

# Pulse

A publication of Bethesda Health Group, Inc. • Summer 2023

Fostering successful aging through  
compassion and innovation



## Perseverance Personified

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# Welcome, Laura Frame and Happy Retirement, Kevin Curry!



Laura Frame

A hearty Bethesda welcome is extended to **Laura Frame**, who joined the organization in May and is serving as Corporate Vice President, General Counsel and Compliance Officer.

She is filling the position formerly held by **Kevin Curry**, Bethesda's Vice President and Corporate Compliance Officer, who retired at the end of June after nearly 20 years of service to Bethesda.



Kevin Curry

"The experience and skill set Laura brings to Bethesda, especially with her legal background, will serve Bethesda tremendously as we continue to seek new and better ways of meeting the needs of our residents, patients and families," says **Joe Brinker**, President & CEO. "At the same time, we cannot thank Kevin enough for the leadership he brought to the Compliance program, and we wish him well in his retirement."

Prior to joining Bethesda, Laura worked for SSM Health as their Assistant General Counsel.



## We Honor Veterans— Level 5 Secured Again

Bethesda Hospice Care earned its fourth consecutive Level 5 distinction in the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's "We Honor Veterans" program.

The initiative helps hospice programs identify and support Veterans' unique needs at the end of life.

"Participating hospices perform staff training, coordinate educational programs, and host community and veteran support events throughout the year," says **Dr. Julie Strassman**, Manager of Support Services.



Scan to learn more about Bethesda's Hospice Care.

## Bethesda celebrated its 134th birthday on June 8!

134 years of serving the needs of St. Louis seniors and their families. Thank you for your commitment, dedication and support!

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Scan to view a complete list of our leadership team and board members.





## A Crowning Achievement—Two BJEC LPNs Obtain RN Degrees While Juggling Work and Family

Bethesda knows its nurses can do practically anything—just take **Alicia Edwards** and **Monica Hunt** for example. Both ladies have been doing triple-duty as licensed practical nurses (LPNs) at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care (BJEC), students earning their registered nurse (RN) license and moms at home.

Both wanted to pursue nursing from young ages. Alicia has worked with BJEC since becoming an LPN in 2015, while Monica joined BJEC six years ago after working as an LPN and administrative roles at a couple local rehabilitation facilities.

They say that the 18 months it took to obtain their degrees were grueling, but they are proud of themselves for persevering, especially considering that some of the challenges would have caused many to give up.

“I had a baby last year over spring break,” says Alicia. “There were times I had to get up in the middle of the night to study because that’s the only time I had.”

Two motivational factors that got them through the RN program: career advancement and family.

“I wanted to inspire my three kids who have been a great support to me while I’ve been in school,” says Alicia. “They’d tell me ‘We’re so proud of you. We know you can do it!’ and let’s just say there were lots of tears at graduation. It was a wonderful feeling.”

Similarly, Monica wanted to prove to herself and her children that she could complete such an accomplishment.



(l-r) Nurse Manager **Casey Johnson**, graduates **Monica Hunt** and **Alicia Edwards**, and Vice President and Administrator **Candice Brown** celebrate graduation at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care.

“My children and I ended up swapping roles on occasion,” says Monica. “I remember my daughter got onto me for studying while lying on my bed. She told me to get up and go study at the desk!”

Alicia and Monica both thank their BJEC/Bethesda family for their encouragement, flexibility and financial support through the process.

“Everybody from administration to maintenance staff were amazing,” says Monica.

Alicia was awarded Bethesda’s prestigious 2021 Presidential Scholarship. Launched in 2020, the scholarship helps an LPN advance in their career and achieve their RN license by granting up to \$25,000. This allowed Alicia to work part-time at BJEC and maintain her full-time pay during school.

Similarly, Monica received tuition reimbursement from Bethesda for receiving high grades and working full time.

“At BJEC, you are constantly learning even when not taking classes,” Alicia said. “With the nursing classes, I was challenged to look at things in a different way.”

The next step for both women is to take the five-hour nursing board exams. Until then, both nurses are keeping focused and studying hard.

“I celebrated my graduation with a family vacation,” says Monica. “Now that I’m back, I will focus on preparing myself for the exam.”

“I’m ready,” says Alicia. “I think we both are. We learned a lot with the coursework and in our jobs.”

## Bethesda Helps Housekeeper Fulfill Caregiving Aspirations

A passion for caregiving and the residents of Bethesda Dilworth led housekeeper **Ashley Henderson** to pursue her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license through Bethesda's Career Ladder program.

"I knew I wanted to do more for the residents by becoming a CNA," says Ashley.

After two years of watching others participate, Ashley decided to look further into the program and reached out to **Eileen Caffey**, Bethesda's Director of Recruitment and Retention, to express her interest.

"Many people would be intimidated to return to school.

But Ashley proved that if you have the determination to do it, you will be successful," says Eileen.

In the 12-week course, CNA candidates learn the clinical skills they need to care for residents. The program is a partnership with Applied Technology Service, an organization that specializes in adult education, and was a great fit for Ashley.

