
A Heart for Service: Confluence Health Honors Retiring Chaplain Scott Langager for 25 Years of Care and Compassion

Wenatchee, WA: Hospitals are well known as centers of care, where nurses, doctors, and other medical staff work to heal the injured and uplift the sick. But this need for care sometimes goes beyond healthcare and into the demands of the spirit and soul, for both patients and medical staff alike.

For over 25 years, Chaplain Scott Langager has been quietly and steadfastly serving as the bridge between these two realms of care, working alongside physicians, nurses, medical assistants, and others to provide counseling, spiritual guidance, or even just a friendly smile when most needed.

“We recruited Chaplain Scott from Fargo, North Dakota in December 1997. He was probably just trying to warm up,” remembered Tracey Kasnic, vice president of special projects at Confluence Health. “His plan was to only stay a few years and then go back to North Dakota, but here we are almost 26 years later. It became a running joke for several of us.”

Chaplain Scott didn’t just stick around but became an integral part in the care and service provided to patients and their families. For many years, until later joined by chaplain assistant Jamie Wilhite, he served alone, working at Central Washington Hospital (now Confluence Health Hospital – Central Campus) and for home care and hospice. Coming in at all hours of the day and night whenever called upon, Chaplain Scott was a hospital fixture for those receiving and providing patient care. Delivering countless funerals and memorial services for both patients and staff members alike, he even was asked to perform a few weddings along the way. Through it all, whatever the task required, his constant presence gave comfort and hope to those who needed it most.

While the needs of patients and their families might be the most readily recognizable role for a hospital chaplain, he often found staff and providers turning to him in times of need. The person someone could confide in when they couldn’t share their pain with others or let it show, he became known as a gentle and kind – but stalwart – rock in times of trouble.

During the pandemic, this need was magnified and his steady kindness all the more welcome to fill the deep need by staff and providers to have someone to listen, validate, and encourage them through the extreme stress that COVID-19 put the entire medical profession through for years.

“Having worked with Scott since he was hired, I had always enjoyed him as someone who really had a deep ability to listen, give a kind word, and, most of all, show compassion to absolutely everyone,” reflected Jackie Whited, a registered nurse working in utilization management for Confluence Health. “I’m not sure if he is aware of the impact he had on staff during the pandemic. They came to rely on his check-ins with them. Knowing he truly cared about their well-being made things just a bit easier for everyone.”

On Wednesday, July 26, staff held a retirement party for Chaplain Scott in the Confluence Health Hospital – Central Campus courtyard. Attended by a large group of current staff, former co-workers, and patients he helped along the way, the echoing impact of his quiet, steadfast care was felt in the laugh-filled swapping of stories, the joyful reunions of those with memories to share, and a feeling that the appreciation ran far deeper than any gathering could convey.

Though retiring, Scott Langager leaves a legacy not marked by the time in his role, but in the impact he had on the lives of those he met during his years of service.

“Chaplain Scott’s demeanor and compassion – as well as his steadfast listening ear to countless patients, their families, and hospital staff – has left a huge impact on our community where he has the reputation of being a gentle Dakota Norwegian,” remarked Ceci Wood, volunteer customer service manager for Confluence Health. “He has also been an integral part of our healthcare team, providing spiritual and emotional support to patients and families during their most difficult times. He has been a true pillar of strength and support, always willing to go above and beyond to ensure that those in need receive care and comfort by spending countless hours supporting every single person who has walked through our doors. He is our healthcare community’s very own Mister Rogers!”

About Confluence Health

Confluence Health serves the largest geographic region of any healthcare system in Washington State, covering over 12,000 square miles of Okanogan, Grant, Douglas, and Chelan counties. Confluence Health is one of only two locally-lead healthcare systems in the state with the purpose of maintaining availability and access to high-quality, cost-effective healthcare services for North Central Washington. The Confluence Health Board of Directors provides governance for Confluence Health and includes nine community board members and six physician board members.

For More Information

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