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FOUNDATION IN FOCUS

Confluence Health Foundation Quarterly Newsletter

Groundbreaking News: Moses Lake Radiation Treatment Facility

BY ABEL NOAH, CFRE, VP, EXECUTIVE TRUSTEE

On August 31, 2022, leaders from the Confluence Health Foundation and the Columbia Basin Cancer Foundation joined donors, healthcare leadership, and elected officials at the future site of the Moses Lake Radiation Treatment Facility to break ground – an event that signals a long-fought win for the Columbia Basin community.

The project arose from a significant need for local cancer care in the region. Radiation treatment services are not currently available in Grant, Douglas, or Adams counties, meaning patients must travel to Wenatchee, Seattle, Spokane, or Tri-cities for care. What might only be five minutes of treatment a day can turn into a three-hour trip – longer if patients are relying on public transportation or living in remote areas of the region.

Confluence Health has always strived to provide high-quality healthcare close to home for its patients. However, in the past, it was not feasible to build and sustain a radiation treatment center in such a small region. A lack of access to local care created health disparities in the Columbia Basin. Patients face greater barriers to vital healthcare services, which has a direct impact on health outcomes and

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From the left: Confluence Health Foundation VP, Executive Trustee, Abel Noah; Columbia Basin Cancer Foundation Board President and Confluence Health provider, Dr. Michael Graham; Columbia Basin Cancer Foundation Executive Director, Angel Ledesma; and Major Donor, Darrel Wallace pose at the groundbreaking ceremony.

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25th Annual Armada Golf Classic: What a Day!

The 25th Annual Armada Golf Classic benefitting the Confluence Health Foundation took place at Desert Canyon Golf Resort on September 12, 2022. This is the first golf tournament hosted by the Confluence Health Foundation since 2019, a hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We were thrilled that players, sponsors, volunteers, and staff were finally able to safely come together for what turned out to be a very fun day of golf.



The Armada Golf Classic is one of the Foundation's major annual fundraising events. This year, the proceeds from the Armada Golf Classic will help Confluence Health's Rehabilitation Services Department establish an adaptive cycling program for Confluence Health patients and other residents of North Central Washington. The program will integrate adaptive bikes into inpatient and outpatient therapy services at Confluence Health's hospitals and clinics and provide opportunities for community adaptive cycling events. The tournament netted approximately \$74,000 that will be used to propel this important work.

So much of what we were able to accomplish is thanks to our generous sponsors. Without them, this fundraiser would not be possible.

We'd also like to thank our volunteers: Teena Hauck, Erin Keeley, Laurie & Tom Kutrich, Darci Christopherson, Erin Boatright, Linda Haglund, Dr. Makrina Shanbour, Don Brawley, and Kathy Campbell. This year they braved the rain and smoke to ensure the tournament ran smoothly. We are so grateful for their help!



Finally, thanks to the golfers! We had some great teams hit the links – it's always a pleasure to host such a wonderful group of players. Congratulations to the winning teams and hope to see you again next year!



Low Gross

1st Place Team - Numerica

2nd Place Team - Chandler Business Interiors



Low Net

1st Place Team - Fidelity Investments

2nd Place Team - Cascade Autocenter

American Cancer Society Grant Benefits Confluence Health's Patients

We're grateful to the American Cancer Society (ACS) for providing a second year of patient transportation grant funding. Grant funds are used to purchase gas cards that are given to patients to help defray the costs of traveling for cancer treatment appointments.

The high cost of gas and frequent trips to the clinic can add up quickly for patients living in rural areas of North Central Washington. A patient in need of infusion therapy might be required to travel to treatment daily or weekly over a course of months or years. For instance, a patient traveling from Omak to Wenatchee daily for radiation treatment over a six-week period could spend between \$1,716 to \$2,640 on gas alone! These costs can be prohibitive for many patients and their families.

The ACS understands that transportation can be one of the biggest barriers to care. Their gift helps alleviate some of the financial strain on patients during one of the most difficult periods of their lives.

In some cases, it is the bridge to care patients need to keep fighting. On behalf of the Confluence Health Foundation and our colleagues at Confluence Health, we want to thank the American Cancer Society for their generous support.





Groundbreaking From page 1

creates disproportionate physical, emotional, and financial burdens on rural patients and their families. With new cancer diagnoses in the Columbia Basin projected to increase by 5-10% in the next five years, the disparity would only get worse.

