GUNNISON VALLEY HEALTH FOUNDATION 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



711 North Taylor Street Gunnison, CO 81230 970-642-8400

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Investment in our Health System

\$100.000 committed to

\$1.1M has been given to support the start-up and implementation of the Behavioral Health department. Over \$300,000 has

In the past three years, 27 scholarships were given to GVH employees to support continued education and workforce development in various departments including the lab, the Senior Care Center, EMS, behavioral health and the patient care unit.

\$1.4M in grant support from public and

2023 Fundraising Key Performance Indicators



Average annual giving per donor increased by 136%



Average gift increased by 135%



Donor retention rate up 42% from 2022



Donors in database up 246 (36%) from 685 for a total of 931



Donors in 2023 up 53%



This team travelled from Cobden, Illinois to play in the GVH Foundation Golf Tournament.



Rate of growth in donors up 36%



Rate of growth in giving up

A Message From The **Executive Director**



Dear Friends and Supporters,

As the Executive Director of the Gunnison Valley Health Foundation, I am honored to present our annual report for 2023. It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I reflect on the incredible journey we have embarked on together over the past year.

Throughout 2023, the Foundation has remained steadfast in its commitment to supporting Gunnison Valley Health in providing exceptional healthcare services and programs to our community. Through strategic fundraising initiatives, grant opportunities and community partnerships, we have been able to enhance access to essential healthcare services, invest in state-of-the-art medical equipment and support innovative programs that promote wellness and preventative care.

One of our proudest achievements this year has been our capital campaign "Seconds Save Lives" for a new EMS Station. At the August gala, we raised over \$1.2 million for this campaign—far exceeding our goal initial expectations and setting a new standard for philanthropic excellence in our community. The success of this campaign can be directly attributed to the financial support of over 500 donors and the tireless dedication and leadership of our Development Chair, Jack Blake.

Thanks to your unwavering support and generosity, the Gunnison Valley Health Foundation manages approximately 20 restricted funds and 7 investment accounts. This year, under the exceptional leadership of our Finance Committee Chair, Bill Sullivan, we have taken significant strides to enhance the oversight and stewardship of our assets. One of the most notable achievements has been the comprehensive review and update of our Investment Policy ensuring that we are maximizing returns while maintaining prudent risk management strategies.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to advancing our mission and serving as a catalyst for positive change in the health and wellness of the Gunnison Valley. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of your for your continued support, dedication and commitment to the Gunnison Valley Health Foundation. Your generosity and compassion are truly the driving force behind our success, and we are deeply grateful for the opportunity to partner with you in creating a healthier, more vibrant community for all.

With warmest regards,

Jenny Birnie, M.S.W. Executive Director

②

A Patient Expresses their **Appreciation**

I hope this letter finds you in good health. I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude for the exceptional care and support that my 13 year-old daughter, Scarlett Schwegmann, received during her recent hospitalization at Gunnison Valley Health during the first week of January 2024.

My daughter suffered a dislocated hip, complicated by a rare, genetic disorder that makes her more susceptible to severe rhabdomyolysis. She and I stayed three days and two nights in your facility. I cannot commend enough the dedication, professionalism, and kindness exhibited by your medical team during our stay. From the moment we arrived in the emergency room, your team greeted my family with warmth and empathy.

Our doctors - Dr. Elfenbein and Dr. Porter - provided expert medical attention, both explaining the situation thoroughly and offering us reassurance throughout our stay. I was particularly impressed by the way Dr. Elfenbein and Dr. Porter communicated with Scarlett, especially how they involved her in the decision making concerning her treatment. She felt heard, unlike her experience with doctors in other hospitals.

The nurses and other healthcare personnel were equally remarkable. Krista, Amy, Heidi, Remy, and Ginny, all deserve very high praise for their unwavering compassion and attention to detail. Each was nlways ready with a smile, a little joke, a friendly quip. Their upbeat attitude and constant medical and emotional support - both day and night - made this hospital stay as comfortable as possible during an otherwise challenging time for our family.

