



Dear Friend,

What an incredible month to reflect on how far we've come and where we're headed next. As I sit down to write this, I'm filled with gratitude for this amazing community that makes our work possible every single day.

This month's newsletter is packed with stories that capture exactly why I love being part of the GBCHC family. Here's what you'll find inside:

- **Twenty Years Strong and Ready for 2030.** Our exciting strategic plan as we celebrate 20 years of service and set our sights on becoming a national model of clinic excellence.
- **John D.'s Journey Back to Health in Just Eight Days.** An incredible patient story showing how care at the clinic can transform a life.
- **300 Years of Nursing Experience, One Amazing Team.** Learn about our incredible team of volunteer nurses.
- **Meet the Team: Nick Blackmond Shows How GBCHC is Demonstrating Clinic Excellence.** Read about our Quality Improvement Manager who is proving with data

that we exceed national benchmarks.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us and building this extraordinary community together.

Onward and Upward,

*Mary Lewis*

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### John D.'s Journey Back to Health in Just Eight Days

We're grateful to Andrea Hammond for sharing John D.'s incredible story with us. Andrea has been practicing nursing since 1987 and brings compassion as a volunteer nurse to our clinic.

Andrea began, "John D. came into the clinic having not seen a physician in a few years. **He had no health insurance. He didn't have a lot of money, and he couldn't afford his medications.** He's diabetic, his diabetes was poorly controlled with an elevated blood sugar level around 300, and he had an open wound on his lower leg. It had been amputated a year prior."

**John D.'s Journey cont...** The blood sugar level was dangerously high. Andrea explained, "If your blood sugar is above 150, you cannot heal a wound, and this wound was infected."

**But here's where the magic happened.** The team didn't just treat the wound. They set John up for success at home.

"We got him in and cleaned up the wound. The physician cultured the wound and got the exact bacteria so they could choose the right antibiotic," Andrea recalls. **She also sent him home with everything he needed: medication to control his blood sugar as well as a glucometer, test strips, alcohol wipes, and lancets to poke his finger so he could test his blood sugar at home.**

She explained, "I gave him extra dressings and supplies so he could change it himself, and I taught him how to do it. Knowledge is a powerful thing." Andrea added, "I even gave him some Splenda so he could have his coffee sweetened in the mornings without sugar because he might not have been able to afford it."

**Just three days later? John's blood sugar dropped from 300 to 128!** And just eight days after his first treatment, **his wound had shrunk nearly half its size, finally healing**

after six long months.

Thank you, Andrea, for showing us what compassionate care looks like. Stories like John D.'s remind us why this work matters so much.

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## Twenty Years Strong and Ready for 2030

It's hard to believe we're wrapping up our first 20 years of serving this community. When we think back to how it **all started with Dr. Burnstein helping patients at a homeless shelter to now operating out of a 7,000 square foot facility delivering comprehensive medical care** to thousands of uninsured Michigan residents,

it's amazing to see how far we've come together.

But here's what really has us excited: we're not just looking back. **We're looking ahead with a clear vision for the future.**

Our leadership team has been hard at work developing a strategic plan that will guide us through 2030. **It's our roadmap for becoming a national model of clinic excellence.** We've taken everything that makes us who we are, our mission to remove barriers to healthcare and those core values Dr. Burnstein instilled in us, and we've mapped out exactly how we're going to get there through six key areas:

- **Financial Sustainability.** We're strengthening our financial foundation to maintain a sustainable future for the organization.
- **Operational Excellence.** We're achieving operational excellence through continuous improvement of our processes, procedures, and practices that lead to quality healthcare delivery.
- **Clinic Awareness.** We're developing greater awareness of our clinic to expand our patient base and foster deeper trust in the community.
- **Staff and Volunteer Management.** We're intentionally recruiting, developing, and retaining both volunteers and staff who share our commitment to excellence.
- **People, Culture, and Organizational Values.** We're ensuring our organizational values remain at the forefront of every decision we make and every interaction we have with patients and each other, so everyone who works with us experiences the culture that lives up to Dr. Burnstein's example.
- **Growth.** We're planning for strategic growth that allows us to serve even more people in our community.

You might have already noticed one change. We launched our new website back in August. It's designed to make it easier than ever for people to learn about our services and connect with the care they need. It also makes it simple for volunteers to get involved with GBCHC, which is critical since our volunteers like doctors, nurses, dentists, medical

students, and other health professionals are such an essential part of our successful model.

