

Words of Wisdom: From One Generation of Leaders to the Next

Q2, 2024

In my past year working for Mass-ALA, I've met so many fantastic and passionate leaders who are shaping the future of assisted living and senior care in our state. There are many Executive Directors who are working hard to make their communities safer, more equitable and welcoming spaces for all residents, staff, families, and volunteers alike.

As the new leaders of today are looking to what the future holds for them and their communities, I wanted to share some words of wisdom from some experienced leaders in our network. I asked a few of these leaders to draw on their years of experience, offering advice for the next generation of leaders and sharing their thoughts on how assisted living has changed, and where they see us going in the future. I hope you enjoy reading their answers and the insights they provide.

Betsy Connolly, Executive Director, New Horizons at Marlborough

Please share a few sentences about your experience working in assisted living.

I have been an Executive Director for twelve years. Previously, I was an assisted living business director. I have worked for LCB Senior Living in Wayland and now for New Horizons, which is part of the Cummings Foundation. This is a second career for me; earlier I worked in financial services. To facilitate my change of career, I obtained my Masters of Gerontology at UMASS Boston.

What do you think are the most important attributes an Executive Director can have?

Executive Directors need to be able to think strategically but also execute at a detailed level. On the one hand, we need to plan for the Baby Boomer generation and how we need to change our offerings for them. On the other hand, we need to focus on building equipment and ensure it is maintained and working as it is supposed to be. My role has a broad range of responsibilities which requires me to constantly track what needs to be done and regularly reprioritize where to focus my time and efforts.

Has the role of Executive Director changed throughout your career?

Despite being organized as a "social model," we all learned during COVID that assisted living needs to be concerned with our residents' health related challenges. We may not be directly delivering health care, but we can help our residents and families obtain the best care they can receive. We can do this by being aware of what care is available in our network of contacts and by continuously growing our professional networks.

What do you see changing about the future of assisted living?

Along the lines of the last question, we just implemented an automated resident database solution that helps us track resident data, care concerns, incidents, and other critical information. Sharing data across our entire team is helping us be more aware of resident challenges and concerns so we can work better as a team to help residents and families obtain necessary care. With the Baby Boomers starting to come, we are upgrading our dining and activities offerings to appeal to this population.

Chris Moge, Executive Director, The Gables of Fitchburg

Please share a few sentences about your experience working in assisted living.

I have been an Executive Director for 8-10 years, but I have been with our company for 42 years and held many different roles including in the construction of our community from 1987 to 1989. We began as an Independent Living retirement community and transitioned to assisted living in 2012.

What do you think are the most important attributes an Executive Director can have?

I think the most important attributes one can have as an Executive Director are empathy, understanding and compassion. We need to always remain aware that what our residents present on the surface can stem from larger concerns, troubles, or physical issues that they may be experiencing. We should listen closely and try to understand what someone is experiencing and do what we can to be of comfort and assistance. The business side of things will take care of itself if we are truly providing the best care for our residents.

What do you see changing about the future of assisted living?

In this world of constant changes and developments of new technologies, I'm sure there will be beneficial things that come along. But I believe that the day-to-day interactions and care provided to our residents and the personal touch will always remain the most important.

What would you say to someone stepping into the role of Executive Director for the first time?

If you are starting the role as an Executive Director, do your best to engage with as many residents as possible. Be compassionate and empathetic. Value your team and understand that the Resident Care Director's role is probably more important than yours. Your C.N.A.'s, servers and other employees are extremely valuable to your residents, and therefore to your operations. Educate resident family members as to the benefits and limitations of assisted living. And know that any difficult day, week, or situation will pass or get resolved with your effort and be rewarded with many days and weeks of feeling the

satisfaction of knowing you have made a difference in the lives of many people along the way.

Lori Todd, Executive Director, Loomis Lakeside at Reeds Landing (Springfield, MA)

Please share a few sentences about your experience working in assisted living.

I have been working as an Executive Director of CCRCs or Life Plan Communities with oversight over the assisted living area, independent living and skilled nursing since 1996. I have worked with my community, Loomis Communities, for 24 years and worked for another organization as Executive Director for 3 years. I have also been a Nursing Home Administrator and Director of Nurses.

What do you value most about being an Executive Director?

That I have an opportunity to help shape the culture to provide the best quality of life for our seniors by developing a team of competent and caring and well-informed team members.

Are there any new technologies or innovations your community is implementing or hoping to implement in the future?

We are instituting more educational programming designed for those living with dementia to keep the brain stimulated while not frustrating the learner.