I failed to note everyone's name, and for that I apologize. But please understand that every person with whom we interacted provided the same high level of service. Indeed, I must commend your hospital chef, Kevin, for his kindness, and the exceptional meals that he and others prepared during Scarlett's stay. (I'm not sure I've ever seen Scarlett eat an entire flank steak salad)! The occupational therapist provided tools and advice that made Scarlett's transition back to school easier, and made her more confident in her everyday activities. I also want to extend my appreciation to the administrative staff, technicians, and all the other individuals who work behind the scenes to keep the hospital running smoothly. Your dedication to patient care did not go unnoticed.

I genuinely believe that the exceptional care my daughter received played a pivotal role in her speedy recovery, and for that, I am profoundly grateful. Please convey my heartfelt thanks to all the doctors, nurses, staff members, and the hospital chef who contributed to my daughter's well-being.

Once again, thank you for your outstanding service, and I am forever grateful for the care my daughter received at your hospital. As they say, I hope not to return, but wouldn't mind seeing you again at the Safeway! Please share this letter with the individuals mentioned above, as they deserve to be recognized and appreciated for their remarkable work.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Schwegmann

Seconds Save Lives Campaign Update:

A \$12 M Campaign to Raise Money for a New EMS Station

In 2023, the Seconds Save Lives capital campaign advanced with notable successes. A final location was determined, and the new station will be located at 1200 N. Colorado St., one block from Hwy. 135, a site chosen for its size, cost efficiencies, proximity to Gunnison Valley Hospital and emergency services access. An experienced team was contracted including SEH Architects, JVA Engineers, and Black Dragon Development. There was a groundbreaking ceremony in August for the drilling of the geothermal wells, and construction of the station will commence this spring.

The third annual GVHF gala last August raised a record \$1.2 million to support the campaign. Driven in large part by private donations from throughout the Gunnison Valley, the campaign has surpassed 500 donors to reach close to 90% of the \$12 million needed to build the new station.



Advancing Behavioral Health Services: A Year of Notable Progress

In the ongoing pursuit of holistic healthcare, the Gunnison Valley Health Foundation has been instrumental in driving forward several key initiatives aimed at enhancing behavioral health services within our healthcare system. With a clear focus on increasing access, reducing hospitalizations, and providing professional care and support, the Foundation has been at the forefront of meaningful change.

Recognizing the critical need for expanded mental and behavioral healthcare, Gunnison Valley Health has taken proactive steps to address these challenges. By leveraging the support of the Foundation, significant advancements were made in 2023, marking a pivotal moment in the journey towards comprehensive care in the Gunnison Valley.

One of the most significant developments was the establishment of school-based therapist positions across all Gunnison and Crested Butte public schools. With the mental health needs of middle and high school students on the rise, this evidence-based model of therapy provides immediate access to much-needed behavioral health services for our young people. By embedding therapists within schools, Gunnison Valley Health aims to offer timely support and intervention, fostering healthier outcomes for students across the valley.

Moreover, recognizing the geographical disparities in access to care, Gunnison Valley Health opened a behavioral health clinic in Crested Butte, catering to the needs of north valley residents. This strategic expansion ensures that individuals in remote areas have access to the same quality of care as their counterparts in more central locations, fostering a more inclusive healthcare landscape.

The impact of these efforts was further amplified by the Foundation's success in securing \$430,000 in grant funding that

has enabled the implementation of various initiatives aimed at expanding access to behavioral health services. From school-based therapy and mobile crisis teams to peer support programs and workforce development initiatives, this funding has been instrumental in bolstering the behavioral health infrastructure in Gunnison Valley. Recognizing the critical need for additional service providers in our rural area, the Foundation has established within this funding \$95,000 committed to providing scholarships to students pursuing a career in behavioral health, \$20,000 for clinical licensure support for behavioral health professionals, and \$124,000 for behavioral health related paid internships.

