

# WALKER METHODIST FOUNDATION COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



Dear Friends,

Sometimes we need to reflect, to remember how we came to be where we are today. That might be my favorite part of producing this report—it gives me a moment to pause, pull myself out of the day-to-day tasks, and spend time enjoying the good that has happened within our walls as we serve our residents, patients, families, and team members.

As I thought about 2019, I remembered a story from one of our memory care communities—a story about a former resident named Bill. Like all residents receiving memory care, Bill was given an iPod Shuffle filled with some of his favorite music, including songs from his wife's band, Tjärnblom. He wasn't with us for long before he passed away, and his wife told us that when she hosted Bill's memorial in their home, she played the songs from the iPod he had been given by the Foundation and laid out the playlist for visitors to peruse.

The simple gesture was a big testament to how important music was to Bill in his final days.

The iPod that Bill received was a gift from the Walker Methodist Foundation, a gift made possible by donors who care about our residents as much as we do. The Music and Memory™ program is a standard practice in our memory care communities, and part of how we enhance the lives of those living with memory loss. We know how powerful music can be for those living with dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

As you read this report, I hope you see both the important and enriching work that the Foundation and Walker Methodist are doing and realize just how meaningful your contributions are to the Foundation and to the lives of the people we serve.

Thank you for continuing to help us live out our mission of enhancing the lives of older adults through a culture of care, respect, and service.

Sincerely,



Scott Riddle  
CEO and President of Walker Methodist



**COVER:** Kate, a resident at Walker Methodist, enjoys her favorite songs on her iPod through the Music & Memory™ program.

## Dora Huang: Remembering through memoir

After a phone conversation with one of her grandsons, Dora Huang realized she wanted to write her memoir. Her grandson had asked about his late grandfather, and Dora told a story about his love for baseball. She hung up, only to think of more stories she could've told her grandson about his grandpa and herself. So, when a series of literary arts workshops came to Highview Hills—thanks to a grant from Aroha Philanthropies—Dora signed up right away.

Research shows learning new things improves the cognitive, social, and physical health of seniors. That's why the Walker Methodist Foundation works to find grants for engaging, educational programs. The workshops allowed Dora to learn how to share her story. "If I didn't have someone encouraging me, I don't think I would've done it," said Dora. "It was important for me to do this for my family, especially my grandkids." In fact, she wrote more than what could fit in her memoir and also wrote about the life of her late husband. Read an excerpt from her book below.

### The person who influenced my life

If I must choose a person who had a profound influence in my life, she was my first dentist. I don't remember her name. In the 1940s there were only a few doctors in my home province of Jiangxi, China, so she was probably the only dentist there. She was trained in England.

When I was young, my teeth would come loose or break, and my parents took me to the hospital where she worked. One day when she was working on my teeth, there was an air raid and everyone ran into the shelter. She said since we were in the middle of something which could not be stopped, we should continue...

Read the rest of Dora's story  
at [bit.ly/dorahuang](https://bit.ly/dorahuang).

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"I was surprised I could write my own story like this."



Photo: Bud and Marian Erickson with six out of the 17 employees they have nominated for Partners in Excellence awards at Walker Methodist Levande in Cambridge.

## Bud and Marian Erickson: A lifestyle of encouragement

Bud and Marian Erickson, residents at Walker Methodist Levande in Cambridge, have a shared, unspoken life mission: to make everywhere they go a better place.

They've been doing this for decades, even before they married 10 years ago. Marian, who spent years investing in students through home education classes, also worked in a hospital. And Bud, a beloved shop teacher, made grandfather clocks and repaired airplanes.

Since moving to Levande, the Ericksons haven't stopped giving back. In fact, they've nominated 17 employees for Partners in Excellence awards, recognizing those who go above and beyond. But why this dedication to intentionally encourage others?

**"We look for the good in everyone."**

Because Bud and Marian know what it's like to have someone notice hard work or a job well done. Inspired by people who've invested in them throughout their lives—such as family, friends, and church communities—they believe "people do better with a little encouragement."

"We hope to encourage others to keep doing a great job and to make our home even better than it already is," said Bud.

The couple believes in looking for the good in every situation—and in other people. "People like to know they're noticed and that they're making a difference. We hope it encourages them to continue to do the work they're doing," Marian said. "Recognizing someone's good work can go a long way." They understand the power of kind words and have made encouraging others their goal. For Bud and Marian, letting others know they are appreciated isn't a chore or task to complete. It's a way of life.

The Partners in Excellence program honors Walker Methodist team members who have been nominated by patients, residents, family, or co-workers. Those who wish to recognize team members contribute at least \$25 to the Foundation. Recipients receive a pin, are recognized in their community, and are invited to a lunch in their honor with CEO and President Scott Riddle.

**200** nominations made  
**190** team members honored  
 more than **\$8,000** raised since 2016



**192** trips since Nov. 8

## New van, less stress

At Walker Methodist Health Center in Minneapolis, a new van means less stress for residents. "The van gets our residents to medical appointments with more accuracy and consistency, and better customer service," said administrator Merilee Johnson. "Residents feel safe because they know and trust Glen Davis, our in-house driver."

Now, residents have an affordable, reliable, and personal transportation option to get to their medical appointments. Using the van saves residents money and time. Before the van, there were times when residents had to wait more than two hours for a return ride. With the new van, residents shouldn't have to wait more than 20 minutes. The 2019 Dodge Caravan, donated by the Walker Methodist Foundation and Auxiliary, fits two wheelchairs and two additional passengers. This extra room allows caregivers to accompany patients to medical appointments, creating a more familiar experience.

The van makes Glen's job easier, too. It's easy to drive and park, fitting into a single parking space and under low clearances. Plus, it gets better gas mileage than a bus. His favorite thing about the van, though, is how it helps residents feel comfortable. "It's more personal, and most people who ride a bus prefer the van," he explained. "It makes life a lot easier for the residents." Most importantly, residents enjoy the ride.

## 2019 Donors

# We are thankful for all of our donors

The following is a list of individuals, corporations, and foundations that supported our work in 2019. We are thankful for your support—we couldn't do this without you. To steward our resources appropriately, we have listed donors of \$100 or more in this publication.

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## Scholarships and success: Sadie's story

Celebrating two years of serving older adults at Walker Methodist Levande, Sadie has big dreams for the future. Thanks to the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) scholarship from the Minnesota Department of Health, she is pursuing her next goal. Sadie's getting her Registered Nursing (RN) degree at Anoka-Ramsey Community College in Cambridge, hoping to continue working at Levande as an RN. The HCBS scholarship provides money for childcare; mileage; and books, fees, and tuition for caregivers working in senior housing communities.

A single mom of four kids, ages two to 11, Sadie said, "I'm working hard to provide for my family. I want my kids to know what it looks like to set and reach goals."



Continuing her education will help Sadie grow in a career field she's loved since she worked as an in-home health aide for an elderly man with dementia. At Levande, she started as a resident assistant (RA) and was soon promoted to the lead RA responsible for scheduling. Now, she loves when she gets to work in our memory care neighborhood.

"Building relationships with residents is my favorite part of my job," she said. "I like to challenge myself, and I'm passionate about serving others, especially older adults."

## WALKER METHODIST LEADERSHIP



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Life. And all the living that goes with it. Enhancing the lives of older adults through a culture of care, respect, and service.

### VALUES

Respect | Imagination | Collaboration

Questions or omissions?

Please contact Marilyn Peller Nelson, executive director, Walker Methodist Foundation at 612.827.8538 or [mnelson@walkermethodist.org](mailto:mnelson@walkermethodist.org).

