



# HELP Newsletter

University of Utah  
Hospital Elder Life Program  
Issue 9

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## Hats off to HELP volunteers!



Every year many of our HELP volunteer crew move on to graduate school. The year of 2017 was no exception, with 15 HELP volunteers accepted to medical or nursing school, and one to law school. Eleven HELP volunteers entered medical school in 2017, seven of them at the University of Utah. Three HELP volunteers have started the U nursing program, Lisa Merrell in January 2017, Stephanie Black in August 2017, and Lauren Perry in January 2018. The cycle for 2018 is already in full swing, with HELP volunteers eagerly anticipating interviews and acceptance calls.

Our hope is that while HELP benefits our older patients it also sparks interest in geriatrics among HELP volunteers. The first HELP Volunteer Alumni survey suggests HELP may indeed be a pipeline for producing geriatric-friendly health professionals (more about the survey below).

### HELP At A Glance

- 2,656 enrolled patients
- 42 HELP volunteers
- Delirium rate: 4.3%

*...Helping to maintain cognitive, physical and emotional well-being in hospitalized older patients*

### In This Issue:

- Hats off to HELP volunteers!
- HELP Travel Scholarship
- 50 ways to identify HELP
- Volunteer Spotlight

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## HELP Travel Scholarship 2017 and 2018

The HELP Travel Scholarship was founded in 2017 to encourage research on HELP and delirium at the University of Utah. Awardees receive a travel scholarship covering expenses to the International HELP Conference to present a poster on their project.

Espen Earl (photo), awardee of the 2017 HELP Travel Scholarship, presented his poster on the effect of Active Range of Motion on delirium rates among HELP-enrolled patients at the HELP Conference in Pittsburgh in April 2017. A recent graduate in kinesiology, Espen is applying to medical school. Espen volunteered for HELP at the University Hospital for nearly three years.



Ashley Loosle is the awardee of the 2018 HELP Travel Scholarship. A pre-med psychology major and current HELP volunteer, Ashley has enthusiastically taken on the challenge of developing the first survey for HELP volunteer alumni with the support of the HELP team. Her abstract on the impact of HELP on volunteers has been accepted by the American Geriatrics Society (AGS), and Ashley will be presenting her poster at the AGS Conference in Orlando this May.



## 50 Ways to identify HELP

Hunting HELP volunteers is not a popular pastime in the University of Utah Hospital. No need to paint a bull's eye on their backs! HELP volunteers have a unique role in that they are specially trained in the delirium prevention interventions of the Hospital Elder Life Program. To assist hospital staff in identifying HELP volunteers from hundreds of other red-shirted hospital volunteers, HELP volunteers carry a black backpack distinguished by a large HELP logo button. HELP-enrolled patients can also be identified, depending on the unit, by either the "HELP" acronym in the Notes column of the electronic whiteboard or by the 2 x 2 HELP logo magnet placed on the doorframe of the patient's room. Okay, that's only three ways to identify HELP!

## HELP Volunteer Spotlight

### Sherilyn Santaw

Sher Santaw is a devoted mother, grandmother, and retired nurse who has been married to a physician for 42 years. She and her husband Mike Magill, MD, who recently stepped down as Chair of the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, keep busy with their 6 children and 2 grandkids. Sher confides that she has never been a fan of hanging out in hospitals. Her primary motivation in becoming a HELP volunteer is to help older patients get out of the hospital faster by engaging them with activities and being an empathetic listener who can provide a comforting hand or foot rub. She recently traveled to Hawaii to support her husband and children who ran in a marathon. Sher enthusiastically cheered from the sidelines, with her favorite drink, a piña colada, in hand! She much prefers reading and piña coladas to running.



### David Harnsberger



Dave Harnsberger is a Salt Lake native who knows how to keep himself busy. When not studying for his classes at the University of Utah, working as an HCA at the University Hospital in MICU, or volunteering, he is likely to be off running, swimming, or climbing rocks. Volunteering has helped Dave discover his passion for patient care. His career goal is to become a nurse practitioner, and he is currently applying for the U nursing program so he can complete his bachelor's in nursing and become an RN. Dave also volunteers as a Spanish medical interpreter at the Maliheh Clinic, and enjoys improving his proficiency with Spanish-speaking HELP patients at the hospital. Dave has lived in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he happily worked and surfed, and for his next vacation is planning a sea kayak trip to the north shore of Molokai, Hawaii.