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Volunteers - The Heart and Soul of VIM



Dr. Jerry Lear with Kimberlee and Judy Lear.

Jerry Lear, MD retires from VIM after 11 years of volunteering

More than 300 volunteers graciously contribute their time and skills to our daily operations and long-term mission of ensuring that low-income adults have access to quality medical care. Dr. Jerry Lear has been taking care of patients as a volunteer since June 2004, performing general surgery procedures in the clinic once a month. He has donated a total of 384 hours over his 11 years, valued at \$76,800. He celebrated his last volunteer shift on June 22.

“Jerry has been a close friend for many years,” shared VIM Co-Medical Director, Dr. Bob Hakala. “Our friendship goes back to when we were both in practice. Jerry is an excellent surgeon and a compassionate physician. It was a pleasure to work alongside him. He will be greatly missed at VIM.”

Dr. Lear, what made you decide to volunteer at VIM?

It seemed like a good cause. I think back over time and realize VIM was run like a practice should be. You work at a reasonable pace, help people for as long as needed, and you don't have to worry about the logistics of running a clinic. It was common for people to cry because

they were so thankful for the care they received. They were very grateful we were here for them.

What hasn't changed over the years?

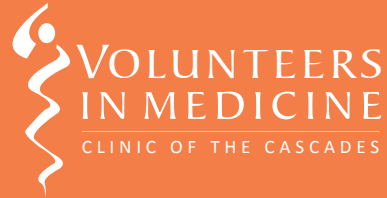
The leadership may have changed over time, but the attitude and feeling of the clinic never did. It has always felt like family; people working together to help those with fewer resources. It was about the people who needed our help and the feeling we got from helping them. That has never changed.

Where is life taking you from here?

I am involved in my church as a volunteer and sit on the Family Kitchen board. I also enjoy cycling and am headed on a 500-mile bike trip in early August. It begins in Blackfoot, ID and rides along the Snake River to Yellowstone. I will also be participating in another 500-mile bike ride in Oregon in September.

I feel very blessed to have had the opportunity to serve others at VIM. The clinic is composed of very many people who have contributed much more than I have and, because of these people, I am sure that the future of VIM is bright.

Thank you Dr. Lear!



Fall 2015

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INSIDE

A Volunteer Story:
Kathie and Dave
Cannon

A Message from
Kat Mastrangelo,
Executive Director

Jerry Lear, MD
Retires from VIM

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VIM Mission Statement

*“To improve the health
and wellness of the uninsured
and medically underserved
through the engagement of
professionals, community
partners and dedicated
volunteers.”*

VIM Rallies for Diabetes

Ralle Johnson, 49, of Redmond was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when he was 12 years old. He is insulin-dependent and requires an injection after each meal to compensate for the insulin that his body no longer produces.

Over the years he was able to manage his diabetes by keeping his blood sugar levels as normal as possible with regular

**For me, to have so many people
volunteer to help others is huge.
Thank you for everything that
you are doing.**

glucose testing and monitoring, and by eating a healthy diet. But Type 1 diabetes is a difficult disease.

Ralle became a patient at VIM in August of 2014 when he was no longer able to afford his insulin and testing strips and didn't know where to turn.

Ralle is one of many low-income working adults who make too much money for Medicaid coverage, yet still can't afford the payments for insurance plans available through the Affordable Care Act. In his case, going without medical care, insulin and testing strips would be deadly.

Over 20% of VIM's patients have a diabetes diagnosis. Since management of this disease can easily overwhelm a patient, we provide wrap-around services that include diabetes management,



medication, support, and a 7-week Diabetes Wellness Educational Program.

In Ralle's case, his Type 1 diabetes had progressed to the point where he also needed supplemental medical care for macular edema and other complications from his disease. In cases like this, we rely on VIM's Community Medical Partners. They have agreed to see VIM patients upon our request for specialty care that is beyond the scope of our clinic.

Ralle is now doing well, but it's taken a team of people to get him there. “The care at VIM has always been excellent,” Ralle shared.



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We Believe in the Health of our Community

A Database from the Heart

One of the inspiring aspects of VIM is our ability to attract remarkable volunteers.

Two years ago, we received this call.

“Hi. I’m a retired software consultant and developer from Silicon Valley and wonder if you can use some volunteer help?”

At the time, Kathie Cannon didn’t realize how much her offer would impact every part of VIM. We didn’t either.

Kathie started as our IT liaison with VIM’s electronic medical records system. But once we understood the extent of her skills, we started to discuss a much bigger project – creating a customized database program for the front desk. We wanted something that would streamline our patient interaction and data collection from the first call to the first appointment.

