

2010

Leadership aahsa

Transformational

Learning in Action




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First**

Leadership AAHSA



Class of 2010



Welcome to the Leadership AAHSA Class of 2010



LARRY MINNIX

How do you define leadership?

In Leadership Without Easy Answers, Harvard professor Ron Heifitz suggests that instead of defining leadership as a position of authority or as a personal set of characteristics, “we may find it a great deal more useful to define leadership as an activity...the activity of a citizen from any walk of life mobilizing people to do something.”

The participation of the 32 Fellows in the rigorous, year-long Leadership AAHSA program speaks volumes to their understanding and practice of what leadership really is as well as their sincere commitment to mobilize themselves and their peers on behalf of those we all serve. At the conclusion of their year together, these Fellows are poised to continue their journey, together, to create the future of aging services.

This publication catalogues and celebrates the culmination of a year’s worth of engagement, exploration and transformation through the process of their **Action Learning Projects**. It serves as the public manifestation of their learning and demonstrates that a new generation is committed to the most pressing challenges that lie ahead for our field.

I would like to personally thank this year’s Leadership AAHSA Fellows and their supporting organizations for contributing to the program’s ongoing success. The Fellows’ passion for their projects and the learning they acquired and imparted while in the program underscores their unique leadership gifts and potential.

Thank you, Fellows, for leading the transformation of aging services!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Larry', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end.

William L. Minnix, Jr.
AAHSA President & CEO

AAHSA extends deep appreciation to the following individuals and organizations that helped to sustain the Leadership AAHSA program. This groundbreaking endeavor would not be possible without their ongoing support.

Individuals*

Matthew Anderson
Rye, NY

Alex Candella
Pleasanton, CA

Renee Cisewski
Elburn, IL

Christina De La Torre
Los Angeles, CA

John Diffey
Kennett Square, PA

Robert Engle
Aurora, OR

Greg Garrett
Oakland, CA

Sandra Jo MacWilliam
Rochester, NY

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Larry Minnix
Washington, D.C.

Roger Myers
Southfield, MI

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Plantsville, CT

Gary Puma
Princeton, NJ

Jane Shukitis
Rochester, NY

Michael Smith
Plantsville, CT

Lynn Szender
Lake Oswego, OR

Donna Taylor
Youngtown, AZ

Ruth Tietz
Scotia, NY

Organizations*

Alzheimer's
Resource Center of
Connecticut, Inc.

Plantsville, CT
American Baptist
Homes of the West
Pleasanton, CA
Bethesda Health
Group, Inc.
St. Louis, MO

Covenant Retirement
Communities

Skokie, IL
Presbyterian Villages
of Michigan
Southfield, MI
St. Andrew's
Resources
for Seniors
St. Louis, MO

Saint Mary's Home of
Erie Saint Mary's at
Asbury Ridge

Erie, PA
Suncoast Hospice
Clearwater, FL
Tacoma Lutheran
Home and Retirement
Community
Tacoma, WA

* As of September 2010

Donations to Leadership AAHSA help sustain the program and provide scholarships for future Fellows. For information about how to donate to Leadership AAHSA contact (202) 508-9460.





A Transformational Year

Leadership AAHSA is
created around
Three Core Ideas:

1

Transformational leadership

Leadership that elevates
the aspirations and
performance of organizations

2

Person-directedness

A focus on the wellbeing
of the individual person
we serve as well as the
individual staff member
who provides that service

3

Innovation

Changes at every level
that create new ways of
providing value

2010 Leadership AAHSA Class Year

Our year-long curriculum, including site visits, theory, readings and exercises, build on these three ideas. The following is a snapshot of the 2010 Leadership AAHSA class year.



**VASSAR
BYRD**

Leading from the Mind and Spirit

November 8 – 12, 2009

In conjunction with the AAHSA
Annual Meeting & Exposition
Chicago, IL

Site visits: *Mather's More Than a Café*
and *The British Home*

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**DEANN
ESCALANTE**

Building Networks and Partnerships

February 20 – 24, 2010

In conjunction with the AAHSA Future of
Aging Services Conference



JEREMY
NEELY

Creating Home – The Heart and Science of Culture Change

April 21 – 23, 2010

Cleveland, OH

Site visits: *Eliza Bryant Village* and
A. M. McGregor Home



DENISE
GANNON

Sustaining an Ethic of Caring and Service

July 7 – 9, 2010

Minneapolis, MN

Site visits: *Ecumen* and *Presbyterian Homes and Services*



KAY
KALLANDER

Passing it On – A Lifetime of Leadership

October 31 – November 3, 2010

In conjunction with the
AAHSA Annual Meeting & Exposition
Los Angeles, CA

Cultivating Emerging Leaders in Aging Services

The Leadership AAHSA year-long learning experience offers a variety of challenging and engaging activities:

- **Face-to-Face Learning Opportunities** include community tours and intimate conversations with aging-services leaders, through which Fellows are immersed in the leadership capacities that enable transformation, innovation and person-directed care.
- **Leadership Theory** from a wide range of authors and experts generates discussions about the practical connections to our field, including emerging trends and important policy issues.
- **Self-Evaluation Exercises** encourage introspective reflections of personal leadership and learning styles, revealing the powerful relationship between self-awareness and transformational leadership.
- **Action Learning** provides Fellows an opportunity to reflect on their growth as leaders and experiment with their expanding knowledge, perspective and skills.
- **Virtual Peer-to-Peer Interactions** facilitated by an online learning community and monthly conference calls that foster continued sharing and engagement among the Fellows, faculty and coaches.
- **Alumni Network** participation continues the journey of community and shared learning while advancing the field of aging services through leadership, service, innovation and fellowship.

Apply to Leadership AAHSA

Applications for the Leadership **AAHSA Class of 2012** will be available in the **spring of 2011**. Please visit www.aahsa.org/leadership for more information.



Action Learning Projects



**JUDY
BROWN**

The Leadership AAHSA Fellows' year-long experience culminates in an action learning project designed to advance the supporting organization's mission by making progress toward an innovation or best practice that will impact the individuals it serves and, ultimately, the aging-services field.

This action learning process requires that Leadership AAHSA Fellows continuously learn and put into practice the critical leadership skills that foster transformational ideas and organizational change.

All Fellows were asked to explore the following questions related to their action learning projects and Leadership AAHSA experience:

- How would you describe your project and the difference you hope it will make to advance your organization's mission (or the field) and benefit the individuals you serve?
- How have the relationships you developed as part of your project (with mentors, partners, stakeholders, etc.) influenced its direction? How have those relationships influenced you as a leader?
- What have been important turning points for you, in your own learning, as you engaged with the action learning process (you might consider a surprise, insight, setback or challenge)?
- How do you hope your project might unfold in the months and years ahead, and what impact do you hope it will have on the field at large?
- How has the action learning process in the context of the Leadership AAHSA experience contributed to your growth as a leader?

The Fellows' insights and observations are presented in the following pages...

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A portrait of Shareen Anderson, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a grey blazer over a dark top and a necklace. The background is dark with some green foliage visible on the left.

SHAREEN ANDERSON

Executive Director
Good Samaritan Society Greeley
Communities
Greeley, CO

Bio Summary

Shareen earned a BS in business administration and is a licensed nursing home administrator. The Good Samaritan properties she serves offer price points from higher-income rental properties to Medicaid in SNF and AL to Section 8 and Section 202 HUD. She has worked in administrative health care for more than 20 years.

Creating Service Hubs

The Good Samaritan Society was founded on the realization that only a small percentage of seniors who may need our assistance will live within our communities and that it is our desire to provide a place where services are available to all and Christian Fellowship abounds. My hope is that my action learning project may further this vision by developing our existing centers into service hubs for physician services, health and wellness opportunities, and social and spiritual experiences.

Leadership Influences

The nature of the Leadership AAHSA class fostered a sense of trust and acceptance allowing relationships with classmates to develop quickly. This laid a foundation for self-reflection and the dreaming of possibilities. My Leadership AAHSA team members and coach provided suggestions as to the details of my project, helping me to focus on areas of personal growth. The team assisting at home with the logistics and details of my vision transformed my thinking about my own leadership, helping me to stop and not only listen, but really hear them. I became intentional about my role and contribution as a leader.

Turning Points

When I first dreamt of offering services in the greater community, I developed the plan, agenda and timetable. I thought I had to have all the answers about what was needed and offered, and how to offer it. As discussion began with the team, center residents and residents in the greater community, I realized that by being intentional in my leadership style, my real contribution was listening and fostering discussion. It is with this realization that I have confidence in this project moving forward and succeeding. It is not dependent on any one person but has a momentum of its own.

Moving Forward

As we progress along our journey in providing services that help maintain and improve quality of life for the many seniors not living within our center, I hope to also provide a place of Fellowship, establishing a sense of belonging. My long-term hope is that payment systems will be developed and proven to support new care models that assist seniors in maintaining independence longer and allowing them to age in place.

Key Learning

The Leadership AAHSA experience has helped me to focus my energy and worry less about details.

I understand and appreciate the contributions of others and have a new appreciation of “working together.” I have learned that planting a small seed of an idea, nurturing the process along the way and watching the concept develop is immensely gratifying. I began my action learning project with an end in sight and have seen it blossom into more than I could have ever imagined.

“I understand and appreciate the contributions of others and have a new appreciation of “working together.”



A portrait of Andrew Applegate, a middle-aged man with a shaved head and a light beard, smiling. He is wearing a red and white vertically striped button-down shirt. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches.

ANDREW APPLEGATE

Executive Director
Asbury~Solomons Island/Asbury
Communities
Solomons, MD

Bio Summary

Andrew is the executive director of Asbury~Solomons Island in Maryland. He has a master's degree in organizational management from the University of Phoenix. He has served older adults for more than 20 years as a nursing home administrator and in leadership roles within residential living in large-scale retirement communities.

Leadership Asbury

“Creating Services for Seniors that Enhance the Entire Span of Life” is the mission of Asbury Communities. Achievement of that goal will require a team of exceptional leaders at every level of the organization. To that end, this project seeks to create opportunities for current and emerging leaders within Asbury Communities to develop and hone their transformational leadership skills for the purpose of learning how to bring to bear their unique gifts and talent for the betterment of themselves, their co-workers and the individuals we serve.

Leadership Influences

Working with a wide range of individuals has helped me see that this is no longer “my project” but an opportunity for a truly collaborative experience. This is not a task to be completed, but a gift to be carefully prepared and presented. These relationships resulted in a change in the very nature of this project. As a leader, this project and the people with whom I have interacted have influenced my leadership by making me see that my project needs to be formed within the context of larger organizational needs.



Turning Points

The biggest turning point was the decision to change my action learning project. The Leadership AAHSA experience helped me realize that my original choice would not stretch me the way I needed to be stretched nor would it do more than impact my local community. If I wanted this experience to be a type of legacy, I would need to think bigger, be in touch with something about which I was passionate, and work under someone else's set of project expectations. Learning how to better achieve my personal objectives while meeting a sponsor's objective was an intriguing challenge.

“One benefit of Leadership AAHSA has been the gift of giving voice to something within me, something deeper and more personal.”

Moving Forward

My hopes are two-fold. First, move leaders to a place where there is a deep sense of satisfaction and joy in leading. One benefit of Leadership AAHSA has been the gift of giving voice to something within me, something deeper and more personal. It is from where these thoughts and ideas live that one finds a voice and a way of leading authentically that energizes rather than depletes. Second, my hope would be to unleash an individual who has come to know that deep sense of calling and leadership to our organization and the profession.

Key Learning

The process has made me more humble. It has forced me to think and act intentionally as well as strategically. I could have been called upon by my organization to develop a similar project; however, I can't imagine how poor the outcome would have been without the Leadership AAHSA experience. The Leadership AAHSA experience has been transformative.

A portrait of Matthew Bogner, a man with short brown hair, smiling. He is wearing a blue and white striped collared shirt. The background consists of green pine branches.

MATTHEW BOGNER

Administrator
Kansas Masonic Home
Wichita, KS

Bio Summary

Matthew serves as the administrator of Kansas Masonic Home. He previously served as administrator of Presbyterian Manor in Newton and epidemiologist for Sedgwick County, KS. Bogner is a graduate of Wichita State University where he earned a master's degree in public health and a bachelor's degree in psychology.

