

## Bethesda's Continued Commitment to Career Advancement During COVID-19

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, Bethesda had a choice to make—halt all advancement programs for certified nursing assistants (CNA) and certified medication technicians (CMT) or continue them with modifications. Bethesda chose the latter.

“We never stopped recruiting for all types of employees during the pandemic,” says **Kathy Joslin**, Senior VP of HR and Marketing. “It was what we needed to do to care for our residents.”

Bethesda offers two career ladder programs for employees who qualify. One offers employees with at least six months of Bethesda employment with coursework to become CNAs. The second allows CNAs to

become CMTs by getting certified in safely administering medications.

“It’s been wonderful to have more CMTs able to distribute medication to our residents effectively and safely,” **Eileen Caffey**, Director of HR Recruitment and Retention, says.

Eileen says Bethesda also offers an apprenticeship for those seeking to become a CNA through Applied Technology, the adult education arm of the Special School District. This apprenticeship is open to unemployed or underemployed people interested in pursuing a career in healthcare, and in turn helps Bethesda identify new potential team members.

Applied Technology brings instructors to Bethesda facilities to teach the courses. Students are paid for their clinical hours as they learn on the job.

**Bianca Napier** pursued a CNA apprenticeship in late February and began her courses at Bethesda in May. She plans to become a nurse in the future and would recommend the CNA apprenticeship to anyone looking to make a career move.

“Working as a CNA at Bethesda gives you the discipline and patience needed to work in healthcare,” Bianca says. “It teaches you compassion and empathy when working with older adults.”

According to Eileen, Bethesda stepped up its course offerings during COVID-19 to prepare for the inevitable staffing shortages from the pandemic. She says Bethesda began to think more creatively about staffing and how they could help current employees grow in their careers. Since April 2020, Bethesda has offered seven classes.

Thanks to this commitment to career advancement during the pandemic, Bethesda has avoided severe staffing shortages and continues to provide optimal care.

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**Bianca Napier**, right, takes **Nancy Kortz**'s temperature in 2 Rehab at Bethesda Dilworth. Bianca began her CNA apprenticeship in early May.



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**Bethesda Southgate**  
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Alton, IL 62002, (618) 463-7330  
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**Christian Extended Care & Rehabilitation**  
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St. Louis, MO 63136, (314) 355-8010  
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**Barnes-Jewish Extended Care**  
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**Bethesda Gardens**  
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## Pandemic Brings Financial Challenges to Community Care Needs

The COVID-19 pandemic has delivered unexpected hurdles to organizations like Bethesda in the last nine months. These hurdles require funding, which is why your gift to Bethesda is more important than ever before.

In 2020, Bethesda has incurred more than \$3 million in COVID-related costs for "Hero Pay" to frontline healthcare workers, COVID-19 testing (which has exceeded \$25,000 each week), increased supplies of PPE, and extensive virus mitigation and control efforts to keep our residents safe. Fortunately, Bethesda has received several funding grants from the CARES Act to help offset some of this burden.

The CARES Act also includes an expanded and enhanced charitable giving tax incentive. This year, the federal government made it easier for taxpayers to



With their hands in the shape of hearts, members of the Corporate team celebrate their 2020 Hearts for Our Homes campaign victory.

make a significant difference with a generous donation to charitable organizations like Bethesda. The CARES Act legislation:

- Allows donors to fully deduct gifts equal to as much as 100% of their adjusted gross income this year.
- Charitable contribution deductions by corporations were generally limited to 10% of their taxable income. Under the new law, however, corporations are entitled to deduct qualified contributions of up to 25% of their taxable income.

Bethesda is fortunate to have received CARES Act funds, and is dedicated to providing the

highest level of care and service while keeping our staff and seniors safe.

One way to provide support is to donate to *Hearts for Our Homes*, a campaign that raises funds for residents who have exhausted their financial resources and can no longer pay for care and services. Due to COVID-19, the 2020 campaign was held virtually and via direct mail only. Despite these challenges, more than \$92,000 was raised.

