

Volunteer of the Year – East Central Wisconsin

Joe and Audrey Leisgang

Bellin Health and the American Red Cross of Wisconsin

Governor's
Service Awards



Joe and Audrey Leisgang have dedicated thousands of hours over multiple decades to promote the health of individuals across the greater Green Bay area. They have served in numerous volunteer roles across multiple organizations, including Bellin Health, the Concerned Heart Club of Northeastern Region of Wisconsin, and the American Red Cross of Wisconsin – Northeast Region, as well as several other local organizations.

Over the past 18 years, Joe and Audrey have volunteered over 12,000 hours combined to provide critical assistance at the Advance Care Desk in the ICU department of Bellin Health. While volunteering at Bellin Audrey and Joe checked in with families in the ICU area, going out of their way to help them in their time of need by providing advice, consolation, or simply offering a cup of fresh coffee. Having had open heart surgery at Bellin Health in the past, Joe could relate to a patient's questions, concerns, and anxieties of rehab and recovery, helping them in their journey and enhancing their patient experience. Wanting to know why it took so long to discharge patients, Joe shadowed the nurses to see the discharge process, which helped him explain the discharge process to patients going through it for the first time. Audrey would typically focus on providing support to the family in the waiting room, trying her best to help calm their worries and anxieties.



In addition to volunteering in the ICU, their service at Bellin Health also extended to critical help during the COVID pandemic. Bellin Health needed door monitors stationed at the entrances to screen individuals entering the hospital at the height of the pandemic, and Audrey and Joe assisted with this task several days a week.

Their support to patients who had invasive heart surgeries and their families also extended to devoting time to volunteering and holding leadership roles with the Concerned Hearts Club Northeastern Region of Wisconsin. Both Joe and Audrey held elected roles in the organization throughout the years. Joe served as treasurer, 2nd vice, vice president, and president, while Audrey served terms as its secretary and financial secretary, with both also serving terms on its board.

Over the years, the Concerned Hearts Club held numerous community educational offerings regarding heart health and supported academic scholarships for nursing students who showed an interest in cardiology. Joe and Audrey helped organize and lead fundraising events to support these efforts, as well as raising funds to allow the organization to purchase over 20 AEDs that were given to organizations and schools in rural communities across Northeast Wisconsin.

Additionally, Joe and Audrey have devoted 25 years to supporting the American Red Cross of Wisconsin – Northeast Region. They were willing to help with anything that was needed to get done, including answering phones, assisting with local events, driving vehicles with equipment, setting up blood drives, and handling registration of blood drive participants. Not only have they helped organize these drives, as participants themselves, they have donated a combined 88 gallons of blood at Red Cross over the years.

Audrey and Joe have dedicated their time to helping others in numerous additional ways as well, including taking on volunteer roles to assist San Louis Manner Nursing Home, the Ashwaubenon Lions and Lioness groups, Brown County Social Services, the Cormier Early Education Center, and Nativity of Our Lord Parish in Ashwaubenon.

Describing the difference Audrey and Joe have made through their decades of volunteer service, Kimberly Summers from Bellin Health Volunteer Services explained that "Joe and Audrey Leisgang are true public servants for our Northeastern Region of Wisconsin, Brown County, and the Village of Ashwaubenon. Their work with The Concerned Hearts Club and the Northeastern Region of the American Red Cross helped the rural communities in our region with much needed AED's, blood drives and cardiac education...We are honored to have had Joe & Audrey's dedication to Bellin Health and The Concerned Hearts Club throughout the years. They are truly a couple that exemplify giving back to their community. Their values and humility are to be looked up to. They have made a HUGE difference in the cardiac health community and have made our community a better place with all their volunteer efforts across Brown County."