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New Board Member Brings Business and Senior Services Expertise to Role



Mitchell Abrams

Like AgeOptions, Mitchell Abrams works to help older adults stay independent in their own homes. His company, Homewatch CareGivers, assists elders and their families to identify needs and find resources and providers of services such as home care, companion care and meals.

Mitch, who joined the AgeOptions Board of Directors last November, is managing director and president of the North Shore office of the national provider of in-home care services. He points out both a distinction and similarities between his clientele and the AgeOptions client base.

Homewatch CareGivers serves an affluent North Shore clientele residing along the lakefront from Lake Forest to the Gold Coast. While their circumstances may differ from most of the older adults AgeOptions serves, Mitch points out that the individuals and families he works with need the same kinds of services and assistance in connecting to them. "People who have the financial wherewithal to pay for services privately are still struggling with the same issues the AgeOptions community has," he says.

He believes his experience can be leveraged to be useful to AgeOptions clients, and vice versa. "I'd like to deploy my senior care knowledge and the skill set I've acquired over the last decade in the private sector and utilize that with AgeOptions and the diverse group of people it serves," he says. "No doubt there is a wealth of information I probably can learn from this more public arena and bring that back to our client base."

Mitch had a long corporate career before joining Homewatch CareGivers in 2009, a change that ultimately led him to AgeOptions. “The opportunity to go out and make a difference in someone’s life is a really big deal,” he says. “I spent decades in corporate America as an executive and while we brought significant value to the corporation and shareholders, I did not get a lot of hugs or people saying ‘I don’t know what I would do without you.’”

He did get that positive feeling during the seven years he was on the Board of Directors of Maot Chitim, a nonprofit that provides holiday dinners for people with lower incomes and those isolated from their families. “Working with 1,000-plus volunteers and feeding 5,000 people on the holidays – that had a huge impact on me, and my children established a strong understanding and belief in the value of volunteerism,” he says.

In addition to Maot Chitim, his volunteer service includes serving as a commissioner on the Northbrook Senior Service Commission and leading the Board of Directors of the Elder Services Network of Chicago.

Chicago born and raised, Mitch received a Bachelor of Science degree in finance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Master’s of Business Administration from DePaul University in Chicago. He was senior vice president of Sales and Business Development with DMX Music, managing partner at TV Consulting Group and held multiple positions including executive director of Global Accounts at MCI Communications. He has received numerous awards for his leadership and business success at Homewatch CareGivers.

He became aware of AgeOptions through North Shore Senior Center. “I realized AgeOptions was doing things I had a desire to enhance,” he says. “It would be great to take some of my business knowledge and experience and bring it to our client base. I have decades of experience focusing on the bottom line; however it’s time for me to use my skills in support of those in need of services, which is a much larger group of older persons.”

He’s putting his expertise to use as a member of the Board’s Business Strategy Committee and he sees the state’s financial environment as a challenge to the older adult community. “There are so many places where we see the impact of these exceedingly beneficial programs and my business background is something of value that I can incorporate in my role at AgeOptions,” he says.