

Bethesda to Require Vaccinations for Employees

Effective November 1, 2021, all Bethesda employees, as well as volunteers, contract workers, vendors, providers and licensed independent practitioners providing services within our facilities, will be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

The announcement was made on August 23 by **Joe Brinker**, Bethesda's President & CEO.

"There is overwhelming scientific evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and highly effective," Joe says in the announcement. "Vaccination is our best defense from the

COVID-19 virus, and has been shown to provide a high level of protection against variant strains of the virus. A fully vaccinated workforce is the most important safety practice we can implement to provide the best protection for our staff and the vulnerable senior population we serve."

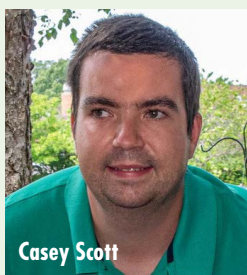
Bethesda was among the first senior living, care and service organizations in the St. Louis area to offer and administer the COVID-19 vaccine to our residents and employees. Our primary vaccination campaign



started in late December 2020 and continued through March, but we have continued to make the vaccine available for new residents and patients, new employees and employees who chose not to become vaccinated when the vaccines first became available.

"This is not a change that we are making without great consideration," Joe says. "In fact, this is a topic that Bethesda's leadership has discussed in depth over the past several weeks. After thoughtful consideration of the needs of our residents, patients, employees and the community, we feel this is an important step we are taking as a health care organization to help promote wellness and create safe, healthy environments for everyone." ■

Casey Scott Breaking Barriers as Bethesda's First Legally Blind Hire



Casey Scott, Bethesda Meadow's newest activities assistant, has never let his disability stand in the way of achieving his goals. Casey is legally blind, but that hasn't prevented him from coordinating and participating in activities with the residents.

Casey discovered the open position during a job fair. **Eileen Caffey**, Bethesda's Director of Recruitment and Employee Relations, spoke with Casey and his MERS Goodwill job coach about his qualifications and interest in the job. She learned that Casey had volunteered at nursing homes in the past, and had an interest in working with both seniors and activities.

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Tiffany Knebel, Admissions Counselor

Bethesda Meadow

322 Old State Road
Ellisville, MO 63021, (636) 227-3431
Wade Hachman, Administrator
Susan LeBar, Admissions Counselor

Bethesda Southgate

5943 Telegraph Road
Oakville, MO 63129, (314) 846-2000
Jennifer Popp, V.P. and Administrator
Sarita Weldon, Senior Admissions Counselor

Alton Memorial Rehabilitation & Therapy

1251 College Ave.
Alton, IL 62002, (618) 463-7330
Mark Jeffries, V.P. and Administrator
Hazel Morgan, Referral Coordinator

Christian Extended Care & Rehabilitation

11160 Village North Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63136, (314) 355-8010
Renee Cwikowski, Administrator
Angela Funk, Admissions Counselor

Barnes-Jewish Extended Care

401 Corporate Park Dr.
Clayton, MO 63105, (314) 725-7447
Candice Brown, V.P. and Administrator
Eudora White, Admissions Counselor

Assisted Living

Bethesda Hawthorne Place

1111 Berry Road
St. Louis, MO 63122, (314) 853-2551
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Lea Ann Coates, Residency Counselor

Home and Community Based Services

Michelle Glass, Corporate Vice President

Bethesda Hospice Care

(314) 446-0623, Missy McAuley, Director

Bethesda Senior Support Solutions

(Formerly Bethesda Private Duty)
(314) 963-2200, Kristen Daniels, Director

Bethesda Rehab & Therapy Centers

(Short-Stay Medicare Rehabilitation)
(314) 277-9959
Thomas Miskle, Executive Director

Senior Independent Living

Robyn Duffey-Rogers,
Corporate Sales Director

Bethesda Barclay House

230 South Brentwood Boulevard
Clayton, MO 63105, (314) 963-4141
Barbara Jackson, General Manager
Jerry Ahillen, Sales Counselor

Bethesda Gardens

420 South Kirkwood Road
Kirkwood, MO 63122, (314) 686-4250
Kristyn Koehler, General Manager
Sarah Zimmerman, Sales Counselor

Bethesda Orchard

21 North Old Orchard Avenue
Webster Groves, MO 63119, (314) 963-2296
Todd Meury, General Manager
Eloise Capelle, Sales Counselor

