

Angels of Courage Retreats

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DISCOVER HOPE IN THE MIDST OF YOUR REALITY

Volume 1, Issue 1

October 2006

Co-Founder tells of purpose found in Retreats

In 1988 I began my career; I was 14 years old. I didn't realize it at the time, but I started my career as a patient. I'm now 32 years old and a four and a half year (two time) cancer survivor. I also have Lupus which has been in remission since 1991.

After I survived cancer the first time, I realized that I must still be here for a specific purpose. I prayed, shared my frustrations, and prayed some more to find the guidance I was searching for. I thought that I should go back to school to gain the experience I needed and I actually enrolled, but found that it wasn't fulfilling. That is when someone said, "What experiences have you had that are unique to you where God could use you just as you are?" I jokingly and sarcastically replied, "Well, I sure have experience as a patient!"

I am telling you all of this because I know what it is like to be in and out of hospitals. I know what it is like to always be waiting to find out the test results. I also know what it is like to be tired of finding out what is wrong with me. I wanted to find out what was right with me.

I knew I wasn't the only one who felt this way, so I hit the pavement. I contacted 30+ medical and spiritual leaders in our community to find out what is being done to help people thrive in the midst of their illnesses.

I learned that there are numerous resources in our community, but none that address the whole person (body, mind, and spirit). I also learned that my experience wasn't exclusive to being a cancer survivor. The thoughts and feelings I experienced are felt by most people who have been diagnosed with a chronic illness or who have lost a loved one.

I started sharing my vision and dream with those who would listen. I soon realized that there are many other people who want to be involved in such a cause.

A friend, Pastor Paul Brunsberg, introduced me to Don Goering, a 30+ year cancer survivor. (Don will be sharing why he got involved with Angels of Courage Retreats in our next quarterly newsletter). After a few discussions, Don and I realized that our passions and callings were very much in alignment with one another. We decided to

move forward and co-found Angels of Courage Retreats.

I am so excited to continue on this journey as I know I will be introduced to incredible people. People who are in the midst of an illness or loss of a loved one and need a glimpse of hope. People who have overcome more than they ever believed they could who now have the ability to be an Angel of Courage to others.

Here's to livin' your purpose~

Carly Nelson

*Co-Founder Angels of
Courage Retreats*

If you're reading these words and can relate to the situation I'm describing, please read on. If you would like to become involved in Angels of Courage Retreats in some way, shape, or form, please contact me (info on page 4).



Don Goering and Carly Nelson,
Co-Founders of Angels of
Courage Retreats

Inside this issue:

MISSION AND PURPOSE STATEMENTS	2
PILOT RETREATS	2
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED	3
PARTNERING WITH IMPACT SOLUTIONS	3
FEASIBILITY STUDY WITH UNIVERSITY OF MARY	3
ANGELS OF COURAGE CONTACT INFORMATION	4

Angels of Courage Retreats



Mission of Angels of Courage Retreats

The mission of Angels of Courage Retreats is to create an environment that encourages those affected by chronic illness or the loss of a loved one to live life with courage.

The purpose of the organization is to create weekend retreats focusing on a specific topic. For example, one weekend there could be a retreat for cancer survivors, the next retreat for parents of children with multiple scler-

osis, and the next for children with diabetes.

The retreats will be created based on the feedback received from members of our community and the resources that are available to ensure a successful retreat.

Our goal is to gather and share resources that exist to help individuals and families learn to thrive in the midst of their illness. We need to focus on thriving not just surviving!

As you can imagine, the impact on attendees will be amazing!

“WITHOUT
COURAGE, WE
CANNOT
PRACTICE ANY
OTHER VIRTUE
CONSISTENTLY.”

MAYA ANGELOU

Pilot Retreat to be held:

The first pilot retreat will be held in 2007 focusing on adult cancer survivors. We will utilize leaders in our community and existing organizations to build the content of the retreat.

What will the schedule consist of during the retreat?

- ⇒ Motivational Speakers
- ⇒ Medical Doctors will discuss physical issues of being a cancer survivor
- ⇒ Psychologists/
Psychiatrists will discuss the emotional issues that go side-by-side with survivorship
- ⇒ Pastors/Clergy will discuss the spiritual questions people have when faced with cancer
- ⇒ Meditation/Relaxation through: Art Therapy, Garden Therapy, Music

Therapy and Pet Therapy.

⇒ Time set aside to visit with people who are going through similar issues.

⇒ Resources/Non-profits that already exist in our community that can provide further resources after the retreat has concluded.

If you would like to participate in the planning of the first pilot retreat please review Page 3, “Volunteering for Angels of Courage Retreats”.

Planning for the second retreat will happen in 2007. Thus far, there has been tremendous interest in retreats for Families/Individuals with children with disabilities and Families/Individuals who have experienced the loss of

a loved one.

Please submit your feedback regarding upcoming retreats to the contact information listed on Page 4.

Volunteering for Angels of Courage Retreats

Does the mission and purpose of Angels of Courage Retreats call out to you based on what you have experienced in your life?

We are looking for passionate and committed people like you to help out in several key areas for the first retreat that will be held in 2007. The task forces thus far include:

⇒ Programming (planning of retreat content)

- ⇒ Site Logistics (planning of location and schedule)
- ⇒ Marketing (flyers, magazines, radio, etc)
- ⇒ Journalism (writing that engages people's interest in Angels of Courage Retreats)
- ⇒ Volunteer coordination
- ⇒ Fundraising (Events)

If you would like to volunteer for the first retreat or would like more information, please see the contact information listed on page 4.

If there is anyone that you know who you think would be interested in learning more about participating, please forward this information to them.

For all of the people that have volunteered thus far—THANK YOU! We will be contacting all volunteers after the October board meeting for next steps.

Partnering with Impact Solutions

Many people have asked, how has Angels of Courage gotten as far as it has so quickly? How have you known what to do in order to form a non-profit? The answer: our partnership with Impact Solutions.

One of Impact Solutions purposes is to assist non-profits with resources and training to become more efficient and

effective. When a non-profit is effective, it can have the greatest positive impact on those it is serving.

An example of the training we are receiving is fundraising training for board members. In addition, Impact Solutions has also provided a consultant who focuses on strategic business planning.

For more information on Impact Solutions, go to their website at:

<http://www.dakotamedicalfoundation.org/impact/>

“REAL FELLOWSHIP HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE GET HONEST ABOUT WHO THEY ARE AND WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THEIR LIVES.”

RICK WARREN

University of Mary performs feasibility study

In July of 2005, one of the people involved in planning for Angels of Courage Retreats recommended checking with the local universities to see if they would be interested in performing a feasibility study. A feasibility study is where research is done in order to determine if a project will be successful.

A meeting was held with Brenda Kaspari, Director of the University of Mary-Fargo campus, and she indicated that this topic would be a perfect fit with the curriculum as it dealt with Service Learning.

Seven Master-level students focused their research on

Community Need, Start-up Costs, and Annual Operating Costs. In a 100 page evaluation, they made several recommendations. Their final recommendation declared the project very feasible for our region. This information will soon be available on our website that is currently under construction.



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Contact Information:

If you would like to learn more about Angels of Courage Retreats or if you have questions please contact:

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Phone: 701 -371-3025

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