

Kathy's House: Welcomes Governor Evers to grand opening

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Milwaukee, Wis. (August 4, 2021) – With a \$12 million dollar capital campaign nearing the finish line and two months after welcoming its first guests, Kathy's House today held an event to celebrate its new "Home for Healing."

Kathy's House, 9101 W. Doyne Ave., is 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.

Governor Tony Evers kicked off the program, which also featured several business leaders, a ceremonial flag-raising and award-winning Washington, DC, student poet Kashvi Ramani, a former Kathy's House guest. About 150 people attended the event.

"We have been overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response from our guests and from the community," said Patty Metropulos, president and chief executive officer of Kathy's House. "Continuing demand for our services and dedication to our mission to help enable access to care fueled our multi-year project to build this new, larger House."

She added, "Now, with a building intentionally designed to accommodate our growing guest population and a location just footsteps from the Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin Cancer Center, Kathy's House is well-positioned to achieve our vision to be a national model for hospital guest houses."

Donors and other supporters and current and past guests attended the celebration, which opened with a ceremonial raising of an American flag, which flew over the U.S. Capitol earlier this year in honor Kathy's House's namesake, Kathy Vogel

Kuettner.

“As this pandemic underscored, folks can sometimes face multiple barriers to accessing life-saving healthcare they need,” said Gov. Evers. “I was glad to be able to join Kathy’s House today for their grand opening and to celebrate their important work providing an affordable, safe, and supportive place to stay so families and caregivers can focus on what matters most—the health and well-being of their loved ones.”

In addition to Gov. Evers, speakers included Eric Conley, president of Froedtert Hospital and Rick Schmidt, President & CEO of C.G. Schmidt, general contractor for the project. Ms. Ramani closed the program with an original poem she wrote for the occasion. She stayed at Kathy’s House in 2016 while her father underwent cancer treatment in Milwaukee. Blessings were offered by Doug Schoen, Kathy’s House director of pastoral care, and Greg Van Dunk, Pastor of Atonement Lutheran Church, Muskego.

Metropulos, who serves on the Governor’s Health Equity Council noted that, prior to opening the new facility, Kathy’s House was forced to turn away more than 1,200 guests over three years because no rooms were available. The purpose of the Governor’s Health Equity Council is to address the various factors that exacerbate health disparities by creating a comprehensive plan to achieve long-lasting and equitable health outcomes for all Wisconsinites.

Ms. Ramani remembered her time at Kathy’s House fondly. “Kathy’s House was a haven for my family. Rather than communicating miles apart, it allowed us to stay with my dad as he was facing a difficult time,” she said. “I learned to think about other people rather than just myself and it led me to my love of volunteering. Kathy’s House helped my family stay together, make new friends, renew my dad’s health, and become better people in the process.”

Kathy’s House celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. Since opening in 2001, Kathy’s House has provided over 150,000 nights of lodging, with more than 22,000 patients and families staying at the House. More than half of guests who stay at Kathy’s House report a household income of less than \$40,000, and 40% say they would not have been able to get needed medical treatment without Kathy’s House.

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, their families and caregivers, and accepts referrals from all area hospitals. Annually, Kathy's House has served approximately 1,500 guests; roughly half are patients and half are family members. The number of guests served is expected to reach 3,000 in the new building. 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 local mother of three and cancer patient. She had deep empathy for fellow patients who had to travel to Milwaukee to access 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 about Kathy's House and the capital campaign to build the new House, visit www.kathys-house.org.