

# Momentum.

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation Newsletter

Volume 31 / Fall 2023

Mary Free Bed<sup>®</sup>  
Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**October 28**  
**Thrive!**

*Presented by Buist Electric  
Benefiting the Center  
for Autism  
DeVos Place*

**November 4 & 5**  
**Keep Up the Pace**  
**Junior Pacers Wheelchair  
Basketball Tournament**  
Special Olympics Michigan

**December 2 & 3**  
**Mary Free Bed Invitational  
Adult Wheelchair Basketball  
Tournament**  
*Presented by CareLinc  
Mary Free Bed YMCA*

## WHAT'S NEW

### A COMMUNITY UNITED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Spring and summer were in full bloom as the Mary Free Bed community came together for a purpose at the Mary Free Bed Foundation's annual luncheon, *Let Freedom Spring*, and golf outing, *The Mary Free Bed Open*.

*Let Freedom Spring*, presented by Trace3, was held on May 3rd at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. The more than 300 attendees were inspired by former patient Spencer Cobb, who recovered at Mary Free Bed after sustaining a spinal cord injury. Thanks to the overwhelming support and generosity of sponsors, table hosts and guests, the event raised over \$71,000 for Mary's Mission. A special thank you to Eva Aguirre Cooper

and Reverend Katherine Lee Baker, Foundation trustees who emceed the event and provided a meaningful reflection before lunch, respectively.

*The Mary Free Bed Open*, took place on June 5th at Thousand Oaks Golf Club. The annual golf outing benefits the Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports (WAS) program. Thanks to our golfers, generous sponsors, in-kind donors and many volunteers, the unforgettable day was sold out once again. The event, presented by Kent Quality Foods, made a tremendous difference on behalf of the athletes served by the WAS program. The event was a resounding success raising over \$125,000 to continue providing

access to adaptive equipment, coaching, classes, clinics, camps, and competitions for kids and adults with physical and/or cognitive disabilities.



We'll be back in full swing on June 3, 2024, at Thousand Oaks Golf Club. To reserve your foursome or secure sponsorship for the 2024 Mary Free Bed Open, please contact Laura Dulay at [laura.dulay@maryfreebed.com](mailto:laura.dulay@maryfreebed.com).

# thrive

soaring to  
new heights with

*Mary*

## join us!

OCTOBER 28 | 6:00 P.M.  
DEVOS PLACE

Tickets are on sale.  
Sponsorships available.

For more information:  
[maryfreebed.com/thrive](http://maryfreebed.com/thrive)

presented by

 **BUIST ELECTRIC**  
Raising The Standard



# A COMMUNITY UNITED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



# MARY FREE BED GUILD



## MARY FREE BED GUILD EXPANDS CAREER DEVELOPMENT

This year, the Mary Free Bed Guild awarded \$97,000 in scholarships to 24 impressive and inspiring scholarship winners. The Diversity and Ability Scholarships provide outstanding students the opportunity to pursue their career goals. The goal is to reward high-achieving students and hope they'll consider Mary Free Bed when it's time to join a workforce dedicated to restoring hope and freedom.

Guild President, Amy Stuursma, shared, "To promote continued academic achievement, we created the Minority Scholarship in

2006 and the Disability Scholarship in 2015, now renamed the 'Diversity and Ability Scholarship.' Since the scholarships' inception, we've given over \$1 million to students in our communities — a milestone we're proud of. The Guild also reaches beyond the walls of our hospital and into the community by donating more than \$25 million to dozens of organizations dedicated to furthering the quality of life for those with disabilities. We aim to support everyone in reaching their potential and becoming successful community members."



# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS EVENT SUPPORTERS!

## LET FREEDOM SPRING

Presented by:



Physicians Health Plan

## MFB OPEN

Presented by:



Cart Sponsor:



Lunch Sponsor:

THE MEIJER FOUNDATION

Bloody Mary Bar Sponsor:



Tee Prize Sponsor:



Breakfast & Coffee Bar Sponsor:



## WHEELCHAIR & ADAPTIVE SPORTS



### CAMP IS BACK IN SESSION!

In its 39th year, WAS welcomed 48 campers from Michigan, Indiana and Ohio for Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp, presented by Saladin Shriners. Kids and teens ages 7 - 18 took over Grand Valley State University's campus playing sports like basketball, lacrosse and tennis. Every year, camp provides the chance for kids to come together through adaptive sports to try new activities, enjoy a bit of healthy competition and make lifelong friends.

The camp is led by instructors who are also competitive wheelchair athletes. It's a fun reunion when former campers return as volunteers to help mentor and encourage the young athletes.

A much-anticipated highlight of the week is the annual water fight with the Allendale Fire Department. Fire fighters bring their fire truck to create a large sprinkler and even join in the fun with coaches, volunteers and campers.

Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp is made possible by generous sponsors, volunteers, and the Mary Free Bed Guild who provide and serve lunch daily.



