

Pulse

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Fostering successful aging through
compassion and innovation



A “Family Affair” Alive and Well at Bethesda

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Women's Board Membership Continues to Grow

With a renewed emphasis on philanthropy and support, the Bethesda Women's Board continues to grow in numbers and provide much-needed services for Bethesda residents.

Already in 2022, the Women's Board has purchased raised flower planters at Bethesda Dilworth and a Whisper Glider at Bethesda Southgate. As a result of growing membership numbers, many more activities are being planned to support the effort in 2023.

"We're very excited about the direction of the Women's Board," says **Linda Sanders**, Corporate



Nearly 60 women enjoyed listening to stories from Tony-Award winning producer **Terry Schnuck** at the Bethesda Women's Board fall luncheon on Sept. 15.

V.P. and Director of Development at Bethesda. "Thanks to their hard work, we will be able to do so much more to help our residents and their families."

For more information or to find out how you can join the Bethesda Women's Board, call 314-800-1981 or email llsanders@bethesdahealth.org.



Team members from Alton Memorial Rehabilitation & Therapy and Bethesda gathered to cut the ribbon at the Sept. 22 Open House.

AMRT Open House

In 2019, Alton Memorial Rehabilitation & Therapy was set to celebrate its name change and show off for its referral sources with an Open House celebration—and then the pandemic hit.

Fast forward to Sept. 22, when guests including Alton **Mayor David Goins** and social workers and case managers from Alton Memorial Hospital came to the community to celebrate. **Joe Brinker** and **Dave Braasch**, Presidents of Bethesda and Alton Memorial Hospital, respectively, welcomed the group with brief remarks prior to a commemorative ribbon-cutting.

"Our team worked very hard to get ready for the Open House," said **Susan McClenahan**, Administrator at Alton Memorial Rehabilitation & Therapy. "With the new carpeting, flooring and furniture, coupled with their hard work, I've never seen the building look better!"

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A “Family Affair” Alive and Well at Bethesda

People often refer to their coworkers as “family,” but for many Bethesda team members, their co-workers are literally family.

From mother-daughter and mother-son duos to husbands and wives, sisters, aunts, nieces, nephews and cousins, employees across Bethesda love sharing their place of work with their loved ones.

At last count, more than 65 employees have relatives working at Bethesda!

Nikki Aubuchon, Activity Director at Bethesda Terrace, started her career at Bethesda eight years ago after a recommendation from her cousin.

“My cousin worked in the dining room at Bethesda Orchard and always talked about how much she enjoyed her job,” says Nikki. “I applied and was hired. We worked together for about five years before we went our separate ways within the company.”

“Bethesda is an incredible place to work because they provide the tools needed to be successful and grow in your career. They also acknowledge the importance of family and work-life balance, which has made such a difference in my life.”

Stephanie Graf, Recruitment Coordinator

Now, they’re both activity directors—Nikki at Bethesda Terrace and her cousin, **Kayla Edwards**, at Bethesda Orchard.

“My favorite part of my job is talking to and learning about the residents,” says Nikki. “Sharing that feeling with my cousin is so special. We have a close family, but working together has brought us even closer. We have a sister-level bond.”

For **Julie Hoppe**, nighttime receptionist at Bethesda Orchard, the family ties run deep within Bethesda. Her sister, son and niece have all worked for Bethesda.

“Life gets so busy sometimes, so being able to see family members at work is great,” Julie says. “It allows us to connect in a different way. I love that the entire organization is like an extended family. It feels like home.”



(L-R): Cousins **Kayla Edwards** and **Nikki Aubuchon** visit with **Stephanie Graf** and her aunt, **Jill Immethun**. They are among the more than 60 Bethesda employees with a relative working in the organization.

Stephanie Graf’s family’s relationship with Bethesda began long before she started working as a recruiter in the Bethesda Human Resources department.

“Quite a few of my family members volunteered at The Charless Home (a former Bethesda community located in South City), and my aunt, **Jill Immethun**, worked for Bethesda as well,” Stephanie explains. “Because of our close ties, when my son was born with cancer, The Charless Home held a fundraiser to help cover his medical bills. The community at Bethesda is unbeatable.”

Not long after, Stephanie began working part time as a business office associate at The Charless Home. She enjoyed it so much that she took on additional responsibilities to become a full-time employee. After a few years, she transferred to Bethesda’s corporate office to work in human resources.

Although Stephanie and her aunt don’t work in the same building, they continuously work together to brainstorm new ideas to further Bethesda’s mission and vision. Stephanie says they’ve grown closer because of it.

“Bethesda is an incredible place to work because they provide the tools needed to be successful and grow in your career,” says Stephanie. “They also acknowledge the importance of family and work-life balance, which has made such a difference in my life. I wouldn’t want to have spent the last 13 years anywhere else.”