No matter the size, your gift makes a difference. For more information, visit [www.bethesdahealth.org/giving-to-bethesda](http://www.bethesdahealth.org/giving-to-bethesda) or contact the Bethesda Health Group Foundation at (314) 800-1981. ■

## Two Earn Inaugural Bethesda Presidential Scholarship Awards

This year, Bethesda introduced a Presidential Scholarship award designed to help licensed practical nurses (LPN) become registered nurses. **Alicia Edwards**, a Nurse Manager at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care (BJEC), and **Jessica Wallace**, an LPN at Bethesda Southgate, were the first two recipients.

This scholarship provides funds for books, tuition and a stipend for qualified individuals to earn an associate degree in Nursing, and will provide up to \$25,000 per recipient. These full-time employees will work 24 hours per week while attending classes for the 1-year bridge program. Congratulations, Alicia and Jessica! ■

(top photo) **Jessica Wallace** (center) accepts her presidential scholarship with Bethesda Southgate Administrator **Jen Popp** (left) and Director of Nursing **Darlene Cosby** (right).

(lower photo) **Alicia Edwards** (center) accepts her presidential scholarship with retired BJEC Director of Nursing **Karen Zurick** (left) and Administrator **Candice Brown** (right).



## 2020 Norwood Awards

Congratulations to **Dianne Mollet** and **Fred Perabo**, this year's Norwood Award honorees!

Fred, an attorney and long-time Bethesda volunteer, joined Bethesda's Board of Directors in 2001. He has served in many leadership positions over the years, including Board Vice Chair and Legacy Society co-chair.

Dianne has been volunteering at Bethesda Meadow since 2013. She takes great pride in recognizing each individual's rights in long-term care.



**Fred Perabo**



**Dianne Mollet**

"Unfortunately, the pandemic forced us to cancel the annual dinner celebration, but we are so pleased to be able to honor

Fred and Dianne for all of their contributions to Bethesda," says **Joe Brinker**, President and CEO.

The prestigious Norwood Award was established in 1998 to recognize those individuals and groups who have given many years of extraordinary support and service to Bethesda.

The award is named in honor of **John Norwood**, former President of Bethesda, who devoted more than 30 years of service to the organization. Mr. Norwood was the first recipient of the award. ■

## Innovative Technology at Bethesda During COVID-19

In August, Bethesda began implementing a replacement electronic health record (EHR) system via iPads that allows clinicians in the field to communicate with each other in real time through the capabilities of EHR devices. They can use their iPads to send clinical data, update medical records, and share emails.

At St. Andrews & Bethesda Home Health, this upgrade has proven to be extremely valuable. **Kathy LaChance**, clinical manager, says the new EHR system includes improvements such as safety guards to make sure all patient information is entered correctly, and clinicians can immediately see all prescriptions a patient has received in the last 12 months.

Bethesda Senior Support Solutions (SSS) has also implemented the new EHR system. According to

SSS Director **Kristen Daniels**, it has helped streamline scheduling, billing, and tracking resident medications.

"We had been juggling five different methods and tracking our hours with pen and paper," says Kristen. "Having everything in one place has helped us accurately account for our time spent with residents."

Rarely used prior to the pandemic, telehealth technology has become vital for home health professionals. During the height of the outbreak, patients didn't feel safe going to a doctor's office. Many were too afraid to go to rehab after leaving the hospital and went directly home instead. With telehealth, home health clinicians are able to show physicians how their residents were recovering from home.

"This has been a very pivotal moment for us," Kathy says. "We are now able to help patients get the care they need through video calls on our iPads and communicate in real time to deliver the best care possible."

