

# ***Iowa CareGivers strives to elevate the direct care workforce and the difference they make in the lives of Iowans.***



## **Dear Friend,**

Many of Iowa CareGivers' generous supporters make gifts because their lives or the lives of a loved one were changed by a dedicated direct care worker. *Julie McMahon is one of them.*

**"I just want to go home!"** The date was Oct. 14, 2022, and this was the plea of Julie's 97-year-old mother, who had developed mobility issues that May. After two months in a nursing home and almost three months in Des Moines with family, she longed for her life back home.

Julie's mom, Betty Mason Grimsman, comes from the strong, independent Iowa stock we all know well; she and her husband, Warren "Stub" Mason, raised six kids on the family farm in northwest Iowa. But as happens with many of us or our family members whose lives become constricted because of health, age, or other limitations, Betty could no longer live on her own in her beloved lake home.



***Julie McMahon and her mother, Betty Mason Grimsman***

***"Mom couldn't walk and needed help getting in and out of bed and to the bathroom," Julie says. "I knew we had to have someone else besides family to help."***

It was a problem Julie had so often seen before in her decades-long career in home care and public health: a loved one needing care beyond what family members could furnish.

**Julie already knew how vital direct care workers (DCWs) are** — the certified nursing assistants, home care aides, direct support professionals, hospice aides, and others who provide most of the hands-on care for Iowans in these settings as well as in clients' homes, group homes, hospitals, and hospices. "When I worked in the Iowa Department of Public Health, had there not been homemaker-home health aides in the local agencies to help folks — especially rural folks — many Iowans would not have been able to stay in their homes," Julie says.

For Betty, these DCWs have been Tina Lamaak and the caregivers with Personal Touch Homecare. "With the Personal Touch team and family caregivers providing 24/7 care, staying at home became possible for Mom," Julie says.

Tina agrees. "My clients are my family, and I want them treated the way I'd treat my own parents and grandparents," she says.

Julie was so grateful to the Personal Touch team that she gifted the registration fee for three of her mom's caregivers to attend Iowa Caregivers' annual DCW conference in October. A longtime volunteer and donor with Iowa CareGivers, Julie has witnessed the organization's mission in action, lifting up the lives and work of Iowa's direct care workers. "I couldn't afford to send all of Mom's caregivers to the conference, but I could afford to pay for some," she says. "Tina picked two people who'd most cared for Mom, Asha and Jen, along with herself."

"Caring for clients such as Betty is more than a career – it's my passion, a love for people who've become my extended family," Asha says.

For 30 years, Iowa CareGivers has provided education, support, research, and advocacy for direct care workers and other healthcare professionals and the people they serve. We strive to elevate the direct care workforce and the difference they make in the lives of Iowans like Betty and her family.

Today, Betty is back at her home on the lake and enjoying the changing of the seasons— an outcome that would not have been possible without direct care workers like Tina and her team.



L to R: Julie McMahon, Asha Clayton, Tina Lamaak, and Jan Reiling

That's what Julie was reflecting on recently watching the memorial service for former First Lady Rosalyn Carter, one of the first advocates of strengthening the caregiving workforce — which ultimately strengthens our families, our communities, and our society.

**"One of the speakers at the service quoted John Lewis, who said, 'You can't journey alone,'"** Julie told me.

**INDEED, WE CANNOT.** We at Iowa CareGivers are so grateful to have our most generous and loyal supporters like you alongside us. We hope sincerely that you'll consider supporting our efforts with a year-end gift, so that the direct care workers of today and tomorrow can continue to do the work they love for those we love.

**In gratitude,**

**Di Findley,**  
Executive Director



You may make your gift in memory of a loved one or to honor a direct care worker using the enclosed donation card, or online at <https://bit.ly/3Q8uKOe>

### **Beneficiary and Bequests Designations Multiply Donors' "Generosity Quotient"**

*"Like most people, I have only modest means. And while I give monthly to Iowa CareGivers what I can afford, I've always wished I could do much more. When updating my estate plan a few years ago, I realized, hey, I can do more for this worthwhile organization through a planned gift. I chose to make Iowa CareGivers the beneficiary of one of my retirement accounts, but making a bequest in my will*

*would have been equally easy to do. And because Iowa CareGivers is a nonprofit organization, my gift will be tax-free. It means so much to me to know that, after I die, the organizations I appreciate so much and respect the work of will benefit. I can't think of a better legacy to leave in the world!"*



**Jodi O'Donnell**



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