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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 12, 2013**

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## **At Our Lady of Hope Clinic, Volunteers Keep Costs Low & Free Clinic Running Smoothly**

**Madison, WI**—This June, Our Lady of Hope Clinic will be celebrating its fourth anniversary of providing free medical care to Dane County’s uninsured men, women and children. The clinic, which first opened its doors to uninsured patients on June 1, 2009, is the area’s only completely free full-time primary care clinic for people without health insurance. In just three years of operation, Our Lady of Hope Clinic has treated nearly 3,000 uninsured patients who may not otherwise have had access to a doctor.

Dr. Michael Kloess, a family practitioner who co-founded the clinic, is Our Lady of Hope’s attending physician. Dr. Kloess is assisted on a daily basis by a team of volunteers who are trained and coordinated by Diane Painter and Michelle Whitfield, both registered nurses in the Intensive Care Unit of St. Mary’s Hospital. Ms. Painter and Ms. Whitfield first became involved in the clinic in the spring of 2009. With a roster of approximately thirty-five volunteers under their supervision, the clinic is able keep its operating costs relatively low, while providing outstanding medical care. “Our volunteers ensure that the clinic is open four days each week to our patients without health insurance. Michelle and Diane teach volunteers the patient-care related skills that they need—from performing vital signs, to providing clerical support, and helping people find free medications from pharmaceutical companies to help cover the high cost of prescriptions. I estimate that, since the clinic first opened, our dedicated volunteers have given over 17,000 hours of service. Our Lady of Hope Clinic does not have the funds to pay a full staff so there is absolutely no way we would be able to provide the free care that we do without our volunteers. I can’t possibly express how humbled I am by their service, and how grateful I am to them”, Dr. Kloess states.

“My experience in the ICU at St. Mary’s has introduced me to so many people who have manageable, chronic diseases that have spiraled out of control and led them to my care because they could not find treatment without health insurance. Diseases like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, hyperthyroidism—these are conditions that people with health insurance manage fairly easily but without treatment they often end up in the ICU where the charge is a minimum of \$4,000 per day”, explains Ms. Painter. “I was drawn to volunteering at Our Lady of Hope Clinic because Dr. Mike is offering a unique yet sustainable solution to our country’s medical crisis”. Ms. Whitfield goes on to state, “Diane and I have worked together for over sixteen years. We work really well as a team as each of us has different interests. The beauty of our clinic, and of our volunteer base, is that it brings so many different people together who are united by their desire to make basic healthcare available to everyone, despite their economic and employment status”.

Our Lady of Hope Clinic volunteers must commit to a minimum of one year of service, and at least two four-hour shifts each month. While the majority of the clinic's volunteers are students who are considering going into medicine, we also have retired individuals, medical professionals and interpreters giving of their time as well. Our Lady of Hope Clinic is funded by community donations, and by medically insured patients who pay a modest annual fee for concierge medical services provided by Dr. Kloess, who became Our Lady of Hope Clinic's first full time provider at the beginning of 2012. Walk-in appointment scheduling is available for those without medical insurance on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings at 9:00 a.m. and again on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at 1:00 p.m.

For additional information on Our Lady of Hope Clinic, please visit our website at [www.ourladyofhopeclinic.org](http://www.ourladyofhopeclinic.org), or contact Julie Jensen, Director of Development, at (608) 957-1137 or [Julie@ourladyofhopeclinic.org](mailto:Julie@ourladyofhopeclinic.org).

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