Crucially, the Foundation's support has facilitated the implementation of bilingual patient navigation, ensuring that language barriers do not hinder access to care for non-English speakers in our Cora and immigrant communities. By prioritizing inclusivity and accessibility, Gunnison Valley Health is striving to provide equitable care to all members of the community.

The advancements made in behavioral health services in 2023 stand as a testament to the collaborative efforts of Gunnison Valley Health and the Foundation. With a steadfast commitment to addressing the evolving needs of our community, these initiatives represent a significant step towards a more integrated and inclusive healthcare system. As we look to the future, the Foundation remains dedicated to driving further progress and ensuring that every individual in Gunnison Valley has access to the care and support they need to thrive.

We continue to invest in addressing the mental health needs of our community In 2023, our behavioral health team conducted 3,555 therapy sessions, 1,585 sessions at the Western campus clinic, 1,360 sessions through the school district and responded to 125 mobile crisis calls.

The High Peaks Employee Club

The High Peaks Club is an employee-run philanthropic group dedicated to promoting community spirit among the Gunnison Valley Health staff. In addition, High Peaks provides emergency funding for staff members that experience an unforeseen crisis and need some financial support. Holiday support is also provided to staff members that cannot afford to provide a holiday



for their family. This club is a voluntary program for staff that is funded through donations from employee paychecks.

The employee members of the High Peaks Club work to promote and conduct activities that give back to the GVH family. The Gunnison Valley Health Foundation manages all funding donated on behalf of Hight

Peaks. The Foundation staff and the High Peaks Committee strive to be mindful stewards of the philanthropic funding they receive.

Support is provided to employees that are unable to work due to a personal or family accident and have no PTO. Or who have family emergencies and don't have enough money to travel. In the past several years we have provided:

Total of \$46,000 emergency support

- \$4000 to \$5000 a year for Christmas support
- Support of an employee that had three different surgeries in three different hospitals over 6 months (passed away before she could return to work)
- Support of employee and of family after an accident with a nail gun
- Support of employee whose son was killed in a motorcycle accident
- Support for employees whose son has been diagnosed with blood cancer, many trips and time spent at Childrens
- Support for employees whose baby was born in critical condition
- Support for employee whose mom was critically injured in a car accident in another state
- Creation of the Jill Adams Memorial Fund

Employee testimonial ...

"I want to extend a sincere thank you to High Peaks. It was an unexpected gift that has eased some fretting about lost wages as a result of some travel wrapping up my mother's affairs. This winter has been a perfect storm of unexpected needs and High Peaks assistance is so appreciated."

Investing in Our Future: Gunnison Valley Health Foundation Scholarships



The Gunnison Valley Health Foundation is not just about supporting and developing healthcare; it's also about investing in the people who make that healthcare possible. Through its scholarship opportunities, the Foundation is paving the way for the next generation of Medical Laboratory Technicians (MLTs) and Certified and Registered Nurses. Passionate about employee development, the Foundation's board of directors recognizes the invaluable contributions of Gunnison Valley Health employees. Executive Director Jenny Birnie emphasizes their commitment to nurturing talent within the organization. "We feel fortunate to have so many talented individuals working at Gunnison Valley Health," Birnie states. "We are thrilled to have the ability to support

people's growth and development." The scholarships not only aid in personal growth but also bolster the health system's day-to-day operations. Christina Lovelace, Director of Human Resources, highlights their role in staff retention and recruitment.

"As we look at creative ways to recruit and retain staff, these scholarships are one way we can support people already committed to Gunnison Valley Health," Lovelace explains. "We want to be an employer of choice and provide opportunities for people to stay with us and progress in their careers." Megan Warren, a recipient of the MLT scholarship, shares her journey and gratitude for the Foundation's support. Enrolled in the Medical Lab Technician program at Arapahoe Community College, Warren praises the Foundation's assistance in covering her tuition and facilitating her externship at GVH

Laboratory. Next year, Warren aims to transition from Phlebotomy Supervisor to

MLT at GVH, thanks to the Foundation's support and encouragement from her colleagues.