**The next decade is going to be transformative.** Dr. Burnstein's legacy of compassionate care continues to guide everything we do, and with our strategic plan in place, we're positioned not just to serve our community, but to demonstrate how excellent healthcare can work everywhere. **Our goal is to create a replicable model that inspires and guides other communities nationwide.**

Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Here's to the next 20 years and setting the standard for clinic excellence nationwide.



### **300 Years of Nursing Experience, One Amazing Team**

When you walk into GBCHC, you'll meet one of our incredible volunteer nurses who have become the backbone of our clinic. Because of their dedication and our other volunteers, the clinic has been able to provide **3,501 medical and dental visits year-to-date already**, and we are on track to see more patients than in 2024.

A huge part of this success is thanks to our volunteer nurses. This amazing team of volunteers gives their time to ensure every patient receives compassionate, expert care. **Together, GBCHC nurses bring more than 300 years of experience to our community!**

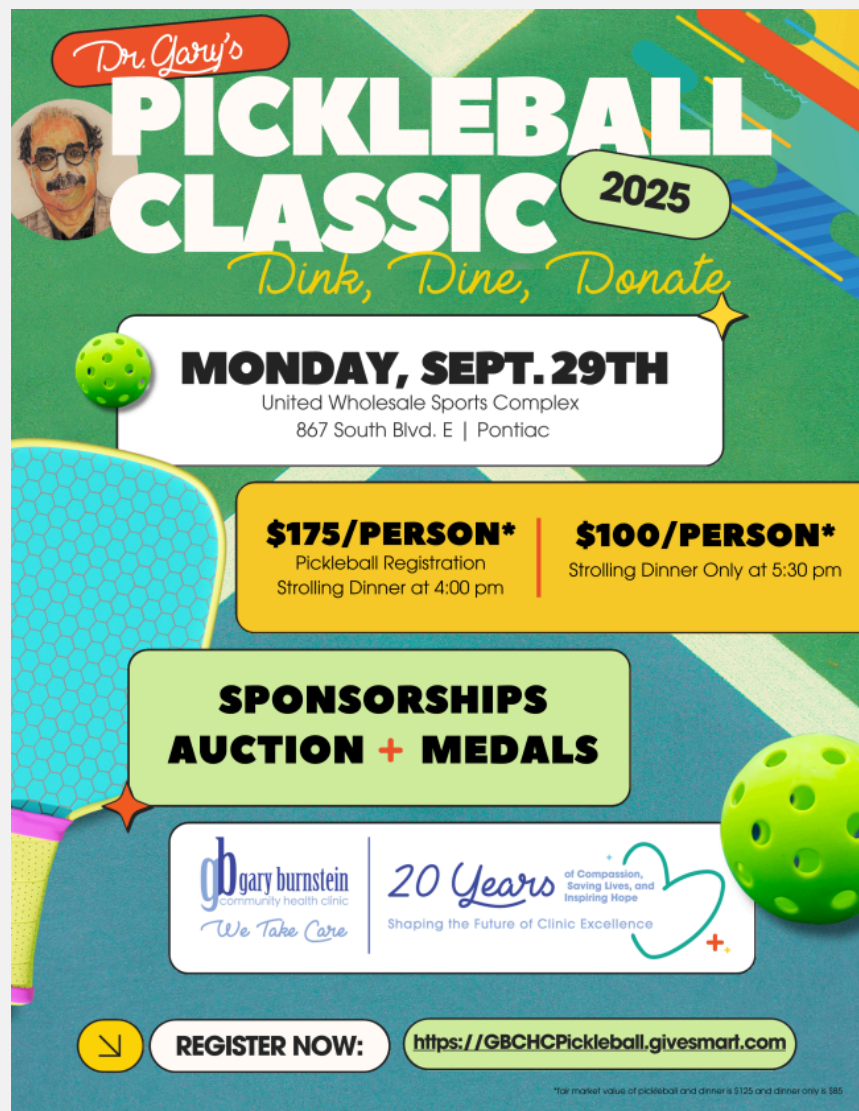
Among them are Ms. Deb, Ms. Val, Ms. Andy, and Ms. Mary. These four incredible volunteers have a combined 150 years of nursing expertise. Ms. Deb, Ms. Val, and Ms. Andy have each volunteered with GBCHC for more than a decade, and Ms. Mary just celebrated her first year with us. Week after week, they show up with skill, heart, and dedication.

**"Our nurses here at the clinic play an amazing role in our patient care,"** says Tamika Bellamy, GBCHC's Community Vaccination Outreach Director and Medical Coordinator. "They assist in promoting and managing health education and chronic conditions, to improve overall outcomes."

