



Aurora House News

Volume 8 Issue 1

Spring 2014

Of Special Note

Since Inception June 21, 2007

- # of Patients and their Families Served: 434
- Age Range: 17—97
- Avg. Length of Stay: 35 Days
- # of Cities served: 14

July 2013—December 2013

- # of Volunteers: 53
- # of Volunteer Groups: 7
- # of Volunteer Hours: 890

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Groundbreaking Ceremony for AHEC and Additional Rooms

Aurora House broke ground recently for its new education center AHEC (Aurora House Education Center) and will add four more patient rooms.

Partnering with South Texas College since 2010, Aurora House has provided fourth level nursing students with an opportunity to learn about End of Life Care - more specifically palliative and hospice care.

Students going through this rotation learn how to identify and report poor management of physical pain; familiarize themselves with the most common narcotics; and understand the importance of the interdisciplinary approach in caring for these patients. Students see first hand the role of the chaplain, social worker, and physicians as they manage the care of Aurora House patients.

Modeled after the Denver Hospice Rotation Program, students keep a journal and may consider a variety of

questions such as: How do we talk with patients and families about prognosis? How will you decide when a patient is “sick enough” for hospice? Whether or not the students choose palliative care as a profession, concepts such as total pain management, grief counseling, dying as a part of life, and working as part of a team will translate into every nursing career.

The first of its kind in the Rio Grande Valley, this unique undergraduate nursing rotation training program has been offered to over 630 students. The program combines lectures, reading materials developed for this program, audiovisual case studies and direct patient care experiences. Testimonials from students reveal their enthusiasm about this valuable learning opportunity.

Aurora House began as the dream of Founding Director, Rafael Rodriguez MD, FACP, a board certified specialist

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Groundbreaking (cont. from page 1)

in Internal Medicine and Palliative care. His vision of Aurora House's educational building is another part of that dream fulfilled.

"We know that today's medical and nursing schools, in general, do not include enough specialized training about end-of-life care," said Dr. Rodriguez.

"Most nurses and physicians don't come to the practice with the tools required to evaluate the emotional, spiritual, psychological and physical needs of older and dying patients," he stated.

"Our vision is to create a generation of nurses well equipped to serve a growing aging population through a dignified, compassionate and respectful approach."

According to Dr. Rodriguez this is a great time for expansion. "At this time of significant growth of Hospice programs in the Rio Grande Valley area, we want to make sure that nurses graduate with a solid knowledge and understanding of the care this special population of patients needs."

As a direct result of Dr. Rodriguez' persistence and heartfelt passion about this project, The AH Foundation approved the construction of the 2700 square foot center. Like the name **Aurora** implies in Spanish — it is truly a new dawn, another new beginning with endless possibilities.

FUNDING THE PROJECT

Funding for Aurora House's efforts have caught the attention of

national and local foundations throughout the years and this newest expansion is being funded in part by several private donors interested in the growth of this kind of program in the Valley area.



Dr. Rodriguez celebrates with his family during the recent groundbreaking for the Aurora House Education Center and Patient Room Expansion. Shown left to right is his wife, Delyssa, and daughters, Ava (age 7), and Zoë (age 10).

As a private non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, Aurora House does not receive any form of government funding and relies fully on community donations to provide care for its patients.

Many new and exciting opportunities exist for local residents and businesses to partner with Aurora House to sponsor new education equipment or furnish the new patient rooms.

WHAT IS NEEDED

AHEC will be a fully equipped learning center with office and storage space, lounge, restrooms and classroom complete with a

video conferencing system for distance learning.

Part of the mission of AHEC is to provide resources for a fully stocked library suitable for both students and the community. A full compliment of educational videos; up to date literature; and educational charts will be geared toward helping students with their studies about palliative care. These materials will also be available for families in our community to help raise awareness about the benefits of Hospice care and assist them in making informed decision about the care of their loved ones. The classroom will be available for community educational lectures as well.

In addition the Foundation is doubling its capacity and expanding to eight patient rooms. Aurora House is one of only ten special care facilities licensed by the Texas State Department of Health to care for the terminally ill. Since 2007 Aurora House has remained at full capacity, with a waiting list most all of the time.

The new wing being added to Aurora House is a response to this identified need. The wish list for this type of expansion is big and includes hospital beds, chairs, bedside tables, bedding (sheets and blankets) towels and a myriad of patient care items. Cash donations are always welcome and will allow Aurora House to carefully partner with local businesses to provide comfortable furnishings for the patients and their families. Please contact Kathy Scheuerman, director, at 973-9690 to learn how you can help.