Likewise, nursing scholarship recipient Anyssa Huff expresses her appreciation for the financial relief provided by the Foundation. With the scholarship, Huff has been able to focus on her studies and alleviate the stress of tuition, enabling her to pursue her dream of becoming an ER nurse at GVH.

These testimonials underscore the profound impact of the Foundation's scholarships, not only on the recipients' educational journeys but also on the future of healthcare at Gunnison Valley Health. By investing in its employees, the Foundation is ensuring a brighter, more skilled workforce and ultimately, better healthcare outcomes for the community.

What patients are saying ...

"OUTSTANDING EXPERIENCE! Skilled, knowledgeable staff. I attribute my rapid recovery to their inspiration. Facilities were in excellent condition. Sessions began and ended on time. My sincere thanks to all of you."

Transforming Health Equity at Gunnison Valley Health

In the heart of Gunnison Valley lies a pressing healthcare challenge: communication barriers faced by Spanish- and Coraspeaking residents. These linguistic hurdles have long hindered access to quality healthcare, leaving some community members dissatisfied and even driving them to seek medical care outside the valley. Determined to confront this issue head-on, Gunnison Valley Health (GVH), in collaboration with The Gunnison Valley Health Foundation, embarked on a transformative journey to bridge the communication gap in 2023.

Recognizing the need for change, GVH leaders initiated a dialogue with the Latino community, delving into their experiences and concerns. At a pivotal community listening session attended by approximately 20 area residents, GVH staff unearthed a host of troubling issues surrounding language barriers. Armed with this insight, GVH devised a multi-pronged approach to enhance communication between limited-English speakers and health center staff.



Cinthia Saenz, bilingual patient navigator

First and foremost, **GVH** implemented a proactive measure: an "ask" at admission regarding preferred language. This simple yet effective step enabled staff to deploy the appropriate interpreters or services, whether Cora or Spanish, ensuring seamless communication. Additionally, the Gunnison Valley

Health Foundation funded an investment in technology, acquiring iPads equipped with translation services in 30 different languages. This technological upgrade bolstered the organization's ability to cater to diverse linguistic needs.

While iPad interpretation services fill an important role, it became apparent that in-person interpretation services are vital to the health outcomes of non-English speaking patients, especially Cora-speaking patients whose language does not have a written component and is not included in any digital interpretation service. To support the expansion of the interpreter pool, Gunnison Valley Health Foundation is offering funding for staff and community members to go through an accredited medical interpretation program and GVH awards a pay raise to staff who complete the program. More than 20 individuals were trained in 2023 and are available to GVH patients 7 days a week.

Central to GVH's initiative is the addition of the bilingual patient navigator position. Cinthia Saenz started in this position in 2023 and has played a pivotal role in its success and 5.2% growth in the immigrant population served at GVH just in 2023. As a certified medical interpreter and trusted community member, Saenz serves as a bridge between the healthcare provider and the linguistic community, facilitating access to healthcare services and fostering trust. Thanks to funding from The Katz Amsterdam Foundation and Rocky Mountain Health Foundation, GVH is poised to expand the bilingual patient navigator role to full-time status, with a focus on increasing access to bilingual behavioral health services.

The engagement didn't stop there. In 2022, GVH launched a health literacy education program which is entering its second full year. Providers, alongside the patient navigator and other staff members, continue to actively engage with the community on a monthly basis. These sessions cover a wide variety of topics and encourage understanding of the healthcare system for non-English speakers.

GVH's initiative to enhance healthcare access for Spanishand Cora-speaking immigrants and residents was founded on community engagement and collaboration. By forging partnerships with local organizations such as Gunnison County's Multicultural Center and the Hispanic Affairs Project, GVH fostered a safe and inclusive environment, thereby building trust and encouraging active participation.

As GVH continues its journey to transform healthcare in Gunnison Valley, reduced communication barriers and improved access to healthcare services for Spanish- and Cora-speaking residents will serve as tangible evidence of its impact. By prioritizing equity and inclusion, GVH is paving the way for a brighter, healthier future for all residents of Gunnison Valley.