Deborah Teasdale (known as Ms. Deb in clinic), one of our volunteer nurses, explains their mission: **"Nurses advocate for their patients in all aspects of their care.** At the GBCHC that involves assessing needs, assisting patients through our process, education specific to each patient and ensuring that their voice is heard."

Andrea Hammond (known as Ms. Andy in clinic), another volunteer nurse, speaks to the collaborative spirit that makes it all work: "The GBCHC community is welcoming. You're always learning, and there are other nurses there who can be mentors. It's very supportive. Everyone supports everyone else. **Our goal is to help patients.**"

To our volunteer nursing team, thank you for everything you do. Your expertise and commitment make all the difference in the world.



**Join us at the 2nd Annual Dr. Gary's Pickleball Classic!**

Monday, September 29, 2025

United Wholesale Sports Complex  
867 South Blvd. E | Pontiac

Hit the courts or just join us for dinner at the Dr. Gary's Pickleball Classic. Registration and sponsorship opportunities are now available for our largest fundraiser of the year:

[REGISTER OR SPONSOR]

Link to: <https://e.givesmart.com/events/HTO/>



## Meet the Team: Nick Blackmond Shows GBCHC is Demonstrating Clinic Excellence

What happens when you measure the quality of care at a free clinic? That's the question Nick Blackmond set out to answer at GBCHC.

After serving eight years as a Hospital Corpsman with the US Navy, Nick started volunteering at Gary Burnstein Community Health Clinic in 2019 and joined the team in 2021. Nick brought impressive credentials to this work. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology from Wayne State University, a Master of Science in Physiology from Wayne State University School of Medicine and is currently pursuing his PhD in Kinesiology.



After joining the team, Nick realized no one was tracking the clinic's effectiveness. "Most clinics don't have tools that capture data to showcase what they are doing," Nick explains. **"But we wanted to prove what we are doing. Who are our patients? How are we doing this work?"**

Now GBCHC's Quality Improvement Manager, Nick spends his days digging into numbers that tell an incredible story. Since January, the clinic has conducted 3,501 medical and dental visits and filled 5,121 prescriptions. The financial impact alone is staggering: \$4.7 million in medical Charlson Comorbidity Index (CCI) savings which is the value of care provided to complex patients who come to the clinic. **If patients had to pay out-of-pocket for their care, it would be like paying the mortgage on a \$750,000 home they'll never live in. That's the financial reality about 70% of GBCHC's patients would face without the clinic.**

But Nick wanted to also measure the actual quality of care, not just financial impact. He evaluated GBCHC using the same standards applied to healthcare providers nationwide for breast cancer, colon cancer, and diabetes screening protocols.

The results were remarkable. **GBCHC exceeded national benchmarks and outperformed most free clinics across the country.** For example, while the average free clinic achieves a 34% controlled blood pressure rate, **GBCHC hit 66% – nearly double the performance tracked by the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (NAFC).**

The diabetes results are impressive too. Some of our new patients who came to the clinic this year had dangerously high A1C levels of 9-10%, putting them at serious risk for heart attacks, strokes, and other complications. Within six months, these same patients averaged a drop in A1C levels of 3-4% to near-ideal ranges with just one medication compared to the two or more that insured patients typically need. As Nick puts it: **"We're providing excellent care that matches or exceeds what people with insurance receive."**

Through his work with the NAFC Standards Working Committee and its Clinical Working Group, Nick is helping other free clinics adopt these same measurement tools. Given GBCHC's incredible results, he says, **"I hope we can serve as a national model for other free clinics across the country, showing what's really possible when it comes to delivering quality care and achieving great patient outcomes."**

These impressive clinical outcomes are already translating into improvements in patients' lives. **Quality-Adjusted Life Years (QALY) is a measure that shows not only that care is being delivered, but how much it improves both the length and quality of**

patients' lives. Last year, that impact was \$10.7 million in health improvements. This year, we are already averaging \$2.7 million medical QALY value each month, which puts us on track to surpass last year. It's powerful proof that what's happening here every day is life-changing.

"My goal is to prove what we are doing and show the community that free clinics are the safety net for healthcare," Nick says. **"Without them, without clinics like GBCHC, where would these patients go? What would be their quality of life?"**

Fortunately, our patients don't have to wonder since we have an incredible community at GBCHC, including Nick Blackmond, ready to provide excellent healthcare.

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