

GIVING MATTERS

EvergreenHealth
Foundation

WINTER 2025

**Meaningful
Medicine in Action:
A Family Heals
through Hospice**

page 4

**Celebrating 25 Years
of Comprehensive
Parkinson's Care in
our Community**

page 6

**Planned Giving: How the Generosity of a
Legacy Gift can Transcend Generations**

page 10

Message from the Chief Philanthropy Officer

Dear Friends,

The holiday season is upon us: a time for gathering, giving and gratitude. Which is why I'd like to share my thanks for the countless bright spots in community health from this past summer. From our record-breaking Gala in April to our neighbors affirming their support for EvergreenHealth by passing Proposition 1, our community came together in a show of support for health care that is compassionate, independent and exceptional. **My heartfelt thanks for your efforts and generosity.**

These triumphs introduced new opportunities for EvergreenHealth Foundation to look toward future investments in clinical excellence in the coming years. We intend to lean even deeper into our commitment to our community hospital by focusing on exciting new opportunities to invest in specialty care and preserve access to essential community services. Your philanthropy continues to be vital to sustaining our hospital's mission and vision.

In early October, patients, providers and donors came together to recognize a major milestone in local medicine: 25 years of comprehensive care at EvergreenHealth's Booth Gardner Parkinson's Care Center. Established by an innovative group of providers and community partners, the Booth Gardner Center is a prime example of the impact of philanthropy. See more on page 6.

Later in October, we hosted our annual fundraiser for EvergreenHealth Hospice: The Meaningful Medicine Luncheon. In this edition of Giving Matters and during the luncheon, sisters Mary Grace Roske and Ann Taylor shared how EvergreenHealth Hospice treated their brother Mark as an "honored guest" during his time at the inpatient center, which was healing for their entire family.

Also in this issue, EvergreenHealth Legacy Society donor Don Desonier captures the spirit of giving like no one else. On page 10, Don shares how EvergreenHealth Hospice provided compassionate end-of-life care for his wife, Nancy, who died in 2012. The experience was so transformative that Don pledged to donate a portion of his retirement savings to EvergreenHealth. This kind of planned giving helps grateful patients and families invest in the future of EvergreenHealth. Don's gift will go toward ensuring all families have access to the same compassionate care his family benefitted from more than ten years ago.

The future is bright for EvergreenHealth and we are excited to explore how philanthropy can continue to expand and enhance patient care at our community-owned hospital. We hope you will join us.



With gratitude,
Lori Kloes
Lori Kloes
Chief Philanthropy Officer
EvergreenHealth Foundation

GIVING MATTERS

In this issue:

- 4 Hospice care: Mary Grace Roske shares how hospice treated her brother Mark as an honored guest
- 6 Celebrating 25 years of comprehensive care at the Booth Gardner Parkinson's Care Center
- 10 Planned giving helps grateful patients and families invest in the future

ON THE COVER:
Sisters Mary Grace (top left) and Ann Taylor (top right) shared their story at the Meaningful Medicine Luncheon about the care and dignity their brother Mark received in his final days. Also pictured, Mark's brother John Jr. and Mark's mother, Sylvia. *Read more on page 4.*

Meaningful Medicine Luncheon Raises over \$235,000 to Benefit EvergreenHealth Hospice Care

On October 23, our community came together for the annual Meaningful Medicine Luncheon in Woodinville to celebrate the power and compassion of EvergreenHealth's renowned hospice care. The event was held at Woodinville's new The SOMM Hotel & Spa and presented by Wise Hospice Options.

The luncheon benefits EvergreenHealth Hospice Care, and this year featured Mary Grace Roske and Ann Taylor, who spoke about the compassion and dignity their brother Mark received at the end of his life.

"Mark was treated with so much respect and dignity at the Wockner Hospice Care Center," said Mary Grace. "As an individual with intellectual disabilities, that wasn't something we saw at other times in his life. Here he was treated as an honored guest, and comfort in his final days was the top priority."

The experience was healing for Mark's family after a lifetime watching their brother's needs, abilities and worth minimized.

This year's keynote speaker at the luncheon was acclaimed journalist Dave Ross, a broadcaster on KIRO Newsradio for nearly 50 years, who shared his insights on the power of words and how our language, tone and message can be used to inspire and uplift a community. Dave reminded us that we are all broadcasters in life. We can all bring meaning to a moment, a sense of calm to life's storms, and strength when the people around us need us the most.