Murphy Begins Second Career via Bethesda's CNA Program

It's never too late for a fresh start—just ask Bethesda Southgate employee **Kathleen (Kate) Murphy**.

After serving nearly 25 years as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) in the hospital setting, she decided to pursue a new career path—as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) in a senior care environment.

Kate began her journey in healthcare at a young age, volunteering as a candy striper at The Jewish Hospital of St. Louis alongside her sisters. She spent most of her career working as a COTA in St. Louis, earning two associate degrees and a bachelor's in the process.

"What I enjoyed most as a COTA was helping people and seeing them get better," Kate says. "Most of my patients came to the hospital with an illness, after an accident or after surgery. I liked being able to improve their lives and get them back home."

In 2010, she made a life-changing move to New Mexico, where she pursued her passion for studying Native American arts and culture and continued her career as a COTA. When she returned home to St. Louis at the end of 2021, she began searching for her next career move.

Wanting to stay in healthcare, Kate discovered the job of a CNA was not far from her COTA roots.

"I looked online to learn more about CNA programs in the area, and I found the program at South Technical High School in Sunset Hills, which is in partnership with Bethesda," she says. "I thought it would be a good fit."



Kate Murphy accompanies her favorite resident, Mary Ann Amato, in enjoying a beautiful fall afternoon at Bethesda Southgate.

"I feel like I still have a lot to give. I'm really excited to continue making a difference in the lives of Bethesda residents."

Kate Murphy, Certified Nurse Assistant

Director of Recruitment and Employee Relations **Eileen Caffey** says the CNA class, which is part of Bethesda's esteemed Career Ladder program, primarily receives students who are looking to quickly advance in their careers. Very few come in with a history in healthcare like Kate's.

"It was exciting to have Kate take part in the CNA program with her background and the wisdom she brings at her age," Eileen says. "She has exceeded our expectations."

Upon graduation, Kate began working full-time at Bethesda Southgate, and after only a few months already had recruited two of her sisters to apply, boasting the inclusive and diverse work environment for people of all ages, races and backgrounds.

"I don't want to retire," she says. "My sisters and I want to keep working to stay mentally and physically healthy. Statistics show that if older people stay active, they will likely live longer and be happier."

Kate plans to continue working as a CNA for as long as she can. "I feel like I still have a lot to give," Kate says. "I'm really excited to continue making a difference in the lives of Bethesda residents."

For more information about the CNA class or the Career Ladder program, please call Eileen at 314-800-1950.

Scholarship Winner Has Unique Story

Years ago, **Katrina McFarland** accepted a job as a Certified Nursing Assistant at Bethesda Dilworth. She quickly progressed to a Certified Medication Tech, and began caring for Dilworth resident Mary June King.

Fast forward to August 2022—Katrina, still at Bethesda Dilworth, learned that she was one of two employees (**Micky Williamson** was the other) to earn a scholarship designed to assist Bethesda employees in their pursuit of a post-secondary education.

The irony? The scholarship she earned was the Mary June King scholarship! It is named after her former resident!

"I always treat every patient with love and care, but you do have those patients you have a soft spot for sometimes," Katrina says. "Miss June King was one of them."

Before joining the Bethesda team, Katrina was experiencing a difficult time in her personal life. In the throes of unexpectedly moving herself and her three young children, she received a call that she had lost her job. Days later, however, she saw an ad for employment at Bethesda. She decided to apply.

"My grandmother was a nurse," Katrina says. "I'll never forget when she would put on her white uniform with her white hat and white shoes. I wanted to be just like her."

"I always treat every patient with love and care, but you do have those patients you have a soft spot for sometimes. Miss June King was one of them."

Katrina McFarland, Certified Medication Technician

Katrina had attended Health Careers high school, and it was there when she chose to follow in her grandmother's footsteps and started her journey to become a nurse.

"I love taking care of people—it's a passion for me," Katrina says. "I can't imagine doing anything else."

Katrina is currently enrolled in the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program at St. Charles Community College. Once she finishes in May 2023, she will move on to the Registered Nurse program.

"At first, I wasn't going to apply for the scholarship because I didn't think I would get it," she says. "But, after knowing Miss June King and her daughter, I thought I would try."

Mary Brown, daughter of Mary June King and founder of the scholarship fund, loved hearing Katrina's story and how hard she has worked towards her dream of becoming a nurse.

"It feels like this has come full circle," Mary says. "My Mom mentioning her thoughts to Trina about the importance of education, Katrina being a caregiver for her at Dilworth, and now Katrina realizing her dream of a nursing career. It really touches my heart and I wish her only the very best!"

Katrina says she used the scholarship for a new school uniform, a stethoscope, shoes, and other much-needed supplies.

Congratulations to Katrina and Micky for their selection as the 2022 Mary June King Scholarship recipients!

Katrina McFarland receives her scholarship check from **Mary Brown**, the daughter of Mary June King.