Outreach Services Project

My action learning project resulted in a year of research on my part. I focused on the market demand, feasibility, start-up costs, logistics and business models of CCRCs providing outreach services including chore services, home health, telehealth and case management to allow elders to age in place. This study included retirement communities, technology providers and multi-site organizations throughout the United States. Based on research and best practices, we will assimilate the information and develop a business plan to determine the best way for Kansas Masonic Home to serve elders.

Leadership Influences

This action learning project has presented me with an opportunity to collaborate with leaders and organizations throughout the United States. The relationships I developed with others greatly influenced the direction of my project as they have traveled a similar road and offered much support. The action learning project was truly a crucible for me in that I now see the world in a much more global, collaborative and supportive way. I am aware of resources and opportunities I never would have been aware of otherwise. I now feel the confidence to look for partnerships and to encourage innovative thinking and risk taking.



“I have grown considerably by collaborating with other communities, executives and my own leadership team.”

Turning Points

An important turning point for me was when I understood there was no “magic bullet” or structured model available that makes development of outreach services a simple endeavor. Each organization works within a unique market and has vastly different resources at its disposal. Determining market demand is the first step, but after that there is a certain amount of risk an organization must take with regard to start-up capital. The need for collaboration and the guidance of experienced professionals is paramount to these development opportunities.

Moving Forward

My hope is that Kansas Masonic Home will begin by offering one line of outreach services to elders that allows them to age in place. We then could build upon this with more service lines including case management and telehealth services for more than 40,000 Masons throughout the state.

Key Learning

This process has allowed me to focus my efforts on a strategic goal impacting the future of the organization rather than the operational role I find myself in most of the time. I have grown considerably by collaborating with other communities, executives and my own leadership team. This business development experience will no doubt prove to be invaluable as I continue my work in aging services.

A portrait of Vassar Byrd, a woman with long, wavy brown hair and blue eyes, smiling. She is wearing a white shirt with a red cherry pattern and small hoop earrings. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches.

VASSAR BYRD

Chief Executive Officer
Rose Villa Senior Living
Portland, OR

Bio Summary

Vassar's career began in economics. Following a transformative, volunteer long-term care ombudsman experience, she changed course to follow her heart. She earned an MA in gerontology and began work as a marketing director. She is now CEO at a progressive CCRC and living her dream.

Community Enrichment Through Social Media Innovation

Using social media, I will facilitate the emergence of Rose Villa as the hub of a large and diverse crowd – people interested in rose gardening, organic farming, symptom management, RX trials, senior Olympics, local restaurant reviews, political events, art openings – and provide a platform on which to share our lives around these and other interests. In the simplest terms, we will be a means to life enrichment. Going beyond addressing individual isolation (certainly one goal) we aim to connect the entire group of older individuals in our area to one another and across age and other superficial boundaries.

Leadership Influences

Using technology to build bridges and community for, with and among older folks requires taking nothing for granted. My team is extremely diverse and includes one of my youngest staff members, a board member, our graphics consultant and two residents – representing an age spread of more than 50 years. Getting these different perspectives to come together in a mini-community using social media is a great beta experiment for the larger project. You throw a lot of pasta on the ceiling before some of it sticks! This has created a wide open process engaging everyone.



Turning Points

The biggest surprise for me has been to realize I don't need to create a new program to benefit my community. Deepening our core connection to one another is the highest added value I can bring. That connection is the true engine on which everything else runs and from which we will reap countless ideas going forward. Another revelation was that this project has the potential to reach all aspects of the community; it can be outreach and engagement for employees, families, vendors, donors, board members, government officials and more – well beyond our residents.



Moving Forward

This is almost exclusively a process, not a goal, project. There is no end point, which is very exciting. I cannot predict what offshoots might be generated but I do expect this to provide greater connection, transparency, diversity and velocity for Rose Villa and the field of senior living. Ultimately, this is a social revolution in which every individual can connect authentically, without the fetters of age-based expectations, and unlock the treasures and wisdom within us all for the enrichment and growth of our global community.

Key Learning

I intentionally choose a topic that pushed me outside my comfort zone, and it has been very humbling. I am not a “techie!” Getting beyond those kinds of details to see that I am involved in expanding the communication bandwidth for my community has helped me to better explain and understand it. However, the difficulty in crossing cultural, age and experiential boundaries is serious. It stretches my ability to create comfort with new ideas, maintain transparency in all that we do, give up control, trust the process and, of course, be open to the surprises.

A portrait of Diana Delgado, a woman with shoulder-length blonde hair and bangs, smiling. She is wearing a dark top with a blue and green patterned collar and a thin necklace. The background is dark with some green foliage visible at the top.

DIANA DELGADO

Chief Operating Officer
Eaton Senior Programs
Lakewood, CO

Bio Summary

Diana is the chief operating officer of Eaton Senior Programs. She has an undergraduate degree in gerontology from Univ. of Northern Colorado and an MS in health services administration from Regis University. She is certified as an aging services professional (CASP) and holds additional credentials through the National Center for Housing Management.

Enhancing Wellness Programming by Defining “Aging Well”

Eaton Senior Programs’ (ESP) mission includes meeting the physical, spiritual, social and psychological needs of seniors and contributing to their health, security, happiness and worth, enabling all to live to their fullest potential. The ESP wellness program is directly linked to the organization’s mission. By defining what “aging well” means to our stakeholders, we can better enable our residents to age in place. My hope is that by having a wellness program that comprehensively incorporates the physical, emotional, spiritual, social, intellectual, vocational and environmental aspects of wellness, we can share the successes of aging well with colleagues in aging services.

Leadership Influences

One person alone cannot do the work of defining aging well or enhancing wellness programming. The partners and stakeholders involved in the process are influencing its direction and are accountable to their role in the project and its relationship to our strategic plan. As a leader, cultivating these relationships contributes to my energy and passion. I am consciously trying to mobilize my team around a vision, working to be more affiliative in creating

harmony and relationships, and democratic in collaborating with my team to build consensus.

Turning Points

In Ronald Heifetz's book, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, he talks about pacing the work so that people can take on a difficult task at a tolerable rate. Through my engagement with the action learning project, pacing the work has been necessary so that those involved are able to adapt at their own capacity. Heifetz also describes the concepts of the dance floor (active leadership) and balcony (reflective leadership). This metaphor has been a turning point for me to get those involved onto the balcony to think on a larger level about creativity, technology and innovation in our wellness program.

Moving Forward

Ideally, we'll have a comprehensive wellness program expanded on the definitions of our residents and families of what it means to age well. It will encompass all dimensions of wellness and meet the needs of the residents in however they define aging well. The program will offer a variety of services that are available not only within but also outside our community through creative partnerships. We will also grow our program to offer a wide range of wellness support to our staff. Eventually I hope we become a successful wellness model to our housing colleagues in aging services.



Key Learning

I have learned a lot through the Leadership AAHSA experience around emotional intelligence and how to use the different styles of leadership based on the situation at hand, as well as translating that leadership style to dealing with the individuality of my team members. Those lessons have been helpful in communicating with stakeholders, getting buy-in from team members, holding staff accountable and empowering staff to take on their own leadership roles throughout the process. It has been a transformative journey of self-awareness in realizing how to manage my emotions and understand the emotions of others.

A portrait of Rebecca Donato, a woman with long dark hair and blue eyes, smiling. She is wearing a black and white striped shirt with large black polka dots and a black leather jacket. A yellow flower is pinned to her shirt. She is also wearing a gold chain necklace with a heart pendant. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches.

REBECCA DONATO

Director of Program Development
North Hill Communities, Inc.
Needham, MA

Bio Summary

Rebecca discovered her calling to the field in 2003 and has served in various change-agent capacities at North Hill since 2006. She holds a bachelor's degree in music from NYU and an MBA from Georgetown. She is passionate about fostering the integration of creativity, spirituality and personal growth into professional work.

Harnessing the Power of Possibility

Our community (CCRC) is embarking on a major repositioning for the first time in our 26-year history. The aim of my project is to foster creativity and market-mindedness within our culture through formation of an “innovation team.” Through our exploratory work and collaboration, this cross-departmental, multi-level group gives our team members a voice in the repositioning. The goals are to empower participants, develop new programs and services, and inculcate innovative thinking into our everyday “way of being.”

Leadership Influences

Six years ago, by saying “yes” to a cold-call internship request, my mentor, Kevin Burke, gave me the gift of a possibility. This possibility helped me to discover a passion for serving older adults and a rewarding vocation. Throughout Leadership AAHSA, I find myself often reflecting upon the depth of what can emerge from the simple gift of giving someone a chance. The notion of harnessing the power of possibility has become the foundation of my project. Success will be defined by how well we draw out the passions and unrevealed gifts of our team members.

Turning Points

One of the most important insights gained through the Leadership AASHA experience has been an exploration and revelation of the deep connection between leadership style and life story. This journey has helped us to clearly connect our unique stepping stones to our work in leadership. Cultivating a keener awareness of the thread that binds personal history to values to worldview has helped me move toward my desired and most authentic leadership style. It has also been a tool to work more intentionally and effectively with both my strengths and challenges.

Moving Forward

My hope is that the ideas and creativity of the innovation team will come to life as new programs and services. Ultimately, the goal is to help our organization reclaim the position it enjoyed early in its history as an innovator. For the field at large, my hope is that as our innovation team's journey matures, an approach will emerge that is replicable for use by others. Just as we have created frameworks for strategic planning, social accountability and quality, so too do we need formulated approaches for fostering innovation.

Key Learning

This project is unlike any work I've done before. But what I realized this year is that leaders don't necessarily have all the answers, all the time.

For adaptive challenges like changing culture, leaders draw more from a strong foundation of self than from technical knowledge or direct experience. If that foundation is rooted in integrity, passion, courage and competence, the leadership challenge will be met. Leadership development is a slow, steady series of steps – one step in courage leads to another step in confidence. This recognition increased the faith I have in my own dreams.

“I realized
this year that
leaders don’t
necessarily
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all the time.”



A portrait of DeAnn Escalante, a woman with brown hair pulled back, smiling. She is wearing a black blazer over a pink button-down shirt and a silver necklace. The background is a close-up of green evergreen branches.

DEANN ESCALANTE

Director of Community Initiatives
Brewster Place
Topeka, KS

Bio Summary

DeAnn has more than 10 years' experience in the aging field. She is a member of the design team/coach for Leadership KAHSA. A graduate of the Leadership Greater Topeka program, she now serves on its planning and selection committees. DeAnn is involved in a community-wide visioning process for Topeka.

Interdisciplinary Advocacy

The intent of this action learning project is to create a model for organizations to use that will strengthen their advocacy efforts by tearing down silos and bringing together groups from all sectors of our communities to create a shared message. This interdisciplinary approach will create an opportunity for our field to share our mission, discover commonalities and work closely with community members to advocate on issues in which we share a common interest, thereby enhancing the supports and services we provide day in and day out.

Leadership Influences

By building trusted relationships (from the local chamber of commerce to the police, district attorney, secretary of state and beyond) we can set the stage for creating a model of “shared messages” through an interdisciplinary effort. I have been pleased with the interest expressed by members of the larger community in support and services for seniors and by requests for information about policy specifics that I have been able to provide.



Turning Points

I am learning how to break my project into phases. At this point I am actively involved with research and planning of different models such as the Eldercare Workforce Alliance. One insight I have come to realize is that I can reach out and ask this team if they have a framework for their project that may be transferable to mine.



Moving Forward

I hope to begin by forming a pilot project with chambers of commerce and AAHSA state associations. My hope is that connecting with local stakeholders as well as a broader state association will enable organizations in our field to be more proactive in their advocacy efforts. In essence, you build the relationship before the need occurs. The anticipated result is a model for organizations to use in their advocacy efforts by joining together in a noncompetitive environment to support and strengthen the field of aging.

Key Learning

The process has introduced me to new ideas and ways of thinking. My action learning project evolved from going on Capitol Hill during the Future of Aging Services Conference in Washington, D.C. As I witnessed diverse groups vying for time with their legislators, I was inspired to find ways to collaborate with a larger mix of people from the community, thereby creating a more meaningful and powerful message at both the state and federal level. I am honored to have been a part of this tremendous experience that has opened my eyes to multiple possibilities for innovation and transformation.

A portrait of a middle-aged man with a receding hairline, smiling. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches with light-colored needles.