He shared the stage with Emmy Award-winning journalist Michelle Millman, who served as our emcee for the event.

Thank you to the more than 280 guests who joined us to support EvergreenHealth Hospice Care.



Save the Date
2026 Evergreen Gala
Friday, April 24, 2026
The SOMM Hotel & Spa, Woodinville



The 2026 Evergreen Gala, presented by Bellevue Healthcare, marks a milestone 25th Anniversary celebration with a dazzling Silver Soirée in support of EvergreenHealth. Newly opened, The SOMM Hotel & Spa Autograph Collection in Woodinville will be the host venue for our unforgettable evening. Honoring a quarter-century of community impact and compassionate care, the gala promises an inspiring night of philanthropy, fine dining, and celebration—all in support of advancing health and wellness across the region.

Interested in learning how you can help? Each year, support from individuals and the community makes the Evergreen Gala an amazing success! Your participation via sponsorships, auction procurement, and/or attendance will greatly enhance our event and contribute to the success of the 2026 Evergreen Gala. Please reach out to Shauna Smith SSmith@evergreenhealth.com with any inquiries or to learn how you can get involved.



Meaningful Medicine in Action: A Family Heals Through Hospice

In his 64 years, Mark Helsper was a loyal employee, doting uncle and Seattle Mariners fan who found purpose and pride in a hard day's work. Unlike many adults with intellectual disabilities and complex health conditions, Mark lived independently and worked for most of his adult life.

Mark's independence is a credit to his work ethic, and the love of his parents and siblings. Born before the Americans with Disabilities Act made people with disabilities a protected class, Mark's future would have looked different were it not for the advocacy of his parents, John and Sylvia Helsper, and later his siblings, Mary Grace Roske, John Helsper Jr. and Ann Taylor.

When some experts said Mark would never speak, his family moved from Wichita, Kansas, to Baltimore, Maryland, so Mark could participate in a new program at John Hopkins Hospital to support children with communication disorders. Mark did learn to speak, and went on to graduate from high school.

His family also empowered him to seek employment at a time when little opportunity existed. For about 30 years, Mark lived independently in a Kirkland condominium he rented from his parents.

These efforts paid dividends for Mark. As an adult, he followed the news closely, watched the stock market and tracked Mariners' player stats.

Mark's family helped him thrive, but despite his capabilities, the world was not always kind to him. Mary Grace said her brother was frequently dismissed or had his needs overlooked during his lifetime because of his disability.



Mark's sisters, Mary Grace Roske and Ann Taylor, shared Mark's story during our Meaningful Medicine Luncheon to benefit EvergreenHealth Hospice.

Front row: Mark, Sylvia and John Jr.;
Back row: Ann and Mary Grace



Dignity in death, gratitude in grief

Last year, Mark's health began to decline after he experienced a series of health crises, compounded by existing autoimmune conditions. What started as a bacterial infection spiraled into multiple cardiac events, kidney failure, COVID-19 and delirium related to prolonged hospitalization. Through it all, Mark's family was by his side.

After months moving between the hospital, long-term care settings and a skilled nursing home, Mark was diagnosed with pancytopenia, meaning multiple blood diseases, while hospitalized at EvergreenHealth. Recovery was unlikely, and Mark was referred to the EvergreenHealth Gene and Irene Wockner Hospice Care Center for inpatient care.

"Mark was treated with so much respect and dignity at Wockner Hospice Care Center," said Mary Grace. "That wasn't something we saw at other times in his life."

In a departure from many past experiences, Mark was treated as an "honored guest" at the Wockner Center, Mary Grace said. Mark's comfort in his final days was the top priority. Although he was asleep during most of his time in hospice, the care team greeted Mark as if he were awake and conversational, interacting with him as a full person.

The experience was healing for Mark's family after a lifetime watching their brother's needs, abilities and worth minimized.

"It was just a very different experience to be at EvergreenHealth Hospice in terms of the respect they showed for him, and the care they showed for our family," Mary Grace said.

Mary Grace said she was particularly grateful for the compassion EvergreenHealth Hospice showed for their mother, Sylvia, whose grief was particularly profound.

