

Experience the Joy of Helping Others - Volunteer at Griffin

Volunteering at Griffin Hospital offers you a unique opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of patients, families, and the entire community.



- People and Animals Working in Spirit is a pet therapy program that helps bring smiles and soothes the soul of both patients and visitors alike. Join us if you have a certified therapy dog, or are interested in seeking certification.
- Volunteer bakers prepare and provide fresh baked goods and comforting aromatherapy in our inpatient units and The Center for Cancer Care. Join us if you have a passion for baking and help spread cheer to our patients and their visitors.
- Hospital Elder Life Program provides extra support for elderly patients. Join us to help with mealtime assistance, exercise, and more.

To learn about these opportunities and more, please contact Griffin Health Volunteer Coordinator Kathy Browne at 203-732-7555.

Your Generosity in 2025

As we begin the new year, many of our dedicated donors choose to give through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) in January. These proactive supporters not only meet their Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for the year, they also make a meaningful impact on our mission. By contributing through a QCD, you can support Griffin Hospital's work while enjoying potential tax benefits.

Griffin Hospital offers an opportunity to create your meaningful legacy. By including Griffin Hospital in your estate plans, you can leave a lasting impact on a place and community beloved to you. Your bequest ensures that future generations will benefit from the caring you've helped make possible.



We are deeply grateful for your thoughtful generosity. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your options, please contact Executive Director Kristy Jelenik at kjelenik@griffinhealth.org or 203-732-7539.

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GRATITUDE

INSPIRING HOPE THROUGH YOUR ACTS OF KINDNESS
WINTER 2025



GRIFFIN HOSPITAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.

Your Support Powers Our Progress - Thank You!

Dear Friends,

As we welcome the new year, we are filled with gratitude for your continued support to our mission. Thanks to your generosity, 2024 was a year of meaningful impact for our community. Your contributions helped us achieve patient-centered enhancements in our capabilities and services, and we look forward to building on this momentum in 2025. We invite you to watch our 2024 Highlights video to see how Griffin Health is improving the health and well-being of our community by scanning this QR code:



In this newsletter, we are pleased to share updates about significant additions to the Griffin Hospital medical staff and our integrated medical practice Griffin Faculty Physicians, information about recent awards and recognition, messages from grateful patients, ways you can engage with Griffin and more. We hope these stories inspire you as much as your support motivates us to continue setting the standard for exceptional care.

We are grateful to have you by our side as we start 2025 with goals of continuing to expand and enhance the ways Griffin Health makes a difference in the health of individuals and in the well-being of our community. Thank you for being a vital part of the Griffin Health Family.

In gratitude,



Patrick Charmel
President & CEO
Griffin Health



Kristy Jelenik
Executive Director
Griffin Hospital
Development Fund

Griffin Health Mission

- To provide personalized, humanistic, consumer-driven healthcare in a healing environment.
- To empower individuals to be actively involved in decisions affecting their care and well-being through access to information and education.
- To provide leadership to improve the health of the community served.

Your partnership and support means the world to us, and as a nonprofit community hospital, we are resolute in our commitment to exceptional and compassionate care for you.

With You, We Can Open Doors to Heal Those in Behavioral Crisis

Griffin Health is making remarkable progress in its plan to launch the state's first Emergency Psychiatric Assessment, Treatment and Healing (EmPATH) Unit - a proven model that reimagines emergency psychiatric care from the patient's perspective. As a Planetree Gold Certified Patient-Centered Hospital recognized globally for excellence, Griffin is uniquely positioned to pioneer this transformative approach in Connecticut. Our commitment to innovative, compassionate care aligns perfectly with the EmPATH model's philosophy of treating the whole person, not just their crisis.

Thank you to our early donor champions, led by the Hewitt Foundation and including the Friend A. Russ Fund, Steven and Carol Zavednak, Drs. Sudipta and Bindu Dey and many others who have pledged their support to make this new Unit a reality. Further help is urgently needed.

Learn more through our campaign webpage by scanning here:



"Having a beautiful space that can be therapeutic and helpful to our community members exemplifies why Griffin is who we are, because we are putting the patient first, doing the right thing for them in the absence of other resources."



Lindsay Slaybaugh
MSN, RN NE-BC,
Emergency
Department Director

Your Support Drives Excellence

Griffin Hospital Receives Gold Certification for Person-Centered Care

Griffin Hospital is pleased to share that we've been awarded the prestigious Gold Certification for Excellence in Person-Centered Care by Planetree. Only 172 healthcare organizations worldwide have achieved this honor, with Griffin standing out for earning the designation for 15 consecutive years.



This recognition celebrates Griffin's commitment to patient empowerment, dignity and well-being, while fostering partnerships between staff, patients, and families.

Your contributions have played a pivotal role in helping Griffin prioritize compassionate, high-quality care for the community, empowering patients to improve their health and overall well-being.



An Unforgettable Night of Music and Community



Thank you to all of our incredibly supportive community members for joining us at the Annual Griffin Health Holiday Concert on December 10. It was another truly memorable and inspirational evening of traditional and contemporary gospel, featuring a breathtaking performance by the 60-voice Valley Soul Community Choir, beautifully led by our phenomenal Choir Director Angela Clemmons, who is an artistic powerhouse with an electrifying presence. Together, we celebrated the power of music to uplift spirits, inspire change, and in following the evening's theme, *Illuminate the Good!*



A Grateful Patient's Journey: How Weight-Loss Surgery Transformed Olivia's Life

When Olivia was ready for weight-loss surgery, she knew Griffin Health Bariatrics was the best partner for the journey.

"Dr. Abe Fridman was my top choice for a bariatric surgeon, and after meeting with him, I knew he was the right person to guide me," she said. "He made me feel like he genuinely wanted me to succeed."

Not only did Olivia lose weight, 11 months after surgery her life was transformed. She lost 148 pounds, which had an incredible impact - from the small, everyday things like crossing her legs and having a seatbelt that fits comfortably, to dramatic health improvements including reversing pre-diabetes and lowering her risk for cancer.

"This is the life I've always wanted. I've never experienced happiness at this level before. My daughter can hug me and wrap her arms all the way around me. I feel like I'm finally living the life I was meant to live."

For more information about Griffin Bariatrics, visit www.griffinhospitalbariatrics.com.



"I've struggled with weight loss my entire life. From a young age, I was always on the heavier side. By 19, it became an ongoing battle - gaining weight and never being able to lose it, no matter what I tried."

Griffin Bariatrics Patient
Olivia Salza