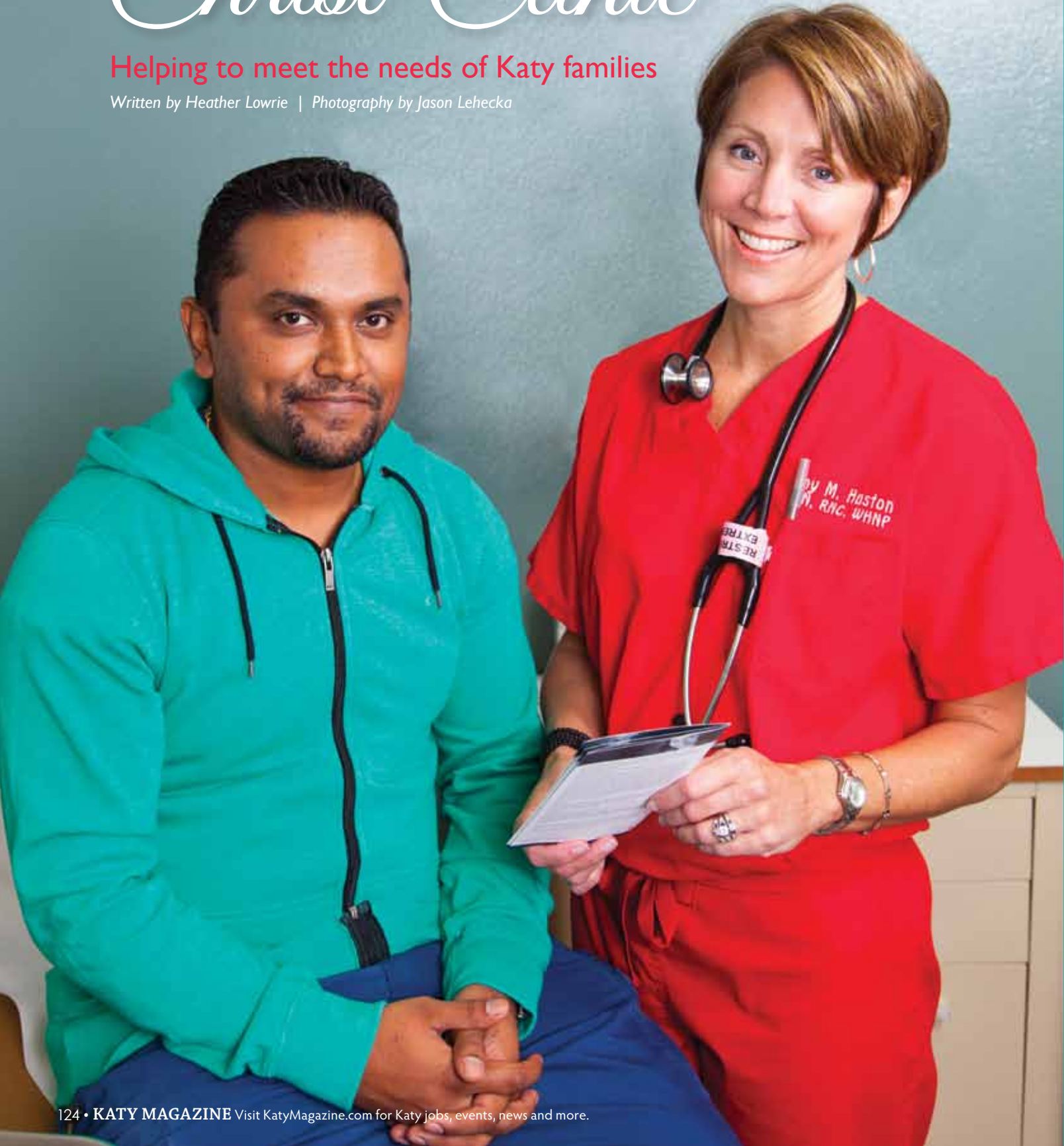


Christ Clinic

Helping to meet the needs of Katy families

Written by Heather Lowrie | Photography by Jason Lehecka

Nurse practitioner Amy Houston visits with a patient at Christ Clinic, which helps treat a variety of illnesses, offers an onsite pharmacy, and even includes specialists like dietitians and audiologists for Katyites in need



Dr. Cynthia Anthis, a board certified family practice physician, sees many hardworking patients with health problems that interfere with earning a living wage



Lab interns Maria Alcantar and Brandon Walther are just a few of the many medical volunteers who share their time and talents at Christ Clinic



Imagine waking up without a job, your health insurance stripped from your family and a feeling of complete helplessness. Knowing that someone in your family is sick and not being able to give them the care they deserve would be devastating. Thankfully, Christ Clinic is located right in the heart of historic Katy, waiting to serve the sick and giving them an opportunity to get amazing care during some unfortunate circumstances. “I enjoy taking care of patients who have no other option for medical care,” shares Dr. Cynthia Anthis, a family practice physician who has volunteered at the clinic for 10 years. “They are hard-working people, and often, their health problem or their inability to get treated keeps them from being able to earn a living wage.”

