



For Immediate Release

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## **Kathy's House Launches Fundraising Campaign to Build New House** *Strong demand drives need for larger hospital guest house*

**Milwaukee, Wis. (August 27, 2019)** – A steadily growing need for lodging for cancer patients and others with serious illnesses is the catalyst for a \$12 million fundraising campaign launched by Kathy's House on August 27.

The fundraising effort is the first major capital campaign for Kathy's House, a nonprofit hospital guest house that since 2001 has been serving out-of-town patients and families who must stay in Milwaukee for medical care.

“This is a tremendous step for us—our staff, our board, but most of all, our guests,” said Patty Metropulos, Kathy's House president and chief executive officer. “We've been operating at capacity for several years, and frequently face the heartbreaking task of turning people away. A new, larger House is the best thing we can do for patients and their families. I'm absolutely thrilled to officially kick off this campaign to the public.”

A lead pledge of \$6 million from Froedtert Hospital set the stage for the campaign, followed by significant gifts from the Fotsch Family Foundation, Ladish Co. Foundation, Schneider Company and Ginny and Mike McBride. To date, these and other substantial gifts total \$9.6 million (80% of the goal).

Concurrent with the launch of the campaign, a \$100,000 challenge grant is being offered by the McBrides, Brookfield residents and longtime supporters of Kathy's House. It is their second gift to the capital campaign.

“The need is so great. We are deeply concerned about the number of guests who are turned away. It's critical that this new House gets built as soon as possible,” said Mike McBride.

Metropulos said the McBrides' challenge is a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$100,000, which will double the impact of donations made during the public phase of the campaign.

“Kathy's House has quietly been doing important work in our community for almost 20 years,” said Gary Vroman, trustee, Ladish Co. Foundation. “When we learned

about the incredible care they provide for people in medical crisis, supporting this campaign was an easy decision.”

Although Kathy’s House has served guests from all 50 states, most who stay at the House live in northeastern Wisconsin, where access to advanced treatments for complex diseases such as cancer or organ failure can be limited. According to Metropulos, nearly 90% of guests have cancer or a loved one with cancer. She noted that more than 40% of patient guests report they would be unable to receive the care they need without Kathy’s House.

“In the past five years, more than 1,000 Brown County residents stayed at Kathy’s House,” said Mary Gronnert-Kollross, former foundation coordinator for Schneider, the Green Bay-based transportation and logistics company. “That number struck home because Schneider believes in giving back to organizations that help improve the quality of life for its associates. Every day, Kathy’s House helps sick people get the medical care they need, even if it’s 100 miles from home. The enterprise is proud to support that.”

Metropulos said demand for lodging at Kathy’s House has grown by 75% over the past six years, and the House is often at capacity. Over the past two years, lack of space forced her to turn away more than 500 families. Annually, Kathy’s House serves about 1,500 guests. On average, guests donate \$32 per night, but no one is refused housing if they cannot donate.

The new House will have 36 rooms, doubling current capacity, with a separate wing for patients with compromised immune systems and a patient services room for blood draws and private consultations. It also will have a kitchen, dining area, library, family room, fitness room, laundry facilities, courtyard, patio, walking trail and parking, and will be fully compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. It will be located on a previously announced 3.6-acre site in Wauwatosa on North 92nd St. between Doyne and Wisconsin Aves., near the Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin Clinical Cancer Center.

“The relationship between Kathy’s House and Froedtert Hospital goes back many years, and supporting this campaign is a natural for us,” said Cathy Buck, president of Froedtert Hospital. “Increasingly, medical care is being provided on an outpatient basis, and our doctors and nurses count on the supportive, compassionate home away from home that our patients find at Kathy’s House.”

Buck is serving as honorary co-chair of the capital campaign, along with Peter Engel, president and CEO of Easterseals Southeastern Wisconsin and former Johnson Bank executive.

“This capital campaign supports our mission to provide a comforting home for healing for our guests and will help us realize our vision to make Kathy’s House a national model for hospital guest houses,” Metropulos said. “We are deeply grateful for every donation, large and small, because those gifts enable us to continue to open our doors and our hearts to people at a critical time in their lives.”

For information about the capital campaign and to donate, visit [www.kathys-house.org/new-home](http://www.kathys-house.org/new-home).

### **About Kathy's House**

Kathy's House is a nonprofit hospital guest house that provides affordable lodging and caring support in a "home away from home" environment for people who need to travel to Milwaukee for medical care. Open 365 days a year, it is the only such facility in southeastern Wisconsin that serves patients of all ages and their families and caregivers. Annually, Kathy's House serves approximately 1,500 guests; roughly half are patients and half are family members. Most are cancer patients and more than 70 percent live in Wisconsin. Kathy's House was founded in 2001 by the parents of Kathy Vogel Kuettner, a Milwaukee cancer patient who had deep empathy for fellow patients who traveled to the city for care and faced illness without the support of nearby family and friends. Kathy died in 2000 but her wish to help others lives on. For more information, visit [www.kathys-house.org](http://www.kathys-house.org).

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