



# **LEADERSHIP AAHSA**

## **Class of 2007**

## **Action Learning:**

## **Creating the Future of Aging Services**

## About Leadership AAHSA

**L**eadership AAHSA is a year-long leadership development program designed to augment the skills of emerging leaders across the continuum of care and services for the aging and address the shortage of potential leaders nationwide. Fellows learn about reflective practice, self-assessment and leadership theory, and the latest trends, innovations and policy issues in our field.

The three core tenets of this 12-month program include transformation and transformational leadership, innovation, and person-centeredness, both on the part of those providing services and those receiving services. The three tenets are integrated throughout the fabric of every program exercise, group discussion and assignment. Fellows return to their sponsoring organizations with the knowledge and leadership skills they need to create the future of aging services and better serve older adults.



CLASS OF 2007



## Action Learning Projects

**T**he Leadership AAHSA experience culminates in an individual Action Learning Project (ALP). This directory contains summaries of each Fellow's project and testimonials of their life-changing experience this past year. Fellows personally champion an innovation or initiative that has the potential to directly affect residents, clients, their families and staff. Each project is designed to benefit the Fellow's sponsoring organization or the aging-services field at large. The project may be a new professional responsibility or organizational program, or a passion that the Fellow has elected to pursue. The process of action learning gives each Fellow the opportunity to experiment with newly acquired leadership skills.

**We're pleased to present the Leadership AAHSA Class of 2007 Action Learning Projects.**



## Conversations for Performance Improvement

**Alexander M. Candalla**  
Executive Director

ABHOW/The Terraces of Los Gatos  
Los Gatos, California



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

Toss out the traditional progressive discipline! It is adversarial, punitive and, most importantly, it goes against the respect we have for our valued employees. My project will bring improvements in areas of employee relations and performance management.

The traditional progressive discipline was developed in the 1930s for unions who wanted to see a progressive system of penalties to protect their employees from losing their jobs without even being aware that their job was at risk. Times have changed and this old system does not fit our industry, which is focused entirely on promoting people's well being.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

My project gains agreements/commitments with employees in a non-punitive conversation and to clarify actual vs. desired work expectations to achieve a fully acceptable performance.

It is **transformational** for it changes basic values, norms, beliefs and traditional practices to bring improvements in our organizational performance. It is **person-centered** as it looks at every employee's success by focusing on good performance or communicating if

desired performance is not being achieved. Hence, it is **innovative**. Unlike the traditional progressive disciplinary process, my project uses concepts that recognize/reinforce good performance (positive feedback) and confront/correct poor performance (coaching) to a point where employees take personal responsibility for their behavior and making real decisions about their own employment and careers.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

My project creates a major cultural shift to bring about a respectful and trust-building performance management process. It will improve employee morale and relationships, preserve employee dignity and respect, and ultimately build trust. It will also make employees feel more responsible and committed, deal with issues in a dignified way, promote and increase recognition of good performance, and most importantly, make good employees know that they are our most important assets. Employees will know that we will work and support them to be successful in their jobs.

Ultimately, successful and happy employees mean more satisfied residents!

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

It was a crucible moment for me when, during one of my meetings with my Project Sponsor (Terese Farkas, ABHOW VP of Human Resources), I learned that my Action Learning Project, after a few more revisions, will be incorporated onto our corporate Human Resource Strategic Plan. That's when I realized how powerful one small idea, when created with such belief and passion, can evolve into something bigger with the potential to make significant impacts in creating an

enhanced company culture. This was also a moment when I realized that I can make a difference in our industry.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#6. Human Resources Development

**Biographical Summary**

Alex Candalla received his bachelors and graduate degree in Gerontology with an emphasis in long-term care administration from San Francisco State University. Alex served American Baptist Homes of the West in a leadership capacity for 12 years. His leadership and commitment was recognized by ABHOW when he was given the Executive Director of the Year Award in 2004. Alex shares his vision with other emerging leaders giving particular attention to the administrator-in-training program at The Terraces of Los Gatos. In 2006, Aging Services of California recognized this achievement by honoring him as the Association's Mentor of the Year. Alex shares this personal success with his understanding family, wife Maria and daughters Andrea and Ysabel.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

I have been fortunate having a few mentors to help and guide me in my career. For this project, I was blessed to have the assistance and support of Leslie Warren, ABHOW's VP of Employee Development, Terese Farkas, ABHOW's Sr. VP of Human Resources, and Kay Kallander, ABHOW's Sr. VP of Strategic Plan-

ning. All have been very helpful and instrumental in the development of the project and remain dedicated to the project's full company-wide implementation.

I have always respected and valued these leaders' passion and commitment to excellence. They continue to inspire me to do well and to dream big.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

The Leadership AAHSA Fellows Program has provided me with a valuable and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn—an opportunity that I wouldn't have otherwise experienced. Most importantly, it has widened my horizon and taught me to look beyond my limits.

My participation re-energized and rebuilt my self-belief, giving me great confidence to think bigger, to be transformative and innovative. I see the gates just opening up and I can't wait to see how else I can positively contribute in the years to come, not only to the residents and employees I serve, but also to our field, as a whole.

## Green House Project Concepts in a Traditional Health Center Environment

**Nellie Ward Cole**  
Chief Financial Officer

McKendree Village, Inc.  
Hermitage, Tennessee



### **Please describe your Action Learning Project.**

While we have focused on providing quality loving care to our residents, our traditional health center (nursing home) environment was not designed to be person-centered. This project is designed to incorporate Green House Project concepts into our service delivery process to create an atmosphere that is supportive of our residents and staff. The Eden principles that we have embraced provide a solid foundation on which to create an atmosphere where residents are inspired to live life to its fullest extent.

### **How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?**

*Person-centeredness* is the core of the Green House Project concepts. The needs and desires of residents are considered at every decision point. This is an *innovative* concept that will require *transformational leadership* in order for it to be successful because it is difficult to move away from the institutional way of analyzing issues and developing solutions.

### **How will your project benefit older adults?**

The residents of our health center will have the ability to make choices because they will live in an en-

vironment where their schedule is not dictated by what is most convenient for the staff. This will encourage them to be more engaged in creating an atmosphere in their home that is more comfortable for them.

### **Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.**

The level of excitement that is being generated around the renewal of our Eden certification flows through to this project. As I have discussed the challenges presented by the project, the team continues to believe that implementation of the Green House Concepts is the next logical step for us. My sponsor and I had the opportunity to introduce these concepts to an individual who is interested making a contribution to the field of aging services. Developing networks, collaborations and partnerships supports the advancement of our community and the aging services field as a whole.

### **Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#3. Leading-Edge Care and Services

### **Biographical Summary**

Nellie Ward Cole is the Chief Financial Officer of McKendree Village, Inc., a continuing care retirement community that provides independent living, assisted living and long-term health care to over 650 residents. She also has responsibility for management information systems.

As a CPA in public practice, Nellie provided a variety of professional services including management of financial statement and compliance audits,



due diligence related to mergers and acquisitions and assistance in the preparation of initial public offerings, bond offerings and other SEC filings.

Nellie also enjoys visual and performing arts (art exhibits, museums, theater, opera, ballet and symphony) and tai chi.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

My sponsor and mentor for the project is Mary Anna Womeldorf, President and CEO of McKendree Village. We met in 1998 when I was the senior manager of the KPMG, LLC audit team and maintained con-

tact over the years prior to my coming to McKendree. She has provided me the opportunity to learn about the challenges and opportunities in the aging services field. The Leadership AAHSA experience has allowed us to have more dialogue about the future of aging services and how we need to position our community for success. Together we identify and pursue the building of networks and partnerships that have the potential to support the furtherance of our mission.

**What ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

I have always been committed to the development of others. I believe that successful leaders continue to grow and develop. I also believe that it is impossible for this to happen without offering growth and developmental opportunities to those who surround us. I will continue to share the powerful messages that I have received from the leaders who have participated in Leadership AAHSA and encourage others to become more introspective as a foundation for effective leadership. Being in touch with who you are is the first step in the development of relationships with others. Building good relationships at all levels is critical to the continuing advancement of the aging services field.



## A Different Kind of Green House: Creating an Environmentally Responsible and Competent Organization

**Gregory Poole-Day, RN**  
Assistant Administrator for Resident  
and Clinical Services



Sarah Neuman Center for Healthcare and Rehabilitation  
Jewish Home and Hospital Lifecare System  
Mamaroneck, New York

### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

The health of a society is directly linked to the health of the environment. The purpose of this action learning project was to develop a trustee-staff workgroup at the Jewish Home and Hospital Lifecare System to address issues relating to reducing the harmful effects on the environment due to the operations of the organization. JHHLS serves more than 10,000 elders annually and employs over 3000 staff. Strategies for energy conservation, the reduction/reuse/recycling of materials, along with the use of biodegradable chemicals all have the potential to greatly reduce the carbon footprint left by the organization.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Statistically, elders are better stewards of energy and material resources than people of younger generations. Thus, this project is *person-centered* as elders are being included in the local workgroups being organized throughout the JHHLS, to reap the benefits of their wisdom to optimize the project's success. The

project is *innovative* and *transformational* because there has been very little emphasis on environmental responsibility relating to homes and services for the aging. By beginning locally, it is hoped that other organizations can be motivated by and learn from this project so that they too can create a better environment for all.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

There are two main benefits of this project to the elders that the JHHLS serves. The first is a healthier, more socially responsible environment in which to live. The second is that there are substantial financial savings that can be realized from reduced energy and materials consumption. In an era of fiscal constraints, these moneys can be used to further augment staff and programs aimed at improving *elder-centered* care and quality of life.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

A crucible moment from my ALP occurred when I presented the project proposal to the senior management group. Instead of having to try to "sell" the proposal, there was immediate excitement from the group and a buzz of ideas of possible interventions. I learned two things from this moment: first, that this was really not a revolutionary idea, but one that most people were aware of and felt passionate about, and second, that there had already been many positive strategies implemented in the organization. My role thus became more of a coordinator and facilitator, and not of developer, of ideas.



## Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #2. Governance and Accountability
- #4. Community Involvement

## Biographical Summary

Gregory Poole-Dayana is the Assistant Administrator and Director of Nursing at Sarah Neuman, the Westchester division of the JHHLS. He earned his Bachelor of Commerce and Master of Nursing degrees from McGill University in Montreal, where he also taught in the School of Nursing. Nursing in long-term care has been his passion for the past 12 years.

Gregory has been married to his partner, Ron, for 11 years, and together they have twin children, Elinor and Tomer. His dog Ben has been his faithful companion both at home and at work, where he provides the residents with daily visits and furry love.

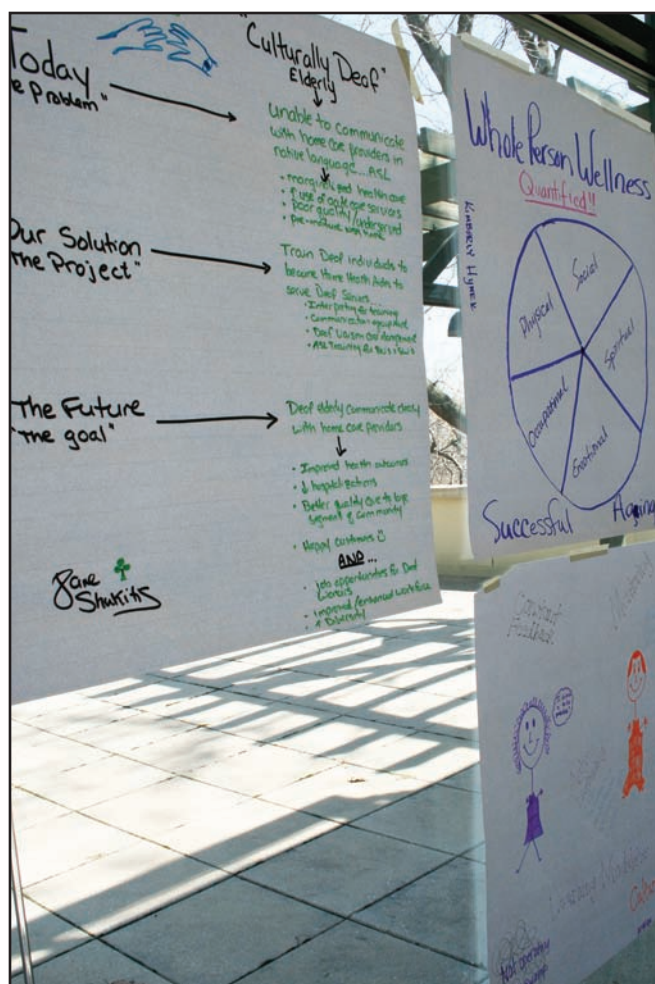
## Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.

My mentor for the project, system board member Michael Jaffe, was wisely chosen for me by my sponsor, Audrey Weiner. Audrey introduced me to Michael when we both expressed an interest in environmental responsibility. In the few short months that I have worked with Michael, he has motivated me with his strong will, his intellect, his wealth of knowledge, and his desire for positive change. He has helped me to learn to take “no” for an answer only as a last resort, but in a sensitive way!

## What ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?

During the past year I have gained the experience and support generated from my 32 colleagues that have learned on this journey alongside me. The energy and wisdom that I have reaped from our discussions will never be extinguished. And of course, Judy, Michele, Kris and John Diffy have been extraordinarily supportive and enlightening throughout.

Just as we know from our work, that relationships are the key to elder-centered care, relationships with colleagues are the key to effective leadership. Leadership AAHSA has provided me with these, for which I will always be grateful.



## Building a Learning Organization

### Kelly Smith Papa RN, MSN

Director of Resident Services, Learning & Development

McLean  
Simsbury, Connecticut



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

As leaders, how can we initiate and sustain the cultural changes that are needed to develop a person centered care environment? The culture of a Learning Organization has been found to be more adaptive to the cycle of change. This Action Learn Project was designed to investigate how to develop, support and sustain the five disciplines of a Learning Organization, to facilitate culture change in a community caring for the aging. Building a Learning Organization is not something that happens overnight; rather it takes root and grows over time with nourishment from transformational leadership.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Creating a culture of organizational learning in long term care is an *innovative* approach to the *transformational* change that is needed to create and sustain a *person-centered* care environment. How can leaders encourage people who live and work in a long term care community to learn, care and grow together? How can learning inspire personal mastery, awareness of assumptions, shared vision, team learning and systems thinking? This project exemplifies how the tenets of Leadership AAHSA come together to illumi-

nate the role of the *transformational leader* as a teacher to establish trust, promote change and celebrate person centered care.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

When staff members are engaged in reflective learning they grow personally and professionally. By stepping back and reflecting and learning from experiences, staff are able to see how their actions affect the elders they care for. Elders benefit when leaders, by example, encourage and support staff to be life long learners. By building a nurturing culture of learning, staff will recognize when they need to learn more about a topic and seek information. This awareness and commitment to the need for ongoing learning ensures improved high quality of care and life for every elder.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

A nurse stated, after a reflective training session on dementia, “I use to see *Joe* as a problem, now I see him as a person.” Prior to the reflective learning this nurse was focused on the challenges associated with caring for *Joe*. The creative learning opportunity gave her new insight into seeing *Joe* as an individual and developing a person centered care plan for him. It was in this moment that I was assured that finding ways to give staff, and management, creative reflective learning opportunities improved quality of care, ensured person centered care, empowered staff members and facilitated teamwork.

## Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

#8. Consumer Participation

### Biographical Summary

Kelly Smith Papa is a nurse, educator, author, and a leader in long-term care. She has authored three books and numerous articles on innovative strategies for staff development education in long-term care. She teaches for the *Institute for Leadership in Geriatric Nursing* at the University of Hartford. She is an officer for the *Connecticut Culture Change Coalition*. Kelly is currently the Director of Resident Services, Learning and Development at *McLean* in Simsbury, Connecticut. Prior



to this role she was the Clinical Educator at McLean for over four years. Kelly lives with her husband James in Simsbury, Connecticut.

### Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.

I am blessed to have people in my life that nurture my growth personally and professionally. The staff members at McLean, my loved ones at home and the people I have met through Leadership AAHSA are mentors, *loving critics* and sit on my *personal board of directors*. These people are my coaches, guides, teachers, and cheerleaders. They give me feedback, ask me thoughtful questions and challenge me to be the best nurse, teacher and leader I can be. Leadership AAHSA inspired me to seek these mentoring relationships that have *encouraged my heart* and solidified my commitment to life long learning.

### In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?

The world, as I knew it, changed the day I flew to San Francisco to begin my Leadership AAHSA journey. Leadership AAHSA has taught me what it means to be a transformational leader and a reflective learner. I will continue to learn and grow from the relationships I have built with mentors, fellows, coaches and design team of the Leadership AAHSA. I feel blessed to have had this experience. It has given me the courage, confidence, resources, and the questions I need to lead. I will be nourished by the memories of the experience for years to come. Thank you!



## Beatitudes Palliative Care for Advanced Dementia: A Model Teaching Unit Project

**Rebecca Brandon**  
Health Care Center Administrator

Beatitudes Campus  
Phoenix, Arizona



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

To perpetuate the successful and practical model of excellent palliative care for advanced dementia, entitled “The Beatitudes Model”, by replicating it throughout Maricopa County in Arizona. Over the past two years the Beatitudes Campus, with Hospice of the Valley as its partner, has developed and refined a model of care that truly anticipates resident needs. The key concepts of Comfort Care, Knowing Your Resident, Person Directed Care and Staff Empowerment, are proven to be affective by quantifiable research; and has been successfully duplicated. It’s a success story worth sharing!

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

My action learning project was, and continues to be, **transformational leadership** as I and my team continue to grow through our connectiveness with each other, by my being transparent and vulnerable enough to recognize that I don’t have all of the answers, and that as a team we do! When people’s inner motivation and achievements are recognized, and they have an opportunity to really impact care, that this is where the seeds of **innovation** are formed. And as for **person-centeredness**, our staff know their residents so well that

they understand a resident’s individual signs indicating pain, or discomfort, and anticipate resident needs before anxious behavior escalates.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Beatitudes Campus is 100% restraint free, the Care Center neighborhoods are quiet, a dramatic decrease in sedating medications has occurred in all levels of care, interdisciplinary staff members taking part in caregiving, greater respect for residents is evidenced, more couches and chairs are used and fewer wheelchairs, and staff members creating “connection moments” that are one-to-one and meaningful. Perhaps the most telling result is 0% weight loss with residents that reside on the Vermillion Cliffs—and that’s on the Beatitudes Campus advanced dementia neighborhood!

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

That staff understands what “anticipating needs” of the person with advanced dementia really means. In its simplest terms it means to feed the person before they are hungry, give them fluids before they are thirsty, help them lie down before they fall asleep, manage their pain before it is out of control and help them occupy their time before they become bored. That C.N.A.’s have the answers to their resident’s care needs—as they know their important life events, past daily routines, and the friends and family members that are important to our resident. Therefore, I just needed to empower them to do what is best for the resident! That good leaders listen, empower and support.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #8. Consumer Participation
- #9. Research Findings and Education

**Biographical Summary**

Rebecca Brandon has served in the retirement housing industry for over 27 years where she has served in many capacities: as a Retirement Housing Sales Counselor, Marketing Director, Resident Services Administrator of a CCRC, and as an Administrator of a skilled nursing center. She has a BS Degree in Business Management, and holds both an AL and NHA license. She was a board member of the Arizona Association of Homes and Housing for the Aging (AzAHA) for three years and served as AzAHA's Professional Development and Convention Chairperson for five years.

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

Leadership AAHSA has had a profound impact on me personally and professionally. The process has challenged me to be more self aware and transparent in my dealings with others. That being vulnerable enough to admit that I don't have all of the answers is alright, and that by listening and learning from others trust and teamwork grows. As a result we continue to find that an individual with advanced dementia can also let you know what their needs are and we can address them appropriately!

**What ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

I plan to continue the self growth derived from journaling daily and to stay in communication with my fellows. For me, being in communication is the hardest, as our business is so demanding. Yet, it is with this group that I have grown the most. I need them – their candid advice, trust and friendship. Additionally, through the exposure to AASHA from a national perspective I know now that a person, a single person, can make a difference. So that, when the time is right, I'll be back (either as a state delegate, or as a committee member), because I plan to make a difference.



## Linking Generations, Establishing Legacies

**Susan A. Sinderson**

Vice President, Older Adult Services

Lifelink Corporation  
Bensenville, IL



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

“Linking Generations, Establishing Legacies” is a mentoring program that celebrates life’s journeys through an organized elder/youth program. Using the storytelling tools provided by LifeBio™, the participants work together to write the life story of the elder and begin a mentoring relationship between the elder living in a Lifelink sponsored HUD housing facility and youth living in the local communities. Through this pilot program, six housing facilities are involved in celebrating life and creating friendships and affection that will hopefully spark a desire by the youth to serve elders either through a career or volunteer work during their own life journey.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

“Linking Generations, Establishing Legacies” displays all three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program. It is *innovative* because it uses web-based technology to introduce and bring together people who are of different generations and provides a means for the program participants to build a mutually beneficial relationship. It is a *person-centered* program that is built around celebrating and recognizing the uniqueness and gifts of every elder and young person

involved. Lastly, it is *transformational* because it takes the very old idea of “mentoring” and offers those providers of HUD housing a way to become involved in shaping the future of aging services by sparking and developing the interest of young people in caring for our elders.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

The immediate benefits include offering an organized mentoring program that: can be easily duplicated in other HUD housing communities, is focused on the needs of older adults to have meaningful conversations and friendships, and gives elders a chance to share the wisdom they have gained over a lifetime with a willing listener. The longer range benefits include having each elder and youth participant as a part of a research project that studies life satisfaction, attitudes, and changes that occur as a result of the program. The results will be used to plan future programs and services in our communities and hopefully will result in a new group of caring, concerned, young people interested in serving the elder population.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

My original thought for this project was to create a mentoring project that encouraged youth to have an interest in eldercare services by exposing them to different career choices. The crucible moment came for me when I realized, after talking with many of my staff members, that their passion, love and respect for elders came not from “on the job” experiences but from the early experiences that they had with elders in their lives. *The key to a great mentoring program is to create meaningful moments for the youth and elders to share!*



**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #3 Leading Edge Care and Services
- #8. Consumer Participation
- #9. Research Findings and Education

**Biographical Summary**

Susan Sinderson serves as Vice President of Older Adult Services for Lifelink Corporation in Bensenville, IL. She is responsible for planning and overseeing the strategic direction and nature of the housing and home care divisions serving elderly and physically challenged individuals.

Susan has over 25 years experience in housing and health care and is a recognized expert in the field of housing management and fair housing initiatives. She is a Diakonal Minister in the United Church of Christ, holds a Master of Science Degree in Health Services Administration and serves on local housing and senior advisory committees.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

I have had the pleasure of working with three mentors throughout my Leadership AAHSA experience; Dennis Bozzi, President of Life Services Network (LSN) is an innovative “big picture” thinker who asks great questions about how this program can be used by all LSN HUD housing members; Linda Hollinger-Smith, Senior Vice President for Research at LSN, is committed to finding a way to use our research findings from this project to offer better services to elders in the future and Matthew Nowakowski, Dean of

Faculty, Minnesota School of Business, and a PhD candidate in Educational Leadership, who helped me find the resources to support my theories on youth mentoring and career choices. I am eternally grateful to each of them for their special insights and abilities to always offer the right questions and motivation.

**What ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

Being a part of this first class of Leadership AAHSA has been a time of rejuvenation for me. Through the time spent with this very special group of people, I am constantly reminded that the “joy is in the journey”. I leave the formal part of this experience eager to pursue more education and attain a PhD in Leadership Education; a commitment to identifying potential leaders within my own organization and nurturing their growth; focusing on helping others achieve their highest level of greatness; and knowing that I have made “friends for life” in this program with whom I look forward to sharing more travel experiences, as well as great conversations on how to shape the future of aging services.

## Sharing the Lessons Learned: My Personal Leadership Journey in the Field of Aging Services

**David S. Smart**  
CEO/President

Eaton Senior Programs, Inc.  
Lakewood, Colorado



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

My action learning project is titled Sharing the Lessons Learned: My Personal Leadership Journey in the Field of Aging Services. The purpose of my project is to examine the process of taking on the primary leadership role in an organization providing housing and services for the elderly. I will examine the pitfalls and obstacles presented when taking over for a long-time well-respected leader. Throughout this process I will analyze my personal strengths and weaknesses as a leader. Transparent documentation of the challenges and successes of my transition will be the main tool used for my own self examination. Lessons learned will be helpful when shared with other individuals going through similar transitions in the field of aging services.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Examining my progress in this transition is a *person-centered* account of my experience. It is *innovative* because it is an examination of a leadership transition in the field of aging services. There are many leadership books and publications available today, however, very few, if any, have the aging services field as the primary

focus. It is *transformational* because it will require me to evaluate my progress as a leader and to look critically at how I can improve on my leadership strengths and weaknesses. When shared, my “lessons learned” will be transformational for others making similar transitions.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

The older adults living in the Eaton communities will most directly benefit from my project as I gain knowledge and improve my performance over time. Residents living in the Eaton communities will also benefit from having a fresh perspective on the current operations and having a leader who asks for, acknowledges and acts upon their input. By offering insight to those making similar leaps in responsibility I can affect change for the better for all older adults being served by AAHSA communities.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

One of the first things I did as the new CEO at Eaton Senior Programs was to resurrect the Resident Council (aka the Resident Board) which had been on a hiatus of sorts. I indicated to the residents that I wanted them to bring issues about their home and community to me. After three months of developing what I thought was a good working relationship with the Resident Board, the Community Pastor shared with me that the residents were unhappy. He indicated the residents didn't feel like much was happening and asked him to talk with me. I was very surprised and disappointed because I thought there had been great progress in the last three months. At the next meeting with the Resident Board they had a long list of grievances about general

safety concerns, all of which made a lot of sense.

At the next Resident Forum there was a huge crowd of residents and I was scared to death. The meeting actually went quite well with a lot of important and sensible questions from the residents. The Community Pastor of 26 years who facilitates the Resident Forum pointed out that he had never seen such a crowd. I realized then that I should relish the fact that the residents are taking control of their home just as I had asked them to do. I was too wrapped up in my own ego to see the progress happening before my very eyes.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#1. Commitment

#2. Governance and Accountability

**Biographical Summary**

David Smart has been the CEO/President for Eaton Senior Programs Inc., a senior housing provider of independent and assisted living housing and services, since March 2007. He serves on the board of the Colorado Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (CAHSA) and is very involved in the CAHSA Next initiative cultivating leadership for aging services providers in Colorado.

David began working in the field of aging services as a young adult at a large non-profit CCRC in Cincinnati, Ohio. He then earned a Masters Degree in Gerontology and Long Term Care Administration from Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado where, during an internship, he found his passion for serving low-income seniors.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

My mentor is John Torres, Executive Director for Golden West Senior Residence in Boulder, CO and my former boss. John has been a great mentor and friend to me for many years, giving me opportunities when others chose not to. As I embark on this new chapter in my career, John has provided me with sound common-sense advice from someone who has “been there, done that”. Our relationship has evolved over the last year to one of peers rather than boss to employee. I am eternally grateful that I can always count on John to be totally honest with me in a very kind way.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

Participation in Leadership AAHSA has been a meaningful experience for me on several levels. I have made lifelong friends who will support me as I will them throughout our careers. Accessible to me now are a great number of knowledgeable and caring experts in the field of aging services who are driven by mission and their love of serving the elderly. I have gained a better understanding of my strengths and weaknesses as a leader. Again I have been reminded of the need and power of reflection and introspection. I plan use this experience as a springboard for working with the leadership team at Eaton Senior Programs and the CAHSA Next initiative to cultivate talent and leadership in the field of aging services.



## Transforming Health Care Neighborhoods

**Joy C. Bodnar**  
Director of Health Services

Foxdale Village  
State College, Pennsylvania



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

This project involves the renovation and transformation of two nurses' stations and common areas in the assisted living and skilled nursing neighborhoods at Foxdale Village. The goal is to create a more social environment and expanded living area for residents while addressing the staff needs for private working and break room space. Our approach to care follows a person-centered, biopsychosocial model, yet the current location of the nurses' stations projects a medical/institutional model. An additional goal in our skilled nursing area is to transform our mealtimes into an improved dining experience for our residents and families by adding an on-site serving area.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Residents, staff, and families took part in discussions about redesigning the two *neighborhoods* at Foxdale Village, a Quaker-directed CCRC, considering a significant expansion project. It is hoped that this project will be a first step in changing a 20-year-old design to reflect wellness rather than illness, and will be an important bridge in helping our community to realize the positive aspects of "change." As such, an *innovative* design and approach to *person-centered* care

will *transform* our health care areas to an environment that is resident- and staff-centered.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Current and future residents should benefit from the changes in the healthcare areas. The average age of our residents is 84.5 years. Residents in our skilled nursing area will be served meals directly from a satellite kitchen rather than from trays on caddies, thereby improving the dining experience for residents, families, and staff. Assisted living and skilled nursing residents and families will benefit by the added living space that was previously occupied by nurses' stations.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

The crucible moment will be when the first nurses' station is removed and the response of our community to that change.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #6. Human Resources Development
- #8. Consumer Participation

### Biographical Summary

Joy Bodnar is the Director of Health Services for Foxdale Village, a position she has held since March, 2004. Joy has a Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies from Penn State University and was a postdoctoral fellow in the College of Medicine at The Ohio State University. Her specialization is dementia care. Joy has been fortunate to work in long-term

care since 1993 as a clinician, educator, administrator, researcher, and learner.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

My mentor is Bill James, CEO of Foxdale Village. His knowledge, experience, and creativity have been instrumental in this project. He recommended me for Leadership AAHSA and has wholeheartedly supported every aspect of the program. Bill's leadership style is one I strive to emulate. I especially admire his listening skills, his ability to handle challenging situations, and his willingness to share the credit for his ideas with others. He takes great pride in the accomplishments of his staff, and his encouragement and integrity are inspirational.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

Leadership AAHSA afforded me the opportunity to develop relationships with leaders in the field of aging services that I anticipate will be long-term. I was introduced to innovative programs, thought-provoking and inspirational readings, important political endeavors, and AAHSA research initiatives. I gained insight about my own leadership style and increased appreciation for the AAHSA organization. The education provided by Michele Holleran, Judy Brown, and John Diffey was especially stimulating and influential. My teammates made the program a wonderful year of supportive learning, caring, and fun. I plan to use this knowledge and experience to do my part for the betterment of aging services.



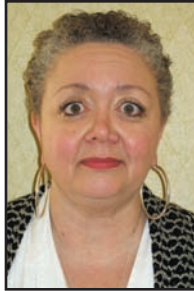
## **The Power of Community. Moving Forward Together.**

### **Zandra Matthews**

Director of Supportive Services

Lutheran Towers

Atlanta, Georgia



### **Action Learning Project Description**

The purpose of this Action Learning Project is to infuse members with greater awareness of member value for renewed commitment and involvement in the association by matching member value to their individual and organizational needs. It is the overall intent to connect our visions with purpose, passion and possibilities.