JAMES FARNAN

Vice President/Administrator
Eddy Village Green/The Eddy
Cohoes, NY

Bio Summary

Jaimy serves as the vice president and administrator for Eddy Village Green (formerly the Eddy Ford Nursing Home and the Eddy Cohoes Rehabilitation Center). During his tenure, he has overseen the overall operations and management for this 192-bed skilled nursing home.

Cohoes Community Connections

The Eddy Village Green was created to improve the quality of life for elders requiring skilled nursing services. To better understand community needs and how our campus can be more active in supporting those needs, my action learning project will formalize a plan to establish new connections with the community and reestablish prior connections that have been neglected. It is also my intention to promote those relationships and allow them to be maintained to enhance the quality of the lives of our elders.

Leadership Influences

To date, I have established new relationships that I never would have initiated prior to my journey in Leadership AAHSA. As someone who is introverted, it has always been uncomfortable to “network” or look to others with whom I haven’t had a history for assistance in furthering my goals. In reaching out to civic and other community leaders, I have already walked away with some great ideas that have set the course for my project.

Turning Points

The turning points throughout have been numerous. The site visits to organizations as part of the Leadership AAHSA program highlighted our glaring needs and began to crystallize some ideas for community outreach efforts. Although we had already begun to explore different avenues with the community as part of our Quality First initiative, it was the site visits during the 2009 AAHSA Annual Meeting that inspired my desire to look further. Having exposure to providers who think “out of the box” in their approach to community linkages allowed me to look for unconventional ways of being an active community member.

Moving Forward

My hope is to have our campus be a resource to the surrounding community, create meaningful relationships among our facility and community groups, and by doing so, strengthen the ties of our elders to the community that some have been a part of most of their lives. As for the field at large? I am not sure of the impact that my local project could have, other than the opportunity to share our experience with others, relaying the need for them to do their due diligence in creating something that meets community needs while fulfilling organizational mission.

Key Learning

We have spent a lot of time, through reading and dialogue, examining our “passion” and how the need to align personal and organizational values is an important driver of success. Through the Leadership AAHSA program and the subsequent initiation of my project, I have become more aware of my strengths and weaknesses and have discovered what I am passionate about. I feel that the knowledge gained has made me more confident in approaching other leaders and organizations. I am also more aware of the need to build and maintain relationships.



A portrait of Denise Gannon, a woman with blonde hair and glasses, smiling. She is wearing a white blazer over an orange collared shirt. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches.

DENISE GANNON

Vice President of Wellness and
Performance Improvement
Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network
Cleveland, OH

Bio Summary

Denise is vice president of wellness and performance improvement for Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network. A registered nurse, she joined Eliza Jennings in 1996 and has served the organization in nursing and management capacities. She is an active member of AOPHA and works extensively on culture change initiatives.

Eliza Jennings at Home House Call Program

The current health care system focuses mostly on acute and episodic care and has difficulty meeting the needs of ill, frail elderly and their families or other caregivers in their home. A coordinated approach to the care of the elder requires a new model that includes primary medical care in the home. Our house call program can provide high-quality primary health care, improve the continuity of care between the home and the hospital, provide support and education to the elderly and their families or caregivers, and link to a broad range of social and supportive services in the community.

Leadership Influences

The project has given me the opportunity to work with a number of residents, nurse practitioners and colleagues in new and creative ways. While we have collaborated before, this is the first chance we have had to develop something from the ground up. As a result, I (not to mention the project) get the benefit of their experiences and perspectives. Not only has this helped to make the concept stronger, the process of bringing others to the table has created a shared sense of ownership and excitement that will help drive the program's success.



Turning Points

It has always been my passion to work in aging services, with recognition that aging services is changing. The field will continually demand that we refine and recreate our services and ourselves to meet the needs of the elders. More than anything, this program has helped me recognize the power and support of collaboration. Whether it is foundations from which we are seeking funding support or residents who need accessible services to live in their homes, collaboration is important.

Moving Forward

I hope to provide full-service, high-quality health care and health promotion to elders in congregate settings. These services will significantly reduce



the elders' chances of being hospitalized and give them the freedom and independence to continue living in their own homes.

Key Learning

I learned that great leaders are defined by a sense of passion, purpose and profound desire to make a difference. It is important to examine our own personal passion and align it with organizational values. My action learning project gave me the chance to align by personal passion (quality of life for elders in the setting most elders prefer – their own home) with an organization goal: nurse practitioner house call program. It also gave me the opportunity to learn the importance of helping my own team members identify their passion.

A portrait of David Gentner, a man with short dark hair, smiling. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a light blue dress shirt, and a striped tie. The background consists of green pine branches.

DAVID GENTNER

Interim President & Chief
Executive Officer
The Wartburg Adult Care Community
Mount Vernon, NY

Bio Summary

David is interim president and CEO of The Wartburg Adult Care Community. Licensed in three states and certified by the American College of Health Care Administrators, he was awarded the NYAHSa Thomas Clarke Memorial Award and named the American College of Health Care Administrators New York chapter's New Administrator of the Year.

Organizational Culture and Campus Master Planning

For the past three years, The Wartburg Adult Care Community has been working on a merger. While we always maintained a commitment to resident care and service, merger efforts diverted our attention from necessary campus master planning initiatives. More importantly, we did not focus on our own organizational culture. Now, with a new focus, we will concentrate on campus repositioning and a cultural support structure that will be directly connected to the new vision of the Wartburg. Throughout this work, we will ensure that the goals, expectations and ambitions of the staff (our organization's cultural reality) are aligned.

Leadership Influences

Relationships are at the center of my action learning project, and I have a renewed commitment to putting our people first. Throughout our campus planning, I am making every effort to re-establish my most valued grassroots relationships with people who directly relate to those we serve to ensure that their needs are met. I believe that by having an organizational culture that enhances employee satisfaction, and a work environment where people have positive experiences and “personal” satisfaction, the changes in our organization will be powerful and guide us through our most difficult decisions for this campus.



Turning Points

A key turning point was the concept of empowering others on the journey and encouraging their own personal journeys. After reading *True North* by Bill George, I found that transforming from “I” to “we” was the most important concept I learned during the Leadership AAHSA experience and the action learning process. Understanding what is most important to us, our most cherished values and motivations, and the sources of satisfaction in our lives helps to guide all staff. By helping to make this point with others, I believe we can recognize the unlimited potential of our staff and harmonize a collective, shared purpose.



Moving Forward

Our campus planning will move forward. In doing so, we will avoid a disconnect between our campus repositioning goals and a structure that will support the realization of our vision. Our employees will have a genuine commitment to our mission, vision and value statements because they will have real input into the process. The organization's goals will relate directly to employees' work. Goals will be consistent and communicated often, and our leadership team will be steady with its actions and behaviors in support of our most cherished covenants.

Key Learning

The action learning process is the key to my Leadership AAHSA experience and my own personal growth during this critical time. Moreover, I think our successes in campus repositioning and my own maturity depend on how well I live by the action learning process that I've defined. I can grow through personal connections and empowering others, during this process and any other in my professional life. The Leadership AAHSA program teaches us that before we can lead others, we must be able to lead ourselves; therefore, the action learning process is the essence of my growth as a leader.

A portrait of Lynne Giacobbe, a woman with shoulder-length, wavy, light brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue blazer, a silver necklace with a pendant, and small hoop earrings. The background is a dark, out-of-focus evergreen tree.

LYNNE GIACOBBE

Executive Director
Kendal at Home/Kendal Northern
Ohio/The Kendal Corporation
Westlake, OH

Bio Summary

Lynne has more than 20 years of nonprofit management experience. After graduating from Kent State University, she lived and worked in Texas and New York. Lynne was hired in 2004 to launch Kendal's first continuing care at home program.

Taking Responsibility in the Larger Community

Kendal's mission has been a driving force in the development of Kendal at Home. Our values and practices lead us to take responsibility in the larger community, maintaining extensive and mutually supportive relationships and sharing resources and experience. These values have inspired me to explore ways in which we can extend to others what we have learned in our experience at Kendal at Home as well as the broader Kendal community. By providing educational opportunities and strengthening partnerships, we hope to enhance the quality of life for older adults in the larger community in which we serve.

Leadership Influences

I have had the great fortune to work with John Diffey since joining the Kendal family. John is a well-respected leader in the field of aging who is driven by the mission and values of our organization. Having the unique opportunity to work closely with John through Leadership AAHSA has inspired me tremendously and challenged me to find ways of expanding our mission. Kay Kallander has been an inspiring coach, mentor and friend. She has guided our team throughout, and each member has provided me with immeasurable support as this project has evolved.

Turning Points

As I have begun to share my vision for this project with board and staff leaders, I have encountered support and a commitment to carry the project forward. Our team is currently involved in building multidisciplinary teams within the community and expanding educational opportunities for older adults.

“We will work to continually find innovative ways to expand our reach within the community”



We are working within the larger Kendal system to develop outreach opportunities to bring resources to providers focusing on best practices and the “Untie the Elderly” initiative.

Moving Forward

I am hopeful that this project will become a part of the Kendal at Home culture. We will work to continually find innovative ways to expand our reach within the community, allowing us to strengthen relationships with partners while sharing resources and knowledge in an effort to enhance the experience of aging for all individuals.

Key Learning

The Leadership AAHSA experience has provided the stepping stones necessary to enable me to become engaged in aging services in a more meaningful way. It has provided the opportunity to learn from leaders and pioneers in the field, develop meaningful relationships with mentors, and explore the innovative ways others are serving older adults and advancing the field. This experience has allowed me to explore my own leadership skills. What I value most are the lifelong relationships I have developed. I am grateful for all that the Fellows have shared throughout the year, especially the tears and laughter.

A portrait of Steven Hardy, a man with short brown hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a light-colored button-down shirt. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches.

STEVEN HARDY

Associate Executive Director
AlmaVia of San Rafael/Eldercare
Alliance
San Rafael, CA

Bio Summary

Steve began his love of elders on the lap of his grandmother. Her love, wisdom and commitment to caring for her large extended family has been an enduring spirit guiding him on his journey. He has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in expressive therapies from Lesley University.

Creative Leadership in Action Process (CLAP)

The Creative Leadership in Action Process (CLAP) will help our organization imbue and grow leadership potential throughout our culture. I see it as an ever-expanding process that attempts to create action-focused leadership intentionality, sowing seeds of innovative thinking, mission and values integration through self-reflection and inquiry-based learning. Employees, residents, family and community stakeholders will be invited to help “write the story” of our communities through multiple learning opportunities that ask for a commitment to creating resonance together. In doing so, we can begin a very intentional focus on operationalizing our values of caring, dignity, collaboration and excellence.

Leadership Influences

The concept of Fellowship has been redefined for me through the Leadership AASHA experience. Each of the 32 Fellows has touched me with a reflection, idea or experience that has challenged me to reexamine my own biases and lead me toward the courage to embark on this project. I have seen it as a creative sculpting of myself as a professional in the field of elder care services. As a leader, I feel I’ve been returned to a sense of centeredness and re-engagement with the creative

A photograph of a man with glasses and a white floral shirt, smiling and cheering with his arms raised. He is in the foreground, and other people are visible in the background, also appearing to be part of a group celebration.

“leadership is not
about what you do
but who you are.”

process – a process that now allows me to
reframe my perspective on creating community.

Turning Points

There were numerous insightful experiences for me throughout the Leadership AAHSA journey. When we first met in Chicago, I was surprised that I took the initiative to be the first to share in our check-in. It was a precedent in our year together that continually challenged me to move out of my comfort zone and take risks in becoming a more authentic leader. As I began to express myself in more creative ways (i.e. singing my check-in), I discovered that this group had become an almost sacred place for witnessing our continued growth as leaders and people.

Moving Forward

I envision the Creative Leadership in Action Process (CLAP) as multi-tiered educational opportunities throughout our organization: A CLAP certification process whereby employees have opportunities to be involved with a curriculum of creative leadership experiences; monthly panel discussions with local leaders from the field; an intentional mentorship program which links employees with prospective mentors within the organization as well as the greater eldercare community; regular site visits to internal and external communities to highlight best practices. It is my hope that this conceptual approach to training leaders will help redefine active aging as a creative process.

Key Learning

The Leadership AAHSA experience was not what I expected. I came to it imagining it would give me some training in improving my skills as a leader. What I've experienced is a transformation of how I see leadership itself. It has brought me back to a realization that leadership is not about what you do but who you are. We are all leaders, from the caregiver to the CEO, and it is in our self-reflection and willingness to learn that we offer our gifts to the people we serve. Are you willing to be fabulous at what you love? Then lead!