Scan the QR code to read more about The Hartford grant, plus see a fun surprise for 14-year-old WAS athlete, Sam.

### WAS RECEIVES \$50,000 GRANT FROM THE HARTFORD

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports was awarded a \$50,000 grant from The Hartford, a provider of disability insurance, for new sports equipment. The grant enabled WAS, a member of the Move United member network, to purchase adaptive sports equipment, including seven handcycles and three sports wheelchairs for the Inpatient Recreational Therapy department and the WAS program.

"With the generosity of Move United and The Hartford, our athletes now have access to equipment that gets them in the action and eliminates barriers to participation," said Maria Besta, manager, Recreational Therapy, Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports at Mary Free Bed. "Adaptive equipment costs can seem overwhelming for individuals who use a wheelchair to play sports. With this funding, they've opened doors and improved access to wellness, socialization and overall health."

## MARY MOMENT

### MARY FREE BED CELEBRATES RETIREMENT OF THREE LONG-TIME LEADERS

In July, three long-time leaders and clinicians celebrated their retirement from Mary Free Bed.

- **Ingrid Cheslek, RN**, chief operating officer
- **Michael Jakubowski, M.D.**, chief medical officer
- **Richard Ball, M.D.**, medical director of the Mary Free Bed PM&R Residency program

Through their leadership, mentorship and dedication to the Mary Free Bed mission, these exemplary team members have made a lasting contribution to the growth of Mary Free Bed staff, services and programs.

The trio celebrated their retirement among family and friends this summer with an event at Millennium Park. Mary Free Bed staff were also able to toast them at a celebratory tea in the hospital's café.

Thank you, Ingrid, Dr. Jakubowski and Dr. Ball, for your service and dedication to restoring hope and freedom through rehabilitation.



### WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY

At Mary Free Bed, we believe "where there's a will, there's a way" to help patients and their families experience transformative rehabilitation. That mindset also applies to our gracious supporters who create more pathways to rehabilitation with a gift to Mary Free Bed in their estate plans. That's why we've partnered with **FreeWill**. Using this online tool, you can create your will to help:

- **Protect the people and pets close to your heart.**
- **Plan for the distribution of your assets — from your home and car to precious family photographs and heirlooms.**
- **Change lives long into the future.**

We invite you to make your plans — no matter where you are on your life's journey — to sustain our mission while showing compassion to yourself and your own loved ones.

Just as we strengthen the mind, train the body, and inspire hope in patients and families, we want to help you build a bright future for yourself and the important people in your life.

Check it out today at [www.freewill.com/maryfreebed](http://www.freewill.com/maryfreebed).

**A new FreeWill feature was just launched** that allows you to create a Revocable Living Trust (RLT) that will help your loved ones avoid certain issues that can come with a lengthy probate process after you're gone. This new feature is only available to people through FreeWill partners like Mary Free Bed.

If you have any questions about leaving a gift to Mary Free Bed in your will, please contact Brad Kaufmann, Director of Planned Giving, at [brad.kaufmann@maryfreebed.com](mailto:brad.kaufmann@maryfreebed.com).



### THYME TO GARDEN

The Mary Free Bed Recreational Therapy team expanded the Margaret G. Bertsch Outdoor Therapy Garden with an accessible therapy garden. The new “live wall” creates a space for patients to strengthen skills and connect with nature.

Recreational therapists help patients rebuild the skills they’ll need to get back to what they love in life. Patients who plan to return to gardening can use therapy to build skills like shopping to purchase gardening supplies, planting in raised beds, using garden tools, and safely transitioning to uneven surfaces.

The live wall creates a calmer setting where patients and families can sit to experience a brief escape from a traditional hospital setting.

Thanks to the National Garden Bureau and Eastbrook Homes for their generous support in bringing this new therapy environment to our hospital.



## Inside Mary Free Bed



### LOCAL VETERAN AND MEDAL-WINNING PARALYMPIAN VISITS MARY FREE BED

Melissa Stockwell, West Michigan native and Paralympian, brought her story back home thanks to a partnership with SpartanNash and the Our Family® brand. She visited patients and hospital staff at Mary Free Bed and led a keynote speaking engagement this summer.

Melissa was a first lieutenant with the United States Army in Iraq before losing her leg in a roadside bombing, making her the first female soldier to lose a limb in the Iraq War. Following her recovery, she became a prosthetist, and then the first Iraq veteran to be chosen for the Paralympics. Since then, she’s become a three-time medal-winning Paralympian, author and motivational speaker.

Melissa is the spokesperson for Our Family® brand, the flagship private label brand of local food solutions company, SpartanNash. The Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports program is an Our Family® legacy nonprofit partner receiving sponsorship through Our Family Cares® program. SpartanNash also supports Mary Free Bed by supplying breakfast foods enjoyed every day by guests at The Inn at Mary Free Bed, a temporary lodging site for patients and families in Grand Rapids.



