



Five Points of Hope ★ P.O. Box 583 ★ Milford, Michigan

A press release from Five Points of Hope

For Immediate Release

Furniture Giant Art Van Launches Tiny Milford-Based Cancer Charity

MILFORD, Mich., May 1, 2018 - One of Michigan's largest retailers, Art Van Furniture, is lending its name to what may very well be the state's smallest cancer charity, nonprofit Five Points of Hope, in a fundraising campaign that starts today (May 1st). If the small Michigan cancer charity wins the challenge, it could help Five Points of Hope nearly double the number of patients it can help over the next year, according to charity Founder and President Erin Welsh.

The 2018 Art Van Charity Challenge is a friendly fundraising competition, sponsored by the furniture giant, where charities compete to raise the most money with the top teams winning grand prize donations from Art Van. Five Points of Hope, based in Milford and benefiting cancer patients since 2001, will be competing for the grand prize among 49 smaller "Tier 2" charities in the Charity Challenge, all with operating budgets of less than \$500,000. Five Points of Hope is on the small side of that spectrum, with an annual operating budget of under \$70,000. Despite that small budget, it awarded \$51,371 in financial assistance to 118 Michigan cancer patients in 2017.

"If we win the Charity Challenge, and we think we can, we can nearly double the number of cancer patients we help in 2018, so this is a really big deal to Five Points of Hope," Welsh said. "If we lose, we still win really big in a number of ways. First we get to keep all

of the money we raise from our supporters. Secondly, we gain visibility throughout the region, on the wings of Art Van Furniture, as a charity that is making hope happen.”

The public can donate to Five Points of Hope in the Art Van Charity Challenge by going directly to their donation page at <https://www.crowdrise.com/o/en/campaign/five-points-of-hope-avcc2018>. Or, supporters can go to www.FivePointsofHope.com and click on the Art Van link. In order for charitable contributions to count in the Art Van competition, the donations must be made through the CrowdRise platform provided by Art Van. Donations of \$10 and up to \$10,000 count toward the competition and Art Van will award cash prizes to the top five charities in fundraising totals. First place receives \$50,000; second place receives \$25,000; and third, fourth and fifth place finishers receive \$10,000. The contest ends at 2 p.m. May 22nd.

Five Points of Hope is on a roll, having just last week won a second place prize of \$5,000 in the Community Financial Credit Union “Thumbs Up for Charity” contest. The Michigan credit union asked the public to cast votes among five nominated charities, including Five Points of Hope, and awarded cash donations to each, based upon the popular vote.

These corporate dollars are important to Five Points of Hope, because the number of cancer patients needing financial help is on the rise and the charity receives more requests for assistance than it can meet, said Welsh. She founded the charity in 2001 in memory of her father, Michael McCusker, who died of cancer in 1999 and in celebration of life for a family friend, Beth, who is a cancer survivor. “The more our charity becomes known, the more requests we get for financial assistance, and we are limited by how much money we can make from golf outings, Euchre tournaments and bake sales.” The charity, she said, serves all cancer patients throughout the state of Michigan, but due to logistics has primarily done the bulk of its fundraising in a small radius of Milford where the charity is headquartered. “If we are to continue doing our good work, we are at a point as a charity where we desperately need corporate backing and family foundations to support us.”

The charity’s corporate relations coordinator, Alison Ellis-Burtrum, said the cost of cancer treatment is skyrocketing, going from about \$10,000 per patient per year in the year 2005 to a price tag today that is closer \$100,000 per patient per year. Quoting data she

collected from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, she said medical debt is the single most common reason for Americans to be contacted by a debt collector.

“By and large, the largest number of Michigan residents who receive our financial assistance actually have medical insurance, but their out-of-pocket expenses are so high that they cannot afford their illness,” Ellis-Burtrum said. “Adding to that problem is the harsh statistic that 44 percent of American households say they cannot come up with a mere \$400 in an emergency,” she added, quoting the most recent Report on the Economic Well-Being of US Households, which is an annual survey conducted by the Federal Reserve Board.

Illustrating that data, Ellis-Burtrum added, “Just two weeks ago we helped a Michigan cancer patient avoid eviction from their apartment by paying their rent.”

Five Points of Hope is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) that is based in Milford and raises money exclusively for Michigan cancer patients in financial crisis. Social workers, on behalf of a patient, may request a grant of funds for a need that is unaffordable but necessary. Grants do not exceed \$500 per patient, per year, and provide financial assistance for expenses such as insurance deductibles, medical equipment, prescriptions and utility bills. When issuing a grant, Five Points of Hope pays billing vendors directly on behalf of patients. Five Points of Hope began raising money for a cancer care fund in 2001 in the living room of Welsh’s home. The organization achieved non-profit status in 2007 and continues to be operated entirely by volunteers with no paid staff, thus maximizing funds for patient benefit.

Here is a list of the charity’s 2018 fundraisers:

- ***Eat and Earn*** at the Comeback Inn in Highland on February 22nd.
- ***Fitness for Hope*** at Highland Fit Body Boot Camp on March 3rd.
- ***Painting with a Purpose*** at Painting with a Twist in Wixom on March 21st.
- ***Community Financial Credit Union “Thumbs Up for Charity”*** starting April 9th and ending at 5 p.m. April 20th at www.cfcu.org.
- ***Ninja Warrior Fun Night*** at The Edge Training Center in Commerce Township on April 14th.
- ***Euchre for Hope*** at the Milford American Legion Post 216 on April 21st.
- ***Art Van Charity Challenge*** from May 1st – May 22nd at <https://www.crowdrise.com/five-points-of-hope-avcc2018>.
- ***Golf for Hope*** at Brentwood Golf Club in White Lake Township on May 19th.
- ***Shop ‘Til You Drop*** during the week of June 2nd-9th.
- ***A Night to Remember*** at Edgewood Country Club in Commerce on Nov. 2nd.

For more information about Five Points of Hope, go to www.fivepointsofhope.com.

About Art Van Furniture, LLC.

Art Van furniture, LLC is the Midwest's No. 1 furniture and mattress retailer with 184 stores in nine states operating under the following brands; Art Van Furniture, Art Van PureSleep, Art Van Flooring, Scott Shuptrine Interiors, Levin Furniture, Levin Mattress, Wolf Furniture and Gardiner Wolf Furniture. Founded in 1959, the company is headquartered in Warren, Mich. Art Van Furniture owned by Thomas H. Lee Partners, L.P. of Boston. Visit artvan.com for more information.

ABOUT CROWDRISE.

CrowdRise is the world's largest crowdfunding platform dedicated exclusively to charitable fundraising. Used by millions of individuals, tens of thousands of charities, hundreds of companies and many of the most famous artists and athletes in the world, CrowdRise enables people to creatively leverage their resources and networks to unlock the power of the crowd to support positive social missions and create massive impact.

Founded by actor Edward Norton, film producer Shauna Robertson and Robert and Jeffrey Wolfe, CrowdRise has conceived, implemented and powered campaigns that have raised hundreds of millions of dollars to date. For more information visit www.CrowdRise.com. In January 2017, CrowdRise merged with GoFundMe to offer both people and organizations the best fundraising tools for any cause they care passionately about.

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