A portrait of Benjamin Hoyle, a man with short dark hair, a mustache, and glasses, wearing a white polo shirt. He is smiling and standing in front of a green evergreen tree.

BENJAMIN HOYLE

Chief Financial Officer
Pennswood Village
Newtown, PA

Bio Summary

Benjamin entered the field of aging in 1995 as CFO of Pennswood Village, a community of 430 residents living in 310 apartments, 37 assisted living units, and 53 skilled nursing beds. In this role he works with the executive director and the board.

A Reorientation of the Finance Department

The project is intended to shift and expand the functional purpose of the Finance Department and, by doing so, reorient the perception of the department's role within the organization. Finance Department staff will work with the CFO to develop a mission statement and statement of purpose to strengthen the service components of the department's responsibilities. These services extend to the other operating departments in the organization as well as directly and indirectly to the residents we serve. Through a consultative process, these services will be aimed at helping department directors and managers.

Leadership Influences

Initially much of the work will be focused within the Finance Department to craft the mission statement and statement of purpose. Additionally, the concept will be tested with executive staff to determine if the project will have value. As a leader, I must make sure that I remain on the balcony so I can monitor how financial and other information is communicated across the organization. I must be able to see where there are roadblocks caused by a lack of understanding of available information or if needed information is not currently being provided.

Turning Points

Turning points have centered mostly on my personal management style. I find that I must be more intentional about remaining in tune with the attitudes and reactions to staff within and outside of the Finance Department. It is important for me to help develop and foster a feeling that this is not just my project, but as a unified department we are all behind these changes. Additionally, it is important for the organization to feel that there is value to these changes. Some staff may require additional support and orientation and will be evaluated on their commitment to service improvement.

Moving Forward

Building a culture of service and consultation will take time to define and build into the core of each department employee's ongoing performance. As the transformation begins to take place, department staff must feel more engaged in the overall operations of our organization. This may involve participation in staff meetings, more direct engagement with other staff and residents, or participation in organizational planning as appropriate. It is hoped that this project may serve as a model for other finance departments as a way to reorient how they view themselves and how other department staff view them as well.



Key Learning

This experience has been invaluable in its impact on me as a developing leader and in my ability to think openly and broadly about how my project and the projects of others in my class could impact my organization and possibly the field at large. The sharing with my teammates has given me the freedom to test my ideas with them and to have them provide comments back to me in a supportive, non-threatening way. Meeting the Leaders in Residence and touring provider sites has allowed me to experience various leadership styles and to learn from these interactions.

A portrait of Laura Lamb, a woman with long brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue top with white patterns. The background is dark green foliage.

LAURA LAMB

Vice President, Residential
Housing and Healthcare
Episcopal Retirement Homes
Cincinnati, OH

Bio Summary

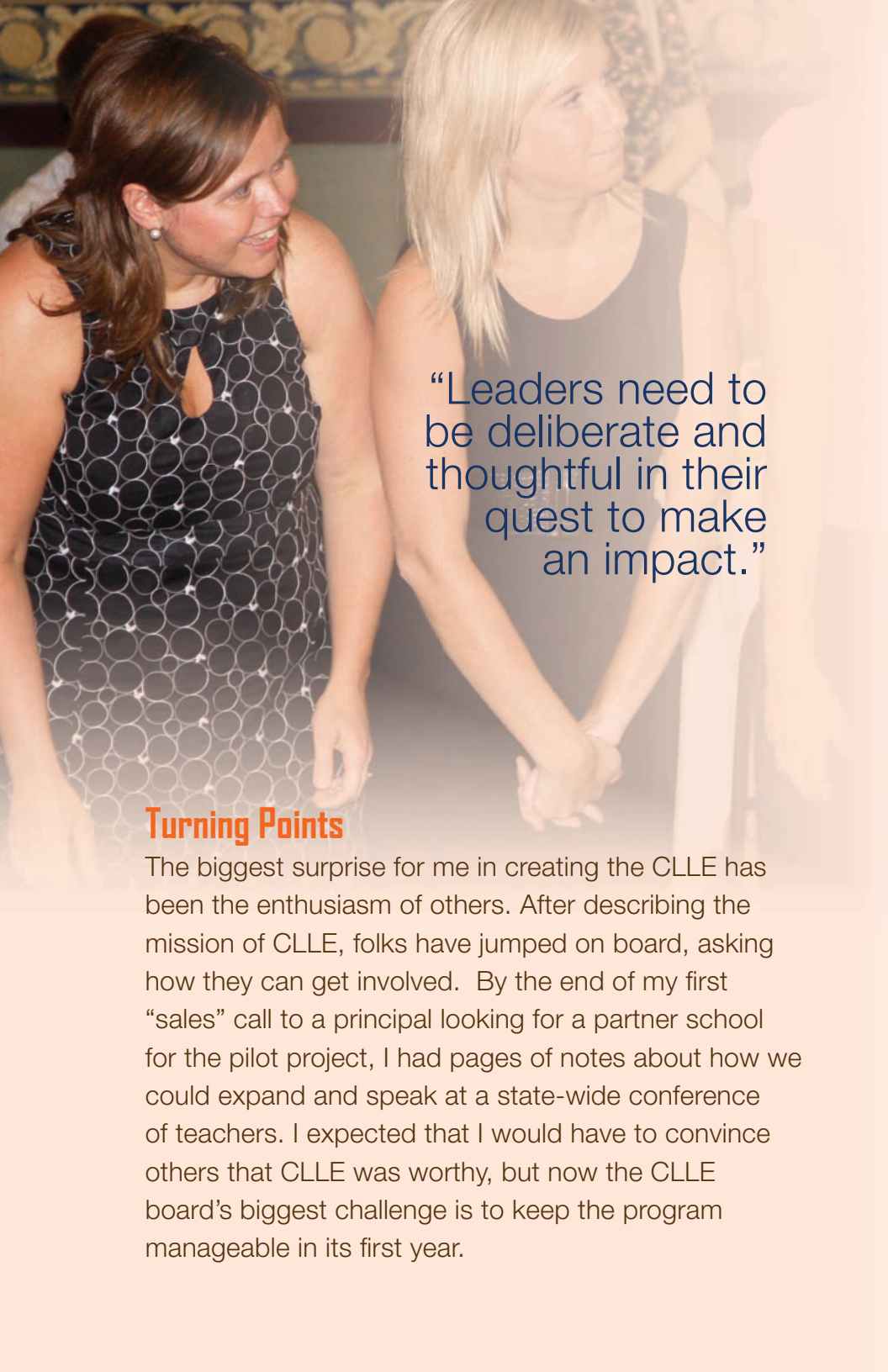
Laura serves as vice president of residential housing and healthcare at Episcopal Retirement Homes. She oversees the operations of two CCRCs. When she was a teenager, her mother's work in nursing homes stirred in Laura a passion for serving older adults. She is dedicated to restoring purpose, choice and freedom to elders.

Council for Life Long Engagement

The Council for Life Long Engagement (CLLE) encourages and enables elders to share their knowledge, wisdom and talents with school children to reverse the negative aspects of ageism. Studies on ageism indicate that negative stereotypes actually reduce elders' longevity by 7.5 years. CLLE will partner with schools to match elders with the school curriculum. Elders will teach various subjects in which they have personal experience. The elders and children will create positive, rewarding relationships. Children will change because they will experience the purpose and value of elders. Our hope is that this generation will reject ageism.

Leadership Influences

Everyone who has joined CLLE has shaped what it has become. Our visions have melded into one quest to eradicate ageism. CLLE is a spider web. Each part is interconnected, yet each new spin allows the web to grow and change shape. The beauty is that it will change over time because of the people involved. I am eager to see what is around the next corner. As a planner and organizer, I find the spider web both exciting and unsettling, but I am learning to let go of the anxiety and embrace the thrill of the unknown possibilities.

A photograph of two women standing side-by-side, holding hands. The woman on the left has dark brown hair and is wearing a black dress with a white geometric pattern. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a black sleeveless top. They are both looking towards the right. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a patterned wall.

“Leaders need to be deliberate and thoughtful in their quest to make an impact.”

Turning Points

The biggest surprise for me in creating the CLLE has been the enthusiasm of others. After describing the mission of CLLE, folks have jumped on board, asking how they can get involved. By the end of my first “sales” call to a principal looking for a partner school for the pilot project, I had pages of notes about how we could expand and speak at a state-wide conference of teachers. I expected that I would have to convince others that CLLE was worthy, but now the CLLE board’s biggest challenge is to keep the program manageable in its first year.

Moving Forward

The 2010-11 school year is a pilot year for CLLE. We hope to create a replicable model for other retirement communities and schools to use across the country. To sustain any positive outcomes of CLLE, we believe we need to provide a toolkit that includes action plans, training resources and critical success factors. We will also include metrics so organizations can quantify their progress. The real business of CLLE, however, is changing attitudes and ending ageism. To measure that, CLLE will seek partnership with universities to study the ongoing impact of CLLE's work.

Key Learning

As time marches on, we get caught up in the day's work and the year's objectives. Leadership AAHSA has challenged me to look beyond the work and to ask: What legacy will I leave? It is amazing how one can look up one day to realize that years have passed. What have I done to make a difference in the lives of those I serve? Leaders need to be deliberate and thoughtful in their quest to make an impact. Leadership AAHSA has rekindled my determination to change the small part of our world that I am most passionate about.

A portrait of John Larson, a man with short grey hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a blue and white striped polo shirt. The background is a close-up of green pine needles.

JOHN LARSON

Chief Financial Officer
The British Home
Brookfield, IL

Bio Summary

John has served as the CFO of the British Home since 1992. He earned his degree from The University of Illinois at Chicago and became a licensed nursing home administrator. He serves as treasurer for Life Services Network Risk Retention Group and Abbeyfield USA senior housing.

Active Living Center

My project is an Active Living Center where members of our campus and community can go for socialization, fitness, wellness, education and rehab services. While this will start on campus, it is expected to grow into an off campus venture. There will be many new strategic benefits. We will evolve from a nursing home into a more proactive aging-well organization. New partnerships and collaborations are likely to be formed. While the focus will be on seniors, there will be many opportunities for community members of all ages. This should provide greater community awareness and benefit for our organization.

Leadership Influences

Relationships were formed and strengthened by this action learning project. One of the relationships looks to be heading into a joint venture, strengthening both organizations' missions and futures. A key partner has broadened my thinking and inspired bolder action. More time and collaboration with our board was needed along with a new appreciation for the value of consensus building. I need to be much more aware of my strengths and weaknesses and in control of my emotions. There is also a greater bond with our senior leadership team as we grow and learn.

Turning Points

The project started as an off-site fitness/rehab center. We started putting together the plan and details, then realized something was missing. Is it time to address the organization's future identity? Will we be a nursing home with senior services or an active-aging services provider with a nursing home? We looked at different legal structures, branding, name change, strategic planning and partnering. We adopted this strategic vision statement: "We will rapidly evolve into a more innovative organization that expands beyond our current identity, is relationship focused, and expands to meet the diverse needs of a broader constituency." The project was becoming truly transformational.

Moving Forward

This project will be the catalyst for our organization's evolutionary change. Within a year the board work and staff education will be completed. Our new branding and evolved direction will be going strong. The campus wellness program will be growing, setting the stage for our off-site venture and new look in the community. The off-site venture will transform our brand identity from just a nursing home. Off-campus revenue and clients will be a much greater percentage of business. This will set the trend to serve people where they want to be served and preserve campus-based financial health.



Key Learning

The concepts, experiences and readings have all contributed to my confidence and knowledge. The Leadership AAHSA Fellows are a tremendous resource and support. These relationships that will last long after the class is over. The site visits have inspired new ideas and solidified current thinking. The professionals you meet and talk with are a wealth of information. This experience has deepened my thinking, improved my people skills and made me more aware of my strengths and weaknesses. The skills and experiences gained while working on this project will help me with future projects and will forever shape my leadership path.



JILL LAYNE

Administrator
Lenoir Woods/Lutheran
Senior Services
Columbia, MO

Bio Summary

Jill is administrator of the Health Care Center at Lenoir Woods. Lenoir is a Lutheran Senior Services community. She is married with two sons and a granddaughter. She is a leader in culture change and has presented at state and national conferences.