In 2018, Confluence Health embarked on an ambitious plan to bring radiation treatment to the Columbia Basin. To make the project feasible, Confluence asked for help from its philanthropic partners, the Confluence Health Foundation and the Columbia Basin Cancer Foundation. Working together with healthcare and community stakeholders they launched the Your Local Cancer Care Campaign, which raised \$3.5 million for the facility in three short years. The key to success was the generosity of individuals, families, and local businesses that supported a common goal: to bring a radiation treatment facility to Moses Lake. Their donations, along with an \$9.8 million capital investment from Confluence Health and \$1.2 million in state funding, ensures patients from the Columbia Basin will have access to state-of-the-art, local cancer care.

The new 6,800 square foot Moses Lake Radiation Treatment Facility is slated for completion in the Fall of 2023. The facility will house a linear accelerator and a CT scanner for treatment planning simulation, as well as enough clinical and ancillary space to ensure the facility can continue to meet needs of the region for years to come. Conservatively, about 370 patients will be treated at the facility in the first year. Local access to care provided at the treatment facility is expected to reduce travel time by an average of approximately two hours per appointment, leading to improved health outcomes and enhanced quality of life during treatment, among other benefits.

The ceremony on August 31st marked the start of construction, but the groundwork to get to this point has been significant. For more than three years, donors from the region, Confluence Health providers and leadership, and philanthropic partners have collaborated to achieve a shared vision. Because of these generous, dedicated groups, Confluence Health can bring radiation treatment to the Columbia Basin and can provide high quality healthcare close to home for its patients.

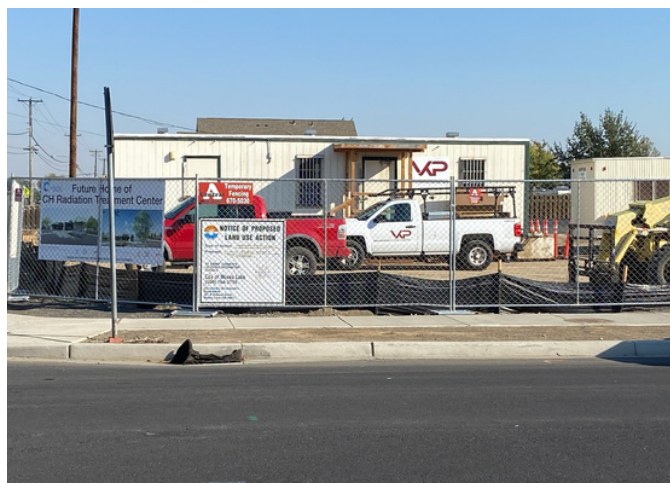
Thank you to all that played a role! This work would not be possible without their generous support!



From the left: Dr. Michael Graham; Wenatchee Valley Medical Group President, Dr. Mitchell Garrison; Confluence Health CEO, Dr. Andrew Jones; Abel Noah; and Angel Ledesma at the groundbreaking event.



From the left: Abel Noah and Confluence Health Foundation Board President, Steve Neher present Dr. Andrew Jones with a check for the Moses Lake Radiation Treatment Facility.



Heavy equipment prepares the Moses Lake Radiation Treatment Facility site for construction. Estimated completion will be the fall of 2023.



Karen McCart Celebrates 30 Years at Confluence

Karen is celebrating her 30-year work anniversary at Confluence Health. She started her career as a scheduler in Independent Home Care in 1992. Three years later, Karen took a receptionist position at Family Physicians. In 2005, Karen changed gears and joined Human Resources at Central Washington Hospital as an administrative support specialist. Her favorite part about working in HR was getting to know all the employees working throughout the hospital and how their jobs fit into the big picture of healthcare. As a Wenatchee Valley native and Eastmont High School graduate, Karen already had an extensive local network, but during the 8 years she spent in HR she acquired a vast knowledge of the various departments and people working within them.

In 2013, Karen made a career leap to the Confluence Health Foundation where she is an essential member of the team. Because the Foundation's main asset is its relationships, the community and organizational connections Karen has been cultivating over a lifetime are integral to our success. In addition to being somewhat of a living rolodex, Karen's close colleagues describe her as loyal, compassionate, caring, and always up for a good laugh. Karen wholeheartedly believes in the power of philanthropy and has witnessed its impact professionally and personally. Her commitment to the integrity of the Foundation is inspiring, and her dedication to the organization and its donors is exceptional.

Today, the Confluence Health Foundation office is in the former Family Physicians clinic. In fact, Karen's current desk sits right behind the reception window she was stationed at in 1995. To her, this is symbolic of her career coming full circle. From patients, to employees, to donors, Karen's service to the Confluence Health community has touched so many of us.