### **How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?**

This Action Learning Project questions the status quo, has created questions and excitement about possible new ways to do things, awakening members to discuss culture change and diversity in leadership, introducing questions and options that disturb the current system. Transforming things we do, how we do them and how we relate to each other including ourselves. This project allows us to create a strong sense of community—engaging members, strengthening our leadership position, telling our story more boldly innovative maybe not, improvement....definitely.

### **How will your project benefit older adults?**

Going deeper into organizations to seek out emerging leaders within member organizations (with

emphasis on cultural competency and diversity for inclusion of ethno-cultural population among organizations) will contribute to a more positive change within the aging-services organization in advancing the interests of a diverse consumer and resulting in better housing in a changing market.

### **Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.**

I am not in control, yet I am accountable for my choices. It is an illusion to think that I can control all aspects of what happens to me, much less to our elders. At the same time, I believe I am accountable for what takes place in my life and the lives I influence. What we do or fail to do for someone else is in some fundamental way the same as doing it—or failing to do it—for ourselves.

It's in our separate and collective best interest to treat our elders and each other with this in mind.

### **Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#6. Human Resources Development

### **Biographical Summary**

Zandra Matthews is a service-oriented professional with over thirty years of management experience drawing upon training, leadership development, community service and organizational problem-solving skills. Currently, Zandra has the privilege of serving as the Director of Supportive Services at Lutheran Towers and began her career in aging services in 2003 as a Service Coordinator at Clairmont Oaks. She has been awarded the distinguished title of Volunteer of the Year (2004).



Favorite quote:

*“It’s time for all of us who can to step forward to bring our voice of passion, purpose, wisdom, courage to our organizations and our communities.”*

—Patricia Neal

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

Awhile ago, I read that “The art of mentoring is not complete until we blend our awareness, knowledge, experience and understanding with compassion”. I’ve been reminded to inspire people, don’t just drive them, be easy to like and respect, help people like themselves, help people believe that what they’re doing is important and most important know the difference between knowledge and wisdom.

I now carry the words of an ancient philosopher, Lao Tsu, and mentor myself with these words in mind:

Knowing others is intelligence,  
Knowing yourself is true wisdom.  
Mastering others is strength,  
Mastering yourself is true power.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

- Strengthen leadership position as it relates to persons of color.
- Engage more persons of color in the work and life of GASHA.

- Member visits to understand their needs and reinforce the value of membership involvement (education, information, policy representation as well as listservs, business connections, etc.)
- Participate in an initiative for provider members to “Tell Their Story”.
- Strengthen relationship with while increasing member organization participation (advocacy, committee meetings, task force, conferences, small group discussions, educational events, and seminars, sharing best practice information, leadership roles).



## Changing the Face of Employee Orientation by Telling Our Story

**Michelle N. Mendoza**  
Director of Sales & Marketing

Scripps Kensington

The Episcopal Home Communities  
Alhambra, CA



### Please describe your action learning project.

Employee orientation is a critical piece of becoming a part of and understanding our organization's mission and philosophy of service. Utilizing the knowledge that we have gained from 84 years of quality service to older adults will be shared with those possibly entering the aging services profession for the first time. We will engage employees through active learning sessions, story telling opportunities and resident interviews. The goal of revamping the current process will allow for a more interactive model of orientation for our organization. Through this process employees will see our commitment to them and to those that we serve.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

The employee orientation gives many a sense of pride, a strong commitment and a successful opportunity in understanding the mission of our organization and the aging services profession. Framing the orientation around shared learning, real life examples, and story-telling shows *transformational leadership*. The process allows early learning of the positive effects of promoting elder dignity and independence. Orienta-

tion encourages and empowers employees to develop practices on how we can do it vs. why we can't, in order to provide quality *person-centered* care. The process is *innovative* in integrating residents, front line staff and families in sharing the mission of the organization.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Employees will enter the organization with a clearer understanding of the expectations of them and our commitment to our residents through a good orientation process. Unless we connect the dots together with the front line staff, they will never know their work is connected to a greater good. The lives of those that we serve will be improved by showing employees the larger vision and mission of our organization, allowing them to see their work as more than a "job" and helping them understand that their service to elders is the key to sense making.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

When front line staff, residents and managers became interested and energized with the idea of change really helped me to step back and realize the integrity of commitment that so many bring to our organizations. As a leader I am proud that I was allowed to stand back and watch the creativity, brainstorming, collaboration and execution of a hope that front line staff and residents were empowered to undertake. The moment I realized standing back and watching was just as fulfilling as doing, was one that will always be with me and has helped me grow as a leader.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #5. Continuous Quality Improvement
- #6. Human Resources Development
- #8. Consumer Participation

**Biographical Summary**

Michelle Mendoza came to The Episcopal Home Communities eight years ago looking for a job and blessed with a life passion. She has grown from her roles as an Admissions Coordinator, Medical Records Assistant, Assisted Living Manager, occasional Laundry Assistant, Marketing Coordinator, Director of Marketing, Director of Transition, to her current role as Sales & Marketing Director. Michelle's hope in life comes from her six year old son, Julian. Her spirit comes from her aging father George and the many lives that she has been allowed to be a part of. Michelle's commitment to aging services comes from her residents.

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

Learning and growing as a leader with 32 of the most amazing individuals has helped me understand what a mentor should embody. Remembering to listen, occasionally needing to be that loving critic, and empowering those to make mistakes have helped me become a better leader

this past year. Realizing that even leaders are human, yet sometimes we treat ourselves inhumanely by not stepping back and allowing ourselves to enjoy what is around us. So many of these skills became apparent to me this past year through Leadership AAHSA and I have been sharing as I continue my leadership journey.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

This past year's experience has further motivated me to share the power of knowledge. The shared learning techniques I've learned and the insights I've received will allow me to assist with the cultural change our organization is facing. Leadership AAHSA has shared with us the fruits of what an engaging program designed for emerging leaders could accomplish. I experienced and see the accomplishments of developing a program like I've had the benefit of being a part of for front line staff. This program has allowed me to grow and learn how to lead future leaders of aging services.





## Joy of Leadership

**Janet Green**  
Executive Director

Emmanuel

Community & Regional Director  
of Operations

Ecumen  
Detroit Lakes, MN



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

The “Joy of Leadership” is an educational program for long-term care organizations that embraces the premise that all employees are leaders. Training modules will be interactive and discussion based. Examples and exercises will be long-term care specific.

This is not a “cookie cutter” approach to leadership training. Basic recipes will be provided that can be individualized based on the organization’s mission, vision and values. Participants will learn together to change, grow and improve as a team, creating a caring, person centered community.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

*Transformational leadership* recognizes that leadership is not a reflection of position or title; everyone is a leader to those they serve. This program offers opportunities to experiment with new recipes in a safe kitchen, cultivating resonant leadership throughout the organization. The project will be an incremental *innovation* in that it will be packaged as a facilitator manual with a companion cookbook for each participant. There will not be one recipe to follow, but many

wonderful variations to try. The cookbook will encourage journaling and reflecting on lessons learned. The final product will be empowered work teams providing *person-centered* care.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Empowering people and decentralizing authority by recognizing everyone is a leader is a recipe that benefits the lives of older adults and those who serve them. Millions of older adults depend on long-term care employees to provide care and service. People will want to live and work in places that recognize, reward and support respectful relationships. Investing in developing effective, empowered teams is part of the solution to address the shortage of long term care employees.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

A crucible moment occurred when I realized the project had expanded like bread dough. I needed to slow down the rising, knead the dough and divide it in two before baking. It seems counterintuitive, but I learned it is important to slow down to do more. I needed to take time to reflect on the breadth and depth, re-evaluate and modify the original recipe and tap into the collective wisdom of others. A quality final product is more important than cooking it in a flash.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

#6. Human Resource Development

### Biographical Summary

Janet Green’s career in healthcare began in 1974



as a nursing assistant. She graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College with a bachelor's degree in Nursing. Her work experience as an RN has included positions in hospitals, public health home care and a Director of Nursing prior to receiving licensure as a nursing home administrator.

Janet is currently the Executive Director of Emmanuel Community and the Regional Director of Operations for Ecumen, Minnesota's largest non-profit provider of housing and services for older adults. She is proud to be a part of an organization that provides independent living, assisted living, care centers, housing and a wide variety of community-based services in more than 100 communities. Her organization creates a "Home" for older adults wherever they choose to live.

Currently Janet is the Chair of the Workforce Investment Act Board serving 19 counties and is involved in a variety of regional and state wide workforce initiatives that are charged with finding solutions to the workforce shortage and high turnover of employees in long-term healthcare.

**Please describe how your mentoring skills/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

Leadership AAHSA and my action learning project have provided me with numerous learning opportunities that have strengthened my mentoring and coaching abilities. From enhanced self-awareness to formally presenting at the "Ecumen University", I have become a better leader and helped develop others as leaders by practicing and sharing what I have had the honor of learning.

My friend and mentor, Mary Otto, and I meet once a week. We share perspectives, resources and have lively professional dialogues regarding effective leadership practices and how those practices become implemented in the Joy of Leadership.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

The Leadership AAHSA program has been an intense, rich learning experience. I am a better person, a better leader and a better mentor as a result of this experience. I have learned from everywhere and everyone. Lessons learned include the importance of asking questions, reflection and journaling. Leadership is based on relationships and that everyone is a leader to those they serve.

My hope is that as I continue to grow as a leader, I will do a better job of taking care of myself so that I can better serve people. I continue to be a work in progress.....looking for the best recipe.

## Strategies for Seamless Service

**Renee Cisewski**  
Administrator

Wynscape Nursing  
and Rehabilitation Center  
Wheaton, IL



### Please describe your action learning project.

The primary goal of my action learning project is to redesign and restructure the Wyndemere Senior Living Campus resources and systems in order to create a more seamless and person-centered service delivery model. The objectives we set to accomplish this goal are the following:

- Create campus leadership (The Campus Strategy Team.)
- Design leadership structures and processes to manage organizational priorities and make consistent decisions across the campus.
- Research, develop and implement transitional continuum of care processes.
- Develop and implement the “life coach” concept.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Our purpose for creating the Campus Strategy Team (CST) and the corresponding new leadership structures and processes embody *transformational leadership* because we took a fragmented leadership structure that had historically operated in a vacuum and transformed it into a dynamic team that is charged

with developing and guiding the execution of an integrated operational plan. *Person-centeredness* and *innovation* are the foundation for our “Life Coach” design and for enhancing our continuum of care processes. These ideas were a direct result of strategic work conducted by our residents and staff about how to best support our residents through life’s later transitions.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

The Life Coach will connect with new residents to assist them with moving and integrating into the community and developing a new network of friends. As residents age, the Life Coach will support them through life changes that may occur, acting as a liaison to provide and/ or coordinate available resources. The Life Coach role will span all levels of care from independent to skilled nursing. The CST provides more effective planning and management of the community’s resources, giving residents a higher level of seamless service and greater value for their investment.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

My original action learning project contained another key initiative for our organization in which I had been very involved for the past two years. We were unable to gain the approval we needed and that project was put on hold. I was devastated and had difficulty seeing the forest through the trees. Fortunately my very wise and supportive mentor, Robert Friedberg, helped me separate my emotions from the actual project. He helped me realize that the failure to move forward with the project was not a failure of my ability.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #5. Continuous Quality Improvement
- #6. Human Resources Development
- #8. Consumer Participation

**Biographical Summary**

Renee Cisewski has worked in health care for fourteen years, ten within management. Renee entered long-term care as a Certified Nursing Assistant and was able to advance her career by taking on positions of increased responsibility within the following areas: Admissions, Business Services, Human Resources, TIS and Administration. While working full-time, Renee received a Bachelor's in Healthcare Administration and a Master's in Business Administration from Benedictine University in Lisle, IL. She also became a LNHA. Renee currently serves as the Director of Operations for the Wyndemere Senior Living Campus in Wheaton, IL and resides nearby with her husband and two children.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

Robert Friedberg, COO for Central DuPage Hospital has been my mentor for two years. It's been the most rewarding mentoring relationship for me because he understands the business and is impartial because there's no reporting relationship. What I appreciate most about Robert is that he's caring and supportive, yet brutally honest. He stands for my success and will point out what I haven't been able to see or what I have chosen not to. Although mentoring relationships grow naturally with time, the Leadership AAHSA experience

was an excellent vehicle to take our discussions to a deeper level.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

The benefits I have received from my Leadership AAHSA experience are numerous, which have made me a better individual, both professionally and personally. As a result, I'm able to make a greater contribution to my employer and to the industry. With that said, I am committed to remain connected with the 32 fellows, the coaches and the facilitators that I've had the good fortune to befriend. The challenges in aging services are many and the only way that we will develop solutions to overcome them are through understanding the big picture and working together. Carpe diem!



## Infiltration of the Green House Philosophy to Traditional Settings

### David Kafora

Vice President of Operations

Arizona Baptist Retirement Centers,  
Inc. (ABRC)

Executive Director  
Baptist Village Youngtown  
Green House Guide

Youngtown, Arizona



### Describe Action Learning Project

Opening three Green Houses and Infiltration of the Green House Philosophy to Traditional Settings is challenging. Care centers don't look like Green Houses, but why can't we incorporate the philosophy? Imagine elders waking whenever they wish, planning meals, or scheduling activities; all critical in giving independence back to elders. After success in the Green Houses, I challenged my care center staff to embrace the philosophy. Old habits and "efficiencies" are obsolete. Choice, independence, and life to elders can be experienced in the Green Houses and anywhere we choose to put forth the effort. The Green House philosophy seeks to eliminate institutional thinking.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Though simple, the philosophy will revolutionize long-term care. The house design allows acceptance, but it's just bricks and mortar. **Transformational leadership** invites us to focus on the why, not the how.

If ever there was a "program" that is **person-centered**, it is the Green House. Conceptually simple, revering and respecting elders, allowing elders independence of choice is paramount. Respecting caregivers provides them with personal and professional growth opportunity. **Innovative?** The entire industry is discussing Green Houses or some derivative thereof. Just the fifth campus in the nation, Youngtown is the 'first in the West' to embrace the Green House Philosophy.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Protect. Sustain. Nurture. Picture an elder with dementia greeting her husband after moving in. "Jess, look at our new home. I love you." There are two populations institutionalized in the United States – the elderly and criminals. We have reduced elders to routines, efficiencies, and tasks. Wake up at 5:30am, get dressed, haul them to the dining room, care for personal needs, take a nap, play Bingo, and start over again. Life is precious. Even to the last, when our bodies are frail and maybe our minds are unclear, but to feel the love, compassion, and human spirit is essential.

### Describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

Frustration abounds...team dynamics, naysayers, Shahbazime uncomfortable in their roles. Seven months into the project and things seem as chaotic as even the days leading up to the opening. Fix one issue and two more materialize. The headaches and heartaches are many. The challenges never go away. Additionally, the proliferation of the Green House philosophy throughout the rest of the campus and organization is extremely daunting. But again, knowing that this is the right thing to do; to feel "family" happening



in the house, to have elders and families ask, “Why didn’t you do this years ago?” It is all worth it!

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #6. Human Resources Development
- #8. Consumer Participation

**Biographical Summary**

David Kafora has been with ABRC for four years as the Executive Director, Youngtown campus. Prior to this, he was the Assistant Administrator at another local skilled nursing center. Predating this, he was a Medical Service Corps officer in the Air Force, primarily developing and executing the budgets for military hospitals.

