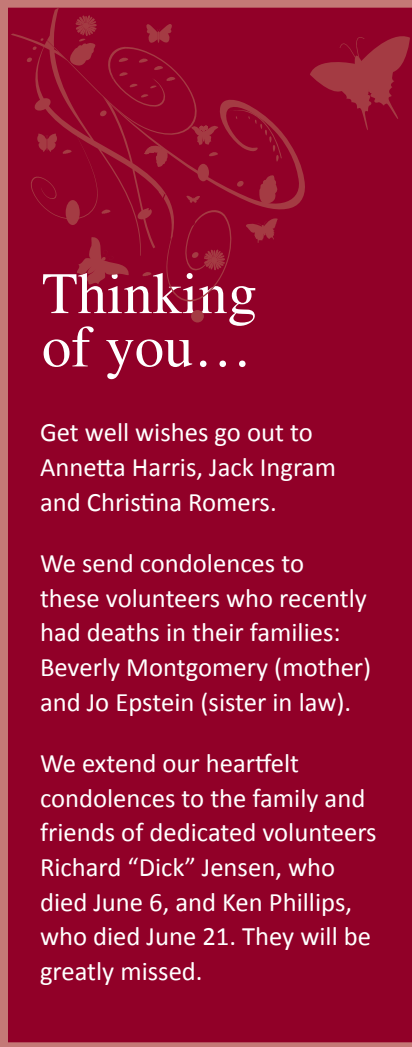
Krista Millican

"I have wanted to join the event for a while, but I wanted to make sure that I could contribute physically and put in the effort it takes to raise the funds, too. I went on the run for the kids. I ran for the little ones who aren't old enough to run and the unfortunate ones who are unable to. These crazy people I ran with have something 'special.' They made me feel welcomed into the groups, either running or just visiting, and being able to hear some of their experiences was truly priceless." **Sean Savage**

"I ran the Memphis to Peoria Run as it has always been my passion to combine my two loves: running and giving back to St. Jude; however, once on the run I realized how special this event truly is. As an inpatient nurse I have a beyond-rewarding job, but at times it can be very stressful. When runs got difficult, it was meaningful knowing I was running for my patients. If they could go through treatment I could push myself for another mile. A memory I will never forget is pushing myself to run my fastest with another nurse on a leg of the run in the middle of the night, in honor of a patient we had recently lost. It really puts into perspective how special working at St. Jude is, and how wonderful it is to be able to give back to our patients and families." **Kate Crook**

Once again, it was my privilege to run in honor of our amazing volunteers. Each step of the way you were all thought of. I'm proud of the accomplishment of this year's employee team. The experience offered me many unforgettable

Employees and volunteer runners Dawn Tanner, Kathryn Berry Carter and Patti Gust Hoard get ready to start a section of the Memphis to Peoria Run 2015.



Thinking of you...

Get well wishes go out to Annetta Harris, Jack Ingram and Christina Romers.

We send condolences to these volunteers who recently had deaths in their families: Beverly Montgomery (mother) and Jo Epstein (sister in law).

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of dedicated volunteers Richard "Dick" Jensen, who died June 6, and Ken Phillips, who died June 21. They will be greatly missed.

moments and new friendships, as well as generated amazing respect and awe at the support the Peoria community has for St. Jude. The employee team raised a ton of money for the institution. Many of you donated to the cause, and on behalf of all of us, I thank you. In particular, we thank the St. Jude Auxiliary for their sponsorship and support. Overall, the Memphis to Peoria Run raised \$1,005,100. When combined with all satellite runs, the total raised was \$4,554,418. That's a lot of money to put toward our incredible mission. What an awesome accomplishment to which many of you contributed!

Thank you for being amazing volunteers. You truly uplift me, our staff and our patients and families. Best wishes for a productive and meaningful fall season.

Spotlight: Nienhuis award winner 2015

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Fisher, Barbara Evans, Lyndal Grieb, Beth Gray, Angela "Christina" Gutierrez, Gayatri Mamidanna, Marcella McCann, Christy Mullikin, Kim Louis, Randa Rosenblum, Patrick Smith and David Tuttle.

