



Letter to our community from the Huntsville Hospital Foundation Board of Trustees

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Our community is different. We have a history of creative solutions to tremendous challenges, and a tradition of taking care of our neighbors during crises.

Recently, the Huntsville Hospital Foundation Board of Trustees heard firsthand accounts from our Hospital leaders about the devastating impact of COVID on our frontline health care workers. More children are being admitted. Intensive Care Unit and emergency room bed space is maxed out. And because there are a limited number of skilled health care workers who can treat COVID patients, those in the trenches have to carry the weight of their regular patient caseload alongside this surge in COVID patients. This means, in many cases, our caregivers must work four or five days a week for 12-hour shifts just to keep up with the demands of patient care.

We serve on this board because we care about our community hospitals and the patients who walk through those doors expecting to receive exceptional care, no matter who they are or what their illness is. And as we listened to the stark realities of what is happening in our hospitals, we felt compelled to help. Last year, there was a constant stream of meals, mask donations, and motivation sent to frontline workers. Now, there is next to nothing, while their everyday reality is even worse than before.

That is why we, as a group, want to encourage our community **to let these health care workers know that they are valued and seen.** While each of us may come from different backgrounds, lines of work and perspectives, we can all agree that every health care worker deserves our immense respect and support. They are there for us at our most vulnerable, and have dedicated their lives to serve us. **This need is as local as it gets – these are our neighbors and family members.**

Ideas that companies, school groups, service organizations, churches and families can do to help include:

1. Contribute gift cards and other morale boosters to specific hospital units (30 to 100 of any item). These donations can be coordinated by calling (256) 265-8077 or by emailing hhfoundation@hhsys.org.
2. Donate to HHF's Healthcare Heroes Fund at huntsvillehospitalfoundation.org/covid19. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly toward employee assistance and morale boosters for the employees serving on the frontlines. This includes nurses, hospitalists, environmental services, respiratory therapists and more.
3. Encourage best practices within your company or circle. Suggestions include incentives and giveaway drawings for those who have been vaccinated, convenient testing for those who have not, and continued mask requirements regardless of vaccination status.
4. Separate, sanitize and get vaccinated if able – only then can you be confident you are not contributing to a hospitalization or even death. These national recommendations are scientifically proven to slow the spread and reduce the strain on our hospitals. Do it for your family, co-workers and for yourself.

Madison County, let's join together to show our health care heroes that we are still behind them in this fight.

Dave King, Chairman
Sarah Savage-Jones, President
Bill Roark, Vice Chairman

Benjamin Cobb, Treasurer
Lori Lioce, Secretary