

RENEWAL

A POAH MIDWEST NEWSLETTER



From the POAH Midwest Office

Friends: Let me introduce myself — For the past decade I have worked — first in Woodlawn and now across POAH's portfolio — with the people who live in our housing and with the people who live and work nearby.

My job — my passion — is connecting with people and community. We create opportunities for residents, certainly, but we also work to connect our residents and communities to the surrounding neighborhoods. For us, providing housing is but one part of the mission.

Needless to say, these past 18 months have been challenging. But for us at POAH they also have been times of new lessons learned and relationships built.

Despite in-person restrictions, we were able to keep in touch with residents, doing more than 5,000 wellness calls and serving more than 600 meals weekly. We also provided employment and rental assistance help, along with workshops on literacy and skill-building for those whose work status changed during the pandemic. This work also helped keep people engaged with us and with each other.

Understanding and experiencing the isolation that the pandemic has imposed on people, creating community wherever possible has been more important than ever to us. From youth to seniors, we have conducted numerous activities — summer gatherings, back-to-school events, bingo and other fun, safe activities. We also offered vaccination clinics at a number of properties.

All this is to say — what many already know — at POAH we are concerned with the well-being not only of the buildings in our portfolio but with the well-being of all who choose to reside with us.

Because we believe investing in human capital is as important as investing in bricks and mortar, if not more important, we want to be more than an owner/manager. Like the people who live with us and near us, we are a community stakeholder with long-term commitments to neighborhoods. This focus took root during our work in Woodlawn, and now informs what we do across the 12 states where we work.

As we move forward, the lessons learned during the pandemic will continue to be intricately woven into the fabric of our work. But both building community and ensuring opportunities for people will be an ever-deeper part of our work. And as we go forward, we welcome your ideas, your friendship, and your partnership.

Felicia Dawson

— Felicia Dawson

Vice President, Strategic Partnerships
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