The mission of EvergreenHealth Hospice is to provide dignified end-of-life care that honors the wishes and needs of every patient and their loved ones, regardless of their unique circumstances. For Mary Grace and her siblings, that meant making sure Mark was surrounded by his family. During his five days and four nights at the Wockner Care Center, Mark was never alone. When he died on October 16, 2024, both Mary Grace and John Jr. were by his side.

When Mary Grace thinks of Mark today, the quote from legendary college basketball coach John Wooden comes to mind: "Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do."

Scan the QR code to watch sisters Mary Grace and Ann reflect on their brother's life.



EvergreenHealth Hospice is honored to provide dignified, end-of-life care that delivers comfort to patients and peace for their families. **November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Awareness Month**, please consider giving to EvergreenHealth Hospice to preserve access to this meaningful program well into the future.





Celebrating 25 Years of Comprehensive Parkinson's Care in Our Community

This year marks 25 years since community partners, physician leaders, and Parkinson's care champions came together to establish the Booth Gardner Parkinson's Care Center at EvergreenHealth.

In the 1990s, Parkinson's care in the Pacific Northwest was still quite fragmented. This group of forward-thinking individuals envisioned a single comprehensive center that could address all aspects of the disease, making it easier for patients to navigate their care.

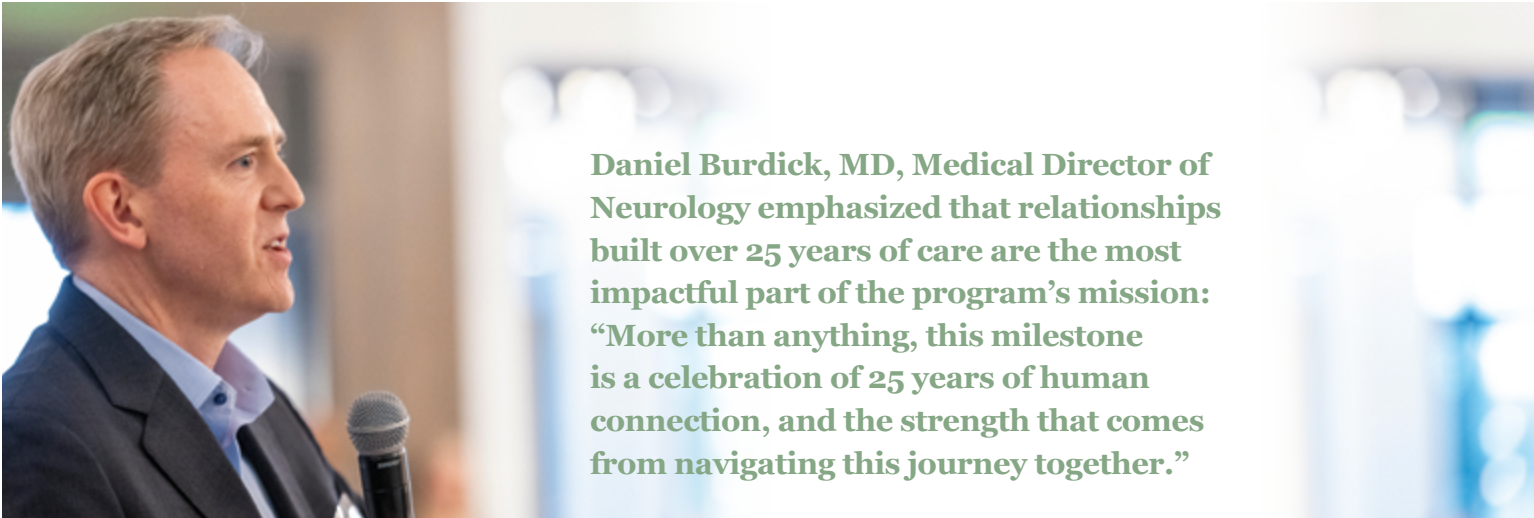
The Center—named for Booth Gardner, the late Washington governor who lived with Parkinson's disease—was founded with a dual mission to provide comprehensive, patient-centered care and to advance treatment for Parkinson's disease through research.

Twenty-five years later, the Booth Gardner Parkinson's Care Center has become an anchor for the Parkinson's community at large and an essential resource for people in our community living with Parkinson's disease.

Honoring successes and looking ahead

Physicians, clinic leadership, staff and patients of the Booth Gardner Parkinson's Care Center gathered on October 2 to celebrate this tremendous milestone.

During the short program, EvergreenHealth providers highlighted the advancements in research and treatment over 25 years, including the critical role of EvergreenHealth patients in contributing to progress in the field through their participation in clinical trials.