Kathy says Bethesda will continue to use telehealth even after the pandemic is over. ■

## Bethesda's Continued Commitment to Career Advancement

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"We really feel it is part of our mission as a non-profit to not only care about seniors, but provide career opportunities for our staff," Eileen says. "Continuing these advancement courses during COVID-19 demonstrates the huge commitment we make to provide fulfilling career opportunities." ■

## Independent Living Survey Results: Keeping Residents Safe and Engaged During the Pandemic

The past few months have presented difficult challenges for staff and residents in Bethesda's independent living communities. Activities have been altered to accommodate social distancing and safety precautions. Restrictions were made to dining and transportation to avoid transmission of COVID-19 from outside the community. The team had to use creativity to keep residents engaged and cared for during the isolating months of lockdown.

Residents from the six Bethesda independent living communities—Bethesda Barclay House, Bethesda Gardens, Bethesda Terrace, Bethesda Orchard, Village North and The Oaks—were asked to complete a survey to evaluate how well Bethesda's independent living communities responded to the pandemic.

The results found that the majority of residents felt Bethesda did an **above average to excellent** job in their overall community

response to COVID-19. In fact, 94% of residents in Village North say management did an **above average to excellent** job in providing communications and updates about the coronavirus.

One resident from Village North had this to say about a particular staff member who made a difference:

"We felt (General Manager) **Felinna Love** worked hard to keep residents informed as soon as new information became available. She made sure all residents had face masks and handed out the mail herself so she could physically check on residents. Felinna truly cares about her residents."

Across all six communities, 64% of residents agreed that they were **glad to be in an independent living community** during the pandemic.

A resident living in The Oaks says, "The weekly phone check-ins and efforts to reach out and entertain residents were supportive, greatly appreciated



**Cathy Clayton**, Office Coordinator at Bethesda Gardens, shares a smile with resident during an afternoon visit.

and helped fight the feeling of isolation."

"Resident satisfaction and safety are the highest priority in our independent living communities," says **Michelle Glass**, Corporate Vice President, Senior Living and In-Home Services. "Our teams have worked diligently to ensure our residents' needs were met throughout the pandemic."

A resident from Bethesda Orchard summed it up well. "The pandemic was a surprise event, but the staff moved quickly, and we were cared for. I cannot ask for more than that." ■

## Bethesda Health Group Foundation Receives Marillac Mission Fund Grant

The Bethesda Health Group Foundation has once again received a \$45,000 grant from the Marillac Mission Fund to support the Home Health Gap Assistance program.

The Marillac Mission Fund invests in area nonprofits, focusing on primary and preventive health care and social services. The organization's Executive Director, **Claire Hundelt**, said that programs like Bethesda's Home Health Gap Assistance program "matters now more than ever,

and it is critical to support efforts to protect at-risk communities, advocate for policy change and prepare for the long-term effects of the ongoing pandemic."

The Home Health Gap Assistance program provides low-income seniors receiving Home Health Care with short-term "gap" funds to cover immediate needs for necessities such as medication, food, transportation to medical appointments and durable medical equipment.



"This grant is particularly important this year, as our communities continue to address the ongoing financial impact of the pandemic," says **Pam Dempski**, Corporate VP and Director of the Bethesda Health Group Foundation. "We are grateful for the continued support from the Marillac Mission Fund for our Home Health Gap Assistance program." ■

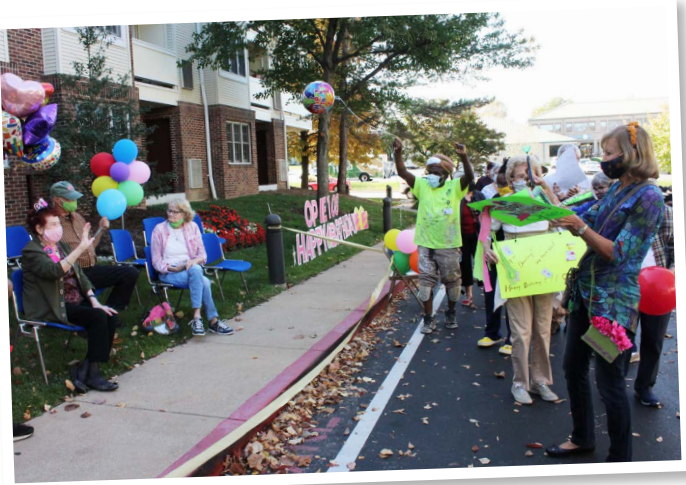
## Perfection!

