

# Insight

Miami Valley Hospital  
Foundation

WINTER 2025



## Miami Valley Hospital School of Nursing Celebrates 125 Years

The Miami Valley Hospital School of Nursing commemorated its 125th anniversary by unveiling a permanent display in the Miami Valley Hospital lobby. This tribute, which was supported through gifts to the Foundation, honors more than 4,000 graduates from 1900 to 1986, featuring their names

alongside a bronze statue of the school's iconic nurse's cap.

"The nurse's cap was a part of the Miami Valley Hospital School of

Nursing uniform from the school's inception and quickly became a proud symbol identifying our graduates," explains **Karla Vandivier**, class of 1973 and president of the Miami Valley Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association.

"The level of pride our nursing alumni have for their school is outstanding," says **Jenny M. Lewis, MBA, CFRE**, president and CEO of Miami Valley Hospital Foundation and system

vice president of philanthropy at Premier Health. "Even after so many years, many nurses traveled from across the country to honor and celebrate their school and its achievements."

Renowned for their clinical excellence and adaptability, graduates of the program have made remarkable contributions. More than 100 served in all branches of military nursing as well as with the Peace Corps, SS Hope, and Breckenridge Frontier Nursing. Thirty-eight

*(continued on next page)*





## Grateful for You



Each day at Miami Valley Hospital, lives are touched and transformed thanks to your generosity. Your support helps provide the technology, training, and compassionate care that allow our caregivers to serve patients and families when they need it most. We are deeply grateful for your continued partnership.



If you have already made a gift this year, thank you. Your support continues to inspire better health. If you are still considering your year-end giving, there's still time to make an impact. A gift to the Foundation, no matter the size, helps ensure our hospital can continue to deliver exceptional care and innovate for the future. Many donors also find that giving directly from their Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is a simple and tax-efficient way to make a meaningful gift.

Your kindness and compassion strengthen the heart of our mission and inspire everyone who walks through our doors. Together, we are creating a healthier, more hopeful community.

Thank you for your continued support and Happy Holidays!

Lisa Kelchner, Ph.D.  
Chair, Foundation Board of Trustees

Beth Hutter  
Vice President,  
Miami Valley Hospital Foundation



## Nursing Celebrates 125 Years *(continued)*

became missionaries, and three alumni endured three years as Prisoners of War in the Philippines.

"Our graduates carried the spirit of Miami Valley's nursing tradition wherever they served," says **Tara Brodbeck, MS, RN**, class of 1976 and secretary and historian for the Miami Valley Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association.

"This new display preserves their legacy and reminds us of the compassion, courage, and dedication that have defined our alumni for more than a century."



The Miami Valley Hospital Foundation was proud to support this project in collaboration with the Miami Valley Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association.

## Shaping the Future of Headache Medicine Education

The Foundation was recently awarded a \$25,000 grant from AbbVie to support the hospital's inaugural Headache Medicine Fellowship. This funding will support a 2025-2026 fellow, as well as provide educational travel and research opportunities. Offered in partnership with Premier Health's Clinical Neuroscience Institute and Wright State University's Boonshoft School of Medicine, the fellowship addresses the nationwide shortage of headache specialists by training physicians in advanced diagnosis and treatment of headache and facial pain disorders.



Marilyn and Al Dunn

## The Community Leaders Behind a Lifesaving Mission

*"Can you imagine the lives that could be saved if Dayton had a MediVac—like the military?" — Al Dunn*



The late Al and Marilyn Dunn believed deeply in helping others and creating something that would endure. Born in Wishaw, Scotland, Al immigrated to the United States at age five and grew up in Detroit, Michigan, where he met his lifelong partner, Marilyn. After graduating from the Henry Ford Trade School, Al worked for Ford Motor Company before enlisting in the Army Air Corps at the start of World War II. A decorated combat pilot, Al flew 128 missions in the China-Burma-India theater, earning two Distinguished Flying Crosses and a Presidential Citation.

Following his military service, Al built a distinguished career as a corporate executive and community leader. He served nine years on the Miami Valley Hospital Board of Trustees and later on the Miami Valley Hospital Foundation Board. But his greatest contribution came in the late 1970s, when, as chair of the hospital's Finance Committee, Al discovered two reports that would change regional health care forever. One described the "Golden Hour," showing that trauma patients have a far greater chance of survival if treated within 60 minutes. The other detailed how many of the hospital's trauma patients came from rural counties more than an hour away by ground transport.

