



CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Issue 4

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Vol. 1



WHAT'S INSIDE

• Employee Wellness	2
<i>National Minority Health Month, COVID-19 Updates, Uncovering Hope</i>	
• Community Day Services	3
<i>The GRACE Project, McAuley, and GRACEful Living Highlights</i>	
• HR and Staff Development	4-5
<i>PHI e-Booster, Creating Solutions, Lead Job Coach, Fit for Success, Anti-Harassment</i>	
• Information Technology (IT)	6
<i>AWARDS Goes Live, Keeping Misericordia Safe</i>	
• Monthly Recognitions	7
<i>Staff Spotlights, Anniversaries, Warm Welcomes, Look Who's on the Move</i>	

Left: Meghan O. of Kaperl Home, releasing bubbles during our campus-wide COVID memorial ceremony. To see pictures of this beautiful event, [click here](#). **Above:** Misericordia's newest group of employees! See **page 7** to learn their names!

A MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE

As I reflect upon this last year, I feel so many emotions: sadness over so many losses of people, experiences, and connections; fear of the what the future holds; anxiety over if or when we will ever get back to "normal". But all of those feelings are eased when I think about all of our staff, all of YOU who have been here each and every day, and then I am filled with tremendous gratitude. We all faced the unknown together and we are stronger for it. You know the residents need you, and you are here for them each and every day. Thank you not only to those providing direct care, but also for the support services that make the magic of Misericordia happen every day. You are brave, you are strong, and I am humbled to be able to work along side you. Thank you for all that you do each and every day.

With my deepest appreciation,

Chris Krackenberger, Residential Administrator

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

• Bank of America Chicago Marathon	2
• Occupational Therapy Month	6



COVID-19 UPDATES

All staff should have received the email regarding the new guidelines for CMS and IDPH. These include:

- Weekly COVID testing of staff who have contact with residents
- Wearing proper eye protection in residential areas
- Wearing N95/KN95 or surgical/disposable masks in residential areas.

Please talk to your supervisor if you have additional questions.

Still searching for available vaccination clinics for yourself or your loved ones? [Click here](#) to find vaccinations sites for Illinois residents living near Indiana. You can also visit [VaccineFinder.org](#). **Please note:** After you receive your vaccine, you must inform HR and give a copy of your card to your supervisor.

PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH



True or False? (Answers Below):

1. The first sign of Parkinson's disease starts with a tremor.
2. Parkinson's disease only affects senior citizens.
3. Knowing if you have a genetic link to Parkinson's can help tell if your children might develop the disease.

In recognition of Parkinson's Awareness Month, the Parkinson's Foundation developed the **#KnowMorePD quiz**. [Click here](#) to test your knowledge of the disease. Additional information can be found [here](#).

1. False; 2. False; 3. True

UNCOVERING HOPE

We have decided that we will continue to offer our **Uncovering Hope** support group due to the feedback that we received from the sessions that were held last month. This support group will provide a space for you to share how the pandemic has impacted you and how you have coped with the challenges. While this is not therapy and should not be used in lieu of seeking out individual therapy, this time is offered for giving and receiving support among peers. The next session will be offered on **Thursday, April 22nd at 10:00 AM** in the Lois Gates Courtyard Inn. Please see your supervisor if you are interested.

*"I have been in the Village for 5 years working as a DSP. I attended the **Uncovering Hope** support group, and it was phenomenal! I found it to be extremely beneficial, encouraging, and a healing experience. I really believe a lot more staff would benefit from groups like this!" —Shannon Vidra*

MINORITY HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Courtesy of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Offices of Minority Health

April is National Minority Health Month, and this year, the HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH) is focusing on the disproportionate impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on racial and ethnic minority communities. To learn about their initiatives and read more topics related to National Minority Health Month, [click here](#).

MISERICORDIA IS PROUD TO BE A CHARITY PARTNER FOR THE 2021 BANK OF AMERICA CHICAGO MARATHON



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2021

Don't miss your opportunity to be guaranteed a spot in the Chicago Marathon and go the extra mile for Misericordia! The deadline to register as a charity runner is May 31, 2021. Runners commit to raising \$1,750.

Choose Misericordia as your charity and be part of the Heartracers! Our team grows bigger every year and is up to 75 runners! If you are interested in joining the team or need additional information, please contact Martha Floberg, Development Officer at 773-273-4125 marthaf@misericordia.com.