We recognize what a treasure we have in Karen. Congrats on 30 years with Confluence Health and THANK YOU for all you do!

From the top: Karen celebrates her grandson, Jackson's, first birthday; Karen and her colleagues from the Foundation celebrate her 30th year on the job; Karen and her family on a recent trip to Oahu, Hawaii





Sage Coffee House & Bistro Makes a Tradition of Giving

This October marks the 6th annual Breast Cancer Awareness Month fundraiser at Sage Coffee House and Bistro in Quincy.

Breast Cancer Awareness month is an annual campaign that is used to draw attention to one of the deadliest diseases in the United States. Nearly 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

Charlene Sherman, owner of Sage Coffee House and Bistro understands the importance of having local resources available to assist breast cancer patients in their fight. That's why each October, Charlene uses the power of her tip jar to make a difference in the lives of those affected by the disease. The previous five years of the fundraiser have generated thousands of dollars in donations from her generous customers.

Proceeds have benefited the Confluence Health Foundation's Compassionate Care Fund, which helps pay for mammograms and post-treatment care for patients in need. She also aimed donations at the Your Local Cancer Care campaign, which will bring a state-of-the-art radiation treatment facility to the Columbia Basin.

We're grateful to Charlene and her customers. This simple, yet powerful act of community-based philanthropy makes a difference in the lives of our friends, family members, and neighbors battling breast cancer.

Community & Clinical Collaboration Advances Health Equity in North Central Washington

The Madrinas de Salud are a group of trusted peer health workers who use their deep understanding of cultural norms to promote health within Spanish-speaking communities. With help from the Confluence Health Foundation, the Madrinas teamed up with Confluence Health to address the disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on local Latino communities.

Early in the pandemic, the Latino population in North Central Washington was especially hard hit by the virus. According to the State of Washington, Latinos were 3.5 times more likely to get COVID-19, five times more likely to become hospitalized, and three times more likely to die from the disease when compared with the white, non-Latino population. Testing data collected by Confluence Health during the first few waves of the pandemic indicated that 46% of patients who tested positive for the disease identified as Hispanic or Latino, despite the group making up less than 20% of the total test results in the region. Further, when vaccines became available, rates of uptake among the Latino population lagged far behind.

The disproportionate impact of the pandemic clearly illustrates the idea that public health and medical information is only as relevant as the context in which it is delivered. The existing health communication infrastructure in North Central Washington was not effectively messaging Latino communities in the region, leading to vast health inequities that had far reaching individual, social, and economic consequences.

Something had to be done.

Physicians and co-chairs of Confluence Health's Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (HEDI) Committee, Dr. Mabel Bodell and Dr. Bindu Nayak, advocated for improved health promotion efforts tailored to Latino communities and initiated work to reduce disparities in vaccination rates. As this work gained traction, Confluence Health leadership approached the Confluence Health Foundation with a request for \$200,000 to fund community-based vaccine equity outreach to underserved communities.





That's when the Madrinas de Salud got to work.

Beginning in March 2021, the Madrinas conducted face-to-face outreach throughout the region, which included distribution of fact-based messages about the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines and information about when and where people could receive vaccines in their community. They visited people door-to-door in the evenings as well as at stores, parks, faith-based organizations, restaurants, migrant camps, worksites, and community events. These methods removed technology and accessibility barriers and were more reflective of how many in the population preferred to receive information. Additionally, Spanish-language radio ads, billboards, mailers, and other media tools were developed and strategically placed to promote COVID-19 among the target population.

Behind the scenes, Dr. Bodell, Dr. Nayak, and Confluence Health staff supported the Madrinas efforts by providing up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccines. Additional funding from Coordinated Care, a local health insurance company, as well as a \$544,000 Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant was secured to help the Madrinas expand their work throughout the region.

Thanks to the efforts of the Madrinas and other health equity advocates, vaccine uptake increased and rates of disease and death within the Latino population fell. Over a period from October 2021 to June 2022, the Madrinas facilitated approximately 3,742 vaccines, mostly among harder to reach groups. They also partnered with other organizations to coordinate, promote, and participate in 116 pop-up vaccine clinics or health promotion events in Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Okanogan counties.

Beckers Hospital Review estimates that a noncomplex COVID-19 hospitalization in Washington State costs \$80,336 and a complex case costs \$334,224. Comparatively, the cost of the Madrina's outreach for every confirmed person vaccinated was less than \$190. Given that COVID-19 vaccines are effective tools for preventing hospitalization and death from COVID-19, their work was an effective, economical way to reduce the burden of disease and to save the lives in North Central Washington.