Daniel Burdick, MD, Medical Director of Neurology emphasized that relationships built over 25 years of care are the most impactful part of the program's mission: "More than anything, this milestone is a celebration of 25 years of human connection, and the strength that comes from navigating this journey together."



Your Philanthropy Makes Advanced Care Possible

We would like to acknowledge the donors who contributed to comprehensive care and research in honor of the 25-year anniversary of the Booth Gardner Parkinson's Care Center at EvergreenHealth. If you would still like to make a donation, please contact Megan Whitman at 425-899-1910 or mmwhitman@evergreenhealth.com.

- Anonymous (2)
- Mary Brown
- John Bennett
- Marilyn J. Dunstan
- Josh Elkin
- Joyce and Randall Jimerson
- Kevin and Meridith Loomis
- Thomas McAvoy
- Jill Northcraft
- Patricia Oleachea
- Jessica Palmer
- Mike Perkins
- Arthur and Deborah Robinson
- Sambataro Family Foundation
- Maureen Taylor-Regan and Don Regan
- The Uppal Family
- Margaret Warner
- Eleanor and Don West
- Paula Willstatter
- Camille and Bruce Winter
- Steven Miller and Rosella Wolff
- David Worthington

How Deep Brain Stimulation Gave One Parkinson’s Patient Her Life Back

For Port Orchard resident June Rutledge, life is all about traveling on the open road. An avid road tripper and National Parks enthusiast who loves to hike and cycle, June celebrated her birthday last summer with a road trip in her new sports car, driving south to Arizona to explore the natural wonders of the Grand Canyon State.

It was a momentous occasion for June and her husband of three years, Scott Rutledge. Two years prior, June had to give up driving after her mobility was severely limited due to painful complications from Parkinson’s disease.

“My quality of life went down,” June said. But after undergoing a transformative procedure at the Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Care Center at EvergreenHealth, she is no longer in pain.

More than 10 years of adventure post-Parkinson’s diagnosis

June was first diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease in her mid-forties after experiencing two years of back pain and gait challenges. After trying acupuncture, massage and physical therapy, but finding no relief, June’s friend recommended an appointment with movement disorder neurologist Pinky Agarwal, MD, at the Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Care Center at EvergreenHealth.

It took one visit for Dr. Agarwal to diagnose June with early onset Parkinson’s disease. The diagnosis was a shock to June, who was younger than the typical Parkinson’s patient and had no family history of the disease. Despite the life-changing news, she was undeterred. For more than a decade now, June has been under the care of Dr. Agarwal, who is a nationally recognized Parkinson’s researcher and medical director for the EvergreenHealth Research Program.

June has always been an active participant in her Parkinson’s treatment, Dr. Agarwal says. She joined clinical trials related to Parkinson’s disease, and for years her symptoms were managed by medication.

Gradually, June’s Parkinson’s symptoms faded into the rear view, and she committed to a life of adventure. June joined a Mini Cooper club, where she met her husband. The couple took up hiking, cycling and road tripping the West, exploring

all the small towns and curiosities along the way. Life was moving forward for June until the summer of 2021, when she experienced a sudden, intense cramp in her left leg while cycling in Arizona. The pain was acute enough that she couldn’t finish the course, but what at first seemed like muscle or ligament strain became chronic and unrelenting. Her discomfort was due to complications from her Parkinson’s disease.

Debilitating pain from Parkinson’s derailed quality of life

For more than two years, June tried various medications to manage her cramping and tremors, but she soon lost the ability to walk or drive. The pain was incredibly isolating for June and her loved ones, who were powerless to ease her suffering. The occasional trip to the grocery store was the most activity she could manage. It wasn’t the life she imagined for herself.

When more conservative efforts at medication-based treatment failed, Dr. Agarwal recommended June for Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) therapy, a treatment that requires brain surgery. During DBS, a neurosurgeon places electrodes in certain parts of the brain to stimulate the neurons, and a trained programmer customizes the energy flow to treat the patient’s symptoms, all while the patient is conscious and participating in the treatment.

“It’s a scary surgery,” June said. “But the quality of my life at the time was so low, it was either that or death for me at that point.”

Dr. Agarwal was confident DBS was the best option for June, and June trusted her doctor and the entire care team at the Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Care Center. She took the plunge.

