



Aurora Health Care®

# *Community Benefit Stories*

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*Dodge, Jefferson, Ozaukee, Washington  
and Waukesha Counties*

## Real-life experience without real-life risks

*Dramatic program takes a realistic approach to teaching teens about the consequences of drinking and driving*

Life's lessons are best learned through experience. Unfortunately, when the learners are teens and the topic is drinking and driving, experience is not the teacher of choice.

With the goal of giving students an unforgettable experience to teach a very valuable lesson, Hartford Union High School participated in a dramatic national program this past May. "Every 15 Minutes" is designed to teach teenagers about the potentially dangerous consequences of abusing alcohol and to challenge them to think about drinking, personal safety, and the responsibility of making mature decisions when lives are involved. The program was strategically scheduled one week before prom. As a member of the Washington County Injury Prevention Coalition, Aurora Medical Center of Washington County plays a key role in planning and running the annual event.

"Every 15 Minutes" refers to the fact that a person is killed in an alcohol-related traffic crash every 15 minutes. The program involves a mock crash scene at the high school and related events that offer real-life experience without real-life risks. Local high school students play the roles of three crash victims, the drunk driver, and the 15 "living dead" representing those killed in alcohol-related crashes. Parents also have roles, and area law enforcement, emergency services, hospital, social work, legal, school and other personnel are actively involved throughout the day-and-a-half event. All activities are videotaped and become part of a DVD shown at a school assembly.

The program is expected to have an emotional impact without the long-term impact of a real-life drunk-driving crash. Planners prepared for an emotional response and provided students with many opportunities for discussion and counseling.

According to Jill Becker, manager of patient care for the Aurora Medical Center emergency department and a member of the coalition, the program met its intended goal. "The students take the program very seriously," says Jill. "It was obvious that they were very moved by the experience and the message definitely got across. We had zero alcohol-related incidents on prom night this year."

## Helping Washington County stay balanced

As young children we were hounded by our parents to eat our vegetables. Today we know that that our parents weren't simply trying to torture us – there's scientific proof that fruits and vegetables are an important part of a balanced diet. They are low in fat and calories and many are excellent sources of the important vitamins A and C and provide ample fiber. Yet most adults still do not eat the five to nine servings a day recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Encouraging people to eat more fruits and vegetables is the first focus of the Healthy People Project of Washington County, a community wellness initiative focused on improving health through healthy eating. The project is a partnership between Aurora Health Care, SynergyHealth, the Washington County Health Department, the Kettle Moraine YMCA and community businesses.

"We decided to start small," says Jennifer Tarantino, an Aurora Health Care caregiver and a member of the coalition's steering committee. "So to encourage more fruit and vegetable consumption we decided to bring farmer's markets to the people of Washington County."

Farmer's markets are held weekly at the Aurora Medical Center of Washington County and two area businesses, West Bend Mutual in West Bend and Signicast Corporation in Hartford. The public is welcome to attend at all locations.

According to Kim Stapelfeldt, an Aurora Medical Center caregiver, the farmer's market has been well attended and very well received. "We get an e-mail the day before the farmer's market giving us a heads up of what will be available to buy. I think everyone looks forward to it."

In addition to the health benefits that can be gained from the fresh fruits and vegetables, the program also supports local farmers.

Building on the success of the farmer's markets, the next step for the coalition is to create a tool kit that other Washington County businesses can use to duplicate the program for their own employees.

## From head bumps to blood pressure

*Aurora Health Care provides valuable services to Washington County Fair attendees*

County fairs conjure up pleasant memories of warm weather, mouth-watering food and exciting experiences. While no one expects to be injured or to discover a life-threatening condition at the fair, volunteers from Aurora Health Care have been ensuring that care is available for attendees of the Washington County Fair for the past 19 years.

Over 100,000 people attend the Washington County Fair each year. Approximately 20 injuries occur at the fair annually which are treated at the first aid station by Aurora caregiver volunteers. The volunteers have even been presented with medical emergencies, including heart attack patients. In these cases, Aurora caregivers have played a vital role in helping to quickly get these patients transferred to a hospital to receive the care that they need.

In addition to first aid service, Aurora Health Care offers health information and free blood pressure screenings at the fair. The screenings inevitably reveal health concerns that are referred to a clinic or a hospital. Last year Kerry Gnatzig, a phlebotomist at Aurora Medical Center of Washington County, noticed a high blood pressure reading during a screening. Kerry referred the fairgoer to a physician who diagnosed her with hypertension. Persistent hypertension can lead to life-threatening events such as strokes, heart attacks and heart failure. Had it not been for her encounter with Kerry, the fairgoer may have never known about her condition until it was too late.

“I was so glad that she stopped in for a screening,” says Kerry. “It’s rewarding to be able to offer this service to the community – especially when you know you may have saved someone’s life.”

*Since 2003, Aurora has partnered with local health departments to conduct community health needs assessments throughout eastern Wisconsin to gather data on behavioral and lifestyle habits and the prevalence of risk factors and disease conditions existing with the adult population. To learn more about how these assessments are completed and to see the reports, go to [www.Aurora.org/CommHealth](http://www.Aurora.org/CommHealth).*