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Finalist | Physicians Dr. Matt German

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BRIAN CASSIDY
Dr. Matt German

It is not uncommon to be out to dinner with Dr. Matt German of St. Luke's Hospital and have his cell phone ring. What is uncommon is that many times it is one of his patients. "I feel better knowing my patients can get in touch with me at any time," German said. "You can't be cavalier with anyone's life."

German, 48, is an infectious disease specialist with St. Luke's Hospital and an active supporter of [Food Outreach](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing healthy, well-balanced meals and nutrition counseling to those with HIV/AIDS and cancer. German's annual Friends for Life

Music Festival has raised \$185,341 for the organization over the past six years, including this year's event. Not your usual stuffy, black-tie fundraiser, German's event features lively music, an auction (German even donates his famous turkey dinner, personally cooked at the highest bidder's home) and a spread of great food donated by local restaurants.

The fundraiser has become so popular that it outgrew its previous space at Bar Italia, and the Sept. 27 event was held at Lucas School House to accommodate the nearly 400 attendees expected.

"Matt is so impassioned, very approachable and has great energy," said Greg Lukeman, executive director of Food Outreach. "No one is a stranger to Matt, and he makes sure that patients receive what they need beyond the traditional medical care, even helping them find housing if necessary." Many times German serves as a family figure to those whose families have turned away from them because of their HIV-positive status. German's fundraisers have become especially critical to Food Outreach due to recent governmental budget cuts and a 15 percent increase in clients. "We've never turned anyone away," Lukeman said. "Matt takes the reins and calls in a lot of favors for Food Outreach that make our mission possible."