"Now that I've graduated, I'm excited to start my new journey. I want to do so much more and keep moving forward," says Ashley.

Ashley is now a full-time CNA at Dilworth. She hopes to continue with the Career Ladder program and become a Certified Medication Technician (CMT).



*Bethesda Dilworth 2023 CNA and CMT graduates: (l-r) **Makila Cornell, Ashley Henderson, Zaykia Young and Denisha Ford***

## Talent Galore at Annual Bethesda Orchard Follies

Plenty of singing, dancing, storytelling and smiles as nearly 30 Bethesda Orchard residents showed off their talents in the fifth annual Follies talent show.

This year's theme, "Put on a Happy Face," came to resident and co-director **Angie Heumann** when she heard the song at one of the community's entertainment nights. To illustrate the theme, co-director **Mabel Weigle** created hand-held, happy emoji masks for the Glee Club's opening number.

As a five-time Follies veteran, Angie performed in three acts this year while Mabel served as M.C.

"I'm not sure if the Follies would have taken place this year if Mabel hadn't volunteered," says Angie.

Mabel had no hesitations, as she had run a similar show at her church

prior to moving to Bethesda Orchard this past year. Both women were excited that many new performers joined the 16-act line up.

Performances included singing, monologues, skits and musical instrumentals. The evening was wrapped up with a high-energy rendition of "Ring of Fire" from special guest Johnny Cash (a.k.a. lip-syncing resident Tom Wheaton).

The packed lobby buzzed with a crowd of residents, families

*The cast of the 5th annual Follies was all smiles after the first performance.*

and employees murmuring how impressed they were with the level of talent.

"We hope to host again next year," says Angie. "We have lots of ideas. Everybody will have to wait and see."

Scan to watch the full performance.





## Home Health Provides Supplies to Grateful Patient

At Bethesda, a patient's recovery journey doesn't end when they are discharged from one of our rehab communities. With the help of the St. Andrews & Bethesda Home Health team, their transition back to the life they love has only just started. And this was especially true for 85-year-old **Denzil**, who first caught the attention of our team in June 2023.

Following a hospitalization, Denzil underwent rehabilitation at Bethesda Dilworth. After a few weeks, he was discharged and moved back home, where he would return to living independently. However, when Home Health team members came to Denzil's apartment for an initial assessment and to establish a care plan, they quickly discovered that his apartment lacked essential medical equipment and basic personal necessities needed to provide him with the best possible living environment.

They found Denzil walking without shoes, which was causing the wounds on his feet to worsen and increase the risk of infection. Clothes were being used in place of bed sheets, and he lacked proper cooking utensils and personal hygiene products.

After being made aware of Denzil's situation, **Missy McAuley**, Director of St. Andrews & Bethesda Home Health, approached the Bethesda Health Group Foundation in hopes of working together to provide Denzil with the critical



*Denzil receives new household items from Missy McAuley, Director of St. Andrews & Bethesda Home Health.*

**“We hope that these items will help reinstate his dignity and, most of all, keep him as comfortable as possible while living independently in his home.”**

**Missy McAuley, RN,  
Director of St. Andrews & Bethesda  
Home Health**

necessities he needed. She felt that the system had let a low-income senior slip through the cracks and was determined to help provide him with the home he needed and deserved.

Through the Marillac Mission Fund Grant, Denzil was gifted a full bedding set, bath towels, pots, pans, utensils, shirts, socks, and more. He was also set up with a bed rail to assist him in safely transferring in and out of bed, specialized surgical shoes to keep his wounds protected, and a lift

chair and recliner to elevate his feet and help him to safely stand up.

“We hope that these items will help reinstate his dignity and, most of all, keep him as comfortable as possible while living independently in his home,” says Missy.

Upon receiving the items from the Home Health team, Denzil was smiling from ear to ear as he expressed his thanks over and over again.

“I deeply appreciate the help and all items they've provided,” says Denzil. “I'm so happy I could jump up and down—do somersaults down the hallway.”

Denzil and his daughter, **Mary**, met the team with gratitude at every turn and new item that was presented to him. Denzil became quite emotional when he reflected on his journey and the support from the Bethesda staff.

“We appreciate that Bethesda cares enough to step in and do something like this,” says Mary.

## 2023 Hearts for Our Homes Campaign Exceeds Expectations

Every year Bethesda depends on the overwhelming generosity of the Bethesda community to make the “Hearts for Our Homes” campaign a success—and this year was no different. Together, the Bethesda family raised more than \$100,000!

These vital funds help financially struggling residents remain in their Bethesda homes.

“The tremendous efforts that our staff, our residents and their families always put forward helped ensure that none of our seniors ever lose their homes and community due to lack of funds,” says **Linda Sanders**, Bethesda’s Corporate Vice President and Director of Development.

Bake sales, barbecues and block parties were just some of the activities that, when combined with numerous financial contributions, made “Hearts for Our Homes” another win for the community.

For more information about “Hearts for Our Homes” and the Bethesda Health Group Foundation, visit [bethesdahealth.org/giving-to-bethesda](https://bethesdahealth.org/giving-to-bethesda) or scan the QR code below.



