When Katie’s smile lights up the room, you would never know there was a team behind it – in more ways than one. Several years ago, Katie was in a terrible car accident, sustaining multiple injuries, including extensive damage to her teeth.

Uninsured at the time, Katie was working as a young entrepreneur building her photography and production business. After the accident, she began to wonder how she could afford to rebuild the face of her growing company.

Cherry Health was the answer. Through access to affordable, exceptional dental care and with the patient expertise of her Cherry Health dental team, Katie was able to restore what the driver of the other vehicle took from her, and get back to the things that mattered most.

Katie smiles easily now: “I absolutely would not have been able to afford the kind of compassionate care I received without Cherry Health. I am incredibly grateful that this service exists in West Michigan. And I’m thankful that we have a community that supported me when I needed it!”

Counted among Cherry Health’s over 87,000 dental visits per year are over 27,000 emergency walk-in procedures. Our dental staff is here to help patients stop the severe pain and treat the underlying problems that can keep them from being able to carry out the activities of day-to-day life.

Katie now puts a strong face forward for her business, along with her confident, contagious smile. Because of Cherry Health, Katie, and many more like her, are able to address health needs when they arise, at a cost they can afford. That’s something to smile about.
Donor Support Reduces Disparities in Oral Health

Oral health is essential to overall health. Poor oral health is a contributing factor to, and a symptom and consequence of, many chronic diseases. Without a healthy mouth, important aspects of one’s general health and health-related quality of life measures are affected, including nutrition status, willingness to interact socially, mental health, and physical health. However, few programs “connect the dots” between oral health and chronic disease prevention interventions like Cherry Health does. When prevention of oral disease is disregarded, or its progression not addressed and managed in people with chronic diseases, serious adverse health outcomes can result. For example, people with diabetes who have periodontitis have six times the risk of poor glycemic control and are at increased risk for other diabetes-related health complications.

According to the Kent County Oral Health Coalition, a collaborating partner of Cherry Health, nearly 170,000 people in Kent County did not get to a dentist last year. Further, 14% of people in the survey reported their inability to accomplish daily activities (work, caring for families, etc.) because of dental issues. And the number one reason children miss school is tooth pain! Fortunately, Kent County is one of many counties that Cherry Health serves with affordable dental care.

Donors to Cherry Health Foundation recently enhanced our ability to offer just this kind of crucial dental care to patients. Through a recent disbursement of $40,500 designated to reduce health disparities, access to exceptional oral care was ensured!

When community support arrives to financially sustain services, Michigan thrives. Because of donor support, there are hundreds of people each day who are able to go to school, return to work, and care for their families. Thank you for spreading smiles!

Join us on Friday, May 15, and make us stronger.

Cherry Health Foundation will host its third annual Prescription: Strength fundraising luncheon on May 15, 2020. This year’s event will highlight our Maternal Infant Health Program (MIHP).

Held at Grand Valley State University’s L.V. Eberhard Center in downtown Grand Rapids from 12 to 1 p.m., this event will be free to those attending, but an invitation to give will be a focus of the program.

Consider becoming a Table Host for this event by inviting 9 friends new to the Cherry Health mission to learn more about the life-fortifying early childhood programs that are winning the fight against maternal health disparities.

Contact Laura Portko, Foundation Coordinator, at 616.965.8254 or foundation@cherryhealth.com to find out how to attend and host!

Cherry Health dentists know that maintaining good oral health can improve chronic disease outcomes.
Have you or a loved one ever faced a health challenge that seemed overwhelming?

Have you ever come up against wall after wall, only to feel like things could and should be different in healthcare? Now, imagine approaching these hurdles with limited resources (education, transportation, etc.) and under the stress of poverty.

When you take part in a Cherry Health Tour, you witness how integrated care breaks barriers and dramatically improves patient wellness. Go behind the scenes to see how patients connect to care and hear how your help has the power to positively change community health.

Tours are offered throughout the year from 12 to 1 p.m. at Heart of the City Health Center, 100 Cherry Street SE, Grand Rapids. Lunch is provided, and pre-registration is requested.

Please contact Laura Portko, Foundation Coordinator, for more information.

foundation@cherryhealth.com
616.965.8254 @ bit.ly/cherrytour

Cherry Health Mission

Cherry Health improves the health and wellness of individuals by providing comprehensive primary and behavioral health care while encouraging access by those who are underserved.
Planned Giving
by Cherry Health Foundation Director of Development Anna Goddard Clifford

One sentence is all it takes.
Life-changing impact may feel beyond reach—bigger than one person’s influence. However, with minimal effort, you can provide what is essential to secure the future: a lifeline. The simple act of naming a charity in your estate plan creates a lifeline for the effectiveness and survival of mission-driven work you value.

And it is as easy as adding one sentence to your will or trust specifying a donation. For example: “I give, devise, and bequeath $________ to [name of charitable organization] [TAX ID #], a nonprofit corporation located in [city, state].” Or, with a quick beneficiary change, a nonprofit could be the full or partial beneficiary of your bank account, retirement savings or life insurance policy. Ask your financial advisor and attorney about how to extend support for the community needs important to you. No gift is small. Each and every one provides a vital lifeline.

One of the organizations I am most proud to have been associated with is Cherry Health. Now, for over 20 years, the organization has been renewed in my husband’s and my after-death planned gifts. Over that time Cherry Health has grown from a single location on Cherry Street providing medical and dental services with supporting disciplines to a multi-site, broader scope organization providing not 40,000 patient visits but instead, in 2019, 823,000!

We fully support them because they ensure the most vulnerable have access to not just care but the best quality care. Cherry Health understands and addresses health in the broadest sense, system and causation, not just the current presenting condition. They are worthy of everyone’s gifts. Please join us if you have not already. —Priscilla Dakin and John Daverman

Why We Give
At Cherry Health, we believe all of our patients deserve the best care and the utmost respect. Through Cherry Health Foundation, our community rallies behind that belief, providing essential financial support for solutions that work.

Mr. Jim Alton
CEO, Acrisure Benefits Group

Acrisure Benefits Group is honored to be a corporate support partner of Cherry Health Foundation. We support the Foundation because Acrisure Benefits Group works to secure wellness for everyone in our community, our clients and our neighbors. By sponsoring annual events and partnering to engage community, we celebrate what is working in healthcare: offering excellent, comprehensive care for the whole person. Cherry Health makes that possible for anyone to achieve, breaking down barriers and offering an example for how healthcare can and should work for everyone.

Reverend & Mrs. Joe & Jessie Jones
President/CEO, Urban League of West Michigan & Executive Recruiter, Spectrum Health

There is a Malawian proverb that says, “If you have, give; if you need, seek.” We know Cherry Health provides a healthcare home for those who may not otherwise have access but are seeking quality healthcare. We have a heartfelt desire to do all that we can for those in our community who have been historically marginalized. Well, it didn’t take long to learn that Cherry Health does too. Therefore, we consider it an honor and privilege to give of what we have to an organization that is deeply committed to the community. It is our sincere hope that all who read this will take to heart this challenge: if you have, give!