

00:21 - 04:32

Doug Bryant

Welcome to certify the podcast for advancing your career in care. I'm your host, Doug Bryant, and with me today is one of my favorite people in the entire world. And I always love when she gets to come on here, mainly because we get more clicks and views because everybody else loves her too. But this is Lavonda Cantrell, who is the Vice President of the Hillcrest Foundation. Hello. How are you?

Lavonda Cantrell

I'm good Doug. Thank you for having me again.

Doug Bryant

Yes. Wonderful. So we're going to talk about, the Hillcrest Foundation today. So tell everybody a little bit about the Hillcrest Foundation, why it was founded, and what the mission of the the foundation is.

Lavonda Cantrell

So the Hillcrest Foundation supports the many initiatives that Hillcrest Health Care has. And I'm so excited to share those with everyone you know. We are founded on the principle that everyone matters. And so a big part of Hillcrest and that mission is supporting individuals in a variety of ways.

So, for example, supporting, students in the community that may want to get their CNA license at the Mason Center for Healthcare Education. But, you know what? They can't afford to do that. So where we come in and we partner with the Mason Center for Healthcare Education, and so we help support those students. We break down barriers when it comes to financial, struggles or issues, and we provide them with opportunities.

Get their CNA license. We guarantee them job placement at one of our communities, and we pay for every bit of their, education and they in turn get an amazing career and job pathway. So that's just one example, you know, educational opportunities. The other opportunity as I like to talk about, just recognizing needs in the community.

You know, we partner with multiple hospitals in the area. The Office on Aging and different local nonprofits. And we communicate and talk with them about different issues that are, you know, they're they're struggling with. So, for example, we launched Hillcrest Health Care, found our Hillcrest transportation. I'm sorry. And because that was a need that our community was struggling with.

For seniors to be able to get access to affordable, quality transportation. So that's another way the foundation supports, you know, not only our own internal, residents and clients through Hillcrest at home, but we also are answering a need in the community to be able to step up to the plate, recognize a need, and be a solution focused.

And so the foundation supports those efforts. We have big events coming up. One right around the corner. Doug, I cannot believe it. We're on the countdown.

Doug Bryant
Yeah, that is soon.

Lavonda Cantrell
It is soon. We have the Knox Rox benefit concert, which is now the Knox Rox Rhythm Festival

Doug Bryant
Because, Lavonda, they can't do anything small. You have to take everything and blow it up, right?

Lavonda Cantrell
Yes, I do like that. Or you can say Lavon does a little extra, or she likes to make things extra sometimes. Yes. Well, you know, this is our sixth year, which is the other unbelievable thing. When we started planning, this event again this year, like, six years, we've been doing this.

And so we wanted to attract more folks and build excitement. And. Yes. So the festival this year will not only have one band, we have four bands. Oh, wow. I know, which is so exciting. So each band will play roughly 45 minute segment. We have Pistol Creek, which we're really excited about, out of Blount County.

Ed Harper, Bill and Carl will be joining the stage. They're actually going to kick off Knox Rox for us this year. And then we have weathered the Johnnies, which I hear are going to bring some 60s and 70s fun. And then Lavonda and the 865 bandits will be the headliner. So we're excited to play this year.

And the other really neat thing is that, we also select another local nonprofit to be the Knox Rox Impact Award winner. And this year, we are excited to announce that it is Random Acts of Flowers. So isn't that amazing? Yes.

Doug Bryant
Remind me a little bit about what they do, in case some of our listeners have never heard of them.

04:32 - 07:25
Lavonda Cantrell

Yeah, they they really. So they repurpose flowers from weddings or maybe even a funeral. They receive donations from even grocery stores. So that way, you know, flowers get thrown away if they cannot sell them, at the grocery store. And so they go round and they collect hundreds and hundreds of flowers and they repurpose those, make those into smaller bouquets, and they deliver those to skilled nursing communities like ours, assisted living hospitals.

And they just spread joy and love through and delivering floral bouquets that would otherwise just be thrown away. So they're making a big impact, and we are excited to share the proceeds from Knox Rocks this year with Random Acts of Flowers.

Doug Bryant

So really purchasing a ticket to Knox Rox Rhythm Festival is helping many in many ways in our community.

