



Darlene Loper couldn't believe she found a place like Bethesda.

As she sat through an appointment for a minor cold, Dr. Humphries gave her such positive news she almost couldn't believe it.

Her journey to Bethesda started months before in New York City. Darlene was working as an art professor, living in New York and fulfilling her dreams. She had gone through many years of school to become established in her field, but her health continued to decline. "I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 2015," Darlene recalls. "I was completely surprised, and devastated. It rocked my world."

Multiple sclerosis is a long-lasting disease that can affect your brain, spinal cord, and the optic nerves in your eyes. It can cause problems with vision, balance, muscle control and other basic body functions. For several years she was able to manage her MS and continue her career. But slowly, the effects of the autoimmune disease forced her to take a step back.

After much consideration, she decided to move to Tyler to be closer to family. The hard part? Giving up health insurance through her job and connections to research hospitals in New York. "My MS affects my cognitive abilities so I had to cut down my hours of teaching and eventually change careers," Darlene said. "I had to have faith that my God is a healer. I love teaching and that was my career and it was really hard to step away. That really hurt."

Back in Tyler, Darlene found a job at Hangers of Hope. It was just what she needed – a place that

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“...I believe in God and He has brought me through so much.”

Darlene with volunteer nurse Karin Grantham, who administered her infusion.

was fun and a great environment, with no stress. She enjoys thrift shopping and the managers understood her health condition and gave her flexibility. But the continued thought of healthcare kept haunting her. One day, at work, she found out that she could be a patient at Bethesda. She had been struggling with a cold, so she made an appointment to see one of the doctors.

"At the appointment I met Dr. Humphries," she recalled. "He was asking about my medical history and we began to talk about my multiple sclerosis. He told me that it might be possible to have my treatment done at Bethesda. It was awesome and I kind of wanted to jump at that moment. I had no idea that would be possible."

Darlene knew her treatment would be very expensive, and she had been saving for months in preparation. She wanted to continue to receive the same kind of treatment she had in New York – a transfusion therapy that could be administered every six months. This treatment, proven to work against relapse, could cost her thousands of dollars.



“ I believe that the men and women who volunteer and serve at Bethesda really care about you and you have a connection with them. Everyone should be able to feel like that whether you have the money to pay for healthcare or not. ”

Dr. Humphries, who also serves as Bethesda's medical director, began researching to see about getting the transfusion medication donated. Working with other staff at the clinic, the paperwork was completed and approved. A volunteer nurse, Karin Grantham, agreed to administer the transfusion on site and a date was set to bring Darlene in for her first treatment – a six hour process that would happen twice a year.

"I cannot begin to tell you how much it blessed me," said Darlene. "If you struggle with MS you nearly always have

pain. I have always been an active person so it's even harder." The treatment will help Darlene's fatigue and other symptoms of a condition for which there is no cure.

"When Dr. Humphries was telling me I could get the infusion done at Bethesda, I was thinking that was great, but I didn't know how. He sincerely cares about me, checks in and follows up. If it wasn't for Bethesda, I would have to take on multiple jobs to afford the treatment," she said.

Through a medication assistance program, the cost of the infusion was \$0 to Darlene. Without this help, the treatment could have been as much as \$8,000. "I still I don't know what the future will be, but I believe in God and he has brought me through so much," Darlene said. "Any little blessing has me jumping for joy."

Life for Darlene is still not easy, but with the stress of healthcare relieved, she can focus on her journey with MS and will continue to have a positive outlook. "Life with MS is different every day," Darlene says. "There might be a week where I would have to use a cane, but the previous week I was running. My balance is terrible and I don't always walk in a straight line. Some people will even think I am intoxicated and I tend to laugh at myself. I am very thankful and I totally believe that within my lifetime there will be a cure. It's hard, but this type of treatment makes it so much easier."

YOU, our generous donors, made this amazing infusion therapy possible for Darlene.

Thank you!

A NOTE FROM JOHN



Through your help and other generous supporters, this year has been challenging but not devastating.

"We are right where we need to be."

As we enter into cooler weather and a time of thanksgiving, the one word that I think of often is *grateful*.

To say 2020 has been a roller coaster would be an understatement. We have faced so many uncertainties this year. The COVID pandemic was something that no one could ever prepare for, and there were many times when we wondered how we would move forward. We learned that we would be prepping for a "new normal."

Our hearts broke for those impacted, both health-wise and financially, and we looked upon the world with slight hesitation - wondering what

was to come. One thing that I have seen throughout this year is the faithfulness of God and the many gifts of reassurance that we are right where we need to be.

The blessings that have been showered upon our work at the clinic are many. Our patients, even with their struggles in life, know that Bethesda is a place they can count on. Through your help and other generous supporters, this year has been challenging but not devastating.

In this time of thanksgiving, please know that our staff and our patients are grateful for you. Your overwhelming generosity and support of our mission has made all the difference this year. We know God is in control, and His work will find a way.

As we look forward, we know that there is tremendous growth ahead for our once small clinic. The need is there, and the work is never-ending. Please pray for Bethesda as we move forward and work on large projects that will help us better serve our neighbors in this great place we call home.

Happy Thanksgiving and God Bless,

Dr. John English, CEO



Mental Health

en Español.

It's no surprise that since the global pandemic began more people are suffering from depression and anxiety. Its impact on our population right here in Tyler is seen by the increase in patients needing counselors and mental health services.

For many years, the need for a bilingual counselor at Bethesda has been a top concern.

Thankfully, God provides.

Recent grant funding from the ETMC Foundation provided \$1.3 million in grants to 25 nonprofits across East Texas. Bethesda, in partnership with Samaritan Counseling Center, received funding to hire a bilingual counselor.