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



THE GRACE PROJECT

The GRACE project is a training program designed to teach staff to support people as they grow older. This program has been around for ten years, and in that time, our body of knowledge about people who are aging with developmental disabilities has increased. As a result of the tremendous progress in research around this subject, the GRACE project is being updated. It will consist of a 40-hour online training, along with approximately 80 hours of on-the-job training.

The GRACE development team will consist of Misericordia staff who will participate as directors, writers, and content experts. While we remain in the early stages of this project, we look forward to releasing a finished product around November 2022.

CURRENT ON KNOWLEDGE OWL

Knowledge Owl is a collection of curricula intended for in person and virtual learning. Contact lukasw@misericordia.com for the account information needed to access fun activities like, "Paint & Sip Party" and "Learn to Sign ASL Colors." This incredible resource is available to all Misericordia staff to be used in any environment!

APRIL COMMUNITY DAY SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS FROM GRACEFUL LIVING & MCAULEY



John G. of Walsh Home, holding the Tree of Thanks on Thankful Tuesdays.



Patty O. of Carr Home making macaroni. Residents in Carr Home doing a color waving exercise.



Svitlan M. and Andy D. watering spring plants in McAuley.



David D. enjoying McAuley's mobile Smart Board.

*Formerly referred to as Developmental Training, Community Day Services (CDS) is a program that focuses on the development and enhancement of daily adaptive living skills, economic self-sufficiency, greater independences and personal choices of people with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. Misericordia's CDS branches of education and vocational training include Lifelong Learning, GRACEful Living, PEP, Community Access, MisWorks, HeART Studios, Beyond Boundaries, Learning in Motion, and McAuley. To learn about the CDS programs at Misericordia, [click here](#).



ANTI-HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

In compliance with Title VII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act, Misericordia maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual harassment of all members of our organization. We strongly advise you to [click here](#) to read our Anti-Harassment manual. For additional information related to anti-harassment and assault prevention and healing, [click here](#) to visit the Sexual Assault Awareness Month website.

PHI E-BOOSTER

We are excited to introduce a new PHI e-Booster video series called ***Building the Coaching Habit***, based on the best-selling book ***The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More & Change the Way You Lead Forever*** by Michael Bungay Stainer. We hope these 3-4 minute videos will help you think about ways to incorporate coaching communication skills into your everyday habits. The videos will build on the skills that we introduced in previous live PHI training, however, you do not need to have participated in PHI training to benefit.

Solid communication skills help us build strong teams and lead to better outcomes for the residents. [Click here](#) to watch our e-Booster and take a few minutes to think about how you can build positive habits that will help us create the supportive workplace culture that we all desire!

CREATING SOLUTIONS

As we continue to review and analyze the input from our diversity and inclusion discussion sessions, one of the immediate actions that we are implementing is finding opportunities for staff to be a part of solutions. We heard you when you said that we need to look at our retention and better understand how we can strive to retain our quality employees. As a first step, we will be forming four separate teams to create solutions around retention and engagement:

Team 1: "Getting Here" will look at how we attract quality candidates.

Team 2: "Getting Connected" will include looking at how to help new employees get connected to the mission, the residents, families, and their teams in their first 0-3 months.

Team 3: "Staying Here" will involve looking at the 3-6-month experience of the new employees and how to bridge the team between training and the work culture.

Team 4: "Growing Here" will explore opportunities for growth experiences for all employees. For this first "opportunities for input" experience, we have selected employees that have expressed an interest in development or who have expressed a desire to be a part of the solutions.

Thank you to our team representatives. [Click here](#) to see who they are. If you are interested in future work to develop solutions, please see your administrator as there will be many more opportunities! Please stay tuned!

MISERICORDIA RETIREMENT PLANNING: SAVE THE DATE

Date: 4/28/2021

Time: 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Location: Webinar

[Click here](#) for more details!



FIT FOR SUCCESS

ATTENTION ALL DSPs & CNAs

Misericordia is excited to announce a new program for DSPs and CNAs to build a meaningful and successful career with us. These new learning opportunities offer an experience unlike any other.

Learn more about yourself and your work style through interactive hands-on sessions to help you turn your personal insights into personal success. For more information, please [click here](#).