Choosing one winner of the annual Nienhuis Award is always difficult. The nominees are some of the hospital's best and most dedicated volunteers. This year's judges were Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer Pam Dotson, St. Jude Auxiliary President Lydia Gibson, Clinical Nutrition Director Ginger Carney and, representing the Nienhuis family, ALSAC Senior Regional Event Specialist Kevin Nienhuis. They concentrated on the activities each volunteer performed, the commitment the volunteer exhibited and the impact of the volunteer's service.

For 2015 award winner, Gayatri Mamidanna, began volunteering at St. Jude in February 2008 and has given more than a thousand hours of service. She has helped in the Transplant Unit in the past but currently serves as a Helping Hands volunteer in the Inpatient Unit on the Patient Care Center second floor.

"Gayatri is so good about being available to any area," said Angela Pratt, RN, of the Transplant Unit. "If her area doesn't need her, she walks around and checks with other units. She will go and find toys and activities for patients. She volunteers on the weekends, when we don't have the extra staff. She is very dependable."

"I have known Gayatri for about two

years," said Tandra Rudd, RN, of the Transplant Unit. "She comes every week to give relief for patient parents, by offering activities to patients. She will sit and play, babysit, or simply offer a peaceful presence to an anxious baby or child."

Gayatri is an international full-time student pursuing a PhD in biological sciences at the University of Memphis. She was raised in a middle-class family in India. "Though we did not have a lot of money growing up, my parents always donated money to charities they believed in," Gayatri said. One of the main reasons she chose to volunteer at St. Jude is because it is a nonprofit organization, helping patients from across the globe.

"I wanted to spend my time working with patients and their families and to see that I can make a difference," she said. "I believe that volunteering is free therapy."

Her favorite thing about volunteering at St. Jude is the children. She loves to play and interact with them. "I also get to meet people from different parts of the country and the world," she said. "Volunteering at St. Jude gives me a better perspective on life."

Tandra said: "I am so impressed with Gayatri's genuine compassion for our patients and families. She would always



Helping Hands volunteer Gayatri Mamidanna visits with a patient during one of her Sunday volunteer shifts.

come to our unit with a bustling smile and offer her services to staff members. She gives 100 percent of herself to our patients."

New VIP newsletter to launch next spring

This issue of *VIP*, the Volunteer Services newsletter, marks the last time it will be presented in the current format. In 2016, two issues will replace this formerly quarterly publication. Each new issue will feature many more photos of volunteers and only a few short articles. We hope this new format will better meet the needs of our volunteers and their busy schedules.

Timely news from Volunteer Services can still be found in the *Weekly Alert* e-newsletter. The *Weekly Alert* offers details about upcoming volunteer opportunities as well as important St. Jude updates, such as parking changes, construction zones and volunteer training.

We hope you will continue to help make *VIP* a fun and useful publication for St. Jude volunteers by sending your ideas for photos and small articles to Tricia Spence in the Volunteer Services office (tricia.spence@stjude.org).

Welcome New Volunteers!

To see a list of volunteers who have joined the team between May 4 and August 3, 2015, visit www.stjude.org/hospitalvolunteer. Click on "Volunteer Recognition" at the bottom of the page, then choose "Welcome New Volunteers." Join us in welcoming these new volunteers to the St. Jude team.

Celebrating our volunteers' dedicated service and milestones

At this year's Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in May, the St. Jude Volunteer Services staff showed how "Volunteers Help Us Soar to New Heights."

In 2014, more than 2,478 volunteers gave 44,477 hours to St. Jude. That is equivalent to the annual work hours of 22 full-time employees. St. Jude volunteers range in age from 16 to 93, with an average age of 46.

Along with the Volunteer Services staff, other St. Jude officials who thanked our wonderful volunteers in person at this event included: St. Jude Director and Chief Executive Officer James Downing, MD, ALSAC Chief Marketing Officer Emily Callahan, and Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services Pam Dotson.

The Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon celebrates both service mile-

stones and service hours. On this page and the next, you will see some of the honored volunteers who attended the event. To see a list of all St. Jude volunteers who gave more than 49 service hours in 2014, visit www.stjude.org/hospitalvolunteer. In the menu at the bottom of the page, click on "Volunteer Recognition" and then choose "Volunteer Awards Events."



María Chandler is congratulated by Volunteer Services Director Kathryn Berry Carter (L) and María's husband Bob Chandler (R) for giving 30 years of dedicated volunteer service to St. Jude. Donna Mulhern (not present) was also honored for 30 years of service.



Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator Randa Spears congratulates Emily Hayward, who is one of two college students to win the Student Achievement Award. The other recipient was Matthew Cannavo. Other nominees included Hannah Hansen, Emma Jackson, Zoe Jackson, Reagan Jones and Tiffany Legarda.



(From L to R) Thomas Ewart, Penny Tramontozzi and Jacqueline Savoy were inducted as Lifetime Volunteers along with Debbie Richerson and Laurie Webby (not shown).



Kentaro "Kenny" Perry gave the most volunteer hours last year – 473. When asked what he likes most about his service to St. Jude, Kenny said, "I volunteer at St. Jude because it feels good to know that I am helping people do something that is really important. Also, the people I work with here are great." Other top hour volunteers with more than 400 hours each were Pat Canale and Charles Belak. Many thanks to these three for their time and efforts on behalf of St. Jude.

St. Jude volunteer supervisors honored for excellence

Each year, Volunteer Services honors one of the hospital's best volunteer supervisors with the Volunteer Supervisory Excellence Award. Along with their regular job duties, these individuals take on the added responsibility of training and supervising volunteers. Being nominated for this award is a great honor because only volunteers can submit nominations.

This year's nominees were: Ashley Carr, Katherine Bailey, Megan Billig, Jessica Goddard, Amy Kennedy, Stephanie Lindblom, Brent Powell and Ashley Wedderburn.

The winner of the 2015 Volunteer Supervisory Excellence Award is Child Life specialist Amy Kennedy. Along with her regular duties, Amy manages three to five volunteers in the Radiation Oncology Clinic.

"Upon my arrival in the play area in Radiation Oncology, Amy has a list prepared with patient information that is of great assistance in organizing and supervising play area activities," said Child Life volunteer Pat Canale. "Although I had taught school for 30 years, working with children in the hospital setting and becoming comfortable in my volunteer role was not easy. Amy was especially wonderful, taking me step by step.



Child Life specialist Amy Kennedy talks with a patient and her mom.

Patiently, she would include me in an activity, then leave me in charge and come back periodically to check. She made sure I was comfortable and prepared."

"Amy is always grateful to all her volunteers through emails, notes and texts. I have never left St. Jude without her thanking me," said Child Life volunteer Lisa Yarbro. "I've volunteered for Amy for more than seven years and don't

have a desire to volunteer anywhere else. She creates an environment that makes a volunteer feel valuable. Amy is genuinely dedicated to the mission and values of St. Jude."

"As a volunteer, I watch Amy treat each patient with dignity and love," Pat said. "I also feel that compassion and respect from her, and I feel so fortunate to be a small part of this amazing place."

St. Jude Women's Club

BY ALLISON COOK AND KELLY CAUDLE,
public relations co-chairs

The St. Jude Women's Club 16th annual Golf-A-Round event was held June 9 in conjunction with the FedEx St. Jude Golf Classic. The Danny Thomas/ALSAC Pavilion was transformed into a putt-putt playground where patients and their families played along with professional golfers who were in town for the tournament. Several event stations were offered, including arts and crafts, beautifully decorated cookies, face painting and photo opportunities. Many patients had their free sun visors signed by the golf pros, which included Dustin Johnson—the 2012 Champion and #8 in the World Golf Rankings—and Ben Crane—the 2014 Champion. This team effort was a shining example of the Women's Club in action.

With the summer temps rising and no end in sight, July was a great time for the St. Jude Women's Club Beach Party. Thanks to the creativity and decorating skills of several members, the Pavilion became a beach where patients and families could fish for treat bags, snap pictures in a fun photo booth, play beach games and make adorable crab hats and sandcastle frames.



This patient gets a big hug from the golfball guy (AKA Kim Avola) at the St. Jude Women's Club Golf-A-Round in June.

More than 100 children came out to play, and each one received a fabulous goodie bag to remember the event. Perhaps the greatest part of this party is the look of joy on the children's faces as they bat around beach balls in the center of the Pavilion.

The Women's Club would like to express their appreciation to Volunteer Services for all they did to

help execute these events and to the Volunteers who assisted club members at the various stations.