It’s been two years now since neurosurgeon Ryder Gwinn, MD, and Idil Baysal, ARNP, performed June’s DBS procedures. The relief was almost instant. After her first round of treatment, the cramping in her leg stopped completely, along with her Parkinsonian tremors.

“I wish I had done it earlier,” June said, “because I’ve gotten so much back.”

What makes Parkinson’s care at EvergreenHealth different

June is one of many Parkinson’s patients in the greater Puget Sound region that has benefitted from the pioneering medicine offered at the Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Care Center, a facility that has grown in size and impact thanks to philanthropy.

The Booth Gardner Center opened in 2000 as a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary medical practice to serve the needs of Parkinson’s patients. Before the Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Care Center, Parkinson’s care options on the Eastside were fragmented and siloed. Patients had to travel between locations for appointments and negotiate a complex system of different payors and providers—particularly burdensome for movement disorder patients.

Although the distance between Port Orchard and Kirkland is a bit of a trek for June, she says the journey is worth the effort. With her symptoms in remission, June can zip up to Kirkland and consult with her neurologist, neuropsychologists, DBS programmer, speech pathologists, physical therapists and even social workers in a single facility.

“I’m super grateful everything is in house at EvergreenHealth,” June said. Her care team can easily communicate internally about her care program, saving her the time and energy of being the intermediary between different clinics and practices.

Deep brain stimulation therapy opened new pathways for June—neural and geographic. So far, June has visited 23 states and nearly a quarter of the National Parks, and plans to add new adventures to her bucket list.

Thanks to the care June received at EvergreenHealth’s Booth Gardner Parkinson’s Care Center, her future is bright.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

How the Generosity of a Legacy Gift Can Transcend Generations

Seattle resident Don Desonier likes to keep busy. From marching in rallies for inclusive causes alongside his church congregation, playing pickle ball at his local community center and serving on the speaker’s bureau at North East Seattle Together (NEST), a community nonprofit that enriches the lives of seniors, Don has always maintained a busy calendar of altruistic hobbies.

After all, he is a tithing member of the University Lutheran Church, paid to replace the YMCA’s pickleball nets, and plans to give at least half of his retirement earnings to NEST, where he was once board president, upon his death. The other half will go to EvergreenHealth Foundation, in recognition of the compassionate care his late wife, Nancy, received from EvergreenHealth Hospice before her death from complications from dementia in 2012.

Don joined the EvergreenHealth Foundation Legacy Society in 2017 and intends to gift EvergreenHealth Foundation the other half of his investment retirement account upon his passing through a planned gift. With the commitment of a future gift, grateful patients like Don can leave a legacy of philanthropy and service that extends beyond their lifetime.



Musicals, marriage and memory care

Don and Nancy met in 1983 while performing in the musical “South Pacific” at the Village Theater in Issaquah. Nancy, a professional flautist and Don, a family law attorney by day and multi-hyphenate actor and singer, fell in love and were married in 1987.

“I got the part and I got the girl,” Don said. Overnight, his family grew by four, with Nancy and her three children, now adults with children of their own, residing on Mercer Island.

Both Nancy and Don had their own interests and hobbies, and led busy, independent lives throughout their nearly 25-year marriage, he said. But when Nancy was diagnosed with dementia in 2008, Don devoted himself entirely to her care.

“My relationship with her changed for the better in a weird sort of way,” Don said. “I was on board completely with her care... This is what I got married to do.”

Two years after her diagnosis, it became clear that Nancy needed more support. She was admitted to the Northwest Hospital Geropsychiatric Unit for geriatric adults experiencing psychiatric emergencies, where she stayed for three weeks. Two days into her hospital stay, Don came to the crushing realization that Nancy could not come home safely.

Nancy was discharged to the Memory Care Center at what is now called Patriot’s Glen in Bellevue, where she resided until her death about two years later.

“It was literally the hardest thing I’ve ever done in my life,” Don said of moving Nancy to memory care.

Don and Nancy Desonier were married for nearly 25 years. Don is carrying forward his father’s legacy of giving, and Nancy’s memory, with a planned gift.

EvergreenHealth Hospice brings peace, positive memories to family

Although dementia can cast a long shadow, Don recalled plenty of moments of joy in his final years with Nancy, like when he threw a concert in Memory Care and serenaded her with songs from the musicals they loved.