Larissa Smith, LMSW supervised by Russell Bailiff LCSW-S, works with the Bethesda team and will be providing counseling services in Spanish to patients for a small co-pay of \$20 or \$30.

Larissa spent 7 years living in Peru and is passionate about providing mental health services to patients, especially the most vulnerable.

"Mental health is an important aspect of primary care and we must offer services to meet the unique needs of our community," said Dr. John English. "Helping patients through hard times, especially now, is a necessary part of healthcare and we are grateful to have foundations and donors who realize this need."

The addition of bilingual counseling is just one aspect of the mental health program at Bethesda. Through a partnership with UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, all patients are screened for anxiety and depression through a program called Vital Sign 6.

Because of your support, and the generous support in our community, patients lives are being transformed through hope and healing.



Thank you to the **CHRISTUS Trinity Mother Frances Hospital Nursing Practice and Outcomes Council** for their coin donation drive for Bethesda's Hangers of Hope Thrift Stores!

A few months ago there was a national coin shortage and our volunteers answered the call! Thank you to this amazing group for helping keep our Hangers of Hope stores running smoothly with plenty of coin change during the pandemic.

Pictured (from left to right):
Ginnie Covey, NPOC Facilitator
Megan Riaz, Bethesda Community Relations/Marketing
Tricia Durham, NPOC Chair-Elect



Pillars *of* Bethesda

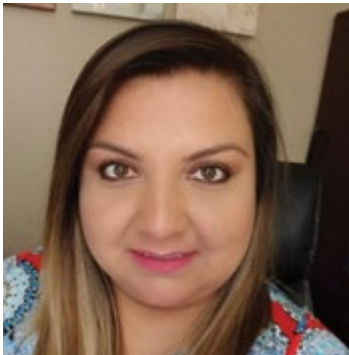
Your monthly donation ensures our patients continue to receive affordable healthcare even if they are uninsured!

As a Pillar of Bethesda, you're part of a special community of monthly donors who are committed to ensuring our neighbors have access to medical and dental care.

It's easy to give on your own terms each month, and no amount is too small.

WHY I GIVE MONTHLY

"Bethesda has been such a blessing to me and my family that I want to help in any way that I can," says Johana Velasco, who gives monthly and also works on staff at the clinic.



"My mom is a diabetic and Bethesda has helped her manage her diabetes. She is able to get her medication through our

patient adoption program. My mom also needs to get CT scans done every 6 months, and without the help and partnership of Bethesda, she would not be able to afford them."

**Johana Velasco,
Bethesda Employee and Monthly Donor**

Thank you!

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Patient Testimonial

LINDA REYES AND KVNE

Thank you KVNE!

KVNE radio station is a beacon of light in our community, sharing the gospel all over our area. Recently, they used their reach to help a patient in need, Linda Reyes.

Linda came to Bethesda in need of hope. After struggling with drug addiction and losing everything, even her children, she committed her life to Jesus and has been sober for 17 months! Even though her heart has been renewed, her teeth were destroyed from the drug use. She was ashamed to smile and desperately wanted a fresh start.



"It has been about 6 years since I really smiled," Linda recalled. "You don't know what you have until it's gone. The teeth don't define me, but to have a new smile would be such a blessing."

KVNE shared Linda's story with their listeners, who came through in a huge way! KVNE listeners donated the remaining funding needed for a new smile for Linda.

"Encouragement Media Group exists to glorify God by encouraging people, connecting our community, and pointing people to Jesus Christ," said Jennifer Bailey, VP of marketing and community connections for KVNE. "Our ministry partnership with Bethesda helps us walk out our mission statement perfectly and it is our honor and blessing to help amplify the message of Bethesda to our listeners and our community."

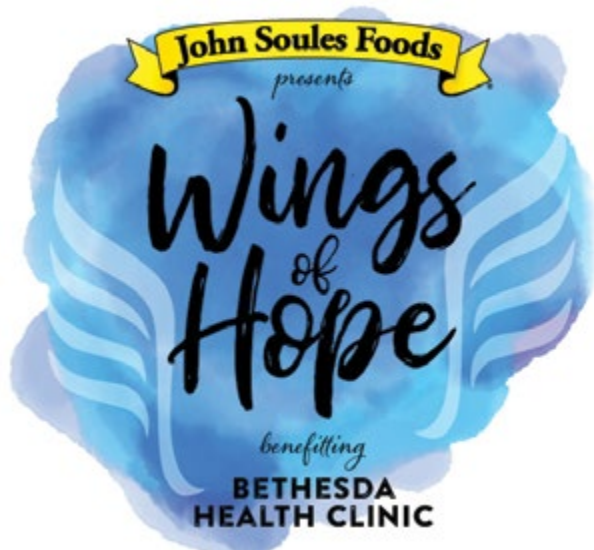
Linda has an appointment next month, and we can't wait to share her new smile in the Spring newsletter.

Thank you KVNE!

89.5
KVNE
The Voice of Encouragement

It has been about 6 years since I really smiled," Linda recalled. "You don't know what you have until it's gone. The teeth don't define me, but to have a new smile would be such a blessing.

Thank you Wings of Hope Sponsors!



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Join us December 1
and
**DOUBLE
YOUR IMPACT!**

The United Way of Smith County is
DOUBLING all contributions to
agency partners for
#GivingTuesday.

Beginning at 8:00 a.m.,
on December 1st, give online
at **tylergives.org**
and your donation (up to \$2,000)
will be automatically doubled!

Your gift provides
affordable healthcare
for our working, low-income,
uninsured neighbors.

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