He holds the following degrees, credentials and awards: MBA, BA, AAS, Nursing Home Administrator; Assisted Living Manager; Preceptor – Administrator-in-Training; Certified Assisted Living Caregiver; Leadership AAHSA Fellow; JCAHO Excellent Performer; USAF Space Command Patient Administration Officer of the Year.

David and his wife have two children and one grandchild.

**Describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

I have had an easier transition to self-managed work teams than I might have had without the Leadership experience. Previously, I had all the answers, made decisions, and lead others. But to be successful,

leaders must develop others. Personalities, conflict, work ethic often frustrate teams. However it is only when the ‘boiling point’ is reached that they are willing to deal with situations. ‘Voting someone off the island’ is not an option. I counsel on expectations, corrections, timeframes, and the consequences.

Unfortunately, situations arise without asking for help and therefore become more complicated to address and resolve. Seek ‘Guidance’.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

The experience has changed me and my approach to leading others. As I continue to know myself better, who I really am, my flaws and my attributes, I can make adjustments to become a better person and a better leader. By allowing myself to be transparent with staff, just being me, and allowing the human, vulnerable side to be known to those I work with, they will gain trust and respect me. In doing so, I will further develop both my professional and personal relationships and thereby create environments that are wholesome, productive, and where others want to be.

## Reimbursement Realities and Potentials for Home-Based Telemonitoring

### Tom Akins

Vice President, Development and Planning

Brewster Place Retirement Community  
Topeka, Kansas



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

As our population lives longer and long-term care becomes increasingly costly, more elderly individuals are choosing to remain in their homes – rather than seeking care in a facility—and are looking for community services and assistance to make this possible. In particular, “telemonitoring” (the use of home-based technologies to provide baseline vital signs to off-site registered nurses) has the potential to radically alter the long-term care landscape. My project seeks both to catalog existing reimbursement available from government and other third-party payors and to identify key factors that would convince payors to reimburse for technology.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

This project continues to be *transformational* because it moves beyond merely listing reimbursement availability by asking key questions about why government and other third-party payors make the decision to provide service coverage. The project is *person-centered* because it provides the “services that people need, when they need them, in the place they call home”—whether that’s in a CCRC, low-income

housing, or out in the larger community. The project is *innovative* because it does more than simply provide high-speed connections and wireless ease; technology holds the promise of keeping individuals healthier and more independent.

### How will your project benefit older adults

Our upcoming customers will utilize internet technology to further their health and independence, connectedness, understanding of health issues, and transactional independence in areas such as banking, purchasing, and investing. This project will benefit older adults by providing the framework for our field to convince third-party payors that the use of technology will keep people healthier, save government money, and keep families and communities more connected. By avoiding acute episodes of hospitalization that lead to a loss of independence, communities can actually save medical care costs at a factor of 4:1 for the cost of preventative monitoring.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

During a meeting of the Senior Safe at Home executive committee, there was pressure to respond to a counter-proposal—it was apparent that no one in the room was comfortable with the new wrinkle. One of the committee members urged us to step back and view the situation in a different light. “Would we accept this proposal if it had been their very first offer to us,” he wondered. Viewed in this new context, it became clear what our course of action should be—and taught us a valuable lesson about stepping back and reframing the question.

### **Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#3. Leading Edge Care and Services

### **Biographical Summary**

Tom Akins is the proud father of Elizabeth and Genevieve and has been blissfully married for 18 years to his wife Debra. He has been with Brewster Place Retirement Community since 1999 where he has direct responsibility for business development, fundraising, and community/media relations. Tom is an active member of Southern Hills Mennonite Church and chairs the Service Committee for the Topeka South Rotary. He also serves on the Executive Committee for SeniorSafe at Home, a limited liability company that combines assistive technology with professional care management services delivered 24/7 from a centralized command center. Tom is a licensed adult care home administrator.

### **Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

David Beck is our CEO and my Action Learning Project mentor. During the past year, his positive feedback has given me the confidence to share with him things I'm learning—and challenged me to figure out ways to creatively share those with our organization. He's also helped me to understand the notion that often times when leaders are

together, everyone's natural inclination is to lead—and that listening (one of the most valuable qualities a leader can possess) goes out the window. He's reinforced what I've learned in the program: "Listening and waiting to talk are not the same thing...actively listen."

### **In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come.**

I plan to utilize my experience by:

- Fully exploring and sharing entrepreneurial opportunities (including those like SeniorSafe at Home which utilize technology to serve elders) that focus on expanding market share beyond our traditional audiences. In particular, I would like to be a part of the effort to convince government and other payors that money can be saved and quality of life improved by providing reimbursement.
- Helping to develop a similar leadership experience in Kansas.
- Being part of an endeavor to have this and future Leadership AAHSA classes serve on AAHSA boards and committees.



## Establishing an Aging Services Mentoring Program: Partnering Gerontology Students with Aging Service Professionals

**Matthew Neeley**

Vice President of Health Services

Brethren Hillcrest Homes  
La Verne, California



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

As part of Hillcrest's outreach to the surrounding community, I currently serve as Chair of the Gerontology Advisory Committee for Chaffey College, a community college in Southern California. The committee consists of 25 aging services professionals who provide guidance to faculty in curriculum development.

My Action Learning Project is to establish an ongoing mentoring program to partner gerontology students with successful aging services professionals. The purpose of this project is threefold: to fortify the college's gerontology program; to support students choosing to enter aging services; and to develop the next generation of aging services talent on a regional basis.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

This project is *transformational* and *person-centered* for each student, professor, and mentor who participates. Students benefit from the personal influence and example of successful women and men who have dedicated their lives to serving older adults. Pro-

fessors benefit from having a powerful new resource to engage students in exploring and discovering all that aging services has to offer. The program is *innovative* in that it brings not only distinction to the college, but also the commitment of business partners interested in the success of the program.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Older adults are the true beneficiaries of this Action Learning Project. Those students who are educated, oriented, and encouraged by mentors will be more likely to enter the aging services field in the area best suited to their talents and interests. Students who have explored and carefully selected their professional roles will be better enabled to serve with greater vision and passion.

A mentor stands with purpose at the crossroads of life guiding others towards happiness and success. The potential impact is immeasurable. It includes every person to be served by a student's future contributions.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

After developing the mentoring program, we agreed that the Committee would identify 100 aging services professionals in our geographic area and that each Committee member would invite five leaders within their realm of influence to serve as mentors.

It started slowly. The newness of the program and lack of awareness became a challenge. To create awareness, I wrote an article which ran on the cover of the health section of a regional newspaper. We are growing, but have not yet reached our goal of 100 mentors. We will carry on undaunted as any great suc-



cess requires persistent effort.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#6. Human Resources Development

**Biographical Summary**

Matthew Neeley serves as the Vice President of Health Services for Brethren Hillcrest Homes in La Verne, California. He has managed senior living communities in various settings since 1991.

He has an MBA and a Masters of Health Services Administration from Arizona State University and a Certificate in Gerontology from Brigham Young University.

Matthew serves as Chair of the Gerontology Advisory Committee for Chaffey College, as Board Chair for Community Senior Services (a non-profit agency providing transportation, caregiving, and other services throughout 15 cities), and as an ecclesiastical leader in the L.D.S. church. He is happily married with four children.

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

My participation in this program has brought me to a greater realization that my talents are (and will be) needed in the field of aging services.

This past year, I developed a cultural orientation program for all associates within my organization entitled, "The Heart of Hillcrest". The purpose of the program is to uplift, empower, and instill within the

hearts of every associate the history, mission, and core values of the organization. To date, I have personally taught 122 associates using active learning exercises, reflective writing, meaningful group discussions, and creative object lessons.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

A great reward of participation has been the fellowship developed among the participants of Leadership AAHSA. I will utilize this training as a model for developing others and helping them rise to their potential as I have been encouraged to rise to mine.

Echoing the thoughts of a poet, we are not meant to be acorns, seedlings, or saplings, but mighty oaks... with broad branches to shade the weary and safely harbor those who depend upon us for protection...with deep roots holding fast amid the storms of life.

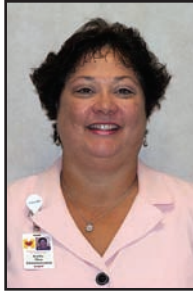
I thank Charles Cable and Brethren Hillcrest Homes for sponsoring me.

## Workforce Advancement Education and Training

### Kathy Mon

Vice President Operations

Gene and Anja Rosenberg Hebrew  
Home and Rehabilitation Center  
West Hartford, CT



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

The goal of my Action Learning Project is to bring strong educational programs to work sites for entry level staff. These programs will assist in developing stronger employees in current jobs as well as open up opportunities for career growth within aging services and beyond. The program is developed in conjunction with Connecticut Workforce Partners, the Connecticut community college system, a handful of other aging service providers as well as the department of labor, Vernon Board of Higher Education, and the Capitol Region Education Council.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

These educational programs are *transformational* because it will change the quality of employees and transform aging services reputation. Employees will seek aging services as an opportunity to care for the elderly while at the same time building a better life for themselves through educational opportunities at the work site. Individual educational programs are *person-centered* because they are designed to meet the needs of each student. The program centers on employee needs and then provides a case manager to assist in maintaining success at work, at home, and at school.

The program is *innovative* because it is the first of its type in Connecticut where the colleges come to the employer.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Self confident, happy people make better employees. Employees, who feel good about themselves and what their employer does for them, perform better and want to grow as people and caregivers. If an employee sees their employer cares about them as a person he/she will be more dedicated to the organization and its mission. Staff who wish to remain in a more entry level positions will be stronger performers and those who wish to climb the career ladder will have that chance. Providing this opportunity will assist in developing strong health care workers in many areas we currently experience shortages.

### Describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

There are many educational programs “out there” and no matter how simple the idea seems, or how small the program is, someone needs to do it in order for it to be successful. And, to someone it creates a whole new beginning. Sharing in the successful completion of a 15 week program with the five employees taught me that it doesn’t matter if everyone or even if the majority benefit from it, because it matters so deeply to the few who truly are thankful for what has been given to them. They will make the difference for everyone they serve.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

#4. Community Involvement

## #6. Human Resources Development

### Biographical Summary

Kathy Mon is currently Vice President of Operations and the Licensed Administrator of a 289 bed long-term care facility. She is Vice President of Operations and is responsible for the overall daily operations of the Gene and Anja Rosenberg Hebrew Home and Rehabilitation Center, and the Hebrew Community Services Adult Day Centers.

Kathy has spent the majority of her career in Health Care. She has worked in long-term care and Home Care. Kathy is a Board Member for the Visiting Nurse of Health Services of Connecticut and a past Board Member of the Greater Enfield ARC. Ms. Mon has her Nursing Home Administrator's License from

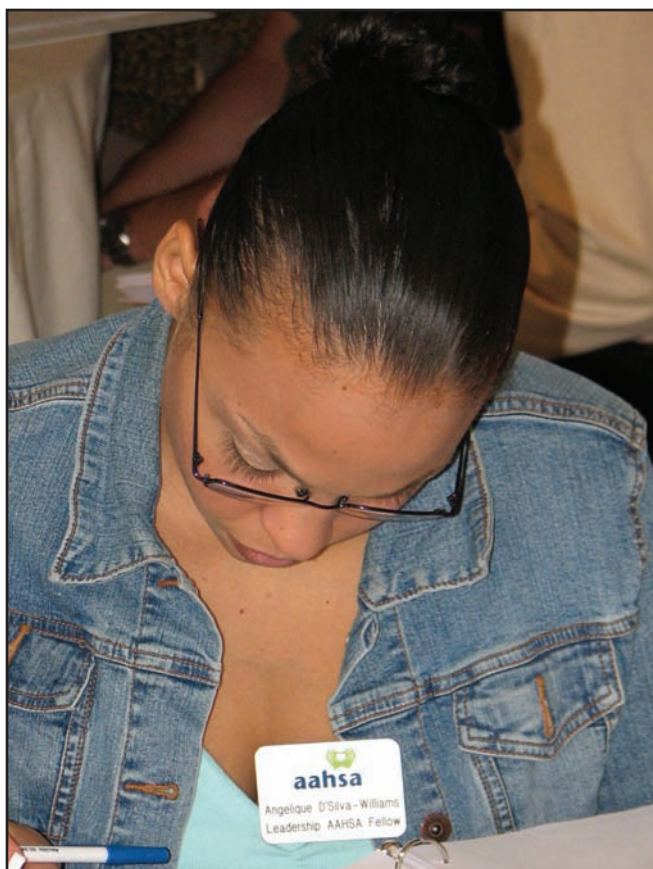
the University of Connecticut, an MBA in Health Care Management from the University of Phoenix, and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism from Southern Connecticut State University.

### Describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.

I take away a strong sense of self confidence and leadership skills from my Leadership AAHSA experience. I reached out to subordinates, and have been approached by others outside of my organization to act as a mentor, and to participate on "special" task forces. With a higher level of self confidence I now really listen to, and seek out loving critics. I reflect and learn from what they share. I have enough self confidence to know that I can improve. I no longer feel bad about areas of improvement needed, but feel good that I still have room for improvement.

### In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?

The Leadership AAHSA experience is unforgettable. I will continue to reflect upon and use this experience to develop and grow as a leader. I will reflect often and use the people and experiences to continually "fill me up." Most importantly it has taught me that the best leaders are always learning and always have something to learn. I will not fear or shy away from my own developmental needs, but will seek out others to show me the way to even higher levels, better ways, and I will develop many leaders where ever I am.



## Social Compatibility Model for Nursing Home Residents with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias

**Ken Carpenter, MS, LNHA**  
Executive Director



Mildred and Shirley L. Garrison Geriatric Education and Care Center, a member of the Sears Methodist Retirement System  
Lubbock, Texas

### Please describe Action Learning Project.

The Social Compatibility Model for Nursing Home Residents with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias is a refinement of the dementia care programming that Sears Methodist has engaged in for 11 years. Sears embraces a social model that utilizes separate communities to better individualize the care needs of our residents. This new model uses social compatibility as the basis for placement in one of the different communities. This approach is in contrast to placement based on cognitive comparability or physical acuity. The goal is to develop a clearly defined, evidenced-based and replicable model for best practices in dementia care.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

The success of this project is dependent upon *transformational leadership*. Leaders from Sears Methodist and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center came together to create culture change, fundamentally changing entrenched dementia programs. This new culture seeks to create, implement and sustain

an *innovative* model of care. Through self-examination and teaching, the “hows” and “whys” can be shared and adopted by all stake holders. The Social Compatibility Model is by definition *person-centered*. It focuses first and foremost on the individual and their unique social needs in the pursuit of the highest quality of life.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Human beings hurt when they fail to meet social expectations. Those with dementia are not immune to significant distress when they feel they have failed socially. In response to this failure, people often withdraw or act out in frustration and anger. Providing an environment conducive to successful social interactions and a sense of belonging is the basis for a high quality of life.

### Describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

It can be difficult when an idea you are passionate about is presented to others. It becomes open to questioning and criticism. As involvement increases, ownership moves from the individual to the group and significant changes start to occur. As our Best Practice Committee took ownership, the level of excitement, creativity and group cohesion increased. The loss of control may be uncomfortable, but is necessary for the project to reach its full potential under the group's influence. The experience also strengthened personal relationships and will make the group a more effective team for future projects.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

#3. Leading Edge Care and Services



## #9. Research Findings and Education

### Biographical Summary

Ken Carpenter serves as Executive Director of the Mildred and Shirley L. Garrison Geriatric Education and Care Center in Lubbock, Texas. Located on the campus of Texas Tech University, the Garrison Center is a teaching and research nursing facility specializing in Alzheimer's and skilled nursing care. He is a licensed administrator and has been an employee of the Sears Methodist Retirement System for 10 years. His degrees include an M.S. in Management and Human Relations and a B.S. in Psychology. He and his wife Tonia have two daughters, Kaely and Chloe.

### Describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.

The Leadership AAHSA experience has helped me to clarify the kind of leader I want to be. Increased self-understanding and personal development have

made me more of a transformational leader. I find that I now approach others differently, seeking to motivate through understanding and finding common core values. Often our most valuable learning experiences come from the mistakes we make. What I have learned in seeking to develop others is the importance of managing my own anxiety and allowing mistakes to be made by the empowered. Creative solutions that I may not have considered have come from this process.

### In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?

A constant focus on developing leaders at all levels is clearly necessary for our organization, association and industry to move forward. The Leadership AAHSA experience will have a positive influence on me as a leader for the rest of my life. This process has gone far beyond technique and procedure to challenge core assumptions about self and others. My effectiveness as a leader is and will be greater because I now see people in a new light and approach them in new ways. My relationship with my other fellows will be a lifelong source of strength, wisdom and accountability.



## The Tupelo Greenhouses®: A Closer Look at the Operating Costs

### Iara Woody

Health and Finance Policy Associate

American Association of Homes  
and Services for the Aging  
Washington, DC



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

The objective of this research project is to study the financial structure of the first Greenhouses® (GH) in Tupelo MS, by examining the change in operating costs before and after the implementation of the GH project. Because the GH project is relatively new, launched in June 2003, the financial sustainability under a Medicaid-funded budget has yet to be analyzed in detail. As providers explore options in improving how they can best deliver long-term care to older adults, the findings of this study will serve as additional information to those interested in learning more about GHs.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Since the inception of the first GH in Tupelo, MS, four years ago, there has been no study on the costs associated with the implementation of such project. With the goal to provide more transparency in the cost structure of the Tupelo GHs, this study can be used as additional information for providers who are faced with decisions to renovate or replace traditional physical plants. By presenting a more transparent business case to an already exemplary *innovative* and *person-*

*centered* concept, providers will be able to make better decisions in *transforming* the way they deliver long-term care services to the elderly.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

The study focuses on the first GH project in Tupelo MS, which is a person-centered concept that has been shown by a separate study to increase quality of care to older adults. Despite these promising findings, very little (if anything) is known about the change in the cost structure associated of the Tupelo GHs. The study will provide supporting information that is needed for providers to better explore options in improving how to best deliver long-term care to older adults.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

A crucible moment from my Action Learning Project was the realization that there are always obstacles in completing an innovative study such as this, but that it can, nonetheless, be overcome through perseverance, courage, and commitment to deliver the right message. Other crucible moments were with my mentor, from whom I learned invaluable leadership lessons throughout the different stages of this study.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

#9. Research Findings and Education

### Biographical Summary

Iara Woody is a young economist who joined AAHSA three years ago with an interest in the complexity of AAHSA's members' financial issues after

working on behalf of physicians at a national non-profit organization. Iara completed her undergraduate work at George Mason University and her Master's degree in Economics and additional advanced work at George Washington University. In her work at the AAHSA, Iara is currently responsible for the home health and SNF financial models and is part of the advocacy team who work on public health policy analysis relating to SNF reimbursement issues and Part D.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

My mentor has always been inspirational and supportive. As a result of the project, my mentor has taught me crucial lessons on how to deal with the challenges I encountered along the way. Discussions with my mentor have been both stimulating and en-

lightening, and her support and teachings have been indispensable. More than ever, my mentor showed overwhelming trust, support, and encouragement that allowed for a tremendous learning experience and personal growth that I would not have gotten otherwise.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

Leadership AAHSA gave me greater confidence, courage, and knowledge in applying my leadership skills to become a more effective leader on behalf of providers who serve older adults. Leadership AAHSA has taught me the importance of developing personal and professional relationships, and I hope this group will continue to become a fundamental support system and professional network from which I will continue to learn and serve in any way I can.





## Expanding Diversity Within the Aging Services Industry

**Cherese Holland**  
Executive Director

Episcopal Homes Foundation  
Oakland, CA



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

This project implemented a learning partnership between aging services professionals and students with the goal of illuminating non-white social concerns in the work places in the workplaces. In doing so, we sought to respectfully and critically motivate participants toward a transformative movement of diversity—one that heightens inclusivity in all aspects of aging services, from resident relations to staff development and organizational behavior.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Historical models of learning depend on a one-way construct, with the mentor dispensing information and the student receiving it. This project insists otherwise. We are *person-centered* in our belief that diversity depends on a dynamic interchange between individuals of all cultures and backgrounds. We focus on *transformational leadership* by holding both the mentor and the student responsible for multiple definitions of learning, personal illumination and social responsibility. We are *innovative* in that we seek to break down historical models and replace them with meaningful experiences based on shared learning and mutual respect.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

This project will benefit older adults by:

1. Bringing the dialogue of diversity and cultural differences to the forefront.
2. Infusing the industry with potentially new diverse leaders.
3. Exposing diverse individuals to aging services as future leaders for our industry. Additionally, it is a way to build a diverse workforce that will provide a pool of candidates from which open positions can be filled. Finally, older adults will benefit as we begin to take a more holistic and authentic approach toward diversity. This project urges aging services to be mindful about diversity concerns, particularly as our aging population becomes more diverse.

### Please describe a crucible moment or a revelation from your program.

This project revealed to me that diversity can't simply be about a list of differences that we memorize or a list of practices that we implement. It has to be about continual change, openness and inclusion. Whether or not diverse individuals are present, we must learn to affirm cultural awareness. The student intern, Weyinmi's Ekwejnor-Etchie, presence was a gift; we can't simply look for learning opportunities whenever there is an ethnically diverse person observing us. We must accept this gift as an example of how we must open the ways in which we learn and grow, regardless of our context.



## **Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#6. Human Resources Development

### **Biographical Summary**

Cherese Holland is the youngest of five children. Her father died when she was young, leaving her mother as the sole provider for her family. Her mother saw to it that Cherese's family had her unfailing guidance, as well as the guidance of their church pastor. These women showed Cherese that true change lies in creative engagement. They taught her that attempting change through isolated ideas was often immobilizing; but change, secondary to education, self-awareness and compassion led to liberation and growth. Their impact on her life continues today, and reflects deeply in the successes she enjoys in both her career and personal life.

### **Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

I was fortunate to have three mentors during this Project: Cheryl Wilson, St. Paul's Senior Homes & Services CEO and former Chair for Aging Service of California; Ann Burns Johnson, President of Aging Services of California; and Maureen Hewitt, CEO of Total Long Term Care, Inc. Maureen empowered me to find my focus and drive it toward success; Ann challenged me with

the people-centered needs of this industry; Cheryl opened my perspective beyond management into the total organizational opportunities within each site. Most importantly, these relationships inspired me because these are women who live the principles that this project affirms.

### **In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

Our industry is not perfect. Striving for that perfection is a process of learning, and therefore necessary for transformation and growth. This project, for all its limitations, remains an experience of perfect possibility. I recognize this possibility and I honor it by committing to challenge myself and my colleagues toward an openness of mind. I will utilize it in the years to come as I labor for diversity-understanding in all my leadership experiences. Honoring this experience carries with it my willingness to be responsible—to see clearly that all people have the power to change the direction of our industry.



## Whole Person Wellness and its Cost/Benefit Relationship

**Kimberly K. Hynek**  
Chief Financial Officer

Lakeview Village, Inc.  
Lenexa, KS



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

While we are making significant improvements in the environments of which we provide to our residents, some still hold on to the concept that it is inevitable that a slow decline occurs as we age. Studies have shown that this misconception is prevalent among seniors, among those who serve them and of our general society as a whole. At Lakeview Village, we intend to implement changes that help diminish this misconception and document sustainable, replicable outcomes that show the cost/benefit relationship of these actions.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

This project displays all three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program. It is *innovative* because it challenges the general assumption that aging equals decline. It is *person-centered* since it is focused on each person as an individual. Lastly, it is *transformational* because it creates an environment where hope and self-determination can flourish.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

There are numerous benefits for older adults. One benefit is that the facets of whole-person wellness provide a realistic approach to minimizing (or even pre-

venting in some cases) the decline of functional ability and capacity. Another benefit will be the impact we can have on society when we, as an industry, cause changes in the assumptions of what it means to age.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

Some years ago, we began the journey of creating a culture based in the principles of whole person wellness. Our organization was able to enact significant changes and plant the seeds necessary for future success. However, we were not able to identify the factors in a way that showed any difference in our work than that of many others before us. Also, some of our staff continued to believe that functional decline was inevitable since they held the belief that it was simply part of the process of growing old. The crucible moment came when we had the opportunity to bring external resources internal—that person's expertise and knowledge helped communicate the message in ways that we had not been able to do before she joined our team.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #8. Consumer Participation
- #9. Research Findings and Education

### Biographical Summary

Kimberly Hynek joined the Lakeview Village team in 2001 as its Chief Financial Officer where she oversees and is responsible for the finance, accounting, information systems, and risk management departments for Lakeview and its Foundation. She has more than 18 years of industry-specific experience. Ms. Hynek's educational background includes Bachelor of Science and

a Master of Business Administration. She received the Ziegler-AAHSA Graduate Fellowship Award in 2003 that funded her coursework in an executive leadership course at Harvard Business School. She is currently serving as an Administrative and Finance surveyor for CARE/CCAC.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

The rewards that come from having a mentor are significant. The most interesting evolution that I experienced that I attribute to my Leadership AAHSA experience is that I gained confidence in my ability to

“give back” in the relationship. I feel more equipped to contribute to another’s development than I did before this program.

**What ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

This program offered a broad perspective in a way that helped me look beyond the challenges of today. I plan to continue my journey of exploration on leadership and I also plan to become more involved in our state and national organizations.





## Home Care Services for the Deaf

### Jane Shukitis

Vice President, Home and Community Based Services

Unity Health System  
Rochester, New York



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

The Deaf elderly population in Rochester, New York is underserved in the area of home health care due to language and cultural barriers which exist between Deaf clients and home care providers.

The purpose of the Action Learning Project is to link elderly Deaf individuals in need of home care services with staff who are members of the Deaf community and fluent in the patient's native language, American Sign Language (ASL). Deaf individuals, and others who are fluent in ASL, are being trained as Certified Home Health Aides, and matched with Deaf clients to be their primary in-home direct care worker.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

The project is **person-centered** because it is meeting the individualized needs of people who are part of an underserved community. Each individual Deaf client is matched with a Deaf staff person based on their unique compatibility of culture and language. The program is **transformational** because it is changing the status quo. Home care agencies traditionally employ a hearing work force who may be able to meet the physical needs of a Deaf individual, but are not able to communicate in their native language, (ASL).

The program is **innovative** because it has never been done before. It is the first program specifically designed to recruit, train and employ Deaf workers to serve as direct caregivers for an aging Deaf community.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Through reducing communication barriers, ASL fluent staff are able to assist Deaf elderly clients to better understand and manage their health and wellness needs. They are helping Deaf elders recognize symptoms earlier, and encouraging better compliance with prescribed treatment plans. We anticipate better medical, functional, and consumer satisfaction outcomes will result, leading to a reduction in unnecessary physician, hospital and nursing home utilization.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

A primary goal of the program is to match the cultural and language levels of the Home Health Aide (HHA) with each client. Unfortunately, our first case came before we were ready. A Deaf elderly woman needed our services, and the only person trained was a "semi-fluent" HHA who was partially deaf, but more connected to the hearing culture than the deaf culture. We were concerned not sending a "good match" to our first case would receive a negative reaction from the client and undermine the integrity of the project.

To our delight, the HHA and the patient established an immediate rapport. The patient was excited about the opportunity to teach her new HHA additional signs. She felt valued, and viewed herself as doing something important to help the program get started. The relationship blossomed and our first case was a great success. The lesson... you don't have to be



perfect, you just have to do your best!

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#3. Leading Edge Care and Services

#8. Consumer Participation

**Biographical Summary**

Jane Shukitis is Vice President of Home and Community Based Services for Unity Health System in Rochester, New York. She is responsible for the development and operations of programs and services to assist frail older adults and people with disabilities so that they can live independently in a community setting. Specific program areas include home health care, adult day care, and non-medical in-home services.

Jane has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing and a Master's Degree in Public Administration. She serves on a variety of community Boards and Professional Advisory Committees. She is active in the New York AHSA chapter, and serves on the NYAHSA Board of Directors.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

The mentor I selected is a trusted friend from my church. He is retired school principal with many years of teaching and coaching experience. I have great respect for his ability to listen and analyze issues, ask the tough questions, and lovingly yet directly point out situations that might be veering off track.

Some of the most valuable advice he has offered include:

- Reflect and analyze the team building aspects – and learn from them.
- Think critically about what I would have done differently, and learn from that.
- Be diligent about keeping a written record of everything: challenges, successes, and failures.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

Leadership AAHSA has been a life changing experience. I came thinking I knew a fair amount about leadership, and am leaving knowing I have just scratched the surface. It has sparked a realization that we all emerging leaders, no matter what position or title we hold. Leadership is a journey with no finish line. The further we develop, the higher the bar is raised. What I take into the future is a renewed passion for leadership development for both myself and my team, and a commitment to never stop learning.

Most significantly, I have been humbled and inspired by the people I have met. I have made life-long friends whom I plan to “utilize” for many years to come. I now have 32 wonderful resources I can look to for insight and advice in my lifelong leadership journey. Without question, this was the greatest gift of L.A.!

## Creating a Smart Unit: The Use of Technology and Key Disciplines to Maintain and Enhance Quality of Life for Seniors

**Jon-Paul Venoit**  
President

Ashlar Village  
Wallingford, Connecticut



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

In the future, I see technology and the many different disciplines working together – providing efficient and new ways to sustain older adults' independence longer and enable providers to follow a senior's health information seamlessly. With the need for a multi-disciplinarian approach and a complement of technology, we are in the process of developing a "smart unit" that will encompass new technologies and software development – all of which will converge into one central repository. To decipher this information we will use a multi-disciplinarian team that will create and manage each senior in many different facets. We will use one of our units as the core hub and install many different pieces of technology. Also, we are going to be designing other aging in home equipment that can be used in the general community.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

This project provides for *transformational leadership* by empowering the multi-disciplinarian team to spearhead the creation of a smart unit that can be repli-

cated anywhere in the country.

The smart unit is focused on a growing need for seniors, and therefore *person-centered*. Because of this, it evolves around the person's needs while providing for a non-intrusive safe environment. The use of technology along with a case management approach allows for a new *innovation* that will allow seniors to enjoy a higher quality of life than was previously possible in today's environment.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

The establishment of a case management approach along with technology will allow for seniors to live in their home longer. We will be able to provide many different services without seniors having to leave the comforts and familiarity of their own home and in essence create a continuum without walls. By staying home longer this will reduce the amount of monies spent on individuals going to long-term care.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

We originally thought the technology would be the forerunner in allowing seniors to stay home safely for a longer length of time. But after some conversation with the multi-disciplinary team, we realized that technology alone was just a piece of a more intricate puzzle in allowing for seniors to retain their independence in a safe and comforting environment. This brought about an interesting occurrence that prompted this task force not only the freedom of information that was being provided, but also the enthusiasm and empowerment that the team members had displayed. Many of the team members brought the discussion back to their own staff and had created the energy within their

departments that has had a domino effect throughout the organization.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #8. Consumer Participation
- #9. Research Findings and Education

**Biographical Summary**

Jon-Paul Venoit, is president of Ashlar Village, a continuing care retirement community by Masonicare, located in Wallingford, CT with 282 independent living and 57 assisted living units. Mr. Venoit has been with Masonicare since 1990. He graduated from the University of Hartford in 1996 and received his RHP (Retirement Housing Professional, now known as Certified Aging Services Professional) certification from the University of North Texas in 2001. He is a member of the Board of Directors for the Connecticut Assisted Living Association (CALA) and Vice Chairman of the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce. He also serves as a member of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA) and the Connecticut Association of Not-for-Profit Providers for the Aging (CANPFA). Jon lives with his wife Christine and two sons, Ethan and Trevor, in Wallingford, Connecticut.