Memorials July 2013—December 2013

In Memory of
Duane Crawford
Gordon & Verda Nelson

In Memory of
Albin DePue
Patty E. DePue

In Memory Of
Lorene G. Derr
Alfred & Velma Dirks

In Memory of Ar-
thur C. Doyle
Mary Anne Doyle

In Memory of
Skip Farrell
Subram & Eliza-
beth Gopalkrish-
nan M.D.

In Memory of
Silverio Galaviz
Irma G. Miranda

In Memory of
Ruth Galloway
Mr. & Mrs. Neal G. Galloway

In Memory of
Ralph E. Godsil
Shirley Godsil

In Memory of
Evidna Green
Bonnie S. Schwarz

In Memory of
Verna E. Green
Beta Sigma Phi
Elida Garza

In Memory of
Jerry Hall
Dr. & Mrs. Allen Dunckel

In Memory of
Derek Heilman
William & Sally Roach
Bonnie S. Schwarz

In Memory of
Francisco Jalomo
Gumecinda Gomez

In Memory of
Enrique Ledesma
Alicia A. Ledesma

In Memory of
Ted Long
Patricia A. Long

In Memory of
Manuela Longoria
Mr. & Mrs. Neal G.
Galloway
Gilda N. Guerra

In Memory of
Maria Longoria
Gumecinda Gomez

In Memory of
Rafael Martinez
Olivia Martinez

In Memory of
Beverly Meyers
Michael & Cheyanne Zink

In Memory of
Stephen F. Militello
Marcia Barba
Sherry Carugan
Rose Collyer
Maria Guadalupe Guzman
Mary Ellen Knickel
Nick & Andrea Polizzi
Sharon Ragona
Bev & Dave Sugar

In Memory of
Leo Neal Namken
Ann Edwards
Bonnie S. Schwarz
Margaret J. Whitley
Jeanne L. Wiegand

In Memory of
Bessie Olson
Jean Lehman

In Memory of
David Overfield
Marilyn Overfield

In Memory of
Julio Palacios
Mr. & Mrs. A. Hinojosa Jr.

In Memory of
Esmeralda Perez
Victoria Perez Hensley

In Memory of
Lee Ross Puckett Jr.
Alfred & Velma Dirks

In Memory of
Sam Reed
Jean Lehman

In Memory of
Loretta Rose
Daniel & Constance Callahan

In Memory of
Consuelo Saenz
Eloy Sáenz

In Memory of
Fernando Saenz
Ofelia Barrón
Ruben & Agustina Sáenz

In Memory of
Marc Schroeder
Michael J. Schroeder



Memorials, Honorariums & Donations

July 2013 - December 2013

In Memory of
Lora Lee Yokom
William Elder

PAVERS

In Memory of
Ovidio Garcia
Aurora House

In Memory of
Juvencio Garza
San Juana Garza

In Memory of
Indalecio Dominguez
Rufino Dominguez

In Memory of
Hank Page
Louella Russell

HONORARIUM

In Honor of
Richard Vaughan
James & Julie Vaughan

DONATIONS

ADL Services Inc.
Beta Sigma Phi
Raquel Briones
Raul & C. Cabaza
Catholic Daughters of the Americas
Alberto Cepeda M.D. P.A.
Carolyn S. Davis
DaVita
Donna Lions Club
Epsilon Sigma Alpha
First Baptist Church (Gladden Sunday Class) Weslaco
Armando Garcia
San Juana Garza

Mr. & Mrs. Victor R. Garza
William N. Gillum
A.R. Griffith
Marjorie H. Johnson
Tiffany Kostynick
Joyce Kunze
Llano Grande Lake Park Church
Los Ebanos Study Club
Los Pentecostales de Weslaco
Hector & Gloria Mejia
Our Lady of Guadalupe Cenacle
Walter & Catherine Piper
Fanny & Buddy Ross
Siesta Village
Southern Comfort Resort Park
Snow to Sun RV Park
S.T.C. HVAC Students
Frances Tovar
V.E.S.A. Donna
Weslaco Elks Auxiliary
Paul & Donna Zopfi

IN-KIND DONATIONS

Alamo Rose Quilters
Angel Alvarado
Victor Aranda
Eva Bermea
Larry Blegen
Raquel Briones
Abel Caballero
Elizabeth Caballero
Dora Del Toro
Santos Delgado
Direct Buy
D.P.S. Weslaco
First Christian Academy
Mandy Garcia
Alma Garza
Tita Garza
Lori Gonzalez
Happiness Cupcakes Weslaco
Enrique Herrera
Anna Hulet