Creating a Hospitality Model for Post-Acute Care in Long-Term Care

Lutheran Senior Services focuses on the wellness of our short- and long-term residents to live out our mission of “Older Adults Living Life to the Fullest.” Over the last year, the focus in our acute-care neighborhood has evolved from person-centered care to a hospitality model. We have found our post-acute care residents want a hotel model rather than a home-style model. Our focus will be to develop a new post-acute care model with a brand name to be recognized in our community as “the place to go.”

Leadership Influences

A local task force, consisting of administrator, clinical nurse leader, licensed practical nurse, social services designee and certified nursing assistant, was created to get information about what residents would like to see. Interviews with some of the residents of our Post-Acute Care Neighborhood had the biggest influence in developing our vision. We also have an organizational task force made up of individuals representing our different communities. The collection of data from the two task forces enriched and broadened our perspective.

Turning Points

The biggest influence on the direction I took for the post-acute care project was when a certified nursing assistant came up to me and said, “The residents on Medicare A do not want a home style, they want a hotel style.” A turning point that helped was when I was speaking with our human resources director from the home office. I was telling him about my action learning project. I found out the home office was starting an organization-wide project on this subject, so I was invited to join the post-acute care strategy session.

Moving Forward

Each day, we learn we need to grow in different directions to improve the lives of our customers. The post-acute care project will help to increase the customer satisfaction of the residents we serve and the surrounding community. Lutheran Senior Services at Lenoir Woods strives to be the best in the field of continuing care retirement communities. Our innovative projects will have a great impact on the next generation of customers we will serve in the future.



Key Learning

Leadership AAHSA has been a phenomenal experience of a lifetime. I could not have imagined the information I would obtain to bring back to our community to empower more people to become great leaders. The books were amazing along with the group presentations. We have built such wonderful, close relationships not only for business resources but on a personal level. I have done a lot of self-reflection along the way to realize what a great leader I can become to enrich others in their leadership journey.



A portrait of Robert Mayer, a man with dark hair and a mustache, smiling. He is wearing a light blue and white checkered button-down shirt. The background consists of dark green pine branches.

ROBERT MAYER

Vice President of Finance/Chief
Financial Officer
Weinberg Campus
Amherst, NY

Bio Summary

Robert has been vice president of finance/CFO of Weinberg Campus for the past 15 years. The Weinberg Campus is a leader in the field of aging services and operates a skilled nursing facility, adult home, senior apartments, home care, adult day care and a managed long-term care program.

Enhancing Lives

My action learning project (ALP) is an effort to transform the culture of our organization. As a framework for this culture change initiative, a focus statement was developed “to enhance the lives of our residents and each other, one interaction at a time.” This focus statement has become the guiding theme for everything we do in our organization. The goal is to create a culture that enhances the live of our residents, clients and staff; we hope that ideas developed during this process will become best practices in the aging field.

Leadership Influences

The scope of the action learning project requires the entire organization to be involved. The central theme of the ALP was agreed upon by a group of core leaders who then were asked to develop action plans for their areas of the organization. The ALP requires that I participate in resident focus groups and town hall meetings; these have greatly influenced the direction of the ALP and have helped me to develop a more collaborative leadership style. An organizational development consultant has been involved in the ALP and has greatly enhanced my understanding of how effective leadership impacts an organization.

Turning Points

For the project to be successful, buy-in is required at all levels of the organization. It has been challenging to have everyone understand and engage in the process. We learned that some of our preconceived notions regarding resident and staff satisfaction were not correct. We had developed ideas on how to enhance the lives of our residents and staff without sufficient stakeholder input. We have had to change course as we learned more clearly what our residents and staff wanted or needed. It will also be a challenge to maintain momentum as we move forward.

Moving Forward

My hope is that my project will continue to gain momentum and will ultimately achieve the culture change necessary to enhance the lives of our residents, clients and staff. To be considered a success, the project will need to change our organization deeply and profoundly and be a lasting and sustainable initiative. It is also hoped that many of the ideas and concepts developed as part of the process will be transferable to other organizations and have a wide-ranging impact.

Key Learning

I have learned a great deal about being a leader through the action learning process. The project scope makes it necessary to involve and engage the entire organization, which has required effective delegation. The project I have selected is a true test of my transformational leadership skills. It has also been a great experience to see the impact that true empowerment can have on the success of our initiative to enhance the lives of our residents and each other, one interaction at a time.



A portrait of Lisa Morrow, a Black woman with long, straight black hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a black sleeveless top with white horizontal stripes. The background consists of green pine branches.

LISA MORROW

Social Service Coordinator
Orchard Place of Englewood/Lifelink
Corporation
Chicago, IL

Bio Summary

Lisa serves as the social service coordinator for Orchard place of Englewood, one of several affordable housing communities within Lifelink Corporation. She began her career in aging services in 2007. She holds a BA in broadcast journalism and will soon pursue her MSW. Her journey has just begun.

Development of an Online Resource Tool for Service Coordinators

It is vital to the work of all social service coordinators to have a wealth of resources at our fingertips to accommodate the individuals we serve and provide them with a variety of quality programs and services. Developing a network of online resources would greatly increase our ability to serve a diverse group of individuals while tearing down the “one size fits all” belief. Not only would this technology be fundamental to the field of aging but it also would deeply stimulate the quality of life of the people we serve.

Leadership Influences

The critical feedback I’ve received from my peers, mentors and leadership team has been instrumental in helping me figure out how to organize my thoughts, ask the right questions and surround myself with the right people to keep my project moving forward. I have established so many wonderful relationships, and I’m surrounded by the most intelligent and passionate people in our field. Whenever I approach a road block or become discouraged, it is those individuals, a few miles or a mere phone call away, who never hesitate to offer strong advice.

Turning Points

My action learning project has been extremely challenging to say the least. However, the concept is far too important to allow those challenges to be a deterrent. We all know that the best laid plans will encounter road blocks. But road blocks influence creativity and bring forth innovation. There are so many components that must be addressed to bring my project from a written idea to actual production. It requires a huge amount of support and expertise from a financial, technological and project management stand point. I am consistently meeting with individuals who can offer insights.

Moving Forward

I have formed a group of passionate individuals who have eagerly offered their expertise. In the months to follow, I look forward to having an actual outline and a tag team in place to assist me in obtaining the necessary resources and agency contacts needed to create this fascinating technology. I am fully aware of the time it will take to make this a reality; however, I will be persistent and intentional in gaining results. The success of this project will be the result of several people working toward one common goal, which is what great leadership is all about.

Key Learning

Having the distinct honor of being a Leadership AAHSA Fellow has given me a profound and in-depth review of my true leadership abilities. Concluding our journey with the action learning project helped me put everything I've learned into action. I have become a confident speaker and an intense listener. I understand that asking the right questions is far more important than having all the right answers. I can appreciate the necessary balance between effort and rest; most importantly for me, I recognize that being transparent is not an indication of weakness.

“asking the right questions is far more important than having all the right answers.”



A portrait of Donna Murphy, a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a grey cardigan over a blue and black patterned top. The background is a dark green, textured surface, possibly a tree or foliage.

DONNA MURPHY

Social Services Coordinator
Sojourner Truth Manor/Christian
Church Homes
Oakland, CA

Bio Summary

Donna serves as the social services coordinator at Sojourner Truth Manor after more than 20 years' dedicated service as a RN in both the private and public sectors. She is also a commissioner for Oakland's Commission on Aging.

Community Service Coordination Program (CSCP)

The CSCP will provide an essential link between vulnerable populations and access to available resources and services in the community. Outreach efforts will be designed to identify and assess whether older and disabled adults may need help but not be aware of available community resources. Targeted outreach to address the needs of older adults and disabled individuals who repeatedly call 9-1-1 for non-life-threatening reasons would prevent these “frequent flyers” from needlessly bogging down the 9-1-1 emergency response system and first responders.


Leadership Influences

The CSCP is a long-term project that will enable senior and disabled persons to live longer, healthier and more independently. This project warrants further discussion and requires the input, effort and support of all community partners to be successful. I have met with the Area Agency on Aging director, Alameda County Senior Injury Prevention Project director, our district City Council member and our city’s Health and Human Services director on aging. There has been widespread interest in this program, and these community partners are committed to continuing its development into the next phase of implementation.



Turning Points

I was delightfully surprised by the level of sustained interest in the project, considering California's ongoing struggle with senior services budget cuts. I have found this to have an unexpected yet crucial impact on cementing commitment at the beginning of a project of this magnitude.



“I have developed a bolder voice in my community as a strong leader in senior advocacy.”

Moving Forward

In the years to come, I see the CSCP substantially reducing the number of 9-1-1 calls on an already overburdened metropolitan emergency response system. As the program takes root in the community, isolated seniors will have more access to community resources and programs. In the end, our connectivity between our isolated senior and disabled populations and the wider community will have been enhanced exponentially.

Key Learning

As I have become more acquainted with my leadership style, I have strengthened my relationships with community partners and developed a bolder voice in my community as a strong leader in senior advocacy. Now that I have engaged in these dialogues, it has strengthened my commitment to securing the safety net for seniors and disabled persons who are isolated in their homes and have no connection to resources and services to which they are entitled and deserve in order to age in place.

A portrait of a Black man with a short haircut, smiling and wearing a dark blue pinstripe suit, white shirt, and a patterned tie. He is standing in front of a background of green evergreen branches.

JEREMY NEELY

Executive Director
Normandy Farms Estates, an ACTS
Retirement-Life Community
Blue Bell, PA

Bio Summary

Jeremy is executive director of Normandy Farms Estates, a CCRC that serves more than 550 seniors on a daily basis. He received an MBA in health administration from Eastern University and is a licensed nursing home administrator. He serves as a CARF-CCAC surveyor and is a CASP graduate.

Eliminating Ageism in Senior Services

The purpose of my project is to address the complexities of ageism by developing a training module. ACTS, like many senior services organizations, provides an environment where individuals from multiple generations interact on a daily basis. Currently, my youngest employee is 14 years old and the oldest resident is 105. These two individuals have to coexist with their various experiences and prejudices. Ageism in senior services comes from the youngest of employees to the seniors themselves. I will seek to define this complex subject and develop training materials that will combat ageism.

Leadership Influences

When I began this project, I incorrectly assumed that it was “my” action learning project. I would set the direction, fill in the blanks and have it completed within my set timeframe. As I involved residents, staff and peers, I gained a multitude of valuable resources. Ideas started flowing, and the one-dimensional project I would have produced began to form into a comprehensive tool that will prove more valuable to our organization. Through the development of these relationships, I was convinced that I did not have to have all of the answers.



Turning Points

I have experienced a number of turning points throughout the year. The most memorable served as a catalyst for the project. I knew I wanted to tackle the complex social issue of ageism. However, finding the time and organizing the massive amount of data served as a challenge. I made a conscious decision to speak about ageism at a Toastmaster's meeting. I was shocked by the clarity that preparing for the speech

brought to my project. In addition, speaking about the issue and seeing the expressions on the faces of my audience assured me that this project is important.

Moving Forward

I hope that through research, surveys, interviews and observation, I can provide a clear and comprehensive view into the complexities of ageism. I would like to share the impact that ageism, once defined, has on senior citizens. Finally, I would like to compile this information, along with steps that we can take to counter ageism, and use it to train the staff of Normandy Farms Estates and the other ACTS communities.

Key Learning

Through this project, I have come to understand who I am as a leader. Even more importantly, I learned who I am not. With this realization, I can surround myself with others who possess the qualities I lack. I learned that there is no failure in having an awareness of your flaws. However, there is failure in ignoring them. This project has reaffirmed the importance of building healthy relationships. Through Leadership AAHSA, I have gained lifelong connections. I have become a part of a network of professionals who provide the highest possible level of quality services to the aged.

A portrait of Kristi Quick, a woman with blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue collared shirt. The background is a close-up of green pine needles.

KRISTI QUICK

Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operating
Officer

Vicar's Landing & Glenmoor/LCPS
Management, Inc.
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

Bio Summary

Kristi has a BS in accounting and an MBA from the University of North Florida. Kristi, who joined Vicar's Landing in 1994, is a licensed nursing home administrator and a certified public accountant with over 23 years of experience in both public and private industry accounting.

Health Care Expansion

Our newest CCRC, Glenmoor, has health care needs beyond the current capacity. We are currently running 100 percent occupancy in both assisted living and skilled nursing. The result for our members is transfer to our Vicar's Landing community, located 25 miles to the north. This has placed a strain on relationships with our members who are being transferred or are having a spouse transferred out of the community. Our management team wants to be able to honor the contract and care for our members within our community.