Serving the Less Fortunate

The vision for the clinic came from the parish nurse at Memorial Lutheran Church in Katy. She knew there were chronically sick people who were struggling to stay healthy without medical insurance. Her idea blossomed into Christ Clinic in 2000 with the help of many community volunteers. In 2007, co-founder Ray Fritz moved the clinic to its current location in Stanberry Plaza.

“This move enabled the clinic to be open many more hours during the week and, accordingly, treat many more patients,” shares Fritz. When the clinic celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2010, it had already seen more than 18,000 patient visits. Last year alone, the clinic served over 5,000 patients, and that number continues to grow. Staff members and volunteers are dedicated to meeting the needs of fellow Katyites, and see their service as a reflection of God’s love and healing grace. “The staff at Christ Clinic knows their roots have watered the hearts of the needy with compassion, and are growing in faith to serve the less fortunate,” says Fritz.

Offering Compassionate Care

Patients that are 2 years of age and older can be served at Christ Clinic for both chronic and acute pain. There are a few qualifications that need to be met, including proper identification, proof of income, and meeting the established national poverty guidelines. These visits can include anything from follow-up care, nutrition information, and smoking cessation sessions to cervical cancer awareness education classes and treatment for diabetes and hypertension, which account for a majority of patients.

The clinic even allows patients to make appointments with specialists like a dietitian and an audiologist. Along with helping cure the sick, Christ Clinic seeks to educate patients on healthy living. It is a well-rounded clinic that also includes a class D pharmacy, which is able to provide prescribed medication at no cost to patients. “I appreciate that I can utilize the knowledge and skill of my nursing background to impact individual patients in healthy life choices,” says clinic volunteer Dee Oelfke, RN. “The outreach also supports community wholeness and health to the benefit of where I live.”

A Prescription for Success

Running a charitable clinic requires many dedicated volunteers. The clinic is comprised of doctors and nurses, as well as several administrative professionals. While there are a few paid part-time staff members, most of the clinical duties are accomplished by at least 50 volunteers a month. All of the doctors are strictly volunteering their time to ensure that each person who walks through the clinic doors gets the best care possible, regardless of their circumstances.

Debra Grigsby has worked as a registered nurse for over 30 years. She retired five years ago and currently volunteers one or two days a week at the clinic. "I feel like Jesus led me here," shares Grigsby. "I needed something to do and wanted to use my education and background. I didn't know where I was going, but I landed here. I love the patients and I feel like we are doing God's work here. It is an opportunity to give back to nursing, because nursing has been good to me." She knows that all patients have unique stories and are not in the situation of needing assistance because they want to be.

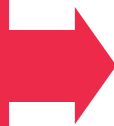
Christ Clinic reaches out to those in the Katy community who sometimes get overlooked. "Volunteering at Christ Clinic gives a meaningful purpose to my life," says Joyce Adams, a volunteer data specialist coordinator. "Helping Christ Clinic in its mission to serve others is so rewarding."

Helping Katyites Stay Healthy
 Keeping Christ Clinic running is truly an act of perseverance and faith. They are always in need of medical volunteers and supplies. Liz Bastien, a volunteer receptionist, knows from firsthand experience the life-saving role the clinic plays in patients' lives. "I had an accident and was found on the side of the road," she remembers. "Someone helped me that I did not know. I am here today because of it. We are helping at Christ Clinic, because we are all here to help each other; that is what a community does."

Every day, volunteers at Christ Clinic make a difference in the lives of Katy patients that won't soon be forgotten. Imagine what a difference we could all make if we had the heart of these volunteers, committed to helping others live fuller, healthier lives. **KM**



HEATHER LOWRIE is a freelance writer who is married to the love of her life. Together, they have three children. She enjoys encouraging others and was inspired by the volunteers at Christ Clinic and their compassionate care for patients.



Donate to Christ Clinic

The organization is always in need of the following:

- Cleaning supplies like rolls of napkins, disinfectant sprays, and wipes with bleach
- Ziplock bags of all sizes and trash bags
- Monetary donations to help offset operating expenses
- Medical volunteers

To learn more, visit **Christ Clinic** at 5504 First St., call **281-391-0190**, or go online to christclinnickaty.org.

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