**Please describe the relationship with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

I am truly fortunate to have individuals in my life that can help me both professionally and personally. In San Francisco, I was fortunate to have the opportunity

to meet many leaders in our industry. One of those leaders talked about having your own personal board of directors to help you navigate through all the things that life throws at you. I have adopted this concept and have seen some changes in what I do and how I do it. My mentor, who is also on my personal board of directors, is truly an inspiration to me. He has helped me become a better leader and a better person. He has taught me that we need to balance our lives both on a professional and personal level. My mentor is changing the industry without knowing it.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your leadership AAHSA experience in your years come?**

One of my goals in joining the Leadership AAHSA program, was to learn how to be a better leader and bring those experiences back to my state. The learning has not stopped and the excitement has grown. I now feel like we, Leadership AAHSA, can change the world because the experiences we have received over the past year. These experiences will be shared with whomever I have contact with. This experience has built relationships among many in our industry that will continue to grow, by the impressions he has made on others in the industry.

## The Nursing Network at IAHSA

**Cheri Schendel-Hennager, RN**  
Long Term Care Consultant & Educator

LTC Resources, LLC  
Story City, Iowa



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

Nursing facilities in Iowa have been struggling to cope with the ever-challenging survey process. The outcomes of survey visits have been of increasing concern especially over the past year – during which time the survey agency has experienced a change in leadership, an alarming rate of surveyor turnover, and also has enforced strict guidance and requirements in the “self-reporting” of accidents. These threats only add to the very stressful nature of our careers in long term care. The Nursing Network through IAHSA will bring nursing professionals together to form a “support group.” This network will gather, either physically or with the assistance of technology, to share, educate, listen, and support each other as we all face similar challenges in our day-to-day operations.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

The IAHSA Nursing Network is innovative because this is an exciting new venture for our state association as well as for the members who will choose to participate. *Person-centered* suggests a focus on relationships. The IAHSA Nursing Network will emphasize that LTC leaders are “not in it alone.” We all have days, or even weeks, when we need help coping. This

network of nursing leaders can remind each other of the power of their missions, and how ultimately, good care by good hearts is the true picture of quality. The IAHSA Nursing Network will support *transformational leadership* as each participant will find comfort in the ability to communicate in a safe environment. A trust amongst participants is certain to develop. By “sharing stories” participants will identify unique ideas and programs to take back and integrate into their facilities.

### How will your project benefit the people we serve?

An organized “support group” of nursing professionals from multiple providers will allow open sharing of information and ideas to flow amongst the participants. A problem that is new to one provider may be one solved by another. Having a network of professionals with whom you have relationships to communicate with, ask questions of, and seek answers to will save time and effort in addition to help achieve quicker results that will ultimately benefit the elders we serve.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

You never know what surprise is hiding behind the next turn. As leaders we often think we possess the ability to predict outcomes and pre-plan our responses. My leadership path took an unexpected sharp turn and I made the difficult decision to leave the organization where I had given my heart and soul for twelve years. Although desperate at first to make sense of it all, my journey purposefully paused long enough for me to re-evaluate my life, personally and professionally. It was in this pause I was able to rest and reflect long enough to allow the next portion of the path to reveal itself.



**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#4. Community Involvement

#6. Human Resources Development

**Biographical Summary**

Cheri Schendel-Hennager has worked in LTC for more than 12 years serving elders and employees in a variety of roles – from C.N.A. to Director of Nursing to Assistant Administrator. Her leadership journey has recently led her into consulting and teaching. As a Credentialed Resident Assessment Coordinator (soon to become a RAC-CT Master Trainer), a Certified Eden Associate, a Leadership AAHSA Fellow, and an active participant on committees at IAHSA, Cheri looks forward to being able to utilize her experience and knowledge in assisting multiple organizations identify and satisfy their complex needs as well as help them navigate the challenges in the aging services profession.

**Please describe the relationship with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your leadership AAHSA experience.**

As if the Leadership AAHSA experience wasn't exhilarating enough, I happened to meet an incredible professional with a wise perspective and a beautiful heart. Michele Holleran was assigned to work with our team, and I chose her as a personal mentor as I faced unexpected challenges in my leadership journey. Michele demonstrates incredible skills and talent as a teacher, an advisor, and a dear friend. I would often find a kind e-mail, or a concerned voice message

during some of my most difficult times. She listened to me, encouraged me, sometimes put me in my place, and most importantly taught me new things about exercising patience and accepting professional growth, even when sometimes it comes with personal pain.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

My Leadership AAHSA experience will be something I'll treasure always. Firstly, I have been introduced to and have developed relationships with 32 fascinating aging service professionals who are certain to remain my dear friends for life. Secondly, I've been blessed with the opportunity to learn from amazing and powerful faculty as well as become acquainted with some of the leaders of our country's most innovative aging service organizations. Words cannot express my gratitude for those who thought enough of our "leaders of tomorrow" to design and implement a program of such high caliber and content. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!



## Broadening Leadership Capacity to Sustain Operational/Plant Expansion

**Eric S. Boston**  
President & CEO

St. Barnabas Senior Living Services  
Chattanooga, Tennessee



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

Acknowledgement of the perpetuating energy of leadership forms the foundation for this project. St. Barnabas has recently engaged in significant efforts to provide a progressive care delivery model through collaborative partnership and new construction. In order to ensure the maximization of these accomplishments, targeted approaches to staff and board leadership have been identified for strategic implementation. Specific areas have included implementation of divisional leadership, development of internal/external leadership cultivation, and a strengthening of the governance model of the board of directors.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

The objectives identified in this project are supportive of *transformational leadership* and *person-centeredness* on behalf of staff in the organization through the acknowledgement of the very integral human element necessary for the perpetuation of organizational stability and adjustment. The future of aging services rests upon the reality that investments in leadership perpetuity extract a greater return than a sole focus on necessary plant and campus modernizations.

Although those *innovations* may be more outwardly visible, the leadership core provides the vehicle in which the physical environment can fulfill its purpose. Further, adjustments to the development of leadership due to the changing demographic of the workforce and the availability of an all-volunteer board representation are necessary to cultivate excellence within narrowing availability.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Older adults represent the ultimate end user of this project of leadership development. As the emerging elder population continues to reach unprecedented levels, the tenants of this project seek to provide the leadership savvy to enhance an appreciable physical environment. Leadership and governance design that emphasizes the necessary research and strategic implementation of effective care delivery models is an investment that is well worth the effort. These foundations will assist the changing needs and expectations of those we serve.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

The inception of this project served as a natural response to the construction implementation of our nursing home campus relocation. Realization of the need to undergo this transformation occurred as a result of the rapid approach to the end of the effective life of our then present building as a nursing center. The organization had not taken a historically proactive approach toward planning for this need, and focus on the demands of the present proved an easy distraction even while acknowledging the past pitfalls of that practice. Although implementation of the outlined objectives

of the plan were incorporated into the strategic planning process, attention was repeatedly diverted by the demands of the construction project. To be concise, the pursuit of funding and the construction management presented formidable hurdles in the diligent focus and cultivation of the objectives of the project.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

#2. Governance and Accountability

**Biographical Summary**

Following acquisition of an undergraduate degree in business administration, Eric Boston served in a management role for a large acute care health system in Orlando, Florida. He also formed a nonprofit ministry extending services to senior facilities in the Eastern United States that was headquartered in Cleveland, Tennessee. While that ministry continued, Eric was offered the opportunity to assist an independent,

nonprofit CCRC campus in Chattanooga called St. Barnabas. This assistance evolved into a ten-year journey that led to new construction and a trend-setting partnership approach to senior care.

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

The learning opportunities presented throughout the Leadership AAHSA program have been well timed for integration and replication opportunities within the organization. The coaching experiences have been replicated in undergraduate internship programs, and both board and staff leadership retreats. Additional information presented has been integrated into the strategic planning process of the organization.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

The encouraging design of Leadership AAHSA is the opportunity to perpetuate the experience through the stories and experiences of all of the fellows in this inaugural class. The richness of the online community is an ever-expanding oasis of encouragement and leadership primers that provide real-field application to leading theoretical practice. Additionally, the well designed facilitation models incorporated through this inaugural journey are all easily applied on the organizational level and are a sure foundation on which to build.



## Journey Toward Design & Implementation of a Household Model

**Lynn Szender, RN, BSN**  
Director of Health Services

Mary's Woods at Marylhurst  
Lake Oswego, Oregon



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

Mary's Woods at Marylhurst has identified a need for more healthcare beds in response to current and future needs as we expand our campus. This project is an attempt to fulfill that need and requirement with an excellent, resident-centered, functional, aesthetically pleasing, technology enhanced and innovative home which supports best practices in long term care as inspired by the green house model and rooted in Mary's Woods Mission to serve individuals through a commitment to integrity, compassion, hospitality and reverence.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

This wonderful household model nurtures *transformational leadership* at all levels. Caregivers, in relationship with residents, will realize their full potential to befriend, sustain and protect elders in a mutually beneficial environment of shared life, love, learning, happiness, healing and growth. *Innovative* thinking and technology coupled with resourceful teamwork will be joyfully *person-centered* on residents' unique needs in an atmosphere saturated with nature's delights.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Provision of personal space, time, tools and choice in an environment built on a more human scale (ten elders to one home) fosters a community which honors full personhood and "family" provided care. Focused on life's goodness, free of the institutional model's limitations, elders will realize their intrinsic role as transformational leaders, teach and support all who cross their path, share their wisdom, humor, skills and life stories which affirm their value to their community and society. No longer relegated to surviving and enduring, Elders will have true quality of life and the meaning in life necessary to fully thrive.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

Vision vs. tradition are at the heart of the conflict that is this project. Despite concerted efforts to educate our architects and owners' representative in the philosophy and consequent design goals, we were presented plans which can best be described as a "mini-health-care building." Getting things back on track required a pointed articulation of the fact that we were not happy with the direction and it had to change in order to go forward. One revelation from this experience: The need for culture change of what elder care is and ought to be reaches far beyond our own profession.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #8. Consumer Participation



## Biographical Summary

Lynn Szender brings 30+ years of dedication and experience in direct care, clinical management, and team-building to all levels of service provided in the Marie-Rose Center as well as to the respite and health-care outreach programs offered at Mary's Woods. A graduate of the University of Portland with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and of Marylhurst University where she completed a graduate certificate in Gerontology, Lynn uses knowledge gained from those educational experiences as well as that gleaned from decades of continuing education to spark excellence in delivery of holistic services, developing caring relationships and advocating for all residents at Mary's Woods. Lynn is supported in her life's journey by divine friend and mentor Leska Emerald Adams.

### **Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

The relationship is a rare combination of divine friendship, altruistic helpfulness, willingness to share wisdom, camaraderie and focus on elder related work. My mentor has offered me continual sagacious buoying support, substantial top-notch work, a sounding board, loving constructive critical feedback, steadfast encouragement, and brilliant analysis of patient/care-giving needs, functions and solutions. She has opened my eyes to patterns and truths whose grasp

are imperative to my success. The ongoing crucible of this project has strengthened our already well-forged relationship immeasurably and increased my amazed appreciation of Leska's unwavering integrity, incisiveness, intelligence and generous heroic useful assistance.

### **In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

I had two core hopes in pursuing participation in Leadership AAHSA. The first, which has been wonderfully realized, is the inspiration and knowledge I have received via the program and through interaction with the Fellows, faculty and the leaders who shared themselves with us so authentically. The second, which is beginning to be realized, is the hope that I will be a source of inspiration, no matter how small, in sharing this knowledge and experience for the benefit of the elders I serve and those with whom I work to provide that service. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity.



## The Green Houses at St. Pete

### Pattye L. Sawyer, M.A.

Vice President of Community Health Programs

The Hospice of the Florida Suncoast  
Clearwater, Florida



#### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

My project is an extension of the rich history and commitment to the provision of quality care for which The Hospice of the Florida Suncoast has become known. I have decided to take on the challenge of building Green Houses in our South St. Petersburg, FL community, which is home to a primarily African-American population. The homey ambiance of the Green House design will provide our elders with the comfortable family atmosphere that is a cornerstone of our culture, and enable me to meet my goal of increasing the availability of quality care options to underserved populations in my community.

#### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

This project provides *transformational leadership* through the inverted management structure of the Green House model, giving more responsibility for decision-making to the CNA/Shabazim, and ultimately the patient; it provides *person-centeredness* through a system of both formal and informal support historically provided through church, neighborhood and friendship networks that are mainstays of African-American culture; and it provides *innovation* through a unique form of service delivery structured to eliminate the

isolation and loneliness that many elders experience in their latter years in a place called “home.”

#### How will your project benefit older adults?

My project will establish an innovative model of care that supports our organization’s overarching goal to help all the people of our community find value and quality of life and to live each day with meaning and purpose. The implementation of the Green House model will meet the physical, spiritual, and psychosocial needs of the elders we propose to serve in an environment that celebrates diversity, embraces their rich cultural heritage, and helps them to retain their individuality and control over their lives.

#### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

My crucible moment occurred after I visited the Green Houses in Tupelo, MS. I was so moved by the elders I met and the spirit of reverence with which they were served that I wanted to replicate that model for a specialized population in my home community. During conversations with my mentor, I recalled my upbringing, which has taught me that in caring for our African-American elders, we honor our past and enrich our future, and I became certain that this project would be a tangible way to pay homage to those who have paved the way for my generation.

#### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #3. Leading-Edge Care & Services
- #8. Consumer Participation

## Biographical Summary

Patty Sawyer holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism from Ohio University and a Master of Arts Degree in Organizational Management from the University of Phoenix, where she graduated summa cum laude. Patty has 17 years of comprehensive community-based HIV experience, directing programs throughout the Tampa Bay Area. She serves on a myriad of local, state and national boards. Her career with The Hospice began in 1998. With her recent promotion to Vice President of Community Health Programs, Patty is looking forward to the challenge of developing and implementing innovative programs that will enable her to better serve the community.

## Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.

My mentor, Becky McDonald, Executive Vice President of Programs for The Hospice, shares my passion for the Green House Project, having long felt that this was an area that The Hospice needed to move into. She is a visionary leader who possesses a unique ability to envision the big picture and help every employee see the vital role he/she plays in it. Not only does she give me unconditional positive regard, but as my direct supervisor/mentor, is deeply invested in my career. Our relationship is built on mutual respect and has been greatly enhanced by our collaboration on this project.



## In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?

I have already begun to put my Leadership AAHSA experience to work by sharing books, articles and teachings with my leadership team. I recently accepted the request of a coworker to serve as her mentor and am excited about the opportunity to share what I have learned over the past year. It is my plan to be a part of a team developing a curriculum for my State Association (FAHSA) to identify and mentor emerging leaders. Finally, I offer my service to future Leadership AAHSA Fellows as we carry out our life's work of serving our nation's elders.