Sara Ibarra
Adela Lopez
Alma Lopez
Love of Christ Church Weslaco
Megan Martinez
Terry Maruska
McCaleb Funeral Home
Diana Muñoz
Norma Muñoz
Paulino Muñoz
Ricardo Orozco
Walt Piper
Ismael Quiroz Jr.
Nora Resendez
Rio Bottled Water Inc.
Josefina Reyna
Rio Valley Estates Quilters
Domingo Rivas
Magdalena Rodriguez
Martin Rodriguez
Melissa Rodriguez
Rotary Club
Maria G. Salas
Zulema Salas
Esther Salinas
Salvation Army
Southern Comfort
St. Pius X Church
Anna Stewart
Trails End RV Park
San Juana Tristan
Irma Vale
Patty Vasquez
Edna Vera
V.E.S.A. Donna
Weslaco High School
Weslaco Lions Club
Weslaco Memorial Elementary

GRANTS

Madison Charitable Foundation

Annual Walk-A-Thon

Despite the cold temperatures participants in the 4th Annual Aurora House Walk-A-Thon were ready to go!

Walkers warmed up with an energizing Zumba dance routine led by instructor Homer Longoria. The Disc Jockey Humberto Chavez kept upbeat and inspiring music playing which added to the fun and excitement.

Over 400 bright blue T-Shirts were distributed and walkers took a brisk walk from Harlon Block park to 8th street and back. On the way water was provided by Weslaco Scout Troop 41. The event concluded with a fun Bucket Auction with prizes donated by several area businesses. In all, over \$14,000 was raised by this much anticipated event. Many sponsors helped to make this successful!

Platinum Sponsors:

Weslaco Rehab Hospital
Knapp Medical Center
Ricardo Abreu MD,PA

Gold Sponsors:

Hollon Oil
Bugambilias/Villa de Cortez
North Bridge Elementary
Weslaco Medical Clinic
IBC Bank McAllen
Cima Hospice
Guerra Insurance
Fernando Saenz Law Firm
Weslaco Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
Doctors Hospital at Renaissance

Silver Sponsors:

Margo's Corner	Elsa State Bank
Red Penny Ranch	Sander Pharmacy
Gonzalez Elementary	Arturo's Restaurant
Maid 2 Order	Texas National Bank
Rudy Garza Funeral Home	BBVA Compass Bank
Rio Grande Pain Team	Beverly Meyers Family
Weslaco Lion's Club	Pax Villa Hospice
Shady Acres Residents	Walker Realty
Coach's Pharmacy Mercedes	Weslaco Pharmacy



AURORA HOUSE FOUNDATION

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Weslaco, TX 78599**

**(956) 973-9690
(956) 973-9705 fax
AuroraHouseFoundation@yahoo.com**

Please! Call us with your email address
and we will email your newsletter — It will be in
color and will save Aurora House po\$tage!!!



Aurora House recognizes dying as part of the normal process of living and focuses on respect and compassion in preparation for death. Its mission is to provide care for persons in the last phase of incurable disease, so they can approach death with dignity, comfort and peace.

**Aurora House Foundation
2014 Board of Directors**

Alicia Aguilar, Chair	Bill Lowe
Cesar Ortega, Vice-Chair	Ginger Walker
E. Richard Vaughan Jr., Treasurer	Melanie Riley
Sergio R. Garcia, Secretary	Rhonda Garza
Melissa Beckwith	Esperanza Garza

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Diana Gonzalez, Virginia Gonzalez, Emily Villarreal, Linda Garza

Newsletter Editor.....Lynn Carter

Aurora House Luncheon 2014

Plans are underway for the 2014 Aurora House Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon.

This much anticipated event will be April 23 at the Knapp Conference Center.

Chaired by Patti Dittburner, the theme is "Classic Hollywood". There will be a catered luncheon, special entertainment, a silent auction and over 20 fabulous door prizes. Tim Smith from KRGV will be joining in on the fun.

Businesses who would like to honor their staff with a sponsorship are encouraged to make reservations early as this event traditionally sells out.

Let us help you make your staff feel special!

Various levels are available depending upon how many staff you would like to treat to the fun.



A Diamond sponsorship will reserve two tables of eight. A Gold sponsorship will reserve one table for eight. A Silver sponsorship will provide reserved seating for four guests.

One of the fun events during the luncheon is the Silent Auction. Interested in becoming a sponsor or donating a silent auction item? Please contact the Aurora House office at 973-9690.