GVH Foundation Funds Study: Health Disparities in the Cora Community

Over the past two years, Gunnison Valley Health has focused on initiatives designed to improve health equity and increase access to care for our Cora and immigrant communities. These initiatives have been wide-ranging, from the implementation of in-person interpretation services, to education programs, to the hiring of our bilingual patient navigator.

Two years ago, Gunnison Valley Health was approached by Western Colorado University Masters student Cole Cooper regarding the possibility of conducting a comprehensive examination of the health disparities of the Cora community, the largest Hispanic subgroup in Gunnison County. Specifically, we wanted to learn more about Cora cultural beliefs and how they can affect care and be tailored into medical interventions at GVH. The report identifies key Cora health beliefs and their perceived gaps in care.

We are very excited to share the findings of this study and aspire to not only address the specific needs of the Cora community but also to foster a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system for all residents of Gunnison County.

Support the health system by giving the gift of your time and talent.

The objective of the Gunnison Valley Health Foundation Ambassador Program is to provide volunteer service to Gunnison Valley Health and its patients through services and opportunities managed by the Gunnison Valley Health

Volunteer service offers opportunities to support the patients, residents and staff of the Senior Care Center, Hospice and the hospital in a variety of ways.

- Resident activity support
- **Event support**
- Hospital patient greeting
- Hospital patient escorts/guides
- Hospice support



Currently, all volunteers are required to be over the age of 18 and must complete an application process. Once an application is submitted, it will be reviewed by the Foundation Volunteer Committee. For further information contact Tammy Scott at tscott@gvh-colorado.org, 970-642-8406.

Hospice Testimonial

"When people hear what I do at Gunnison Valley Health, a common reaction is - that must be a hard job. I always respond with - there is beauty in my job. I am lucky to meet so many community members at both ends of the Valley. I enjoy stories about Crested Butte in the 60s and 70s, stories about Gunnison in the 1950s and 60s through today. I meet ranch families and western alums, transplants and locals alike. I love photographs and flipping through old high school yearbooks. I hear tender love stories, stories of adventure and perseverance. Our Hospice team bears witness to lives well

lived. I am lucky to walk with patients and families on this journey at end of life, and be the very same person who walks with loved ones as they navigate grief."

> Dawn Stewart, Hospice social worker and bereavement coordinator



Scenes from the 2023 Foundation Gala



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WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

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Hospice Testimonial

"The Gunnison community is so fortunate to have an organization like Hospice on their side during a very difficult road. We had a positive experience with Hospice during our daughter's battle with cancer. They provided some welcomed emotional support and services to Mariah and our family.

They have a wonderful, compassionate and knowledgeable staff willing to make cancer patients and their families more comfortable. We received cards of encouragement and

newsletters throughout this journey. Although our community is small, we were fortunate that they provided the transitional services with the same wonderful staff throughout this horrific journey. The services began with home health, palliative care, Hospice care and then the family received bereavement services. We had a relationship with the same staff throughout this process, which made each transition a little easier. They went out of our way to support us."

The Besecker and Green Families

GUNNISON VALLEY HEALTH FOUNDATION 2023 Financial Summary



Total Assets: \$6,380,076.39



Total Income: \$2,953,954.33



Grant Funds Received: \$1,400,000



Hospice Endowment Fund Balance: \$426,797.61



Total Expenses: \$860,396.20



Special Events Income: \$270,852.01



Individual Donations: \$1,935,150

What patients are saying ...

"Attentive, informed, professional, personable and took ample time to answer all questions and concerns. Excellent service across the board. Took all possible measures to diagnose and explain findings."