Lavonda Cantrell

Oh yes. Absolutely. Because of that, shared fundraising. Yes, absolutely. And again, this is our sixth year. So we always select another local nonprofit to share those proceeds. And so, you know, and and going back to the mission of the foundation, tying into the mission of Hillcrest is that, again, we want we're known to about giving back. We want to give back.

We have been serving this community for 65 years, which is hard to believe, too. We want to leave it a better place than how we found it. And what that means is that building relationships with other local nonprofits that, again, serve seniors and have the same mindset and mission driven focus that we do is that we want to support them.

And we've done a great job of that. You know, I think we've given away roughly over \$25,000 just through Knox Rox alone. And so, yeah, it's a lot. So it's really great. And I forgot to tell the date it's Saturday, April the 18th at 865 ax throwing from 5 to 9. And tickets are on sale now.

Doug Bryant

Which we will link the web address of where you can get those tickets, down in the show notes. And it's not just ticket sales that people have. You have merchandise.

Lavonda Cantrell

We do.

Mid-Roll

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Lavonda Cantrell

We pride ourselves on our fun merchandise. Every year we change it up so we have t shirts, sweatshirts, hats. We will also have a food vendor there, Two Coaches catering La La Lorraine boutique will be setting up. And so they'll get back a portion of their proceeds from this event as well.

07:25 - 12:18

Lavonda Cantrell

And we're really taking it talk about extra. We're really taking it to a whole new level this year because we have a VIP lounge. So what that means is I know you're like, what is she doing?

Doug Bryant

I know I'm, I'm I'm trying to figure out how this would work.

Doug Bryant

Okay. So the VIP lounge is a designated area for VIP ticket holders.

Lavonda Cantrell

So those tickets are \$100, though the VIP lounge will be in a 20-by-30 tent. They'll be special tea and beverages in there. And there'll be, a charcuterie board built for kings, displayed in there. And just a fun area to network and again at the event, but still be a part of the concert while it's going on.

So we're really excited about that. And VIP is get front row seating during the concert covered and supported by the TVA Federal Credit Union. So, we're really excited to be able to offer that this year. Again, another little element to take it to a new level. So a lot of partners that are coming together to help make this event.

Doug Bryant

And, you know, tickets are on sale now. It is on Saturday, April the 18th at 865 ax. And it's a great way for you listeners to be able to help out in many different ways. And that's that's one event you have coming up. Yes, but because of all the different things you do. And before we get into some of the other events, there's a story I wanted you to share a little bit about, that the Foundation was able to help with.

And it's, about the story of the lady who was out of town and needed was looking for placement closer. Can you tell a little bit about how the foundation was able to. And that's just a real life, true story of someone's life that was impacted by the mission of the Hillcrest Foundation?

Doug Bryant

Yes. And thank you, Doug, for kind of bringing me back to that point to share again the mission of it because I mentioned education, I mentioned transportation. But another focus area is, you know, our three skilled nursing communities where we offer rehabilitation and skilled nursing and hospice services. So we also support individuals who do not have the ability to pay for required health care services that they need that are detrimental to their health and well-being. So we had, a lady who was, at a different community in Chattanooga, from this area here in Knoxville had, a daughter at the time that was a senior in high school.

So here she was, you know, an hour, hour and a half away from her, and desperately wanted to get back to Knoxville. But she needed additional therapy services, and her insurance had maxed out. So she had no ability to pay for those, physical and occupational therapy. And so through her story and, through the foundation, we were able to actually pay for getting her from Chattanooga back to Knoxville.

We place her in our Beverly Park Health and rehab community. We pay for her to receive physical and occupational therapy, and was able to rehabilitate her, to get her not only back to Knoxville, but she is currently still living at home today in thriving and doing well. So that's a prime example of how, you know, had we not been there and, provided that ability for her to be able to get the care she needed, you know, I don't really even want to think about the outcome or what, where she would be today.

But we're impacting people's lives in a big way, and I'm honored to be a part of that, because that's really at the heart of everything that we do. No matter. Again, everyone matters. It doesn't matter your age. Your, your financial situation, you know, your, your what your needs are. We'll try to find a way to support you.