Although the work of the Madrinas has now shifted away from COVID-19, they continue to support Confluence Health projects and other health promotion efforts in North Central Washington. The network that they have built since March 2021 is a powerful testimony to their relevance and importance as key members of the region's public health and medical communications infrastructure. We thank the Madrinas de Salud and all that helped them succeed.

We'd also like to recognize the role of our donors. The initial work of the Madrinas was funded by those who contributed to the Foundation's COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Appeal. Donations and grants to the Foundation ensure that Confluence Health has the ability to take action when unexpected needs arise and help fortify our region's healthcare system when it is needed most.



Previous page: The Madrinas de Salud partnered with local store owners throughout the region to conduct outreach.

Above: The Madrinas de Salud pose with Dr. Mabel Bodell. Dr. Bodell worked with the Madrinas de Salud to ensure the outreach messages they shared were fact-based, relevant, and current. This clinical and community partnership increased credibility and helped dispel myths and other misinformation that was prevalent throughout the pandemic.



Right: The Madrinas de Salud promoted vaccine pop-up events, where vaccines were administered by clinical staff from the Washington State Department of Health, healthcare providers like Confluence Health, and local health districts.



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Central Washington Hospital Lobby
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Healing Garden Donor Wall Installed

It's finally here! Waylaid by material shortages, fabrication backlogs, and shipping delays, the much-anticipated dedication wall has finally been installed in the Central Washington Hospital Healing Garden.

This is the final element of the garden transformation that began in June 2021. Stop by and see the healing garden in its fall splendor. Late blooming hellebores, hydrangea, and lily turf are accompanied by the changing leaves of the Dogwood trees. It is truly a special spot!

Thank you to all the donors that made this work possible. This garden will continue to honor the dedicated staff and providers that serve the region for many years to come.



**The possibilities are endless.
The impact is personal.**

Everything we do, we can do because of you.
Thank you, donors!



Donor Spotlight, Judy Conner

It's hard to talk about the Foundation's history without bringing up Judy Conner, a long-time Wenatchee resident and faithful friend of the Foundation. Judy, a Certified Public Accountant, spent eight years on the Foundation's Board of Trustees, serving as its president in 2001. In 2005, Judy and her husband, Irwin, were honored as the Confluence Health Foundation's "Spirit of A.Z. Wells" Award recipients. This distinction is bestowed on individuals that show an exceptional commitment to the Confluence Health Foundation and other philanthropic institutions in North Central Washington.

These days, Judy continues to be an icon in the community, remaining active in the Wenatchee Rotary Club. This year marks the 42nd year that Judy has made a gift to the Confluence Health Foundation. We asked Judy to give us an insight into what the Foundation means to her.

Q. Your first gift to the Foundation was in 1980, which means you have been a supporter of the Foundation's work for 42 years – amazing! What's your why? Why do you support the Confluence Health Foundation?

A. My husband, Irv, and I spent our entire professional careers in Wenatchee. This community has rewarded us with financial success and, more importantly, an abundance of lifelong friends. It was and is our privilege to give back to our community currently and through our estate plan. Our hope is that organizations, such as the Confluence Health Foundation, will continue to support the community activities that we cherish.

Q. What is your hope for the future of healthcare in North Central Washington? How does the Foundation help move healthcare in that direction?

A. Healthcare touches every individual in this community. This community has been so fortunate to have the excellent facilities and diverse physicians in Wenatchee to provide care for most medical needs without necessitating travel out of the area. My hope for the future is to maintain and improve the services available here and, most importantly, to recruit and retain the excellent physicians needed to support the independent healthcare system we enjoy today.

Q. Do you have a favorite Foundation program or initiative that you have supported over the years? If so, what was it, and why?

A. Absolutely and without a doubt – The "Nurses for Tomorrow" program. The objective was to "teach them locally, employ them locally". There is such a continued need for nurses and with a program such as this, we have impacted (certainly not solved) this challenge.



Did You Know?

In 2002, the Nurses for Tomorrow initiative brought together Wenatchee Valley Medical Center and Central Washington Hospital (now Confluence Health), Triple C Healthcare Services, the Community Foundation of North Central Washington, the Central Washington Hospital Foundation (now the Confluence Health Foundation) and the Wenatchee Valley College Foundation. The partners worked together to address the growing shortage of skilled nurses and healthcare workers at our local and regional healthcare facilities.