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION FOCUS GROUP

In an effort to enhance our agency's work in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion, we are looking to create a resident curriculum. As such, Misericordia, Trinity Services and Orchard Village are working together with an outside consultant to develop a curriculum to increase the awareness and knowledge in this area for our residents. We are seeking 3 volunteers to participate in a one-hour session to help us determine what training should be included for our residents. We will be holding focus groups that will include staff from Trinity Services and Orchard Village on **Monday May 3 at 3:30 PM and Tuesday May 4 at 10:00 AM** and would like your input. You know the clients best and we want to hear your thoughts. Please contact tiffanyj@misericordia.com by April 26th if you are interested in participating.

We look forward to hearing and learning from you!



(Some pictures were taken pre-COVID.)

"I like being there to help and being that person who gives support to new staff so they don't feel lost. When I started I would have really appreciated having that one person to check in with me every week."

—Jenitra M., Village LJC

"I like being able to set an example for new employees by showing them that our residents deserve the highest level care."

—Kevin M., McAuley LJC

"What I liked about being a job coach was teaching new people and helping them learn to be confident in their skills."

—Jerome B., former Village LJC, now Village Supervisor

WORK PROFILE: LEAD JOB COACH

There seems to be some buzz around one of our newer opportunities for DSPs and CNAs. The Lead Job Coach (LJC) position was created in 2020 in an effort to create an opportunity for staff to grow and take on more responsibility while making a positive impact on retention. **We have 19 employees who are currently Lead Job Coaches.** These staff are working with our new employees throughout the first year of their employment. We all know that learning does not end after the shadow days do and it is important for all of us to participate in helping our new DSPs and CNAs to be successful.

Every area's Support Team is comprised of Directors, Supervisors, QIDPs Managers, Job Coaches and DSPs/CNAs. The Lead Job Coach, in conjunction with the area Support Teams, is instrumental in providing guidance and coaching to new staff during their training period and throughout their first year of employment at Misericordia. We see this mentorship as a way to help new DSPs/CNAs get to know the residents and become active and effective team members, resulting in a more supportive and engaged work environment. Lead Job Coaches build on what the Job Coaches start during the week of shadow days once training is completed by providing additional support and structure, it is a team effort!

We anticipate that this opportunity will be posted again in the near future and will allow us to further strengthen our teams, support our new employees and help to retain our talented staff.

ADDITIONAL JOB POSTINGS & RECRUITMENT

To learn about current job openings, email careers@misericordia.com, check your local time clock, or visit us in HR. Job postings may also appear in the **Campus Connections** weekly email updates.

Be sure to tell your friends and loved ones about our openings!

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



KEEPING MISERICORDIA SAFE

Misericordia staff receive phishing emails every day. Phishing emails are emails intended to trick you into providing access to files and information. These emails are designed to fool you. The goal is to get you to give them information (e.g., passwords, credit card numbers). Don't be fooled. Be very careful if an email:

- Is urgent and needs your immediate response
- You don't normally get emails from this person
- They ask you to review a file (like an invoice) and you don't usually do this.
- If you are asked for login/passwords after opening the file or clicking a link.

When in doubt, contact IT@Misericordia.com.

FOOTHOLD'S AWARDS GOES LIVE

AWARDS went live for Shannon Apartments and CILAs on April 1st. These two locations were chosen to help identify any issues and challenges with the system before we move on to other homes.

As with any new system, there have been a few unexpected issues and surprises. What is not surprising is the dedication and commitment these staff members have demonstrated during this rollout. They have helped identify gaps and missing training as well as create new training guides, helped train the next staff and solved problems

There is work yet to be done but the AWARDS team has done a great job and we are off to a great start.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY MONTH



The Misericordia OT Team (Clockwise):
Leah M. (OT for Shannon Apartments, McGowan, Mercy Glen, and Quinlan); Jill S. (OT for McAuley and campus-wide wheelchair-related concerns); Stephanie H. (certified occupational therapy assistant for McAuley); Jenna C. (OT for Rosemary Connelly, the Marian Center, the Village, and the CILAs).

April is Occupational Therapy Month! Occupational Therapists (OTs) help people across their lifespans participate in the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. OTs specialize in helping residents with *activities of daily living (ADLs)*, such as bathing, toileting, dressing, and eating, as well as *instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)*, such as shopping, meal prep, medication management, and housework. They also provide expert support with social participation, education, work, play, leisure, and rest and sleep.

Currently, the OTs at Misericordia see cohorts on a weekly basis for assessments, staff in-services, and 5-year evaluations. They also host fun virtual sessions for all residents and staff to attend. Check out *Leah & Jenna's* occupational therapy group on Zoom, every Tuesday at 11:15 AM. To join, use meeting ID: 847 9355 8114 and passcode: fun. Sessions involve social skills, exercises, and dance parties.