Our dreams were lofty, but Kathie took the challenge and then “gently” recruited Dave, her retired IBM Business Area Manager and software developer husband, to be on the team.

The development process was enormous. And, since it started as the Affordable Care Act was being implemented, the work was constantly changing.

Yet, Dave and Kathie’s patience and professionalism kept the process moving.

First, they brought us draft after draft of the plan on paper, teasing out the

nuances that we knew we needed but didn’t know how to articulate. Then they started to build the software program, again, incorporating our needs as we refined them.

As the project continued, Dave assumed the lead role, while Kathie focused mostly on her original volunteer duties. When the final product was in sight, VIM’s volunteer eligibility screeners were recruited as product testers to look for unexpected bugs and give valuable user feedback.

VIM’s new Eligibility Database (EDB) was launched on February 15, 2015, and we celebrated! Our dreams were realized, and yes, greatly surpassed.

Patients have benefitted from the streamlined eligibility process that has eliminated repetitive questions, relieving stress and allowing for a more natural flow of conversation.

Kathie Cannon didn’t realize how much her offer would impact every part of VIM.

Volunteers are more efficient. Redundancy between positions has been virtually eliminated, thus eligibility screening appointments take much less time. Volunteers have more independence in their patient interactions. They also have more confidence in their work due to intuitive workflows and the ability to easily share data from one position to the other.

Our staff has benefitted the most. The EDB has given us a professional edge, saving valuable time while supplying accurate data through a variety of customizable reports associated with our patients’ demographics. We can problem solve at staff meetings using real data instead of gut feelings. And, our fundraising efforts have benefitted from the variety of information that is available to meet donor requirements.

The EDB has truly touched every part of the clinic.

We estimate that Dave and Kathie have contributed over \$100,000 in volunteer time to create this database for us. Through the ups and downs and

gazillion changes we threw at them, they stayed the course and came through for VIM with flying colors. They’re still volunteering, with Dave responding to additional EDB requests, and Kathie working with all aspects of our computer based work.

Thank you Dave and Kathie, for being another shining example of the extraordinary volunteer work that happens at VIM every day. We are most grateful for your big hearts and incredible talents – and that you chose to share them with us.

From the Executive Director

The most common question people ask me about VIM is, “Is there still a need for VIM since the Affordable Care Act?” There is a second related question which is, “What do you do now that the ACA has been implemented?” My answers are always the same: YES and A LOT!

In the last year, VIM has been THE access to healthcare for 1,000 of the estimated 6,000 individuals who remain uninsured in Central Oregon. VIM is still here, providing primary and specialty medical care, prescription medications and patient education to those who need our help.

Who are these people with no insurance? Low-income working adults, the same patient demographic we have always served. Some don’t qualify for Medicaid or federal subsidies, including immigrants who have had Green Cards for less than 5 years. Others don’t know they are eligible. We help all of them avoid the Emergency Department, we assist them in signing up for Medicaid, and we provide them with a medical home.

Now that the dust has settled from many of the healthcare changes, we’re also looking deeper. In the spirit of partnership, we’re reaching out. For example, we are working with Better Together and their Supporting Families Initiative to empower youth as they move through school and into careers. We recently hosted our first “Student Day at VIM” to give middle/high school students a hands-on experience of medical field professions.

In addition, our friends at the Latino Community Association will be using the clinic to host their upcoming English as a Second Language (ESL) class for adults who want to improve their language skills.

As always, our most important work is what we do best – caring for the health of low-income, uninsured adults. But if we can help more, we will. We are emulating you – your support and generosity is inspiring. Thank you for believing in the health of our community with us.



Kat

2015 - 2016 Local Restaurant Donors

Every Tuesday night we offer our 25+ volunteers dinner while they see patients from 4 – 8 p.m.

Each meal is donated by one of the following local restaurants. Please consider them when you're looking for a dining option and thank them for their support of VIM!

- Aloha Café
- Café Yumm
- Chow
- Country Catering
- Hola! Restaurant
- Jackalope Grill
- Jackson's Corner Eastside
- Kebaba
- Longboard Louie's Eastside
- McKay Cottage
- Tate & Tate
- Toomie's Thai Cuisine
- Zydeco

We thank you!

Community Pints Night - A Huge Success

For every pint purchased at Deschutes Brewery's Pub on Tuesdays in June, \$1 was donated to VIM. For every growler filled at the tasting room, \$2 was donated to VIM.

In total, Deschutes Brewery donated \$3,000 from all of the pints and growlers purchased, in addition to a \$5,000 grant.

Thank you to everyone who came out to support us! And a huge THANK YOU to Deschutes Brewery for the continued support!