*Residents enjoy a bake sale at Village North, a barbecue at Bethesda Orchard and block party at The Oaks at Bethesda.*



## Bethesda Nurses Recognized

When the annual “Nurses—the Heart of Health Care” section was published by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in May, it came as no surprise that many Bethesda nurses were recognized for their proficiency and skill. Congratulations to those who were honored!

**Vicki Chism**  
Bethesda Southgate

**Lakesha Cook**  
Bethesda Hawthorne Place

**Darlene Cosby**  
Bethesda Southgate

**Kim Hengehold**  
Bethesda Hospice Care

**Mercedes Jackson**  
Bethesda Southgate

**Tina Korunka**  
Alton Memorial  
Rehabilitation & Therapy

**Tina Robinson**  
Bethesda Southgate

**Jennifer Schmittling**  
Memorial Care Center

**Kathi Walsh**  
St. Andrews & Bethesda  
Home Health



## Celebrating 10 years of the Kayman 5K Memorial Walk

Bethesda Hospice Care will host its 10th Annual Kayman 5K Memorial Walk at Queeny Park on September 30. This reverent and joyful event is for all to honor and remember their loved ones who have died. Last year’s event drew a record 150 participants!

Join your choice of a 5K walk, 1K walk or come for the memorial ceremony. This event is free and open to the public.

Sign-up by September 1 and receive a free t-shirt.



Scan to register or learn more about the Kayman 5K



# Residents Having Fun—Out and About!

The spring and summer months provide many opportunities for our Bethesda residents to enjoy the great outdoors...or stay inside when it gets a little too hot and muggy. In either case, it always ends up being a great time!



Scan to link to our community Facebook pages.



1 **Janice Flake** pets a baby pig at Bethesda Meadow's National Skilled Nursing Care Week Fair.

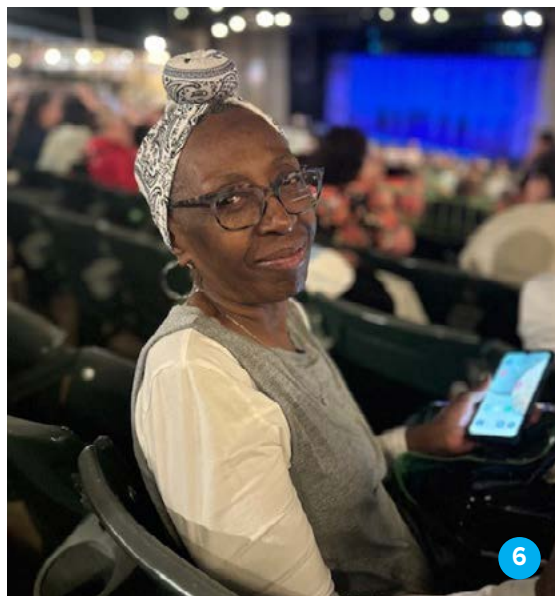
2 **Alton Memorial Rehabilitation and Therapy** residents enjoy a trip to Dairy Queen!

3 **Bethesda Orchard** residents attend Beauty and the Beast at The Muny.

4 **Kim Walker** and LPN Nurse Manager **LeTravia King** play Jenga during National Skilled Nursing Care Week at Barnes-Jewish Extended Care.

5 **Bethesda Terrace** resident **Gisela Harr** won big at Money Bingo on National Wine Day!

6 **Doris Rice**, resident at Village North Retirement Community, watched Beauty and the Beast at The Muny.



## DID YOU KNOW?

... that Bethesda has plenty of positions available throughout the organization? To find all open roles, please go to [www.bethesdahealth.org/careers](http://www.bethesdahealth.org/careers).

... that thanks to combined efforts from the management teams at the Independent Living communities, the Bethesda Corporate Marketing department and the residents, occupancy rates are returning to pre-pandemic rates?

... that Bethesda Orchard hosted Bethesda Terrace in Wii Bowling in an afternoon of camaraderie and fun?

... that a resident recently turned 109 years old?!?

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

# BETHESDA

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## The Value of Public Reviews

The Bethesda team receives many letters of thanks and online reviews from grateful residents and families. These endorsements mean a lot to our employees and are very helpful to individuals and families considering Bethesda for a new residence. We encourage you to consider posting a review on Facebook or Google to assist others in their search.

It's easy and we are here to help if you need it. All you need to do is:

1. Log-in to your account—for Facebook, you must use your desktop computer or your laptop. (Not your phone.)
2. Go to [facebook.com/bethesdahealthgroup/reviews](https://facebook.com/bethesdahealthgroup/reviews) or <https://bit.ly/3NOjTtw>
3. For both, either select a star rating to match your experience (Google – 1 is low, 5 is high) or answer yes (Facebook)
4. Make sure to write a written review
5. Click “post” to share it publicly

Bethesda appreciates the time it takes to post a review. If you have any questions or need help posting your review, feel free to contact [marketing@bethesdahealth.org](mailto:marketing@bethesdahealth.org).