Leadership Influences

From the beginning, this project has been a balancing act of looking at future needs for health care within land use constraints and determining a design and construction budget, while considering the total cost of the project compared to the incremental revenue expected. Working with our underwriter, we looked at several plans of finance, as well as the cost of doing nothing. We may need to change our corporate structure to obtain better financing rates. All of these processes have deepened relationships with our board and management team, as well as the consultants with whom we are working.



Turning Points

I have been surprised by the slow pace of this project. As part of this leadership year, I have learned that we are working on an adaptive solution to our problem, while I have been more comfortable with a technical solution. I think that beyond coming up with a quick build fix, I have used the skills of active listening with our membership and our leadership team to hear possibilities I would not have considered.

Moving Forward

This project will benefit our membership immediately by easing the concern that there is no room in health care, should they or their spouse need it. It is a project that will strengthen the financial outlook for the community. We will be adding capacity that is currently not available, making the community more appealing to our market. We also will be relieving our staff of the stress of turning away members in need.

Key Learning

This year has truly been transformational for me. Self-reflection, the Leaders in Residence program, site visits, conversations with other Fellows and the relationships that have been built will all be treasured time. I have learned of the need to get



off the dance floor and look from the balcony. I hope to share the learning of my leadership year with others in my organization. I will also bring active listening skills and being “in the moment” to my personal relationships.

A portrait of Cathy Ritter, a woman with shoulder-length blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a black top with a white cardigan. The background is a dark, out-of-focus evergreen tree.

CATHY RITTER

Vice President, Marketing
Asbury Communities
Germantown, MD

Bio Summary

Cathy was a newspaper reporter in the Illinois capitol and spent 13 years in government, including four years as Illinois' tourism director before joining the senior-living field. After six years at Friendship Senior Options, she joined Asbury Communities in May 2010. She and her husband Kevin have two daughters.

A Shifting Market: When You Haven't Moved But Your Market Has

My project is aimed at helping senior-living organizations address the challenge of how to learn to adjust the way they deliver services – and whom they serve – when the familiar neighborhood around them changes. Rather than threatening an organization's mission, change can bring opportunities to deliver services in new ways.

Leadership Influences

Because my project is research-based, I must rely on my sponsoring organization's support to collect data and conduct field research. Between Asbury and Leadership AAHSA, I've been the beneficiary of wonderful help and ideas from people who have stretched my thinking. It's been a real-life demonstration of the "cone in a box" concept; when you're outside the box, you'll never figure out what's inside unless you examine it from every angle. My genius team of advisors is helping me make sure I don't mistake the "cone" *inside* the box for something else!



“...no one can change what a community wants to do, but can only help a community do what it wants to do... better.”

Turning Points

Midway through my year in Leadership AAHSA, I took a new position. I'd been excited about the prospect of finding opportunities in the changing demographics around my former community in northwest suburban Chicago, but wasn't sure my new organization would have the same interest. I was startled my second day on the job to hear my

new boss expressing interest in assigning me to do a similar research project for Asbury. Clearly, the question of how to respond to changing demographics is one that many mature senior-living organizations may be asking.

Moving Forward

My hope is that my research will help provide my supporting organization with guidance on how to address challenging trends and find opportunity in what could be perceived as a threat. I also hope this work can stand as a model and provide inspiration to other organizations that know change has happened, but haven't developed an approach for managing it in a way that supports their mission.

Key Learning

One key idea shaping my project is a concept shared at AAHSA's spring conference by Jeff Jarvis, author of *What Would Google Do?* Jarvis explained no one can change what a community wants to do, but can only help a community do what it wants to do ... better. This is profound guidance for shaping a response to the emergence of a new group. The key to success is not to burn energy on trying to alter that group, but to understand what it wants and help it achieve its goals in a way that serves the server as well.

A portrait of Ancel Romero, a man with dark hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a blue button-down shirt. The background consists of green pine branches.

ANCEL ROMERO

Senior Vice President
Affordable Housing
American Baptist Homes of the West
Pleasanton, CA

Bio Summary

Ancel was born in Manila, the Philippines, and came to the United States in pursuit of better opportunities to serve as many people as possible. He joined ABHOW in 1998, which has given him many opportunities to do what he is passionate about.

Creating an Affordable Housing Subsidiary Organization

My project provides an in-depth analysis of the feasibility of creating a subsidiary organization focused solely on meeting the affordable housing needs of older adults and disabled persons in the western United States. This new organization will have the legal structure, resources and talent to further enhance ABHOW's mission of seeking to enhance the independence, well-being and security of seniors. The single-minded emphasis on affordable housing that would be provided by the subsidiary would enable ABHOW to zoom in on affordable housing developments that would be communities of choice by the increased number of residents these communities will serve.

Leadership Influences


The relationships I developed have broadened my action learning project and brought it into sharper focus. I have developed stronger bonds with many of my peers in ABHOW, since all are supportive and will be playing crucial roles in the project's development. The possibility of bringing the PACE model into ABHOW has also become a matter to consider. The relationships have allowed me to be more knowledgeable and insightful. I have also picked up technical knowledge by



listening, learning and doing. Matters that were not familiar to me involving CCRC operations, human resources, finance and PACE are no longer as unfamiliar.

Turning Points

Meeting Roger Myers, my Leadership AAHSA coach, was a significant turning point. Roger briefed me on the nuances of PACE and connected me to influential experts in that field. The book *True North* has guided me in my action learning project journey by reminding me of my core values and how those values are aligned with my project since it involves service to those with minimal resources.



“It has given me the gift of understanding the *how* in addition to the *why*.”

Moving Forward

I hope I can be influential in establishing an ABHOW subsidiary organization that will soar to new heights by serving an increasing number of low-income seniors and disabled people in optimal ways. The organization will be on the cutting edge: innovative and resourceful in finding creative ways to enhance housing with supportive services for people with low incomes. The organization will generate sufficient revenue to be financially independent of the parent organization and will add to its bottom line.

Key Learning

The process has allowed me to be a more disciplined, deliberate and thoughtful leader. It has also invigorated and energized me, reminding me in many ways why I've chosen to embark on a journey of serving seniors. It has given me the gift of understanding the *how* in addition to the *why*.

A portrait of Aline Russotto, a woman with dark, wavy hair, smiling. She is wearing a white blazer, a pearl necklace, and pearl earrings. The background is a close-up of green pine needles.

ALINE RUSSOTTO

Associate Executive Director
Orchard Cove/Hebrew SeniorLife
Canton, MA

Bio Summary

Aline is currently the associate executive director of Orchard Cove, a Hebrew SeniorLife sponsored organization for which she has worked for the past 12 years. She grew up in Belgium and holds a degree in hotel management from the Lausanne School of Hotel Management in Switzerland.

Vitality 360

The focus of my action learning project is the development of a forward-thinking, innovative and comprehensive wellness concept, in line with Hebrew SeniorLife's mission: to redefine aging. Vitality 360 empowers the residents we serve to live life to its fullest. Through a senior coaching process, residents are inspired to think about their lives in a new, holistic way and to set goals supported by an interdisciplinary team of professionals. With proven results and brought to a greater group of seniors, I believe Vitality 360 has the full potential of redefining the way seniors age in our nation.


Leadership Influences

The relationships developed during my project were a critical part of its outcome and my growth as a leader. My project was launched with the guidance, vision and ongoing support from our CEO, executive director and physician-in-chief. The Vitality 360 interdisciplinary team of professionals served as my sounding board – those I could rely on day after day while developing our concept, allowing me to learn more about my role as a leader. I feel fortunate for the opportunities of continued growth and interaction with remarkable team members.

Turning Points

Early on in the process, author Ron Heifetz taught me the importance of spending time on the balcony, where I reside more and more. Bill George inspired me to find my “True North,” strengthening my skills as an authentic leader. My deeper understanding of the transformation from “I” to “we” bettered my ability to engage others to lead. All growing opportunities were turning points in my aptitude to support, influence and guide the team developing the Vitality 360 concept.





“Leadership AAHSA
has given me the
opportunity to interact
with extraordinary
individuals in a
powerful way.”

Moving Forward

My hope is when measurable outcomes are available, my project will permit seniors in our nation to engage in a new aging process. My vision is to inspire other communities to incorporate this innovative wellness vision, allowing our field to benefit from a new way of thinking about aging. Vitality 360 will contribute to creating a new chapter of life, one in which seniors are inspired and empowered to live life at its fullest.

Key Learning

My action learning project, supported by a year-long experience with unique team members, is an important part of my growth as a leader. I was able to apply the theories and concepts discussed during our time together. Leadership AAHSA has given me the opportunity to interact with extraordinary individuals in a powerful way. Each one has allowed me to reflect on my authentic leadership style and given me the courage to grow. There is nothing too small to be noticed in the power of transformation!

A portrait of Katherine Saidis, a woman with long blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark sleeveless top. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches.

KATHERINE SAIDIS

Executive Director
The Village at Sprenkle Drive
Lutheran Social Services of South
Central PA
York, PA

Bio Summary

Katherine is the executive director of the Village at Sprenkle Drive, part of Lutheran Social Services of South Central Pennsylvania. She completed her bachelor's degree and master's degree in health administration from The Pennsylvania State University. She is licensed as a nursing home administrator and is certified as an aging services professional (CASP).

Pathway to Organizational Person-Centered Care

My project has been to design and implement an organizational person-centered care committee for Lutheran Social Services' six retirement communities. My hope is that by having a committee of direct care staff and managers from each campus, we can develop an educational plan for all employees within our organization centered on the power of choice and individualized care. With standardized training, we believe the concepts learned will be used to transform the way in which we provide care to elders on each of our campuses.

Leadership Influences

Throughout this project, relationships have been developed. However, I can't say those relationships have influenced the project's direction. From initiation of our committee, we all knew where we were headed directionally; what we didn't know was how we would get there. Through conversations and meetings, relationship development has more influenced the way in which I have led the committee, rather than the direction in which we would head. Rich conversation with others who are equally as passionate about moving our organization ahead, as well as the sharing of best practices and ideas, has inspired authentic leadership in each of us.



Turning Points

The largest surprise thus far has certainly been the vast difference in where each of our campuses is in the process of and education about person-centered care. Many individuals sitting around the table had never heard of “culture change.” For many, their nomination to the committee was their first exposure to person-centered care and the need for transformation on our campuses.

Moving Forward

My hope for this project is that the global person-centered care committee simply sets the stage for each campus as to where we are headed. Through education and training, I foresee each campus leading its own initiatives in a way that best suits those they serve. I believe that as we successfully lead some smaller key initiatives, direct-care staff as well as managers will see the positive effect it has on the way we provide care and attract innovation and leadership from our peers to inspire change.

Key Learning

My peers have challenged me to think more deeply, to look at a problem and learn to ask the right questions, listen more and talk less. They have asked me questions that have challenged me to scratch beneath the surface and to dream in color. I have found myself more reflective as a result of this experience and have been blessed to be a part of so many rich and meaningful relationships with each of my Leadership AAHSA colleagues. Although cliché, it truly is a transformational journey that I see myself traveling for the months and years ahead.

A portrait of Daphne Schreiber, a woman with short dark hair, smiling. She is wearing a white pinstriped blazer, a pearl necklace, and pearl earrings. The background is dark with some green foliage visible on the left.

DAPHNE SCHREIBER

Executive Director
The Village at Heritage Point/Mon
Health System, Inc.
Morgantown, WV

Bio Summary

Daphne has been the executive director of The Village at Heritage Point for the 11 years it has been open. With her degree in health planning and administration, she has worked in state government, private hospitals and academic medical centers in strategic planning and marketing capacities.

The Village at Heritage Point Foundation

Creating a culture of philanthropy will become another avenue for The Village to fulfill its mission. By creating an opportunity to support us in a tangible way, my project will enhance the quality of life for all who live and work here. As this initiative unfolds, its goals will be built around quality care and services, and prospective donors will know that their support is going to an organization with a passion for its mission. Those touched by The Village care deeply about it. The goal of the project is to build on that loyalty for the future of The Village.