What do you think are the most important attributes an Executive Director can have?

I believe the ED must be compassionate, a skilled listener, knowledgeable about the industry, willing to continue to learn, and have a great sense of humor. This role is rewarding and impactful

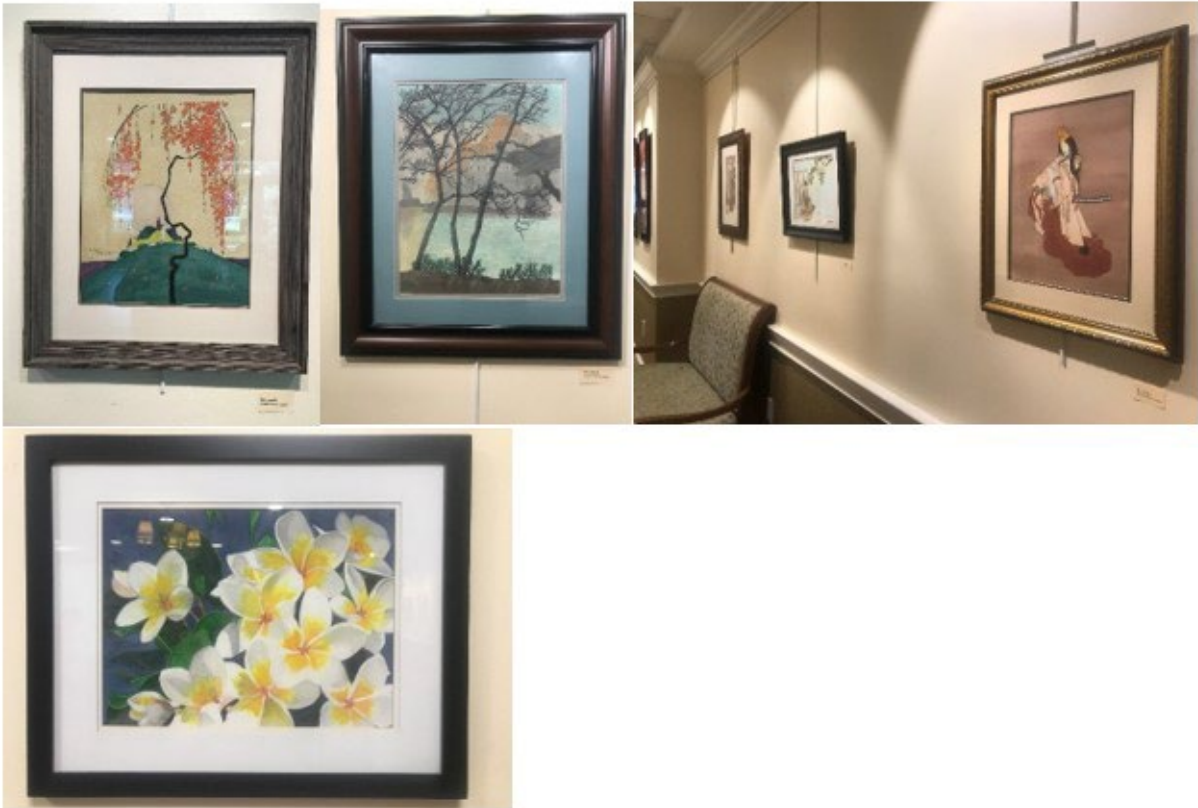
Check It Out: What's Going-on in Assisted Living!

Thank you for sharing what's been going-on this spring season and how you've been enjoying the change of season. Please keep sharing your special activities and moments with us!

Charter Senior Living of Danvers hosted a successful yard sale fundraiser, raising over \$1,200 for Alzheimer's disease through the Alzheimer's Association. They also celebrated Mother's Day with live music, tea, flowers, and lots of love!

Goddard House in Brookline shared the following art exhibition and story of resident Maureen Giallombardo.





“Maureen Giallombardo is a Goddard House resident who has been an artist for many years. An art lover for life, Maureen decided to try her hand at painting in her adulthood and enrolled in a watercolor painting class where she was living in Connecticut. She excelled in the class, and credits her instructor for her success. Maureen describes him as “a curmudgeon of an art teacher, but wonderful once you stopped being afraid of him!” Her instructor’s critical eye and excellent guidance in the use of watercolor paint- which is a very difficult medium to control!- allowed Maureen to develop confidence in her work, and fully hone her craft.