Bethesda Terrace

2535 Oakmont Terrace Drive
Oakville, MO 63129, (314) 375-1070
Andrea Tripp, Senior General Manager
Marie Bartels, Sales Counselor

The Oaks at Bethesda

Big Bend & Berry Road
Oakland, MO 63122, (314) 686-4250
Kristyn Koehler, General Manager
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Village North Retirement Community

11160 Village North Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63136, (314) 653-4810
Felinna Love, General Manager

Charless Village

5943 Telegraph Road
St. Louis, MO 63129, (314) 606-9891
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Casey Scott Breaking Barriers as Bethesda's First Legally Blind Hire

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"I was impressed with Casey from the start," Eileen says. "His job coach told me that Casey can do everything but see, and that's been very clear since hiring him."

Eileen says Bethesda has a longtime commitment to provide jobs to those with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups in the community.

"We have worked with a number of people with limitations, but Casey is our first legally blind hire," Eileen says. "We want all of our employees to be happy in their roles, so we work hard to find the right fit for each applicant and new hire."



One of **Casey Scott's** favorite activities to lead at Bethesda Meadow is a group made up of male residents.

"I strive to make sure the residents are happy and that I have a lasting impact on them."

—Casey Scott

Eileen and **Amanda Jones**, Activities Director at Bethesda Meadow, agree that Casey shined in his interviews, and therefore it was an easy decision to extend him a job offer. To get a better feel for what the role would entail, he began as a volunteer. During his initial training, Casey worked with an assistant to help acclimate him to the building and learn how to get around. Astonishingly, it took him just a couple of weeks to learn to navigate the entire building without any assistance.

"Before too long, Casey already had developed a camaraderie with many of the residents," Amanda says. "If I have a question about a resident, he almost always knows the answer already because he's had such in-depth conversations with them."

Many of the male residents expressed how they missed talking about sports or other similar interests during the planned activities, so one of Casey's goals is to bring more male-focused activities to Bethesda Meadow. To accomplish this, Casey resurrected a men's group, which was formerly led by longtime volunteer **Bob Morris**, that gathers once a month to discuss sports and everything going on in their world.

Outside of working at Bethesda, Casey is a member of the Gateway Archers beep baseball

team. Beep baseball is a blind adaptive sport that uses beeps to communicate the location of the ball to the players on the field. The team regularly participates in tournaments around the Midwest, and Casey has traveled to Indiana, Iowa, Kansas and Illinois to compete.

When asked about his goals for activities moving forward, Casey says he hopes to bring as much joy to the lives of residents as possible.

"I strive to make sure the residents are happy and that I have a lasting impact on them," Casey says. "Sometimes, something as simple as bringing a coloring sheet or wordsearch to their room to keep them from getting bored, or striking up a quick conversation about something that they are interested in, can make a huge difference in their day." ■

Employee Commitment Causes *Hearts for Our Homes* Fundraising Campaign to Exceed Expectations

The recently completed *Hearts for Our Homes* fundraising campaign secured almost 500 donations this year, which more than tripled last year's total. Donations in 2021 yielded more than \$108,500, compared to \$29,751 from 2020, when managing COVID-19 took center stage during fundraising efforts.

The great success of this year's campaign would not have been possible without an extraordinarily generous effort by our employees, none more than the team at Bethesda Southgate. Each year, the Bethesda Health Group Foundation awards a traveling trophy to the Bethesda community with the best fundraising results. Bethesda Southgate became the first long-term care facility in the history of the campaign to raise the most money of all Bethesda communities, thereby securing the coveted trophy.

"Our goal was to at least get in the top three, but to win was amazing," says **Nicole Carter**, Bethesda Southgate's *Hearts for Our Homes* campaign ambassador. "It just goes to show the level of support from our employees and the impact we have on our residents and community. And we are a little competitive, too."

To secure a win for the team at Bethesda Southgate, Nicole and Activities Director **Tara Powell** hosted a number of events and activities designed to bring everyone together safely and build morale. Activities included



The team members from Bethesda Southgate provided a group "thumbs up" as they celebrated their victory in the 2021 *Hearts for Our Homes* campaign.

a t-shirt day, casual dress sticker sale, a snack cart and "nacho day." Residents helped by supplying homemade gifts available for purchase. These efforts resulted in support for the campaign.

Additionally, employee gifts greatly enhanced this year's fundraising efforts. Many employees donated from their salary or hours from their vacation bank, including **Patrick Bush**, a floor finisher at Bethesda Meadow, who gave an astonishing 4% of his salary to the campaign.