## Transformational Leaderships—Staff Development Plan

**Angelique D'Silva-Williams**  
Occupancy Manager

TELACU Residential Management  
Los Angeles, California



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

In today's rapid changing business scenario it is essential for an organization to set the right direction and adapt to the changes as and when required. This is possible only when the organization takes step to train and upgrade the employee skills to meet the anticipated changes. An organization can prove efficient only when its workforce respond quickly to anticipated changes and not fear it. My action learning project is creating a staff development plan for employees so that they are empowered to elevate themselves to new levels and accountabilities.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

The project supports *transformational leadership*, *person-centeredness* and *innovativeness*. *Transformational leadership* begins with a vision that is shared by all in the organization. *Person-centeredness* because TELACU brings forward the best potential in the employees by harnessing their core strengths with the aid of regular training and development, fostering growth with the aid of tools like performance appraisals, constructive feedback, positive challenges, inspired motivation, and healthy organizational culture. It is

*innovative* because TELACU is adopting the **transformational style of leadership** and giving a new face to the existing workforce that takes in the values and ideals that TELACU stands for.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

As a provider of affordable housing for the elderly, TELACU's mission is to provide housing for the aging population whose income would otherwise not allow them to have a place they can call "home." The successful delivery of this housing resource to the people who need it depends on the organization's commitment to be a "learning" organization.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

A crucible moment that I am continuously confronting is building a shared vision. All the employees need to share the company's vision and long-term objectives to meet them successfully. Leadership begins with a vision that is shared by all the team members. A transformational leader will be able to articulate the vision in clear practical terms that the others can relate to.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

#6. Human Resources Development

### Biographical Summary

Angelique D'Silva-Williams has been with TELACU Residential Management (TRM) since October 2005. She was hired as a Regional Property Supervisor and has been promoted twice within a short period



of time—first to Compliance Specialist and now as Compliance Manager. TELACU is an organization that aims at creating opportunities for growth in the community. The reason Angelique feels she has been successful here is that she has built a relationship with the organization's mission statement. The TELACU Mission Statement is “A pioneering institution committed to service, empowerment, advancement, and the creation of self-sufficiency.”

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

“Remember who your audience is” is a phrase that Jasmine always uses when discussing my Action Learning Project. My relationship with Jasmine Borrego, President of TELACU Residential Management is one of continuous learning about myself. She is always making me think outside of the box and challenging

the status quo. Jasmine is a lady of great strength who is committed to empowering those around her. The biggest lesson Jasmine is teaching me is to learn how to adjust my leadership skills in order to connect with my audience.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

Affordable housing for the elderly is very essential in the society today. Research shows baby boomers that are about to retire have various needs that need to be considered by aging services field. My leadership AAHSA experience will enable me to meet the core tenets of AAHSA and continue to empower the residents I serve in my communities. Leadership AAHSA is truly a team of professionals that have identified issues in the aging field and have declared to develop pioneering campaigns to empower the elders we serve.



## An Interactive and Relational Approach to a Holistic Profile for Wellness

**Pamela J. Rooney**

Director of Hillcrest Residence

The Christian Health Care Center  
(The Center)  
Wyckoff, New Jersey



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

My project is the development of a personalized, holistic profile for wellness that uniquely interfaces with programmatic and clinical aspects of our future CCRC. It will proactively address changes in wellness while integrating information (e.g.; vocational skills; lifestyle; physical, emotional and spiritual needs) and weave it into the community. This technology-based program compiles individualized data received during well-checks, interviews and actual residents' data-entry. This living profile assimilates collective information, reports on programmatic trends and elicits personalized invitations to targeted seniors for health and/or community events; driving development of programs and assuring interest and benefit within this thriving community.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

This tool combines *innovative* technology with *person-centered* care to assure a clear understanding of the wellbeing for each resident, both initially and regularly thereafter. A holistic approach remains at the heart of this project; providing formalized accountability. It challenges leadership to evaluate the correlation

between the implementation of particular programs with health and quality of life to ascertain if the intended positive impact is indeed facilitating an active, productive and healthy lifestyle. Multiple partnerships will link the CCRC community with area resources to achieve reciprocal benefits essential to program longevity, creating a deeper commitment to all for whom we serve.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

This concept demands direct involvement of seniors in designing and determining the direction of programming, generating potential for profound effects on overall health and social well-being. Personalized invitations may include pre-registration to a heart-health cooking demonstration in the Bistro; an automated reservation for water-aerobics; a complementary relaxation session in the spa or simply notification of the local senior center's medication review program. Whether fitness and wellness center programs; unique dining experiences, social, spiritual, educational or cultural events, this profile influences the development of programs, while providing a basis to elicit interest and participation of those who would benefit most.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

My desire to find answers and reveal details was in direct conflict with the fact that only assumptions and plans could be made at this juncture. "It's the process, not the product". (Throughout my studies of art as therapy, this phrase served as a mantra and guide through the interpretive process). Hearing this again, I realized that I was in the midst of a crucible experi-

ence, reminding me that the hunger for learning could be satiated by devouring the process. I accepted that certain realities meant approaching my project from an “aerial view” that was mindful of broader benefits.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #5. Continuous Quality Improvement
- #8. Consumer Participation
- #9. Research Findings and Education

**Biographical Summary**

Pamela Rooney has a Master’s from NYU and a Bachelor’s from The School of Visual Arts. During a series of internships, alongside therapists and teachers at the Columbia University Harlem Hospital’s Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Bellevue Hospital’s Adult Psychiatric Unit, The International Center for the Disabled, and The School for the Deaf, that her path in healthcare emerged. After working as a Recreational Therapist, she has transitioned from working with adults to seniors and discovered true fulfillment. Pamela is a member of the NJ Board & Care Advisory Council and has worked with seniors at the Center for 13 years.

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

My mentor and supervisor, Denise Ratcliffe, is COO of Christian Health Care Center. She has played a key role in guiding me in my leadership development. My respect and admiration for her is great. I appreciate her open, honest approach and strive to attain her natural ability to formulate and share a vision for continued improvement and growth. I’ve developed a strong desire to support and foster leadership skills in others as she has for me. She has kept me grounded and encourages me to keep an eye on the overall vision. This mentorship has proven a powerful experience.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

This experience will enable me to enhance my contributions as Executive Director for our future CCRC; to see my role and the role of leadership through new eyes. It has broadened my view of who our leaders are and the direct impact that leadership, relationship building and transparency can have on those we serve. I look forward to embracing change, increasing my knowledge base and improving my leadership style. Reunited with my values, I am inspired to “pay it forward,” and to motivate others to lead, to care, and to provide the best quality of life for those we serve.

## Nebraska PACE Program

**Lois Sietsema, RN-C, CSA**  
President & CEO

Midwest Geriatrics Inc.  
Omaha, NE



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

A PACE program is a transformative process that allows seniors to receive person-centered care in a place they call home. By learning all aspects of a PACE program, I can begin implementation in Nebraska. Through research, documentation review, and financial analysis, I will have a greater understanding of how a PACE program would work and benefit the senior community. Applying this knowledge to Midwest Geriatrics as well as the sponsoring organization will result in an understanding of how two companies can work together to achieve a greater goal: filling the gaps in senior care.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation: A PACE program *transforms* senior care from institution-based to *person-centered* care and requires a leader who is able to move beyond the rigid walls of the old way of caring for our elders. Collaboration with other service providers is required for a successful program. Seeing the individuals as the unique people they are will mean the model of care will have to be unique as well. One size does not fit all. What is right for each individual will take *innovative* planning and programming.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Seniors who fall into the low to middle income range are an underserved population in our community. Services for seniors tend to be disjointed and complex...leading to low utilization or no utilization. By providing a PACE program, seniors can obtain services and care from a variety of providers at one access point. By having group oversight of their needs, seniors can be assured that as his or her needs change, a provider will be with them through each transition.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

By definition, a crucible moment is a time when circumstances test you and make you change. My crucible moment occurred when I was given the assignment to develop an action learning project; to put into words and in action our plans for a legacy. It's one thing to have dreams and wishes, but when asked to fully explore and make those dreams a reality was when my crucible moment occurred. Dreams can get away from you or lose their momentum if not fully acted on. My action learning project, to develop a PACE program in Nebraska, is a lofty idea and requires persistence, patience, and collaboration: characteristics of a worthwhile dream.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #2. Governance and Accountability
- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #4. Community Involvement



## Biographical Summary

Lois Sietsema is a healthcare professional with a diverse background in geriatric care. She possesses a solid knowledge of healthcare management practices, including direction, supervision, and leadership. Personally and professionally she places the highest priority on superior community operations, financial integrity, and leadership development. Her credentials include:

- Registered Nurse with Advance Practice Certification in Gerontological Nursing
- Licensed Long-Term Care Administrator
- Certified Senior Advisor

Lois serves as President and Chief Executive Officer for Midwest Geriatrics Inc., a nonprofit management team for Florence Home Healthcare Center, Florence Home Assisted Living, Royale Oaks Assisted Living, House of Hope Alzheimer's Care, Transitions Day Program, Senior Health Foundation, and Gerimed /Unimed Pharmacies...all located on two campuses in Omaha, Nebraska.



## Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.

I have learned:

- Perseverance, patience, education and the need for Sabbath are critical when mentoring or coaching.
- Perseverance in pursuing what is right for the senior.
- Patience, above all else, is required when pursuing change as all worthwhile goals take time to implement if done correctly.
- Education from academics to personal stories enhances perspective. Keeping current on trends in the industry will ensure a knowledgeable leader. Hearing personal stories from our seniors will ensure we always remember why we do what we do for them.
- Taking time for Sabbath is necessary to avoid burn out and to keep the focus strong.

## In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?

Leadership AAHSA positively changed my way of leading. All of the skills and information gleaned from this experience apply to everything I do. I intend to use these skills to better our organization, my ability to mentor, and to leave a lasting legacy.

## Changing the Decision-Making Culture at The Kenney

**R. Kevin McFeely**  
President & CEO

The Kenney  
Seattle, WA



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

My Action Learning Project is designed to change the culture at The Kenney from one where decisions made were done with staff convenience in mind to one in which the decisions made reflect the resident's best interests. I observed that prior to residents moving into The Kenney (and I suspect other retirement communities), they are used to doing things for themselves. Once they "hit our front door", we begin to do everything for them. This needs to be changed so that the residents are directly involved in the process of living in a community such as The Kenney.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

**Transformational Leadership:** The vision I hold for our organization is one in which programs and services designed and provided are done so with involvement by residents and employees. **Person-Centeredness:** When one looks at the different projects that have been developed by the members of the Leadership Team, it is clear that all have been selected with the purpose of person-centeredness. **Innovation:** Every culture change project identified has the goal that decisions made and programs developed would be done in

an effort to insure person-centeredness is the prevailing underlying principle. Whether it is developing a new language, going from managing to leading, new and innovative steps are being developed from this process.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

Residents of The Kenney will benefit from this work through an enhancement in their quality of life. Providing options that came from participation in designing programs and services rather than offering the "we've always done it this way" approach of providing them with no opportunity for discussion will allow for greater satisfaction in life at The Kenney. In addition, working collaboratively with staff members will build stronger and more trusting relationships, which will benefit everyone. This person-centeredness respects the resident as an individual and recognizes their right to make choices.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

Early on in this project, one member of my leadership team discussed her experience in making the transition from managing to leading. She was so energized by her experience that it made me realize that changing the culture here was the right thing to do. I was so moved by her description that I use the story over and over to demonstrate how change can occur, one person at a time. What a powerful message this was for me!

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #6. Human Resources Development
- #8. Consumer Participation

## Biographical Summary

Kevin McFeely has worked in senior care services for more than 20 years. He received his Master's degree in Health Services Administration from George Washington University. He currently serves on the Board of Directors as the Treasurer for the Washington Association of Housing and Services for the Aging and has been a Board member since 2001. Kevin is the current Chair for the EAGLE Commission, which accredits both faith-based long-term care and child care organizations nationally. He is blessed with a wonderfully supportive wife and four children.

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

My mentor, Marilyn Ferguson-Wolf, holds a degree in systems administration and is well versed in operations from her years as a co-owner of a dietitian consulting services organization. I have appreciated working with her as she is very good about leading with questions during our conversations and making sure that we discuss the impact of events occurring at The Kenney on my leadership style and how I approach situations in contrast to how I would have handled them prior to my participation in Leadership AAHSA.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

I believe I have learned a great deal from my participation in this program. It taught me to look inward at myself to determine my learning style and then lead effectively. I have met wonderfully, caring people and realize that I am not alone in attempting to meet the challenges that are faced daily. It is my goal to utilize all I have gained from my participation and serve not only as the role model for being an effective leader, but also impart this knowledge to them. I also look forward to participating in Leadership AAHSA in the future by serving in a role that will allow me to mentor other future leaders.



## Signature Experience

**Meghan E. McGeoy, MHA,  
NHA**

Administrator of Health Services

ACTS Retirement-Life Communities, Inc  
Lima Estates, Lima, PA



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

My Action Learning Project details the implementation of ACTS' corporate wide culture change initiative entitled "Signature Experience"—a shift in philosophy to a more social approach. The goal of the ACTS Signature Experience is to cultivate relationships among residents, families, and staff. It is about taking loving-kindness to a new level. The philosophy is that by making subtle changes to a unit, it will look like a home, increase privacy, and promote choice. It is about doing what is right.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

The key components of the ACTS Signature Experience include *person-centered*, "neighborhood" living, and resident directed care. The implementation of this mindset is truly *transformational* from the traditional nursing home model. My task is to work with staff members to implement this cultural transformation, and educate the residents, family members, and interdisciplinary staff to insure this transformation is totally integrated into the community. This project is *innovative* because, although promoting culture change is a corporate "proposal", there is not a timeline of a rollout, or a prescriptive program. Each community can choose

a pace based on the needs of the residents, which is truly *person-centered*. Lima Estates has embraced this journey and we are moving forward.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

This approach to care and service delivery fosters a culture in support of autonomy, diversity and individual choice. Providing quality of life to our older adults is the RIGHT thing to do. The benefit to the people we serve is embedded in the goal of ACTS Signature Experience; to embody a way of life in the residents' home that encourages and respects residents as individuals and their right to make choices in an atmosphere graced with loving-kindness.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

The turning point for me and I believe the residents of Lima, was when I informed the Vice President Quality Care and the Corporate Director Resident Health Services, that Lima has sixteen rooms that share bathrooms with more than one person. Because of this, an architect was requested to create schematics to renovate those semi-private rooms. The need to create privacy, and a less institutional setting for the residents had moved "to the top of the list" and now resources are being dedicated to Lima to start this renovation project.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #3. Leading-Edge Care and Services
- #8. Consumer Participation



## Biographical Summary

Meghan McGeoy serves as the Administrator of Health Services for Lima Estates, an ACTS Retirement- Life Community. She also serves as the NHA of WillowBrooke Court Skilled Care Center, oversees OakBridge Terrace Assisted Living Residences, as well as manages the Resident Nurse Office, which coordinates the care for over 300 independent living residents. Meghan has been involved with the long term care industry for over fifteen years. She has a Master's of Management in Health Care Administration from Penn State and a B.S. from West Chester University. Meghan is blessed with a supportive husband of ten years, twin 7-year old boys and a 3-year old daughter.

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how you have used these skills over the past year.**

My mentoring/coaching skills have definitely evolved as a result of Leadership AAHSA—ask ques-

tions! I never realized how powerful asking a question can be. Prior to Leadership AAHSA, I would never have asked my co-workers, “How am I doing”? I asked this of all of the department heads. Several of them just thanked me for asking. I have also learned about doing the right thing, no matter what it takes—this was never more evident to me than going to Tupelo, MS to see the Green Houses and meeting Stephen L. McAlilly, President & CEO of Mississippi Methodist Senior Services, Inc.!