Once Nancy’s health began to deteriorate, Don contacted EvergreenHealth Hospice. For two-and-a-half weeks, EvergreenHealth Hospice took over Nancy’s end-of-life care at Patriot’s Glen. On her final day, July 4, 2012, Don gathered her friends and family for a final goodbye. The experience with EvergreenHealth Hospice left a positive impression on Don, who said his only regret was not exploring palliative care and hospice sooner.

Don worked through his grief with the support of a EvergreenHealth Grief and Bereavement support group, and channeled his firsthand knowledge of dementia, death and the legal system into action. He completed a certificate in Gerontology at the University of Washington and, starting in 2016, Don led a support group through the Alzheimer’s Association for men caring for partners with dementia.

Planned gifts offer opportunity to leave a legacy

Besides honoring the personal, compassionate care Nancy and Don received through EvergreenHealth Hospice, Don knows that his planned gift will honor his parents as well.

Both his mother, Pat, and father, Don Sr., who retired as a captain in the Canadian Army after serving in World War II, instilled generosity and service as core values. After retiring from the military, Don Sr. established an organization to help military veterans transition to civilian life.



Don Desonier Sr. and his daughter-in-law, Nancy

“He modeled a pattern of giving, a pattern of helping out somebody else,” Don says of his father.

Now Don follows a similar guiding principle: if you see a need, act upon it. Through his philanthropic planning, Don will ensure that future health care needs in our community are taken care of. His planned gift will connect more EvergreenHealth patients with compassionate, exceptional care—for years to come.

Explore planned giving options at giftplanning.evergreenhealthfoundation.com.





Celebrate the Season of Giving

The holiday season is a time to reflect on family, community, and the power of generosity. As a donor, you are making an investment in care that impacts your family and serves the greatest needs of our diverse, growing community. As a non-profit, public hospital district, your support makes all the difference in advancing the health and well-being of our community. Visit evergreenhealthfoundation.com/ways-to-give to explore giving options.



Connect with us



facebook.com/EvergreenFdtn



[@evergreenhealthfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/evergreenhealthfoundation)



[linkedin.com/company/
evergreenhealth-foundation](https://linkedin.com/company/evergreenhealth-foundation)

For more information, contact the
EvergreenHealth Foundation at 425-899-1900
or foundation@evergreenhealth.com.

EDITOR | EvergreenHealth Foundation and
Firmani + Associates Inc.

PHOTOGRAPHY | Keith Brofsky

DESIGN | SJ3 Design Studio

PRODUCTION | Arscentia and K&H Printers-
Lithographers

THE EVERGREENHEALTH FOUNDATION TEAM

Sara Burtis

Major Gifts Officer

Megan Dunn

Administrative Coordinator

Sara Kassabian

Communications Specialist

Lori Kloes

Chief Philanthropy Officer

David Miller

Database and Finance Officer

Meg Powers

Executive Director

Beth Roberts

Major Gifts Officer

Shauna Smith

Corporate Engagement and Special Events Officer

Megan Whitman

Director of Major Gifts & Campaigns

2025 EVERGREENHEALTH FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES OFFICERS

Leah Hoge

Symetra
Board Chair/Gala Chair

Justin C. Dime, CDFA, CFP, CHFC

Bordeaux Wealth Advisors/Vice Chair

Jason Holloway

Heritage Bank
Treasurer/Finance Chair

Sandy Cairns

Wells Fargo
Secretary

2025 EVERGREENHEALTH FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS

Megan Baumgartner

SCS Financial

Drew Copitzky

Community Volunteer

Shawn D'Amelio

Community Volunteer

Doug Edlund

PAC Promotions

Bob Ferguson

Ben Franklin Crafts and Frame Shop/
Wine Committee Chair

Gurleen Gulati

City of Seattle

Tom Leonidas

Leonidas Consulting

John Martinka

Martinka Consulting

Abby Newton

Microsoft

Danielle O'Malley

Bellevue Healthcare/Allocations Chair

Margery Yetman

Community Volunteer

2025 EVERGREENHEALTH FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Jeff Cashman

Community Volunteer

Suzanne Greathouse

TierOne Performance Consulting/REPSVR

Lori Kloes

EvergreenHealth
Chief Philanthropy Officer

Michael Mena, MD

EvergreenHealth Medical Staff President

Ettore Palazzo, MD

EvergreenHealth CEO

Eric Taylor, MD

EvergreenHealth