Reviewing the reports, Al turned to Marilyn and said, "Can you imagine the lives that could be saved if Dayton had a MediVac—like the military?" That moment sparked a mission.

Despite skepticism and repeated rejections from other hospitals, Al persisted until Miami Valley Hospital's board, chaired by Fred C. Smith, approved a three-year trial for a medical helicopter program. CareFlight launched in 1983. Today, it has transported more than 90,000 patients, flying enough miles annually to circle the Earth twice.

The legacy of the Duns and the Miami Valley Hospital Board of Trustees lives on in every life touched by CareFlight. What began with Al and Marilyn's vision, championed and brought to life by the board, has grown into a program that continues to deliver lifesaving care across the region each day.





# First Look at the New CareFlight

Donors from across Premier Health’s four hospital Foundations came together at the Dayton Country Club for an exclusive first look at the newest CareFlight helicopter. Guests had the opportunity to preview one of two state-of-the-art Leonardo AW169 aircraft that will soon join Premier Health’s fleet.

The gathering served as a fundraiser to help bring the new aircraft to our community, celebrating the generosity and partnership of those who make CareFlight’s lifesaving mission possible. The event was graciously hosted by Kathleen and Marty Carlson, former Premier Health Board Chair; Sen. Steve and Jill Wilson, with Jill serving as current Premier Health Board Chair; and Brian and Melanie Dugan, former Upper Valley Medical Center Foundation board member.



## Host an Event

If you would be interested in hosting a CareFlight gathering to help raise support for our Care in the Air campaign, please contact our Foundation team at [Foundations@PremierHealth.com](mailto:Foundations@PremierHealth.com) or call (937) 208-2700.

# Supporting Care in the Air



What started as a relaxing motorcycle ride quickly turned into a life-or-death situation for Shawna Helton and her fiancé. While riding through Washington Courthouse, the couple was struck by a distracted driver. Shawna was thrown over the hood of the oncoming vehicle, sustaining a broken leg, torn muscles, and multiple sprains and strains. Her fiancé suffered a serious facial injury.

Shawna vividly remembers waking up on the pavement—and then again in a CareFlight helicopter as she was being transported to Miami Valley Hospital’s Level I Trauma Center. One of the flight nurses looked her in the eye and said, “Don’t worry, we’ve got you.” That moment of reassurance came when she needed it most.

Thanks to that rapid response and expert care, both Shawna and her fiancé have made a full recovery. Her story is a powerful reminder that you never know when critical care will be needed.

To continue this lifesaving service for our region, the Miami Valley Hospital Foundation and the three other Premier Health Hospital Foundations are supporting a new CareFlight aircraft, the Leonardo AW169. This next-generation helicopter will be the fastest, largest, and most advanced air ambulance in the region.

On April 24, 2026, the four Foundations will celebrate with the Care in the Air Gala at Wright Bros. Aero hangar at the Dayton International Airport. This special night will bring together community leaders, health care champions, and supporters—all united by a single mission to enhance lifesaving emergency care in our region.

## Help Us Reach New Heights

We are grateful to our sponsors and supporters of CareFlight and the Care in the Air Gala. Please email [foundations@premierhealth.com](mailto:foundations@premierhealth.com) or call (937) 208-2700 to learn how you can help us reach new heights!



## 2026 CARE IN THE AIR GALA SPONSORS

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## Notable News from Your Hospital

### Premier Health Introduces Cutting-Edge Sound Wave Therapy for Liver Tumors

Premier Health is the first in Southwest Ohio to offer a new, noninvasive option for patients with liver tumors using the Edison® Histotripsy System. This advanced technology provides physicians with a way to target and break down liver tumors using focused sound waves, offering a new alternative to traditional treatment approaches.

### Mobile Mammography Coach Celebrates 10 Years



Premier Health's Mobile Mammography Coach, a program that has helped thousands of

women across Southwest Ohio gain access to convenient breast cancer screenings that support early detection, celebrated 10 years of serving the community. Since its launch, the Mobile Mammography Coach has traveled 120,000 miles, completed 20,083 screenings in 12 counties, and has served 432 locations/partnerships.