Melissa toured the rehabilitation hospital and Orthotics & Prosthetics + Bionics facilities. She shared her story in a speech that included in-person guests and was livestreamed for the public. She also joined a breakout group with patients, hospital clinicians and adaptive athletes.

Melissa created her own non-profit, Dare2tri, aiming to remove barriers in sports and create a community for all athletes, regardless of ability. That effort aligns with both the Mary Free Bed mission to restore hope and freedom through rehabilitation and the Our Family Cares® grassroots initiative to help make our communities better places to live, play and grow.

## THE BEST OF THE BEST

### MARY FREE BED NAMED TOP 10 REHABILITATION HOSPITAL BY U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

For ten years, Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital has been ranked within the top 50 Best Rehabilitation Hospitals in the country by *U.S. News & World Report*. This year, we’re pleased to share our hospital is ranked among the nation’s top ten leaders!

Mary Free Bed has been ranked as the **10th Best Rehabilitation Hospital** in the nation for 2023-2024. This is a significant jump from the previous ranking of 17th and a testimony to the hard work and dedication of the Mary Free Bed team.

The hospital was also rated very high for the number of patients treated who experienced strokes, brain injuries and spinal cord injuries. When it came to advanced technologies and on-site services for patients, Mary Free Bed was rated as “excellent.”

The 2023-24 rankings considered 1,041 hospitals, and results were based on a number of factors including clinical outcomes, physician perception, quality of care and patient experience. Mary Free Bed exceeded the national average in several key metrics, including prevention of readmissions to general acute-care hospitals during and following rehabilitation stays, and the rate of patients being able to return home.

Mary Free Bed is a leader among rehabilitation providers in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin. In fiscal year 2023, we served 98,000 patients across an expanding system of care.

Congratulations to Mary Free Bed, and thank you to all our staff, volunteers, friends and donors for your support!



### TECH-NICALLY TOGETHER: A BYTE-SIZED BOND WITH TRACE3

In a generous display of corporate responsibility, Trace3 continues to take giant leaps beyond the realm of technology and into the realm of compassion. For the past 10 years, Trace3 has provided over \$100,000 in critical funding to a variety of Mary Free Bed programs, including the Betty Bloomer Ford Cancer Rehabilitation Program, Orthotics & Prosthetics + Bionics and Mary’s Mission.

“Being an IT company, we recognize the transformative power of innovation, not just in business but in making a tangible difference in the lives of those facing physical challenges,” said Josh Hilligoss, Trace3 Account Manager. “We’re proud of our partnership with Mary Free Bed. It’s rooted in the shared belief that everyone deserves access to comprehensive and personalized care on their road to recovery.”

The collaboration goes beyond mere financial contributions, as Trace3’s dedicated team members have volunteered their time and skills to improving Mary Free Bed’s IT infrastructure, streamlining processes, and creating a more efficient system. This digital makeover has not only bolstered the hospital’s operations but has also allowed medical professionals to devote more time to patients, fostering an atmosphere of care and support.

## GIFTS & GRANTS

The Mary Free Bed Foundation is grateful for the significant support from the following generous donors and organizations.

- Beusse & Porter Foundation
- Lacks Enterprises
- Nan & Tom Doyal
- Lake Michigan Credit Union
- Eastbrook Homes, Inc.
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Kiwanis of Michigan Foundation

# Mary Free Bed

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maryfreebed.com

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Event Planner

**Maggie Smitt**

Annual Fund Director

## WISH LIST

The Mary Free Bed Foundation often receives requests from our clinicians for specialized equipment and technology to help patients during their rehabilitation journey. If you'd like to fulfill a wish, please contact Darrow Goodspeed at 616.840.8196 or [darrow.goodspeed@maryfreebed.com](mailto:darrow.goodspeed@maryfreebed.com).

### Leckey Squiggles Adaptive Seating System

For use in our Pediatric Feeding Program, this seating system will provide ideal posture and positioning of the pelvis, torso, head, and legs for the child during their feeding sessions. We serve the most complex infants and children that need specific positioning for success. Currently, the program only has one standard highchair. (\$5,110)

### Rifton K130 Small Mobile Stander

This device gives children in a wheelchair greater independence and mobility by strengthening critical motor skills to progress toward independent standing. This would be used for inpatient and outpatient pediatric patients ages 18 months to 4 years with diagnoses such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida and spinal cord injury. (\$3,600)

### Freestanding Basketball Hoop

A new basketball hoop and ball are needed to help with physical aspects of rehabilitation and encourage patients to enjoy the outdoors. Gross motor skills, wheelchair movement skills, upper body strength, recall, processing directions and socialization skills are just a few of the benefits of having a freestanding basketball hoop at Mary Free Bed. Therapists of all disciplines utilize the basketball hoop with patients of all ages outside during the warmer months. (\$325)

*Thank you to Buist Electric for their generous gift of the BOG Rifle Shooting Tripod which is utilized by Mary Free Bed recreational therapists when working with patients to re-learn hunting gun safety and handling.*