2023 Gunnison Valley Heath Foundation Grants

Rocky Mountain Health Foundation - BH Education and Licensure Support	\$45,000 \$65,000
Caring for Colorado - Womb to World	\$177,605
HCPF - Epic EHR	\$650,000
Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley - Mountain Mama's Cafe	
Noble Foundation - EMS Station	
Gunnison Car Club - EMS Station	
Behavioral Health Administration - Career Pipeline Grant for Internships and Licensures	\$144,600
Charles B Goddard Foundation Trust - EMS Station	\$100,000
Rocky Mountain Health Foundation - Bilingual Patient Navigator	\$25,000
Kats Amsterdam Foundation - Bilingual Behavioral Health Peer & Patient Navigator	
Gunnison County - Mobile Crisis	
Town of Crested Butte - Behavioral Health	\$10,000
City of Gunnison - Mobile Crisis & School Based Therapy	\$15,000
Total	\$1,386,705

Gunnison Valley Health now offering **Automated Breast Ultrasound Screenings**

Thanks to a generous donation from Cattlemen's Days Tough Enough to Wear Pink, Gunnison Valley Health is one of the only hospitals on the Western Slope to offer automated breast ultrasound (ABUS) screenings for women with dense breast tissue. This breast cancer screening is specifically developed to help doctors find cancers hidden in dense breast tissue, which may be missed by mammography.

Having dense breast tissue is normal; it is a part of you, like having green eyes or brown hair. Dense breast tissue is common; 40% of women have dense breast tissue. Here in the Gunnison Valley, it is even more common; more than 50% of women have dense breast tissue.

Cattlemen's Days Tough Enough to Wear Pink Executive Director, Heidi Sherratt, said the higher prevalence in the valley is one of the reasons her board of directors decided to fund the ABUS equipment.

"We want to ensure that women in the valley have access to the right services to meet their needs," Sherratt said. "We already have the best possible mammography equipment, and after hearing from the team at GVH, we knew that having access to the ABUS screening was necessary for our community."



On a mammogram, dense tissue and masses both appear white, so a suspicious lump may be hidden in dense tissue. When dense tissue is scanned with the ABUS, tissue appears white, and masses appear black - making them easier to see.

ABUS screenings are available only with a referral from a physician and women need to know that the recommendation does not mean that the radiologist identified any areas of concern on the mammogram. ABUS screenings are supplemental screenings recommended for women with dense breast tissue.

Gunnison Valley Health radiologist, Dr. William Graf, said that the ABUS technology will not replace a woman's annual mammogram, it is one piece in a comprehensive spectrum of imaging services.

"Mammography remains the gold standard for breast cancer screening, but there are women who require supplemental screenings to provide the most effective screening," Dr. Graf said. "Women with dense breast tissue have a higher risk of developing breast cancer. The addition of ABUS screenings will help us detect cancer earlier and save lives."

Gunnison Valley Health CEO, Jason Amrich, expressed his gratitude for Tough Enough to Wear Pink and their continued commitment to improving local cancer prevention and care services.

"We are fortunate to have a strong partnership with Tough Enough to Wear Pink; their support of local healthcare enriches available services," Amrich said. "In addition to funding the purchase of the ABUS equipment, they are partnering with the GVH Foundation to help uninsured women access this life-saving cancer screening. They are a tremendous resource for everyone in our community."

2023 **Board of Directors & Staff**

Board of Directors

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Don Haver Angela Kobel Kathy McAllister Megan Mensing Tim Neyman, Ex-Officio Sarah Otero Dr. Stephanie Porter

Foundation Staff

Jenny Birnie, Executive Director Tammy Scott, Foundation Coordinator Carlie Kenton, Development Chair





711 North Taylor Street Gunnison, CO 81230 WWW.GUNNISONVALLEYHEALTH.ORG/FOUNDATION 970-642-8400

62,295Outpatient Visits

1,597 Total Surgeries

22,386 Radiology Visits

5.342 **Urgent Care Visits**

1,847 **Oncology Visits**

14,752 **Rehab Visits** 115,941 **Lab Tests**

111 Births

2,636 **Mountain Clinic Visits**

1.641 **Emergency Department Visits Paramedics Response Calls**

> **GVH** is the second largest employer in the county. In 2023, we paid \$49,117,494 to 445 employees and \$4,800,000 for contract labor.