**Jim Vuch** has participated in Wii Bowling since he moved into Bethesda Terrace five years ago... he came close to a perfect 300 game before, but in October it finally happened. Congratulations, Jim!



## Holiday Lights Are Back

A beautiful light display like this one at the Oaks can be seen at every Bethesda community. Hop in the car and enjoy them all—it's free, socially distant, and spectacular! Great job, Grounds!



## Happy 108, Opie!

A crowd of nearly 60 comprised of family and fellow Bethesda Gardens residents helped **Opal "Opie" Otis** (sitting and waving, in pink mask) celebrate her 108th birthday. Keep dancing, Opie, keep dancing!

## Bethesda Southgate Holds Campus Alzheimer's Walk

The pandemic couldn't stop a number of dedicated Bethesda Southgate staff, residents and family members from coordinating and participating in its own socially distanced Walk to End Alzheimer's!



## Halloween Fun at Bethesda!

The residents throughout Bethesda enjoyed a scary, spooky good time celebrating Halloween with staff and each other!



## A Traveling Veterans Day Parade

COVID-19 caused Bethesda Hospice Care to replace the annual Veterans Day pinning ceremony with a celebratory car parade honoring all of the Veterans who live and work at Bethesda. Thank you for your service!

## Want More Photos? Go to Facebook!

The Bethesda Facebook pages are full of photos of activities taking place at all of our communities. To access the Facebook posts, go to the pages of your choosing:

[www.facebook.com/BethesdaHealthGroup](https://www.facebook.com/BethesdaHealthGroup)

[www.facebook.com/BethesdaRetirementLiving](https://www.facebook.com/BethesdaRetirementLiving)  
(independent living communities)

[www.facebook.com/BethesdaHawthornePlace](https://www.facebook.com/BethesdaHawthornePlace)

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## Did You Know...

...that now is the time to purchase a Hope Dove for a loved one or a staff member? Contact the Bethesda Health Group Foundation at 314-800-1981 for more information.

...that **Shelby Harp**, an RN Case Manager who works at St. Andrews & Bethesda Home Health, was named 2020 Nurse of the Year in the category of "Community Skilled Nursing" by the St. Louis chapter of the March of Dimes? Congratulations, Shelby!

...that Bethesda was recognized in the 2020 St. Louis Green Business Challenge Awards for its business practices that reduce environmental impact for the eighth consecutive year? ■

## BETHESDA

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## Bethesda Joins with Eli Lilly and Company on Phase 3 Clinical Trial for COVID-19 Prevention

Bethesda has been selected to partner with drug manufacturer Eli Lilly and Company in a Phase 3 trial studying a neutralizing antibody for the prevention of COVID-19 in residents and staff at skilled nursing or assisted living facilities.

Bethesda is the only St. Louis-area senior living, care and services organization currently hosting the study.

"Bethesda is thrilled to work with Lilly on this important COVID-19 research," says **Kiel Peregrin**, Bethesda's Senior Vice President of Operations. "This devastating virus disproportionately affects the elderly, and we anticipate

that some of our residents and staff are motivated to contribute to the greater good of understanding the virus and helping to find possible new treatments."

"COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on nursing home residents, and we're working as fast as we can to create medicines that might stop the spread of the virus to these vulnerable individuals," said **Daniel Skovronsky, M.D., Ph.D.**, Eli Lilly's chief scientific officer and president of Lilly Research Laboratories.

Lilly's study of the antibody drug is experimental. Participation

**"Bethesda is thrilled to work with Lilly on this important COVID-19 research."**

—**Kiel Peregrin**, Senior V.P. of Operations at Bethesda

by Bethesda residents or staff is completely voluntary, and the agreement to participate is between the individual and Lilly. Bethesda is providing Lilly with access to the facility premises and the support services needed to successfully carry out the trial. ■