Patrick says he didn't think it was that big of a deal, but that he wanted to do whatever he could to help residents in need. "Everybody needs help at one point or another and giving to the Bethesda Foundation is a great way to directly help people within the Bethesda community," Patrick says.

This year was also the first time using increased digital tools to

make it easier for all donors, including employees, to donate. There was both a digital pledge form for employees to make payroll deduction gifts through Bethesda's payroll system and an online store where employees and friends outside of Bethesda could purchase t-shirts and scrubs.

The Foundation plans to improve the digital pledge form next year by making it available on mobile devices, while continuing the practice of paper pledge forms for those who are unable to access technology.

In the meantime, the campaign continues to thrive.

"I think the overall feeling of getting back to normal this year as compared to 2020 made both employees and residents feel motivated to give," says Tara. "Staff went above and beyond their normal level of effort as we all tried to keep each other happy during such a difficult time." ■

Guest Concierge Provides Shining Light for Bethesda Rehab Patients

Two Bethesda communities have recently implemented a new role to ensure they are providing the highest level of care to residents. Barnes-Jewish Extended Care and Bethesda Dilworth now have a Guest Concierge to welcome residents and their families and assist with their needs for the length of their stay.



"My job is to bring a warm, friendly face to all our residents upon their admission into our community," says **Felicia Whisenton**, guest concierge at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care. "I'm really here to help in any way that I can, but my ultimate goal is to make our residents feel comfortable."

This program has been especially beneficial, as some families have been unable to visit as often as they'd like due to COVID-19. Felicia has seamlessly stepped into the role of confidant, comforter, cheerleader and friend for many residents.

"Felicia has been described by the residents and staff as a 'jack

Guest Concierge **Felicia Whisenton** visits with BJEC residents **Patsy Roberts** (left) and **Florence England**. Both say Felicia has been extremely helpful during their stay.

of all trades,' since she is the first one to volunteer to help with anything that is needed," says **Candice Brown**, Vice President & Administrator at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care. "She welcomes our guests, gets them settled into their rooms and makes sure they have what they need to be comfortable, handles paperwork, answers call lights, delivers meals, and so much more."

"She is wonderful," says resident **Florence England**. "She is a problem-solver, she's energetic and she's cheerful. And we need that!"

The program has already seen great success and there are plans to expand, creating a position at each skilled nursing and assisted living community. ■

Top Leadership at Bethesda Southgate Earn Promotions

Congratulations to **Jennifer Popp**, who recently added Bethesda Vice President to her title as Administrator of Bethesda Southgate and Charless Village.

Similar congratulations are extended to **Darlene Cosby**, Director of Nursing at Bethesda Southgate, who was promoted to Senior Director of Nursing.

"Bethesda doesn't often promote the top two leadership positions at a community at the same time, but in this case, because of the perseverance and resilience they demonstrated during the pandemic, we felt that Jen and Darlene were deserving," says **Kiel Peregrin**, Bethesda's Senior Vice President of Operations.

"For Bethesda to thrive, our communities in South County need to thrive," Kiel continued. "Under Jen and Darlene's leadership, Bethesda Southgate, its Memory Support and Rehab neighborhoods, and Assisted Living at Charless Village are in very good hands."

Jen started working at Bethesda in 2003, after earning an undergraduate degree in social work. She subsequently earned her master's degree in social work as she earned promotions to Social Services Coordinator, Referral Coordinator, Assistant Administrator, and ultimately Administrator, first at Eunice Smith Home (now Alton Memorial Rehab & Therapy) and then Bethesda Southgate.



Jen Popp (left) and **Darlene Cosby**

Darlene joined Bethesda Southgate in 2013 as a Nurse Manager, and was promoted to Director of Nursing less than three years later.

Congratulations, Jen and Darlene! ■

Congratulations, Emina and Andrea!



Mary June King Scholarship winners **Andrea Aylor** and **Emina Bursac** celebrate their scholarships with **Kathy Joslin**, Senior V.P. of HR/Marketing (left), **Mary Brown**, creator of the scholarship (center), and **Joe Brinker**, President/CEO.

Congratulations to **Emina Bursac** and **Andrea Aylor**, each of whom received a \$500 scholarship from the Mary June King Scholarship Fund.

Established by Ms. King's daughter, **Mary Brown**, the scholarship assists Bethesda employees in their pursuit of a post-secondary education and can be used for any resource they need to assist them with their experience as a student. ■



Senior Olympics Sponsorship

For the 15th consecutive year, Bethesda served as an event sponsor for the St. Louis Senior Olympics. This year, Bethesda sponsored the washers competition, which featured intense competition in the quest for gold, silver and bronze!