### Miami Valley Hospital South First in the World to Offer International Cancer Study

Miami Valley Hospital South led the way as the first of 23 international sites to open enrollment for a new clinical trial focused on advanced ovarian and related cancers. The study gives eligible patients access to an investigational drug combination



currently being studied for its potential to slow cancer growth when other treatments have stopped working.

The trial, known as the BELLA study, is sponsored by Corcept Therapeutics with support from Syneos Health. It is testing an investigational oral medication called relacorilant, which is designed to block certain hormone signals that may cause cancer to resist chemotherapy.

### Premier Health Hospitals Earn Highest Ratings for Heart Surgery



Atrium Medical Center and Miami Valley Hospital have earned the highest possible rating — three stars — from The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), placing them among the top-performing cardiothoracic surgery programs in the United States and Canada.

Miami Valley Hospital achieved a 3-star rating in aortic valve replacement combined with coronary artery bypass grafting (AVR-CABG), a recognition earned by only 4% to 7% of programs nationwide, according to STS.



## A Symphony of Support for Emmett's Place

The talented students of Oakwood High School's Giving Strings orchestra presented a \$6,050 donation to the Miami Valley Hospital Foundation and NICU staff in support of Emmett's Place. The student-led ensemble organized a benefit concert to raise funds for the special space, which offers comfort and respite for families

of newborns in the NICU and for expectant mothers experiencing extended hospital stays.

Their generosity and creativity continue to make a meaningful difference for families when they need it most.



## Supporting Our Community

### The Valley Classic Raises Support for Diabetes Education

Miami Valley Hospital Foundation's 36th annual Valley Classic golf tournament teed off at NCR Country Club in July. Since the event's inception, The Valley Classic has raised more than \$4 million to support vital hospital programs and services. For more than a decade, the golf tournament has supported diabetes education at the Bull Family Diabetes Center. This year's tournament hosted more than 180 golfers and raised \$143,259.

### Cancer Champions Honored

More than 200 people attended the Foundation's Champions of Hope ceremony at the Steam Plant in Dayton. This year, the Foundation recognized Satheesh Kathula, MD, FACP, DipABLM, as the Person of Inspiration honoree; Darinda Reis as the Caregiver honoree; Catherine Campbell as the Cancer Survivor honoree; and Thomas Heck, MD, and Michael Guy, MD, as the Medical Professional honorees. Proceeds will support the development of a new cancer boutique at Miami Valley Hospital South.

### Enjoying the Classics, Supporting Emmett's Place

In November, the Foundation hosted Emmett's Place: Banking on Hope, Investing in Miracles at The Grande Hall at Liberty Tower. This fundraiser welcomed nearly 175 guests for a night of the classics, including dinner, a silent auction, dancing, and casino-style games. The annual event raises support for Emmett's Place next to the Miami Valley Hospital Neonatal ICU.

### Bocce Tournament Brings Community Together for CareFlight

The John Pirelli Lodge #1633 hosted a special Bocce Tournament to support the purchase of the new CareFlight helicopter, raising more than \$16,000. The event drew over 200 participants and featured a special landing demonstration by CareFlight. The Miami Valley Hospital Foundation is deeply grateful to the Lodge for their generous donation and to Joe and Terri Baldasare and Riley Blankenship for their partnership in making the event possible.

### Pender Golf Outing Supports Our Youngest Patients

The 24th Annual Suzy Pender Memorial Golf Outing brought golfers together at PipeStone Golf Club in Miamisburg. This year's event raised \$8,000 to provide Boo Boo Bears, comforting teddy bears to our youngest patients at Miami Valley Hospital locations. Since its inception, the tournament has raised more than \$132,000 for the Suzy Pender Fund at the Foundation. Mark your calendars, next year's outing is set for September 12.





## Follow the Foundations on Social Media

The four Premier Health Hospital Foundations are now on Facebook and LinkedIn. See how your gifts are making a difference by following the Foundation on social media. Be sure to share our posts to help raise awareness on the causes that matter to you!



## How to Support Your Hospital

Miami Valley Hospital Foundation provides support to vital patient programs and services. Your gifts are making a difference in the lives of our patients and inspiring better health.

### Make a Gift

Call: **(937) 208-2700**  
Email: [mvhf@mvh.org](mailto:mvhf@mvh.org)  
[mvhfoundation.org](http://mvhfoundation.org)



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