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

This experience has been life changing—from the travel (I never traveled to anywhere that I could not drive!); to the relationships established with my Fellows; to knowing that you are not alone with the trials and tribulations of the industry; to learning and disclosure. Leadership AAHSA taught me it is ok to get out of my comfort zone and knowing that if mistakes are made, we can learn from it. The teachings of embracing the Sabbath have been instrumental to my quality of life. This experience will stay with me a lifetime. Everyday since the inception of this program, I utilize something from it—a quote, a reference, the on-line community, a contact with a Fellow, etc. I want to use each practice and contact to help me continue to do the right thing for me, my family, the elders and those who I work along side everyday—to mentor and to get them to continue to ask questions.

Thank you so much for the opportunity.



## Kendal's Community Outreach Collaboration

**Ann M. O'Malley**  
Chief Financial Officer

Kendal at Oberlin  
Oberlin, Ohio



### Please describe your Action Learning Project.

Based on the unmet needs of Older Persons in Lorain County and through Kendal's strategic planning process, Kendal at Oberlin has identified home and community-based services as an area for exploration and potential new service development. Kendal is currently exploring the opportunity to partner with another not-for-profit organization, Senior Independence and adopt their model of home and community-based services. Senior Independence home and community-based services includes:

- Certified home health care
- Home delivered Meals
- Adult day care
- Senior Centers
- Transportation
- Emergency Response
- Wellness Clinics
- Telehealth
- Service Coordinators

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Kendal's initiative is considered to be *transformational* in that it is utilizing the core competencies of a traditional CCRC and applying them into the larger community. It allows Kendal to expand its mission

beyond our own campus setting and meet the needs of a broader, more diverse aging population. The breadth and depth of the services that Kendal would be able to provide through this collaboration is geared specifically toward *person-centeredness* and the individual needs of the older adult that research has shown to be underserved in our geographic market. It is *innovative* in the sense that Kendal is reaching out to another organization to collaborate on how to address the unmet needs of the aging population. This will enable Kendal to move more rapidly toward implementation than it otherwise could anticipate if it were to try to implement on its own.

### How will your project benefit the people we serve?

According to statistics provided by Ohio's Scripps Gerontology Center, the greatest growth of older adults in Lorain County has been with the old-old population, those 85 years and older. In 2005, United Way of Lorain County published a report titled, United Way's 2005 Impact Report. The report identified the greatest problems facing older residents include; Health Care, Remaining Independent, Finances and Transportation.

Collaborating with Senior Independence will provide Kendal with the opportunity to address the needs identified in United Way's Impact Report and to focus on the underserved aging population in Lorain County with a proven model.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

The most significant crucible moment that will have a significant impact on my action learning project relates back to the growing crisis in financing long term care. The presentation entitled "The Coming

Demographic Storm and its Implications for Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid”, really gave me pause. What were most concerning are the implications for the growing number of seniors that will have another obstacle in being able to access services they so desperately need. In particular, it identified a potential weakness in the funding of Kendal’s Community Outreach Collaboration (heavily dependent on both Federal and State funding). More study on the funding process is necessary.

**Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?**

- #3. Leading Edge Care and Services
- #4. Community Involvement

**Biographical Summary**

Ann O’Malley is the Chief Financial Officer for Kendal Northern Ohio, Kendal at Oberlin and Kendal at Home. Her responsibilities with Kendal include:

- Oversight of the financial operations
- Coordination of a variety of growth related projects
- Participated on several Kendal Corporation Affiliate Task Groups that include the redesign of the Defined Benefit Plan, the introduction of a Defined Contribution Plan and the Chair of the Information Technology Steering Committee

Prior to joining Kendal, Ann was a Senior Manager with Ernst & Young LLP for over 15 years. Areas of experience included the External Audit Practice, the Dispute Resolution and Litigation Services consulting practice and an Area Industry Leader for Internal Audit Services.

She is a member of the Ohio Society of Certified Public Accountants and on the Board of Directors for Magnificat High School. She and her husband Bryan have three boys, Sean (17), Ryan (14) and Kevin (10).

**Please describe the relationship you have with your mentor and how it has evolved as a result of your Leadership AAHSA experience.**

I identified Barbara Thomas, Chief Executive Officer of Kendal Northern Ohio as my mentor. We have a very close working relationship and she is very supportive of Leadership AAHSA. Through Barbara’s mentoring, she has allowed me to develop as a leader while at the same time guided me to be open to expanding my leadership style. There was one particular AAHSA session, Appreciative Inquiry that really made me evaluate my problem solving approach. This particular technique places greater emphasis on what has been done well vs. what has gone wrong or could go wrong.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

The Leadership AAHSA program has been an experiential learning program that has combined the theory of leadership with examples of actual leadership styles within the field of aging. We were given the opportunity to experience first hand some of the most innovative programs in the long term care profession. The many learning’s that were shared with the inaugural AAHSA Leadership class have set the stage for the future change agents in the field of aging. Specific areas of focus for me in the future will be in the area of Person-Centered Care, Financing Long-Term Care and expanding our mission through Community-Based Services.

## Cedar Sinai Park Staff Development Journey

**David Kohnstamm**  
Administrator

Cedar Sinai Park  
Portland, Oregon



### Please Describe your Action Learning Project.

Making sure that staff has the tools and time to do their job is critical. We are passionate about the idea of supporting staff development and making sure that the environment is ripe for healthy learning and growth. Noble idea we all share, but how to make it happen?

1. The creation and implementation of a staff survey.
2. The creation and implementation of a mentor program.
3. Budgeting hours for staff training, creating replacement hours for staff so that people can be scheduled for training while other staff are on the floor.
4. Develop new staff training curriculum that is fresh and meaningful to staff.

### How does your project meet the three core tenets of the Leadership AAHSA program (transformational leadership, person-centeredness, and innovation)?

Mentoring and quality ongoing training will be *transformative* to our organization. The nature of the mentorship program, which includes career counseling, creates a person-centered approach to staff development. This *person-centered* approach will certainly

become the focus of staff as they relate to our residents. The *innovation* of this project is in the replacement hours of staff during training. It is very rare for LTC facilities to have ongoing staff training budgeted for, that is delivered in a way that respects the staff by not calling them off of the floor to complete.

### How will your project benefit older adults?

There is no question that the older adults who live on our campus will benefit from a staff that is heard, whose ideas rise to the top and *transform* the organization. Residents will benefit from employees who are continuing to learn and grow. The Robert Wood Johnson grant project, in which we were recently involved, summed it up best with the title “Better jobs better care”.

### Please describe a crucible moment from your Action Learning Project.

As the Action Learning Project was assigned and I formulated my thoughts, our organization’s budgeting process was well underway. My mentor and I put a request in the budget for staff training replacement hours and a staff trainer position. As July approached due to fiscal pressure it was clear that the training time and staff trainer position would not make the cut. However, through continued dialogue it was clear that the organization was still committed to the idea of creating a structure for ongoing staff training. Training on campus will be transformed, but not at the first attempt.

### Which Quality First element(s) does your Action Learning Project most align with?

- #4. Community Involvement
- #6. Human Resources Development



## Biographical Summary

David Kohnstamm was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. He went to the University of Michigan for a degree in psychology. He was also very interested in art, ceramics, and art history. After his graduation in 1991 he thought that he wanted to be an Art Therapist and went to his local nursing home to volunteer to see if art and seniors might mix well. It turned out that David loved working with seniors. He dropped his plans for art therapy and jumped into the nursing home Activity Department. He has been with the same organization ever since and now directs the ALF, the Rose Schnitzer Manor.

**Please describe how your mentoring/coaching skills have developed as a result of Leadership AAHSA and how have you used these skills over the past year.**

The program has given me a combination of confidence and humility. I now understand that as an

effective leader I do not need to have all of the answers and in fact others see through a leader who presents as if they know it all. A more effective leader relies on their team to work through the unknown. Trusting this process is the single biggest gift of the fellowship. I also have learned through this program that leadership is a continual process and not something that is mastered.

**In what ways do you plan to utilize your Leadership AAHSA experience in the years to come?**

I will stay in contact with the wonderful people I have gotten to know so well in this program. I learned as much, if not more, from my fellows as I did from the learning material. The support of a close nit group like this is invaluable for continued growth and maturity. Now that I have been exposed to this material and these wonderful people I am a better leader, but I still have a long journey ahead.



## AAHSA Member Hosts and Leaders in Residence

In addition to the Leadership AAHSA faculty and coaches, the Class of 2007 Fellows had the opportunity to learn from a broad range of leaders and experts about ideas that are powerfully and effectively moving aging services forward—all amid a great many challenges that require nothing less than transformational leadership. AAHSA would like to take this opportunity to thank the many individuals at the following member organizations who contributed to the success of this inaugural program year.

### 2007 Hosting Member Organizations

AAHSA extends deep gratitude to the member organizations that hosted the Class of 2007 by providing meeting space and logistical support in addition to the real world innovations and practices that served as case study examples for the program.

Eaton Senior Programs  
Lakewood, CO

Mississippi Methodist Senior Services  
Tupelo, MS

On Lok  
San Francisco, CA

The Redwoods  
Mill Valley, CA

Total Longterm Care  
Denver, CO

Jerry Brown  
Bethany Center Senior Housing, Inc.  
San Francisco, CA

Alan Brown  
Mississippi Methodist Senior Services  
Tupelo, MS

Glenda Buchanan  
Mississippi Methodist Senior Services  
Tupelo, MS

Bridget Bumphis  
Mississippi Methodist Senior Services  
Tupelo, MS

Russ DenBraber  
Christian Living Communities  
Greenwood Village, CO

Maria Dwight  
Gerontological Services, Inc. (GSI)  
Santa Monica, CA

Jim Eiland  
Eaton Terrace Senior Services  
Denver, CO

Barbara Frank  
B & F Consulting  
Warren, RI

Willie Gable  
National Baptist Convention  
New Orleans, LA

Lisa Gaudet  
Northeast Health/The Eddy  
Troy, NY

David Gehm  
Lutheran Homes of Michigan  
Frankenmuth, MI

Maureen Hewitt  
Total Longterm Care  
Denver, CO

Cindy Hogan  
Total Longterm Care  
Denver, CO

Venitta Jenkins  
The Granville Assisted Living Center  
Lakewood, CO

Ruta Kadonoff  
The Green House Project/NCB Capital Impact  
Washington, DC

Kay Kallander  
American Baptist Homes of the West  
Pleasanton, CA

Nancy King  
OPRS Senior Independence  
Columbus, OH

Dick Lamden  
MatureWell, Inc  
Tucson, AZ

Richard Lusk, Ph.D.  
Department of Applied Gerontology at UNT  
Denton, TX

Winthrop Marshall  
Christian Church Homes of Northern California  
Oakland, CA

Louise Maus  
AAHSA  
Washington, DC

Stephen McAilly  
Mississippi Methodist Senior Services  
Tupelo, MS

Richard McCarty  
The McCarty Company  
Tupelo, MS

Peggy Mullan  
Beatitudes Campus  
Phoenix, AZ

Brenda Nachtway  
Evangelical Community Hospital  
Lewisburg, PA

Dean Painter  
Eaton Terrace Senior Services  
Denver, CO

Rena Reid  
Mississippi Methodist Senior Services  
Tupelo, MS

Mary Reilly  
AAHSA  
Denver, CO

### 2007 Leaders in Residence

Aging services leaders across the country engaged in meaningful and educational dialogue with the 2007 fellows during Leaders in Residence Dinners at the face-to-face learning experiences. AAHSA thanks the following individuals for their humility, compassion, and willingness to share both their professional and personal leadership challenges and lessons learned at these special events.

Kathy Anderson  
Goodwin House  
Arlington, VA

Peg Ankney  
Jefferson Home Health Network  
Downtown, PA

Susan Ayers  
Morrison Senior Dining  
Atlanta, GA

Charles Berkowitz  
JH & RC Senior Homes  
Rockleigh, NJ

Cathy Brady  
B & F Consulting  
Canterbury, CT

John Breau  
JHB Properties, Inc./Eskaton  
Carmichael, CA

Mary Grace Smigiel  
Christian Living Communities-Johnson Center  
Denver, CO

Robyn Stone, Dr.PH.  
Institute for the Future of Aging Services (IFAS)  
Washington, DC

John Torres  
Golden West Senior Residence  
Denver, CO

Greg Warnick  
Mississippi Methodist Senior Services  
Tupelo, MS

Susan Weiss  
AAHSA  
Washington, DC

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

Paul Winkler  
Presbyterian SeniorCare  
Oakmont, PA

John Zabawa  
Seniors' Resource Center  
Denver, CO

## 2007 Leadership AAHSA Donors

AAHSA extends deep appreciation to the following individuals and organizations that helped to financially sustain Leadership AAHSA in 2007. This ground-breaking endeavor would not be possible without their support.

### Individuals

Kathy Anderson – in honor of everyone  
on the AAHSA staff  
Goodwin House Incorporated  
Arlington, VA

Maria Dwight – in Memory of Ollie Randall  
Gerontological Services, Inc. (GSI)  
Santa Monica, CA

Randy Fitzgerald  
Good Samaritan Society  
Windsor, CO

Willie Gable, Jr., D.Min.  
National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.  
NBC Housing Commission  
New Orleans, LA

Larry Mabry, RHP  
Collington  
Mitchellville, MD

Connie March  
Provena Senior Services  
Mokena, IL

Kathleen and Larry Minnix – Scholarship  
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Michael Moore, RHP & Elaine Moore  
United Presbyterian Home  
Washington, IA

Peggy Mullan  
Beatitudes Campus  
Phoenix, AZ

William Pierce  
Baptist Retirement Communities  
Oklahoma City, OK

Jill Schumann  
Lutheran Services in America  
Baltimore, MD

William Smith, RHP  
Aging in America, Inc  
Bronx, NY

Barbara Thomas  
Kendal at Oberlin  
Oberlin, OH

### Organizations

AARON'S Corporate Furnishing  
Bethesda Health Group, Inc.

CARF

Carleton-Willard Village

Christian Church Homes of Northern California

Christian Living Communities

Covenant Retirement Communities

Episcopal Ministries to the Aging, Inc

Episcopal Retirement Homes

Friendship Village of Tempe

Hebrew Home and Hospital

Holleran

Lincoln Lutheran of Racine, WI, Inc.

Kendal at Oberlin

The Kendal Corporation

The Meth – Wick Community

Morningside Ministries

Northern California Presbyterian Homes and Services Inc.

Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services

Pennswood Village

Presbyterian Homes & Services

The RiverWoods Company

Rogerson Communities

Simpson Senior Services

St. Barnabas Assisted Living

United Methodist Retirement Communities, Inc.

Volunteers of America

Westminster Communities of Florida

## Leadership AAHSA Faculty

Judy Sorum Brown, Ph.D.  
Academy of Leadership,  
University of Maryland  
College Park, MD



Michele Holleran, Ph.D.  
Holleran Consulting  
Mountville, PA



## Leadership AAHSA Class of 2007 Coaches

Throughout the past year, coaches offered field expertise and knowledge, as well as practical experience, to support and compliment leadership theory and site visits. They facilitated team exercises and discussions during face-to-face learning experiences and monthly conference calls, and were on hand to share their wisdom with the entire class.

John Diffey  
The Kendal Corporation  
Kennett Square, PA



Kay Kallander  
American Baptist Homes  
of the West  
Pleasanton, CA



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For more information on Leadership AAHSA, please contact Kris Santaromita, [ksantaromita@aahsa.org](mailto:ksantaromita@aahsa.org), 202-508-1212.

Applications for the Class of 2009 will be available in the spring of 2008.