The initiative raised over \$2 million from community organizations and philanthropists for faculty, equipment, scholarships and for the nursing program at Wenatchee Valley College. The work fortified local healthcare education resources and built a strong foundation for present and future efforts to expand the local healthcare workforce.



Adaptive Bikes Get a Home at Central Washington Hospital

The last issue of the *Foundation in Focus* featured the new adaptive cycling program for Confluence Health patients and other residents of North Central Washington. A main component of the program aims to integrate adaptive bikes into inpatient and outpatient therapy services at Confluence Health hospitals and clinics.

We're pleased to report that progress on the program is underway. Construction on a new bike cage was completed late summer. The bike cage will provide secure storage for the fleet of adaptive bikes, with space to add new bikes as needed.

Erin Keeley, who leads the program, conducted an in-service training for physical and occupational therapists, which served as an orientation to using the bikes during clinical therapy sessions.

Since then, patients have begun using bikes during their appointments. This might be the first time they have been able to ride since an illness or injury. For many patients, the adaptive bikes are a bright spot in their day.

The Rehab team and patients agree - this program is making a difference!




VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Expression's Gift Shop is looking for holiday help!

- ★ Retail experience is a plus but not required.
- ★ Minimum five hours a week commitment.
- ★ Fun, dynamic environment.

Contact Adele Haley for more information:
adele.haley@confluencehealth.org



Coordinated Care Grant Helps Hearts

We are proud to announce that Confluence Health's Heart Failure Clinic has received a grant from Coordinated Care to continue the hugely successful Cardiology Cares program for another year! The goal of the Cardiology Cares program is to empower patients so that they are better equipped to monitor their chronic systolic or diastolic heart failure, which will lead to improved management of the disease and longer, healthier, happier lives. The program targets patients that live in rural areas and those with limited financial means. Grant funds will purchase blood pressure cuffs and scales that will be provided to patients in need for free. In addition to these devices, patients will receive training on how to use the cuff and scale to monitor their health and share vital information with their care team.

Before the Cardiology Cares program began, the clinic's heart failure readmission rate was about 15%. While this rate was very good, and well below the American Heart Association's national average of 25%, the cardiology team thought they could improve readmission rates further by implementing the Cardiology Cares program. Once the patients began to receive scales, blood pressure cuffs, and training, the heart failure readmission rate fell to 7%. This is an impressive achievement that shows the benefits of ongoing collaboration between patients and their care teams even after they leave the clinic. Nurse Navigator and Cardiology Cares program manager, Danielle Slatton, RN has partnered with the Foundation to find funding to continue the program. "We are very proud of achieving and sustaining these incredible numbers" Slatton said. "The program empowers patients, so they have control over their disease process."

Danielle and her team see the value of the Cardiology Cares program daily. For example, a patient in her mid-fifties with a heart failure diagnosis was repeatedly admitted to the emergency department for shortness of breath, a symptom caused by the disease. Because she had no way to monitor her weight and vitals at home, she only knew to seek care after her symptoms became life-threatening.

The patient was enrolled in the Cardiology Cares program and received a scale and heart failure education at the clinic. She was instructed to call her Nurse Navigator if her weight increased by two pounds in a day or five pounds in a week or if she was having worsening cardiac symptoms. The patient received weekly support phone calls for a few months to provide encouragement and reinforce heart failure management strategies. The patient has now transitioned to self-management and feels comfortable calling the clinic when her weight increases or when she has other cardiac symptoms. Because she calls her Nurse Navigator at early onset of symptoms, the care team can adjust her medications and reduce the likelihood of an admission to the emergency department. Since enrolling in the Cardiology Cares program, the patient has not had any admissions for heart failure.

The grant provided by Coordinated Care will extend this cost-effective, highly successful program for another year. This isn't the first time Coordinated Care has made an investment in patient-centered programs. Previous grants helped fund vaccine equity outreach and a respite and recovery fund for patients experiencing homelessness. All of these grants help Confluence Health better support underserved groups and are important to advancing health equity in North Central Washington. On behalf of the Confluence Health Foundation and the Cardiology Cares team, we want to thank Coordinated Care for their support of this valuable, life-saving program.

Right: Providers and staff from the Cardiology Department are grateful to Coordinated Care for their financial support of the Cardiology Cares program.



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**The possibilities are endless.
The impact is personal.**

The year-end giving season is upon us! Charitable gifts to the Foundation fund innovative medical technology and benevolent programs, as well as capital assets, like clinical space, so that Confluence Health can continue to meet the growing healthcare demands of our region.

Please consider a year-end gift to the Confluence Health Foundation where your donation will make a difference.

Scan to make
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