Leadership Influences

The people involved in this project need to feel empowered to raise questions at every step along the way, which in turn will impact the evolution of the initiative. The committee members complement each other in style and expertise. My role is to instill confidence in myself and others while listening, respecting conflicting approaches and communicating with enthusiasm. The initiative will unfold in a disciplined way, building momentum toward the goal with passion so that the project resonates throughout the organization. As a work in progress, these elements and others will continue to influence the project and me.



Turning Points

There have been several turning points. First, realizing that it is acceptable – even healthy – to need and ask for support and expertise from others. In fact, moving the project from paper to a reality was due to others. Second, knowing that to admit mistakes is not only acceptable, but respected. Third, seeking and then accepting criticism is essential. Fourth, asking questions and then listening, instead of directing a process or resolution. Finally, and most important, affirming that emotions are indeed very contagious. Becoming more aware of our emotions has created a deeper community spirit at The Village.

Moving Forward

This project presents a singular opportunity to create a philanthropic avenue from the ground up and to provide an example of the process of beginning a new development initiative. The project goals will guide how it unfolds over time. They are: to honor the passion that is The Village; to build on the vision of those whose foresight made The Village a reality; to give residents, families and staff the ability to express appreciation and gratitude in a tangible way; to elevate the spirit at The Village such that others will benefit from our work.

Key Learning

The leadership challenge of this project is to ensure that residents are inspired and see its shared purpose. Focusing on others' emotions has been surprisingly rewarding and has guided my day to day interactions with staff and residents. My communication is more deliberate and planned, and the deeper understanding of those around me has helped me find the purpose of my leadership. Due to the growth, perspectives and wisdom afforded me through Leadership AAHSA, as this project unfolds, the future of The Village will be enhanced as will the lives of those who come after us.

A portrait of Melissa Sharp, a woman with blonde hair and blue eyes, smiling. She is wearing a purple sweater, a pearl necklace, and hoop earrings. The background consists of dark green pine branches.

MELISSA SHARP

Regional Vice President
AAHSA
Washington, D.C.

Bio Summary

Melissa began her career as assistant curator at the Hebrew Home at Riverdale in New York. Her time there ignited a passion for serving older adults and led her to join AAHSA in 2002. Melissa's current role as regional vice president creates opportunities to support state associations and members throughout the southeast.

The Art of the Matter

Many AAHSA members bring art into their communities to enhance residents' quality of life. My project will focus on the innovative ways members throughout the continuum bring art into their organizations from inception through programming. My goal is to produce a toolkit so members who do not currently utilize art will have a roadmap of different models to consider. Art is such an important part of wellness that I hope many more members will be inspired to incorporate not just artwork but programming to support their residents.

Leadership Influences

As I visit members and see how they use art in their communities, the number of partners for my project has grown. I am blessed that my mentors at AAHSA, Larry Minnix and Mary Reilly, have recognized the importance of my project – not just to the field but to my growth as a leader. From them, I have learned that leaders harness the passion of those around them to further a mission. Working on a project I wouldn't normally have an opportunity to focus on in my day to day life has ignited a new energy in me.

Turning Points

Going into our Cleveland experience, I actually had decided on a different project. Then, Rob Hilton, CEO at AM McGregor Home, and his wife, Dale, director of distance learning at the Cleveland Museum of Art, invited our class to visit the museum and have dinner. How fortunate I was that they sat with me! Dale explained that the museum began partnering with area AAHSA members to video conference the collection to residents who can't travel anymore. I told Dale about my experience with Hebrew Home, which is an accredited museum. From there, my new project began.

Moving Forward

When I visit members and tell them about my project, they are anxious to share their programs with me. In fact, they want to know if I want to highlight their program. The more I travel, the more innovative models I identify to include in the project. My hope over the years ahead is that the project will expand to include all aspects of using the arts and creativity to enhance the quality of life of those we serve. I hope it will impact the field at large in such a way that wellness becomes the core of what we do.

Key Learning

Through the Leadership AAHSA experience, I have learned that the important moments of our lives truly shape us as leaders. The action learning process has contributed to my growth in so many ways. My past is now integrated into my present in a way that I never imagined. Unlocking that “secret” passion has reinvigorated me. My courage and strength as a leader are deepening. Knowing that my action learning project will be meaningful to the field has helped me realize that I can do amazing things if I put my mind and talents to it.



A portrait of Eileen Smith, a woman with short, wavy blonde hair, wearing a white jacket over a blue top, a pearl necklace, and pearl earrings. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is dark with some green foliage visible on the left.

EILEEN SMITH

Director of Nursing Services
Alzheimer's Resource Center of
Connecticut, Inc.
Plantsville, CT

Bio Summary

Eileen is the director of nursing services at the Alzheimer's Resource Center of Connecticut. She received her nursing degree from Hunter College-Bellevue School of Nursing in New York City. She is certified in gerontology. For the past 20 years she has dedicated herself to aging services and transforming dementia care.

Improving Lives, Sharing Knowledge and Transforming Care

Enabling and Empowering Organizations to Improve the Lives of People Affected by Dementia.

For 20 years, our organization's mission has focused on singularly caring for people affected by dementia. In this time we have developed enlightened standards of practice for dementia care. This approach combines person-centered care (knowing the people you are caring for and their life stories) with an emphasis on empathy, innovation and education. My project began by identifying what makes our dementia program unique, effective and sustaining. The focus is to use this information, as well as successful methods to share these standards, to empower other organizations to successfully transform their dementia care practices.

Leadership Influences


I have challenged myself to write more and to develop methods of reaching and teaching others. My colleagues and I have traveled to many other organizations to share innovative approaches to caring for people affected by dementia. It has been rewarding and inspiring to work with visionaries



who are passionate about transforming dementia care. My confidence as a leader and a teacher has increased. It has made me even more passionate about transforming dementia care throughout the country. I am equally inspired by the good providers across the country who are interested in learning how to improve practice.

Turning Points

This was a transformational year for me. I have so much more I want to do. I have so much more I need to do to change the way people with dementia are cared for. The biggest turning point has been my realization that I am a teacher. I have spent my life as a nurse helping others, taking care of others, helping lead and develop



compassionate nurses. I now realize that I need to teach and inspire others with my passion to change dementia care.

Moving Forward

My hope is that we see radical change in how people with dementia are accepted, supported and empowered in our residential and community settings. I look forward to challenging and exciting providers to realize possibilities that are not currently evident to them. I am optimistic that our residential communities will become the preferred option for people living with dementia. This will require efforts that leverage the strengths of advocates, the government and other not-for-profit and for-profit organizations. Sharing knowledge, passion and power can improve lives and create transformation. We can transform dementia care.

Key Learning

The Leadership AAHSA process has increased my self-awareness and reflection. It has brought me to the realization that there is so much more I have to do with my life and has taken me out of my comfort zone. It also has helped me to become a better leader and teacher. I am more confident in my leadership abilities to help people find what they are passionate about and to inspire change. My legacy will be my passion for transforming dementia care.

A portrait of Nancy Stoddard, a woman with shoulder-length blonde hair and red-rimmed glasses, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue blazer over a white collared shirt. The background consists of green evergreen branches.

NANCY STODDARD

Senior Director, Information
Technology
Jewish Home Lifecare Corporate
Services
New York, NY

Bio Summary

Nancy received a BSN from Syracuse University and an MBA from Baruch College. She served in the Air Force and worked in critical care, nursing education and was a director of nursing. Currently she is senior director, information technology at Jewish Home Lifecare in New York City.

Implementing a Staff Empowerment Strategy to Promote Electronic Health Record Adoption

There is ample evidence that the introduction of electronic health records has not always resulted in positive outcomes for consumers and health care organizations. Health care lags behind other industries in employing technological innovation to improve quality, enhance efficiency and reduce cost. Policy makers on national and local levels have set forth an aggressive agenda to promote information technology and health information exchange to further the achievement of health care performance goals. The staff empowerment adoption strategy aligns with and builds on the gains achieved through culture change and patient-centered care, and it provides a basis to manage change proactively.

Leadership Influences

Cooperation and partnership with labor along with colleagues in human resources and marketing have proven integral to the empowerment strategy. Union organizers from each campus were invited to join our Change Management and Communication Team. They helped us to understand the perceptions, fears, desires and wants of our staff, which provided



“by encouraging others to contribute, the result is significantly enhanced.”

an invaluable guide to decision making on many key issues. Their enthusiasm for the project was palpable, and acceptance by the “Care Ambassador” volunteers was bolstered by their trust in the union. I’ve learned that time spent to maintain relationships is a great investment.

Turning Points

I learned firsthand the principles of technical versus adaptive change described by Ronald A. Heifetz. The expertise that I bring to the group is technical in many respects, but a solution that is technically sound, yet cannot be implemented, will not succeed. The real solution lies in the adjustments that must be made to face the harsh reality that the change imparts. By empowering the team to take control over the design process and impact the final decision, adaptive change was fostered. My experience at Leadership AAHSA was pivotal in letting go of a myopic technical focus.

Moving Forward

I am very optimistic that the organizational transformation ignited by culture change will be furthered through the introduction of information technology. I have a vision of an empowered and engaged staff with access to information they need to provide the best person-centered care. I believe that having the evidence that their contributions to the positive outcomes are measured, valued and honored will result in staff satisfaction and enhance recruitment and retention. I believe that by taking risks and supporting staff through this change, we will see the organizational outcomes that our stakeholders expect.

Key Learning

I have learned that by encouraging others to contribute, the result is significantly enhanced. My instinct before was to inject others with my knowledge by providing the answers and smoothing over the uncomfortable silence. I have learned that a far better result can be achieved by quietly creating an atmosphere wherein everyone can contribute. I am fortunate to be coached and supported by mentors, and through this experience have learned to see criticism as an opportunity to consider an alternate course of action. My own outlook, health and well-being have been restored by making time for Sabbath.

A portrait of Camille Thompson, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair and bangs, smiling. She is wearing a white and blue striped collared shirt and a pearl necklace. The background consists of dark green evergreen branches.

CAMILLE THOMPSON

Vice President and Chief Operating
Officer
Christian Living Communities
Denver, CO

Bio Summary

Camille is vice president and chief operating officer for Christian Living Communities, where she has held various positions including director of sales and marketing, executive director and her current position as COO. Camille holds a BS in restaurant, hotel and institutional management from Texas Tech University.

Hospital Partnerships: Innovation and Collaboration During Times of Significant Change

Christian Living Communities is creating meaningful partnerships with area hospitals to address critical care and funding issues facing our senior adult population. Our intention in this process is to problem-solve together through collaboration, case management, technology and joint resources to promote improved quality of care, allowing our elders to live fulfilling and healthier lives. Our specific areas of focus will be wellness initiatives, telemedicine, case management and maximization of resources.

Leadership Influences

The initial phase of this project led me to reconnect with a mentor, someone I had not connected with in some time. This connection offered me additional resources and insight into hospital systems, primarily about how they function and what is driving their business planning with the recent health care reform. I continue to find that one interaction leads to the next and has me beginning to travel down a road of developing new relationships. Each Person I



meet along the way offers a valuable nugget of information that further equips me with the knowledge I need to continue the journey.

Turning Points

My pre-conceived initial concern was that hospitals would not see long-term care providers as significant partners and would not engage us in dialogue. The reality that I believe will occur is quite different. They need LTC providers at the table discussing ways to care for seniors returning to home or communities after shorter hospital stays to ensure that those they discharge are not re-admitted within 30 days. I have found that the numerous networking meetings and

the information and data collection process have taken longer than anticipated, but are necessary to establish the right foundation.

Moving Forward

The months ahead will include a series of networking meetings and finding key individuals within the health care systems to form partnerships. We also will begin educating those within our organization about the health care reform legislation and how it may change our current model of care delivery. We will have roundtable discussions among all partners to identify ways we can work together to assist seniors in successful aging through innovative approaches. These are truly times of change; often it's during times like these that you begin to do what you should have done all along.

Key Learning

Having the privilege to identify one key project of focus, and the gift of time to dream about the possibilities that will unfold because of the work to be done, is truly a gift most leaders do not encounter due to hectic schedules. Leadership AAHSA has given me the ability to craft a vision for our organization that can improve resident care, is collaborative in nature and spurred by recent legislative changes. Being on Capitol Hill and meeting with legislators during health care reform, one of the most significant times for our field, was monumental.

A portrait of Priscilla Vint, a woman with shoulder-length, wavy, grey and brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a black top with white polka dots and a thin necklace. The background consists of green pine branches.

