



UnityPoint Health  
Grinnell Regional  
Medical Center Foundation

ISSUE 3, 2026

# GRMC IN FOCUS



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For more information or to opt-out of future newsletters, call (641) 236-2079 or email [donna.fischer@unitypoint.org](mailto:donna.fischer@unitypoint.org).

One of the common themes I hear from people in our region is how grateful they are to have a hospital close to home where they receive excellent care and are also treated with kindness, respect, and genuine concern.

There are many factors in ensuring excellent care remains available close to home, including physician and nurse recruitment, updated equipment and technology, and ongoing training and innovation.

Inside this newsletter, you will receive an update on the renovation and expansion of our obstetrics (OB) unit. This \$4+ million project is a critical component of being able to deliver more babies close to home reducing the need for families to travel to Des Moines or Iowa City for care. While construction continues, GRMC is actively recruiting providers to ensure our staff can meet the OB needs of the families in our region.

You will also learn about one of our surgeons receiving a national designation and another surgeon who recently performed a procedure using innovative technology to create a more comfortable experience for the patient.

Your support helps make all this possible. Your generosity strengthens local healthcare by funding equipment upgrades, facility improvements, and programs and services that benefit our communities. Your philanthropic investment in GRMC is an investment in excellent care for you, and your family, friends, and neighbors.

*Thank you for making a difference at GRMC.*



Donna Fischer  
Director of Development

**ONE HUNDRED PERCENT** of every dollar donated to the GRMC Foundation stays local to benefit the healthcare programs and needs in the GRMC service area. For more information and to make a gift, visit [www.unitypoint.org/grinnell/foundation](http://www.unitypoint.org/grinnell/foundation).

# PHILANTHROPIC IMPACT

## BIKE HELMETS DISTRIBUTED TO AREA THIRD GRADERS

For the 31st year, free bike helmets were distributed to third graders at eleven area elementary schools. Thanks to community donations, support from local organizations, and gifts from GRMC team members, helmets were handed out to 410 third graders in May.

Key partners in the continuation of this program are GRMC Medical Staff, Imagine Grinnell, Craig Cooper, Holly Pettlon, and you – our donors. Special thanks go to Craig Cooper for using his resources from his years as the owner of Bikes To You to find the best possible price for the helmets. And we're also grateful to the volunteers who assisted with the distribution of the helmets.



(L-R) Laura Ferguson, Megan Jensen, Barb Arlint, Kristina Carberry



(L-R) Kayley McCain, Grace Diehm, Holly Pettlon, Megan Jensen



Craig Cooper and Roger Hill

## OBSTETRICS RENOVATION UPDATE

Phase II of the obstetrics renovation project will be completed by July 2026. While final materials are arriving and getting installed with finishing touches, we're excited to share photos of the nearly complete renovated baby nursery, medication room, nurses' station and break room. Upon completion, the temporarily-relocated areas will move into the newly renovated spaces, making the postpartum and delivery room completed in Phase I available again for patient use.

"The new layout will optimize our workflow, drastically increase storage and access to supplies, improve workflow for ancillary staff, and ultimately improve patient care," shares Cherish Hansen, BSN, RNC-MNN, C-EFM, OB nurse manager. "It will also open our nurses' station layout, making it easier for parents and their support persons to come to us with any questions during their inpatient stay and their pre-birth intake visit."

What's next? Phase III is the creation of the fourth labor, delivery, recovery, and postpartum (LDRP) room with a private bath. Following that are Phases IV through VI, which will modernize the three existing LDRP rooms, including the addition of private patient bathing in each room.

*Thanks to your support, this project is quickly becoming a reality.*



Nurses' Station



Nurses' Station looking into  
Break Room



View of Nursery from Nurses' Station



## YOUR PLAN, YOUR LEGACY

Have you created a will? Yes? Excellent. Your thoughtful planning will provide security for your loved ones and your favorite charities. It will also give you peace of mind. To ensure the existence of your important documents is not a mystery when they are most needed, you may find our free record keeper, Essential Details for My Loved Ones, helpful. To request this free brochure, contact Donna Fischer at (641) 236-2079 or [donna.fischer@unitypoint.org](mailto:donna.fischer@unitypoint.org).

To learn more, visit our website at [plannedgiving.unitypoint.org/?pgloc=grinnell](https://plannedgiving.unitypoint.org/?pgloc=grinnell).