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



STAFF SPOTLIGHTS



Posted weekly on Facebook, **Staff Spotlights** acknowledge and celebrate the hard work and uniqueness of the individuals who help make us #MisericordiaStrong. Our recent **Staff Spotlights** include:

Nina Martinez - Housekeeper

Laura Schulz - Community Day Services Trainer

Greg Wagner - Plumber

Get to know them by clicking the underlined names above. You can also scroll the Misericordia [Facebook](#) page to see our previous Spotlights.

LOOK WHO'S ON THE MOVE

- **Jerome Button** former DSP/Lead Job Coach in the Village, now AM Supervisor in the Village
- **Richard Chapman** former Residential Manager in the Village, now Residential Manager/Relief Supervisor in the Village
- **Frederick Jones** former Housekeeping staff, now Kitchen Aide in Food Services
- **Caitlin McKay** former QIDP Asst in the Village, now QIDP in the Village
- **Thomas McManus** former BSP in Behavior Therapy, now QIDP in the Village
- **Ashley Meeker** former Lead QIDP in the Village, now Director in the Village
- **Isaiah Newport** former DSP in the Village, now QIDP Asst in the Village
- **Jessica Potas-Biewer** former Staff Development Staff Trainer, now Training and Development Coordinator in Staff Development
- **Carmen Gonzalez** former DSP in the CILAs now BSP in the CILAs
- **Kelly Sheehy** former DSP in Shannon Apt. now CDS Instructor in CDS

WELCOME NEW STAFF

- **Mary Beth Lydon** (Community Day Services)
- **Shaconda Clemons** (Marian Center)
- **Danielle Geronimo** (Mercy Glen)
- **Brittani Thompson** (Rosemary Connally)
- **Megan Wortel** (Rosemary Connally)
- **Brittinay Keys** (Quinlan Terrace)
- **Cynthia Villegas** (Village)
- **Chloe Wells** (Village)



WELCOME ROBYN SHIMMIN



Fun Robyn Facts:

- Collects antiques
- Lived in Boston, MA and Providence, RI
- Owns a Pug and a Jack Russell Terrier

Robyn recently joined Misericordia's Personal Effectiveness Program (PEP) as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). She will work to help residents increase their communication and adaptive behavior skills. While she can only implement programs for individuals on her caseload, she serves as a resource for a general behavior consultation. We look forward to the support and knowledge she will share with us!

WELCOME ISABELLA Z.



Meet Isabella, McAuley's newest resident. Isabella goes by Birdie and Bella, and she enjoys laughing and interacting with all people.

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 37 Barb Benkin
- 32 Mary Anne Fallon
- 28 Leslie Burgard
- 22 Marjorie Neal
- 20 Lela Perez, Tammie Townsel, Dave Rustile
- 19 Norma Cabunacan, Jenny Leszczynski
- 14 Keewandas Johnson
- 13 Sharon Neumann
- 12 Andrea Newson, George Lim
- 11 Tamara Beeler, Denise Bradley, Rachel Kalom
- 10 Shantel Walker, Erica Lopez
- Chris Siefer, Rebecca Muzemil
- 8 Amanda Uychoco, Jaxon Lindars
- 7 Nancy Lopez, Wilson Gonzalez
- 6 Lonna Davis, Delphine Behrmann
- 5 OUtreyia Alshamaq, Yawoavi Akotsu
- 4 Febeia Heard, Tamika Martin, Jerome Button
- Desireee Rogers Naja Ross
- 3 Oluwasegun Adebayo, Robert Button, Yessenia Diaz, Staci Martinez
- Antjonae Williams-Dumas, Christina Ann Marroquin, Katarina Sucic
- 2 Kevin Rahlfis, Lena Rutledge
- 1 Jessica Bahena, Scott Thompson, Samantha Vera
- Crystal Hicks, Kristen Murray, Keziah Paz

IN MEMORIAM



Our Misericordia community feels deeply saddened by the loss of **Joel Manko**, a Direct Service Professional from Mercy Glen. We give our condolences to all of his loved ones.

Stay tuned for weekly **Campus Connections** updates sent via email. You can also find previous issues of **Campus Connections** in **ADP**. Please reach out to tiffanyj@misericordia.com if you have issues accessing the newsletter or you would like to contribute to future issues.