PRISCILLA VINT

Administrator
Lutheran Home-Albemarle/Lutheran
Services for the Aging
Albemarle, NC

Bio Summary

Priscilla serves as the administrator of the Lutheran Home. Prior to this she spent 12 years working for an investor-owned hospital corporation. As a result of these experiences she is convinced of the benefits the not-for-profit business model affords in providing services people need.

Community Adult Respite Experience, the “Care Café”

The Care Café is a respite program for seniors living at home who cannot be left alone. It is being developed in Albemarle by a 15-member volunteer board of directors made up of clergy from five local churches and 10 interested lay people. Modeled after a program developed at a nursing facility in Greensboro, N.C., it could easily be replicated by other not-for-profit nursing facilities. The café will be open five hours a day and will offer participants a safe setting where they can socialize and engage in meaningful activities while relieving their caregivers.

Leadership Influences

The clergy members on our board have experience establishing not-for-profit corporations such as homeless shelters and pregnancy resource centers. I have learned the steps involved in establishing a not-for-profit business from them and in turn have been able to contribute my experience working with the population we plan to serve at the café. Judy Brown’s lecture on the “Rule of Six” was instrumental in changing the way I participate as a board member.

Turning Points

The Leadership AAHSA field trips in Chicago to The British Home Community and Mather's-More Than a Café were instrumental in helping me to articulate a vision for my Fellow board members of what we might offer at the Care Café. A mission statement quoted by an employee of The British Home, "We serve seniors in need and those who serve them," has influenced our marketing approach for this program.

Moving Forward

I look forward to the Care Café becoming financially self-sustaining and hope that it can be replicated by not-for-profit providers in other markets. I look forward to the program providing a life-affirming purpose not only for the participants but also for the volunteers who serve there, much like the volunteers we met at Mather's Café.

Key Learning

The Leadership AAHSA experience has provided a much-needed support group of interesting and inspiring Fellow travelers on this journey to create the future for our field. It has given me fresh ideas about where the path may lead. The reading, lectures and dialogue have opened my eyes to the ways in which I had become complacent in my leadership. The most important outcome of this experience for me is that, as a leader in the field, I now feel a part of my association whereas before I felt more like a bystander.

“I now feel a part of my
association whereas
before I felt more
like a bystander.”



A portrait of Teresa Wester-Peters, a woman with short brown hair and glasses, smiling. She is wearing a blue and green patterned top and a necklace. The background consists of evergreen tree branches.

TERESA WESTER-PETERS

Administrator
Provena Cor Mariae Center/Provena
Life Connections
Rockford, IL

Bio Summary

Teresa has two daughters, ages 14 and 11. She was a clinical social worker for 10 years of her career, then entered the field of geriatrics as an administrator. She loves working in Catholic health care. She is active in her community, children's school, church and other organizations.

Learning Organization: Phase One-Administrator-in-Training Program

Provena Life Connections has great capacity to infuse health care professions and future leaders with geriatric expertise. This not only includes clinical knowledge but cultural competencies, values, inspiration and innovation that will serve our field well in the future. A learning organization immerses students of nursing, medicine, social work and health care administration in the unique field of geriatrics. Phase One of this project is the development of an administrator-in-training (AIT) program for Provena Life Connections. This program will offer internal candidates the opportunity to learn and exhibit the key competencies and values that the organization holds to be important.

Leadership Influences

Through the initial steps of this project, I have had the opportunity to study the key leader competencies of various organizations throughout the country. This process has influenced my ability to give voice to the key competencies that Provena Life Connections values in its leaders. The process has also helped me ask the right questions of our senior leader team and secure critical feedback about capacity to learn and cultural fit. Partnering with my colleagues has helped

to shape and broaden the scope of competencies and experiences needed in a successful AIT program.

Turning Points

One of the turning points has been to help my colleagues with “strength finding” and how each leader in our organization has great capacity to provide experiential learning opportunities for AIT candidates.

Moving Forward

One aspect of this project is the impact on those we serve. Our residents will have the unparalleled opportunity to influence the experience of future leaders in geriatrics. The residents wish to contribute and do worthwhile work for others as lifelong learners and teachers. They are at the core of a learning organization that teaches the value of geriatrics as a specialization. As the AIT program unfolds, and as future aspects of the learning organization evolve, the experience of those we serve will only be heightened. I also hope this project will better prepare future leaders.

Key Learning

We heard a wise leader say during our Leadership AAHSA journey, “Don’t judge a person by the answers he gives, but by the questions he asks.” This project has been all about asking the right questions, rather than giving answers. It is about

learning from others and taking time to listen. This project is about getting on the balcony and gaining perspective about how innovation, compassion and competency can merge to create the future of aging services in our individual organizations through the structure of a true learning environment.

“It is about learning
from others and
taking time to listen.”



Hosts

AAHSA extends deep gratitude to the following member organizations for offering the **Leadership AAHSA Class of 2010** Fellows the opportunity to experience real-world transformational practices and for providing meeting space and logistical support.

A.M. McGregor Home
East Cleveland, OH

Ecumen
Shoreview, MN

Eliza Bryant Village
Cleveland, OH

The British Home
Brookfield, IL

Mather's-More Than a Café
Chicago, IL

Presbyterian Homes and Services
North Oaks, MN

2010 Leaders in Residence

AAHSA thanks the following aging-services leaders* for sharing their professional and personal leadership stories through intimate conversations with the **Leadership AAHSA Class of 2010**, allowing Fellows to learn from their first-hand experiences.

John Alfano
Ohio Association of Homes
and Services for the Aging
Columbus, OH

Kathleen Anderson
Goodwin House Incorporated
Alexandria, VA

Matthew Anderson
The Osborn
Rye, NY

Tom Becker
Pacific Retirement Services
Medford, OR

Cathy Bergland
Presbyterian Homes and
Services
Roseville, MN

Jasmine Borrego
TELACU Residential
Management
Los Angeles, CA

Ann Conn
A.M. McGregor Home
East Cleveland, OH

Peter DeGolia
A.M. McGregor Home
East Cleveland, OH

John Diffey
The Kendal Corporation
Kennett Square, PA

Robin Dunbar
Ecumen
Shoreview, MN

Cynthia Dunn
Judson Services, Inc.
Cleveland, OH

Deborah Enty
Eliza Bryant Village
Cleveland, OH

Mick Finn
Ecumen
Shoreview, MN

Deb Hiller
Eliza Jennings Senior
CareNetwork
Lakewood, OH

2010 Leaders in Residence

Rob Hilton

A.M. McGregor Home
East Cleveland, OH

Kay Kallander

American Baptist Homes of
the West
Pleasanton, CA

Sharon Klefsaas

Presbyterian Homes and
Services
St. Paul, MN

Martha Kutic

Jennings Center for Older
Adults
Garfield Heights, OH

Gayle Kvenvold

Aging Services of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN

Mary Leary

Mather Lifeways
Evanston, IL

Dan Lindh

Presbyterian Homes and
Services
Roseville, MN

Connie March

Provena Senior Services
Mokena, IL

Steve McAlilly

Mississippi Methodist
Senior Services
Tupelo, MS

Tangi McCoy

A.M. McGregor Home
East Cleveland, OH

Roger Myers

Presbyterian Villages of
Michigan
Southfield, MI

Wayne Olson

Volunteers of America
Eden Prairie, MN

Doug Olsen

Eau Claire University
Eau Claire, WI

Gary Puma

Springpoint Senior Living
Princeton, NJ

Kathryn Roberts

Ecumen
Shoreview, MN

Lauren Rock

Montefiore Home
Beachwood, OH

**Affiliations current as of January 2010*

2010 Leaders in Residence

Karma Rule
Eliza Bryant
Cleveland, OH

Dennis Russell
Friendsview Retirement
Community
Newberg, OR

Mary Alice Ryan
St. Andrew's Resources
for Seniors
St. Louis, MO

Patty Sawyer
Suncoast Hospice
Clearwater, FL

Harvey Shankman
Eliza Bryant Village
Cleveland, OH

Dennis Sonnenberg
The British Home
Brookfield, IL

Judy Sorum Brown
University of Maryland
College Park
College Park, MD

Mark Thomas
Ebenezer Fairview
Minneapolis, MN

Darren Trisel
Asian Community Center
Nursing Home
Sacramento, CA

Val Ulstad
Hennepin Healthcare
System
Minneapolis, MN

Cheryl Wilson
St. Paul's Senior Homes
and Services
San Diego, CA

Carla Windhorst
Mather Lifeways
Evanston, IL

Design Team and Faculty

The 2010 Design Team and Faculty includes Dr. Judy Sorum Brown, Wendy Green, Kirsten Jacobs and Kevin Bradley. Their contributions to the program design, facilitation and implementation have created a meaningful and inspiring experience for the Fellows. AAHSA is especially grateful for the unique gifts that Dr. Brown brings to the Leadership AAHSA program. She serves as thought leader, facilitator and advisor to the Design Team, Fellows and coaches.



from left to right: Kevin Bradley, Wendy Green, Kirsten Jacobs, Judy Sorum Brown

Kevin Bradley
Manager, Education
Development
AAHSA, Washington, D.C.

Wendy Green
Director, Leadership
Development
AAHSA, Washington, D.C.

Judy Sorum Brown
University of Maryland College
Park
College Park, MD

Kirsten Jacobs
Manager, Education
Development
AAHSA, Washington, D.C.

Coaches

AAHSA is very grateful to offer the Fellows the rich background and expertise of the following 2010 coaches who regularly interface with Fellows and the design team to further learning and offer their wisdom and guidance as experienced leaders in our field.



**JOHN
DIFFEY**

The Kendal Corporation
Kennett Square, PA



from left to right front row: Katherine Saidis, Shareen Anderson, Steven Hardy, Daphne Shreiber

from left to right back row: John Diffey, Lisa Morrow, Andrew Applegate, Robert Mayer, Jill Layne

Coaches



KAY
KALLANDER

American Baptist Homes
of the West
Pleasanton, CA



*from left to right front row: Teresa Wester-Peters, Lynne Giacobbe,
Rebecca Donato, Melissa Sharp*

*from left to right back row: Jeremy Neely, Kay Kallander, DeAnn
Escalante, David Gentner, Kristi Quick*

Coaches



**ROGER
MYERS**

Presbyterian Villages
of Michigan
Southfield, MI



from left to right front row: *Priscilla Vint, Eileen Smith, Ancel Romero, Roger Myers, Laura Lamb, Camille Thompson, Cathy Ritter*

from left to right back row: *Benjamin Hoyle, James Farnan*

Coaches



**PATTYE
SAWYER**

Suncoast Hospice
Clearwater, FL



from left to right front row: Aline Russotto, Nancy Stoddard, Pattye Sawyer, Diana Delgado, Donna Murphy

from left to right back row: John Larson, Mathew Bogner, Vassar Byrd, Denise Gannon



Dear Class of 2010 Leadership AAHSA Fellows:

Congratulations! I hope this past year with the Leadership AAHSA program has brought tremendous growth to you – both professionally AND personally. Your hard work, dedication to learning and commitment to the field are testament to what AAHSA saw in your application for the program more than a year ago.

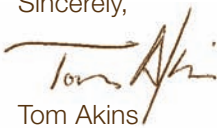
You have visited some great places over the past 12 months – Chicago, Washington, D.C., Cleveland, Minneapolis and, finally, Los Angeles. As you traveled, you built lifelong friendships and learned things that will benefit not only your organizations but your own personal development. If you're like the Fellows in the first three classes, the program has left you with one giant question: "What's next?"

Looking forward, it's my privilege to welcome you to the next chapter in your journey – your status as a member of the Leadership AAHSA Alumni Network. As a Leadership AAHSA alum, you'll have the opportunity to give back to the field through participation with other alums on a number of committees and initiatives. Whether you're interested in shared learning, service, communications, Fellowship, governance or fundraising, the network will afford you the chance to build on your involvement with the Leadership AAHSA program.

Our mission – advancing the field of aging services through leadership, service, innovation, shared learning and Fellowship – is one I know you can help us achieve.

Again, welcome to the network. I look forward to our common work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tom Akins", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Tom Akins

President

Leadership AAHSA Alumni Network

Leadership AAHSA Alumni Network



**TOM
AKINS**

President
Leadership AAHSA Alumni
Network



Larry Minnix with members of the Leadership AAHSA Alumni Network

Photography Credit

Matthew Anderson

Pattye Sawyer

Melissa Sharp