(From L to R) Members Ashley Interiano, Shannon Thomas-Lohrman and Miriam Dillard Stroud volunteer at the St. Jude Women's Club Beach Party in July. The lifeguard to the right is volunteer Matthew Davidoff.



The Ladies of St. Jude

BY SARAH D. PRATT, member

The year 2015 has been another good one for the St. Jude Dream Home. Tickets were sold out, a winner was chosen and The Ladies of St. Jude can reflect on the part they played in this success by hosting open houses and running the ticket processing office.

An ongoing LSJ project is the Art Program, which is held at the hospital and led by Suzanne Hieserman. These sessions provide a fun distraction, and they give members a chance to work directly with patients and siblings.

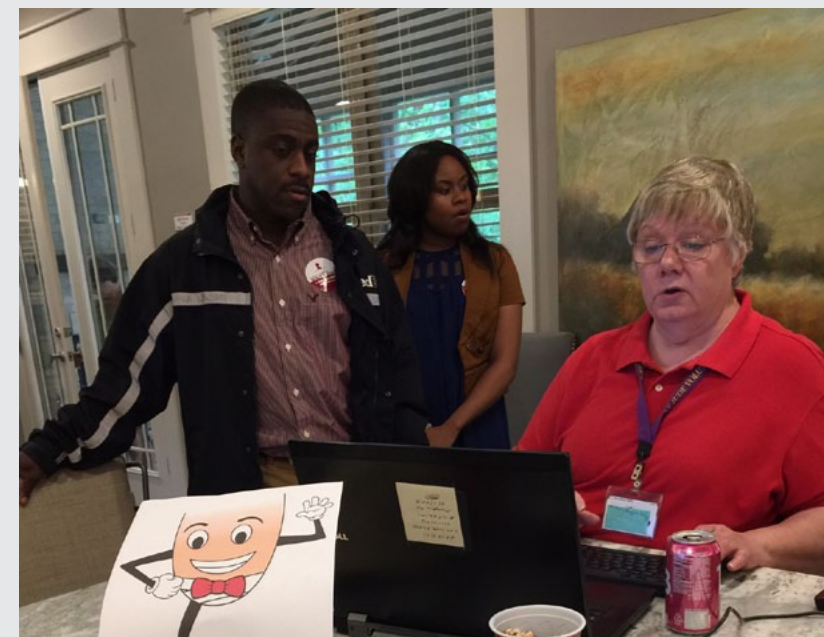
The club provides many volunteer opportunities for their members, including helping with the fundraising runs and walks in the Memphis area.

As many readers know, The Ladies of St. Jude organization is older than the hospital. In 1956 a dedicated group of women volunteers from the former neighboring St. Joseph Hospital created an organization to support the goals of entertainer and humanitarian, Danny Thomas, to build a hospital for children with catastrophic diseases. Club dues were used to purchase postage stamps and stationery to acknowledge early donations toward construction of the hospital. The group changed their name from "St. Jude Hospital Auxiliary" to "The Ladies of St. Jude" in 1960.

When the hospital opened February 4, 1962, LSJ staffed all volunteer positions and worked day and night in the pharmacy, on the switchboard, in patient areas,



Ladies of St. Jude member Aggie Wagner completes the sale of a ticket at this year's St. Jude Dream Home open house.



the business office, the kitchen, or wherever needed. They also met patients at the airport 24 hours a day and housed patient families in their homes, while providing food, necessities and transportation during their stays in Memphis.

A lot has changed over the years, but the original members created a role model that is inspiring to this day—a strong dedication to the mission of St. Jude.

Linder Hill enters ticket information for a credit card purchase at the St. Jude Dream Home open house.

Service-in-action gallery



Volunteers (from L to R) Mary Catherine Newbill, Nick Goode and Sonia Babu work on crafts with patients and siblings.



Bakery volunteer Annetta Harris recently held a fundraiser in her home and raised \$1,500 for St. Jude. Annetta gives her time each Tuesday and has been volunteering at St. Jude since October 2014.



Volunteers (from L to R) Darycka Brown, Morgan Powell and Jessica Bolduc learn basic life support, CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and how to use an AED (automated external defibrillator).



Snack bag volunteer Lyndal Grieb comes to St. Jude each Thursday morning to assemble healthy snack bags for patients. He has been volunteering since 2006.



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