Doug Bryant

Yeah. And that's just one of the many stories that I even am aware of, you know, and listeners, if you are interested in some other stories of how the foundation has helped people, you can go back through our Certify It podcast and look at those, podcasts that highlight students that have attended classes here at the Mason Center. And the majority of those students were actually funded through the foundation to be able to come get those certifications that in many in many of those cases, you know, those people were either underemployed, and or needing new employment there.

They had been laid off from other, positions that had been outsourced or and they were just looking to change their career. And we've the foundation has actually really helped a lot of our students be able to change their life. Exactly. And the livelihood of their families. Exactly. Through the mission that that you all have now, it takes a lot of money to do what we're talking about.

12:16 - 17:32

Doug Bryant

Like, healthcare's not free. Education's not free. Right. And the Rhythm Festival is just one of many different events that we have throughout the year. So if our listeners are not able to attend on April the 18th, first off, you're not able to attend on April the 18th. You can still go to the foundation website and give a donation at any time you would like to do that?

Yes, just a small plug. Yeah. However, if you really would like to interact with Lavonda or some of the foundation board members or planning committee, at some of the events, tell us a little bit about some of the events that you have coming up. And there's a new one that we've never the Foundation has never done before that I'm very excited about.

Lavonda Cantrell

Yes. So our three, primary events are, the Knock Trucks Rhythm Festival. And we also have a golf tournament in October every year. This will be our seventh year again, which that's

unbelievable. And then we have our breakfast with the Grinch in December. The newest event that we are hosting, and this is in partnership with Alzheimer's Tennessee.

It will be in Blount County at the Capitol Theater on Thursday, August the 27th. And this is the memories and Miles Brian Tuggle comedy event. So this is a first. And of course, we'll have a comedian there with dinner, dinner and a show. And it's, honoring Brian Tuggle and the impact that he made, you know, in his time here with us, you know, helping us develop our Hillcrest at Home program, which now he lives in our Hillcrest transportation program, powered by Tuggle Transport.

And he was very, very involved with Alzheimer's Tennessee. So that's how we kind of came up with the name memories, you know, for Alzheimer's Tennessee. And the miles is the, Hillcrest toggle transport, portion of it. But we're really thrilled to be able to, offer that event something new, for everyone to join us and more details to come, but we're excited.

Doug Bryant

Well, the one thing I think that's really interesting about the foundation and and you've said it over and over today is, you know, when I ask you to come on and talk about the foundation, most of the time that's exactly where the conversation would go and the foundation would be what we're talking about the most. But I want everyone listening to understand and, and even go back and relisten to this and see how many times other organizations that are also trying to provide services in our community are mentioned, and how many times the Hillcrest Foundation is actually supporting them because, you know, random acts of Flowers is the recipient this year.

But last year there was a different nonprofit that Knox Paw's place. And then there was an adult daycare one year. So it really is if you by helping the Hillcrest Foundation, you're that whole thing you said about helping the community and wanting to help the community. I don't know of any better way to help the community than instead of trying to do something on your own, finding somebody that's doing something really well that is helpful and supporting them.

And Alzheimer's Tennessee at the comedy event coming up, it's something that even the foundation that's meant for people to give to is giving back. Yes. And that that should make everyone feel really good about donating their resources to that. Yes. And I just want to say a special thank you to the foundation, because the foundation is a great partner with the Mason Center for Health Care Education.

In fact, without them, we would not even be here. And if you need that story, go back to like episode 3 or 4, where we talked about how this whole health care education center came about. But thank you very much for for the passion that you have for not just, education, but for seniors and for, for Knox County.

We we just got out of a meeting where we were talking about this is exhausting work a lot of the times, but it can make you very emotional. Yeah. When you when you see how many different

things that the foundation touches and that we have a small part of that. Yes. And are able to help so many.

So thank you so much, Lavonda, for for coming out. Don't forget to get your tickets. They are available now. You can see that link down in the show notes. April the 18th at eight, six, five acts from 5 to 9. And I'm sure there's probably a lot of VIPs that want to be in that lounge that are listening to me, that want to grab up those tickets.

Lavonda Cantrell

Yes, they do so limited, limited ticket.

Doug Bryant

So thank you so much and thank you for listening. This has been certified by the podcast for advancing your career and care.