## BILDERBACK EARNS FOCUSED PRACTICE DESIGNATION



*Dr. Phil Bilderback*

Dr. Phil Bilderback, director of the Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Program at GRMC's General Surgery and Weight Loss Surgery Clinic, has earned the Focused Practice Designation in Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery from the American Board of Surgery.

This national designation recognizes surgeons who dedicate a significant portion of their practice to the comprehensive care of patients with obesity and metabolic disease, including surgical treatment, complication management and long-term care. This achievement highlights Dr. Bilderback's expertise and reinforces our commitment to delivering high-quality, specialized care close to home. Congratulations, Dr. Bilderback!

## GRINNELL PERFORMS FIRST BREAST SURGERY WITH INNOVATIVE MOLLI TECHNOLOGY

Led by Dr. Anna Mensing, the GRMC surgery team successfully performed its first breast surgery using MOLLI, an advanced technology from Stryker that makes the experience simpler, faster and more comfortable for our patients. MOLLI uses a tiny magnetic seed, about the size of a grain of rice, to mark a biopsy site prior to surgery. The seed can be placed up to 30 days in advance, giving patients the flexibility to go about their normal routines, even travel, before returning for their procedure.



## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM RELAUNCHED AT GRMC

Laura Valencia, Volunteer Coordinator at Methodist West and GRMC, is proud to announce the April 2026 relaunch of the volunteer program at GRMC following a pause which began during COVID. This relaunch is essentially rebuilding the program from the ground up. The first volunteer placement in the Emergency Room is Ava Rodriguez and she is showing great success. Additionally, ambassador volunteers are serving as the welcoming face of the hospital - greeting patients and families, assisting with wayfinding, and support the registration team at the main entrance. Currently, Jack Armstrong is covering Tuesday mornings in this role.

Thanks to the close-knit community at Grinnell College, we've seen strong interest, with many students stepping forward to train and complete shadow shifts. "We are excited to continue growing both student and community involvement," Laura states. "It's been especially rewarding to see the positive reactions from patients, families, and staff, all of whom appreciate the warm presence volunteers bring from the moment they walk through the doors."

As of June, six individuals - all college students - were volunteers at GRMC. With summer vacation at hand, we hope to expand our volunteers to include individuals from the communities GRMC serves. For more information about volunteering at GRMC, visit [unitypoint.org/join-our-team/volunteers/grinnell-regional-medical-center](https://unitypoint.org/join-our-team/volunteers/grinnell-regional-medical-center).



*Ava Rodriguez,  
ED volunteer*



*Jack Armstrong,  
volunteer ambassador*

## SENATOR GRASSLEY VISITS GRMC

Senator Chuck Grassley was welcomed at GRMC on May 5th for a brief hospital tour, highlighting the impact our team is making for patients and families across our rural region, followed by a Q&A session giving our team members and leaders the chance to engage directly and share their perspectives on rural healthcare.

"We value leaders and policymakers who take the time to understand healthcare and the vital role rural hospitals play in our communities," states David-Paul Cavazos, GRMC's president.



*Standing with Senator Grassley (center) are David-Paul Cavazos (left) and David Stark, UnityPoint Health's Chief Government Affairs and Philanthropy Officer (right).*



# UnityPoint Health

## Grinnell Regional Medical Center Foundation

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### BREAKING NEWS!

On July 19, 2026, The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services announced its intent to award a Healthy Hometowns Best and Brightest Equipment Procurement Grant to GRMC in the amount of \$1.29 million. This grant program is part of the federal government's multi-million-dollar rural health transformation plan. The award to GRMC will be used to acquire a new MRI for its Radiology Department.

The new MRI will fill service gaps by adding to the types of scans already available at GRMC and improve diagnostic precision with higher image quality. Its larger, oval-shaped bore will reduce the claustrophobic effect on patients, and its higher patient weight limit will be beneficial to many patients.



"GRMC plays a vital role in maintaining the health and economic stability of the communities we serve. This grant will help us strengthen our rural healthcare infrastructure, reduce disparities for our rural communities, and improve outcomes for our rural populations," states David-Paul Cavazos, GRMC's Rural President. "Investing in this replacement MRI will help ensure rural residents continue to receive timely, high-quality diagnostic services close to home."