Going “Above and Beyond” for Independent Living Residents

When an independent living resident goes to the hospital for a procedure or an emergency, the continuum of Bethesda support doesn't stop. The Care Coordination and Business Development teams work together to ensure that hospitalized residents are referred to one of Bethesda's rehab communities for their recovery.

Senior Care Coordinator **Julie Poelker** and Director of Business Development **Carrie Wetzell** lead this charge.

A member of the Business Development team visits the hospitalized resident to review the services Bethesda has to offer (post-discharge rehabilitation, home health, private duty) and coordinates referrals with the hospital staff, most often to one of Bethesda's seven skilled nursing/rehabilitation communities, for their recovery.

During the rehabilitation process, Julie and the Care Coordination team participate in care plan meetings, to understand the resident's situation and develop a plan to return home.

“It's our job to determine what Bethesda can provide and how we can get the resident back to her or his Bethesda home,” says Julie.

Julie says that, despite the Business Development team visit, sometimes the resident or the primary caregiver still doesn't realize all of the services Bethesda provides, so she works with them to manage expectations and make informed decisions about next steps.

“I recall a Bethesda Orchard resident who was very independent prior to a fall,” Julie explains. “Her

therapist had recommended a move to an assisted living environment. The patient's daughter was taken aback by this recommendation, but I stepped in and assured her that we could provide help with everything the mother needed, while keeping her in her home at Bethesda Orchard. We would make sure her mom was taken care of. And she was, without the move to assisted living.”

These valuable collaborations between Bethesda and area hospitals are unique. “There are not many groups that value coordination like we do,” says Carrie.

“Family members tell us they know that we are looking out for their loved ones, which provides them with the peace of mind they need,” says Julie.



Senior Care Coordinator **Julie Poelker** (r), discusses care plans with **Marcella Kuhn**, Senior Operations Manager, Senior Support Solutions.

For more information about Bethesda's Care Coordination team, please call 314-800-1911.

Record Crowd for Kayman 5K

A record crowd of nearly 150 attended Bethesda Hospice Care's annual Memorial Walk, the Kayman 5K, held Sept. 24 at Queeny Park. The event, which honors the memories of friends and loved ones, was renamed in 2021 in memory of **Brian Kayman**, a dedicated employee of Bethesda Hospice Care, who sadly lost his battle with COVID-19 in 2020.



Bethesda Residents Having Fun!

At Bethesda, our residents are kept quite busy participating in all the fun activities coordinated by our Life Enrichment/Activity teams. Here are just a few examples of the fun!

- 1 **Marilyn Neier** and **Lovette Brown** enjoy themselves at the Bethesda Gardens Luau Pool party!
- 2 Bethesda Hawthorne Place resident **Teddy McCauley** had a great time celebrating her 100th birthday on Halloween, especially because she was the judge of the staff Halloween costume contest!
- 3 More than 100 Bethesda Southgate residents and family members enjoyed the 2nd annual Oktoberfest celebration.
- 4 Plenty of talent visible in this photo of the 2022 Bethesda Orchard "Follies" cast!
- 5 Village North residents **Carol Hanneman** and **Andrew Olree** enjoy a friendly dance at a recent Happy Hour.



... that we'd love to hear from you regarding the *Pulse's* new look? Send your comments to marketing@bethesdahealth.org.

... that one of Bethesda's top executives has been recognized as part of a very prestigious list?

... that Bethesda has been quite active in recruiting international nurses over the last number of months?

Information on these and other stories will be in the next edition of the *Pulse*.

And our Facebook coverage has been amazing! Send a message to marketing@bethesdahealth.org and we'll send you a link!

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Awards A-Plenty for Bethesda Southgate!

Bethesda has long been lauded for its commitment to quality care and service, and recently the team at Bethesda Southgate has received some very prestigious accolades.

Bethesda Southgate was one of fewer than 50 skilled nursing communities nationwide, and the only one in the state of Missouri, selected to receive a 2022 Silver National Quality Award. In an announcement received by Bethesda Southgate, the American Health Care Association wrote that it is evident that Bethesda Southgate has dedicated itself to continuous quality improvement and created a workspace for constant learning.



1 (L-R): Vice President and Administrator **Jen Popp**, Housekeeping Manager **Shaun Heidke**, and Senior Director of Nursing **Darlene Cosby** celebrate Bethesda Southgate's selection as a Silver National Quality Award winner by the American Health Care Association. **2** Bethesda Southgate team members **Shaun Heidke**, **Nicole Carter** and **Amanda Fleming** celebrate with their awards at the annual LeadingAge Missouri conference.



A perfect trifecta for Bethesda Southgate at the LeadingAge Missouri Conference, as three team members were honored with awards! **Nicole Carter** received the "Employee of the Year—Administrative Support"

award; **Amanda Fleming** received the "Employee of the Year—Direct Care" award, and **Shaun Heidke** received the "Employee of the Year—Environmental Services" award! Congratulations!