



**Next fundraising event!  
ARTFEAST9: May 6, 2021**



# Exalta Health<sup>®</sup>

*Our community. Our health.*

**Exalta Health reflects the spirit of Christ by providing compassionate, accessible healthcare.**

## Newsletter | February 2021

New Board member Eva Alexander has a special passion for Exalta Health and our mission.

She says: "As an immigrant, I am familiar with the challenges that our community faces, especially when it comes to a lack of access to quality care. The mission of Exalta Health truly spoke to my compassion for others, and I wanted to be able to help families like mine."

Eva, who is working toward her Master of Management degree from Aquinas College in Organizational Leadership and completed a B.A. degree from Grand Valley State University in Hospitality and Tourism, was born in Villahermosa, Tabasco in Mexico. She immigrated with her family to the United States in 1999, and says she is proud to recently have become a new American. And her fulltime work sees her serve the West Michigan community as the Executive Director of Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates, a non-profit immigration law and advocacy center located in Holland.

She also has experience working in development teams for the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids and The American Red Cross in West Michigan and hopes to bring some of that fundraising and event planning expertise to her work on our Board. She adds: "I know the board will help me grow as an individual and as a Christian by serving others through Exalta's work."

Prior to joining the Board, Eva had served Exalta Health as a volunteer. She initially got connected to us through a luncheon, an event she says was a game-changer and opened her eyes.



"I was moved by the stories of all the individuals that Exalta Health helps," she recalls.

Eva and her husband, who is a chef, have two boys who she says keep her busy. We are grateful that in the midst of her busy life, she is willing to make time for Exalta Health, and we are excited to see the many ways in which she will bless the organization and in turn also be blessed.

## COVID-19 Update: Dr. Chris Shoemaker, Staff Physician

What's life been like on the frontlines for the Exalta Health medical staff during the pandemic? We provided brief updates last fall and winter in our newsletters, and this month we have another such story.

Staff physician Dr. Chris Shoemaker has been treating COVID-19 patients for almost a year now and also has been vaccinated, getting his first shot in December 2020 and his second in mid-January 2021, both courtesy of Mercy Health in Grand Rapids.

He said he felt a sense of relief and also excitement when he was vaccinated. And something more. He explains: "It has been such an overwhelming task to care, worry, grieve and process everything that has been happening with COVID-19. So the vaccination also felt like a small victory."

As Mercy Health continues to assist in vaccinating Exalta Health staff and patient-facing volunteers, Chris speaks for everyone at the organization when he adds: "It will feel even more whole

when our volunteers will be able to return." And despite the ways in which COVID-19 has changed the processes at Exalta Health, and even as a "new normal" guides the ways we care for patients, including tele-health, our mission has not changed.

Reflecting the spirit of Christ, we continue to provide compassionate, accessible, quality healthcare that promotes wellness for all.



## Exalta Health Welcomes New AmeriCorps Member

Our new AmeriCorps member is Andrea Villalobos. She is a Chicago native who was born and raised in the Gage Park neighborhood on the southwest side of the city and attended Solorio Academy High School before coming to Michigan to pursue a degree at Grand Valley State University. A 2020 GVSU graduate, with a major in Health Communications and a minor in Latin American Studies, she said AmeriCorps was not something that was originally part of her



plan, but she is grateful she applied and especially excited to be at Exalta Health.

"I felt like this was the perfect fit for me," she says. "I know that no matter what I do in life, my goal is to help the Hispanic community in any way I can. Being here is an opportunity for me to grow and learn."

Andrea began in January 2021 and will finish up in January 2022. She has completed her training with us and will now assist in a variety of ways, including Medicaid enrollment, health education, interpretation for health care visits, identifying and addressing barriers to health care, community outreach and more. She says already that she can see Exalta Health is full of passionate and selfless employees who are willing to do anything to help the community.

"I am grateful to be surrounded by such amazing people," she says. "I cannot express how thankful I am to have found AmeriCorps and the opportunity to be part of Exalta Health."

## Featured Artists from past ArtFeast Events: Kathy and Joel

Kathy Mohl has been connected to the annual ArtFeast event for a decade now.



*ArtFeast Artist: Kathy Mohl*  
"A friend asked me if I would be interested and offered to give me a tour of Exalta Health," she said. "I saw all of these amazing people, doctors, social workers, staff members, many of them volunteering, working together to help the community. It gave me a better understanding of the care that they provide. I keep coming back because through ArtFeast I am able to use my gifts to contribute to improving the health of our community."

Joel Canales likes ArtFeast for similar reasons.

"I was looking for a place to volunteer," he recalled recently. "Someone mentioned Exalta Health. I love that Exalta Health helps people and the community. It was great to be able to

donate a piece to ArtFeast."

Both Canales and Mohl are painters. Canales uses acrylics. Mohl favors oil. And both appreciate what they get out of painting and appreciate the work of Exalta Health.



*ArtFeast Artist: Joe Canales*

"I love trying to depict what is unseen," Mohl said. "There is a spiritual element present, and I love connecting to that mood or feeling in my work."

See more at [www.kathymohl.com](http://www.kathymohl.com)

## About ArtFeast9

Returning for its 9th year, ArtFeast has become a signature event for Exalta Health. A feast for the senses, ArtFeast features the work of local artists, many of whom will be in attendance personally displaying their work. Music, food, and fun create an exhilarating environment for bidding on local artwork and other merchandise. It's the perfect way to spend a spring evening with friends!



*ArtFeast Artist: Nicole Klotz*



*Mood Swings*

Proceeds from auction items and ticket sales help provide quality, accessible healthcare to our community.

To learn more about Sponsorships and how to become one, follow the link below!

<https://www.exaltahealth.org/events/artfeast-9-who-said-donating-isnt-fun/>



2060 Division Ave S, Grand Rapids, MI 49507  
 Address Service Requested

**GIFT INSIDE!**

### What's New at Exalta Health?

We are happy to announce that over the last month volunteers have begun to return to Exalta Health. Through a collaboration with Metro Health, they have been able to receive the COVID vaccine. We are very grateful that our volunteers are willing to come and serve as we continue to battle through the COVID -19 Pandemic. THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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