Todd Meury, General Manager of Bethesda Orchard, represented the organization in the annual torch lighting ceremony. And congratulations to **Michelle Glass**, Corporate V.P., Senior Living and In-Home Services, for bringing home the washers gold in her age category! ■

107 and Counting!

A happy birthday to **Jessie Trice-O'Bryant**, who celebrated her 107th birthday in July at her home at Christian Extended Care & Rehabilitation. After a Zoom call with nearly 30 family members from across the U.S., she blew out candles in front of her friends at CECR.

Coverage of her birthday celebration appeared in the *St. Louis American* newspaper, among other local media. ■



Orchard's King and Queen Reign in Webster Parade

Many would say that the Webster Groves Fourth of July parade wouldn't be complete without a convertible featuring Bethesda Orchard royalty, and this year Queen **Angie Heumann** and King **Ken Voss** did not disappoint! ■

Three Earn Awards from LeadingAge Missouri



Bethesda is very proud to share that three people with ties to the organization were honored with awards at the LeadingAge Missouri Annual Conference, which was held in September.

(L-R) **Lakesha Cook**, a Licensed Practical Nurse at Bethesda Hawthorne Place; **Jill Immethun**, Senior Staff Development Coordinator at Bethesda Southgate, and **Debbie Austell**, recently retired Medical Records Clerk at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care, earned 2021 "Employee of the Year" awards for Direct Care (Lakesha), Client Support (Jill) and Administrative Support (Debbie).

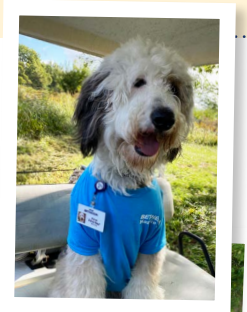
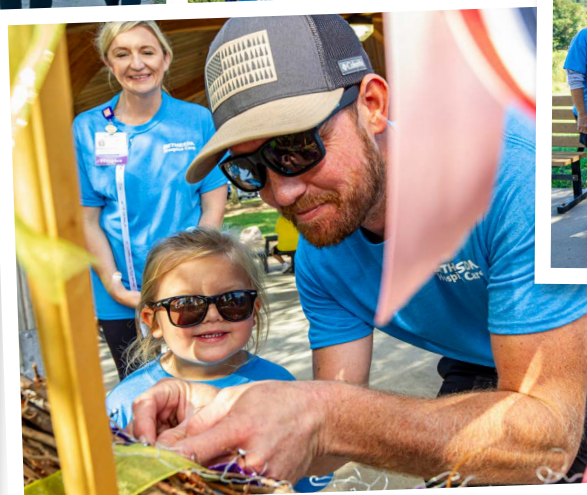
Congratulations, Lakesha, Jill and Debbie! ■

Heavy Hearts Abound in First Annual "Kayman 5K"

The annual Bethesda Hospice Care walk/run, where participants remember and honor loved ones who have died, took on an additional level of remembrance and meaning this year.

The pandemic has produced astronomical amounts of loss. Bethesda Hospice Care experienced that first-hand, losing **Brian Kayman**, longtime Operations Manager, to COVID in Nov. 2020. The walk has been re-named the "Kayman 5K," in honor of Brian and all who have experienced loss related to COVID.

More than 100 people participated at the Sept. 25 walk. A video will be available on the Bethesda website later in 2021. ■



Did You Know...

... that Bethesda was named a category finalist in the Best Places to Work in St. Louis contest for the second consecutive year? We earned third place in the "Giant" (more than 1,000 employees) category.

... that Alton Memorial Rehabilitation & Therapy has once again been nominated for the "Best of" contest, sponsored by the *Alton Telegraph*, vying for Best Skilled Nursing Community for the sixth time in the last seven years?

... that Bethesda was one of only 50 businesses (and among the smallest and few non-profits) to be included in "Saint Louis Visions," a collection of photos and company profiles from the St. Louis area that can be purchased in local bookstores or on Amazon? Bethesda's profile begins on p. 198. ■

BETHESDA

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In many cases, a community has its own Facebook page. Here are the links to those pages:

www.facebook.com/BethesdaTerrace

www.facebook.com/BethesdaBarclayHouse

www.facebook.com/BethesdaGardensRetirement

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