As you will see in this exhibition, Maureen is deeply inspired by Asian art, specifically the art of Japan. Her style of painting employs the same aesthetic principles as many Japanese artists, and many of her works resemble woodblock prints, though all of the pieces in this exhibit were created with watercolor paint. Maureen also finds inspiration in nature, and enjoys exploring the elegance of flowers and trees in her art, conveying a sense of respect for the beauty of the natural world.

The Goddard House Community has been both delighted and surprised by Maureen’s exhibition as she has not previously shared the extent of her “hidden” talent. Though she remains very humble and gracious, many residents have enjoyed sharing compliments and

positive feedback with Maureen about her work! The level of detail in Maureen’s paintings, her skillful use of color, and inspiration from Asian art have resonated most with our community, sparking curiosity and conversations. Thank you, Maureen, for sharing your art with us!”

Du Lac Assisted Living Residence in Worcester shared the following pictures and story of their “Dream Garden”.



“It was during the cold month of January when Sr. Patty Butler, a Sister of Notre Dame da Namur, and Sr. Paula Cormier, a Sister of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, both residents of Notre Dame du Lac Assisted Living, hatched the idea of building a vegetable garden on the campus of Notre Dame Health Care. The goal would be to donate all produce grown to those with food insecurities in the Worcester area. Neither of the women are experienced gardeners so they reached out to experts to help with the planning and purchasing of the raised beds. On a sunny April Sunday, the Sisters brought together many volunteers from the community to prepare the area, assemble raised beds and install perimeter fencing to protect the garden from the many deer that reside on the property. Through donations of goods, time, and money, the “Dream Garden” has come to fruition. The garden area is beautiful and visible to all who come down the driveway to our campus.”

Bridges by EPOCH in Mashpee had a lot of fun hosting special celebrations, crafting and painting with residents, staff and volunteers.



The Residence at Penniman Hill in Hingham shared how residents expressed their creativity by crafting beautiful flower arrangements to be enjoyed by everyone in the community.



Welcome New Members

Welcome to our newest Business Partners! Our business partners provide a wide range of services and products to help assisted living communities in areas such as care management and operational support, payroll and HR solutions, and commercial cleaning services.

[Cadent Technologies](#)

At Cadent, we help assisted living residences boost sales leads and achieve occupancy targets with an interactive website and effective digital marketing strategies. Cadent is offering a comprehensive website performance report, at no cost for Mass ALA members. Learn how you can upgrade your website to reach more clients and find healthcare staff. In your personalized website performance report, we analyze your site's SEO, accessibility, design, and senior living website best practices and offer custom recommendations on how you can improve your website immediately.

[CarePredict](#)

CarePredict works with operators to drive results including: Predicting Falls and UTIs before they occur; Reducing Unplanned Hospitalizations; Increasing LOS. We do this with a wearable for seniors paired with our AI platform that allows for preventative care, helping seniors age in place. The wearable also acts as a nurse call system w2 way radio, RTLS, fall detection, wander management, with a family app.

[CGI Digital](#)

CGI Digital is focused on bringing you new neighbors, customers, and clicks. Serving cities nationwide, we put small to medium-sized businesses in the spotlight—generating leads and creating comradery. Our digital marketing agency proudly makes a meaningful impact on clients throughout every corner of the United States.

[Grassp Health](#)

Grassp Health is a licensed cannabis delivery service that specializes in helping seniors using cannabis for clinical purposes and improved health outcomes. We help seniors

choose the right cannabis products for health-related needs, we provide dosing instructions, then we deliver the products to their door. We work with Assisted Living and Memory Care communities, to ensure they have the doctors order needed for residents to use cannabis regularly, on a dosing schedule, to reduce symptoms of chronic health conditions. We have specialized in the following conditions: Chronic Pain, MS, Sundowning Behaviors in Dementia, Parkinson's, Cancer, Insomnia, Anxiety, Chron's Disease, Wasting Syndrome, ALS and more.

[Hershey Ice Cream](#)

Enjoyed by millions since 1894, Hershey's® Ice Cream is focused on producing innovative, high-quality products and providing industry-leading service. Guided by our family values of integrity, honesty, and respect, we strive to provide an unforgettable experience with each delicious bite.

[Inszone Insurance](#)

Our team of expert agents have the solutions to all of your insurance needs, ensuring that you have the right coverage for any unexpected emergency. Don't take any chances, trust Inszone Insurance.

[Method HRM](#)

Method HRM is a Professional Employer Organization (PEO) that helps clients reduce day-to-day administrative work and focus on growth and operations. With decades of senior living experience, we help companies reduce expenses, increase efficiencies and focus on strategic, revenue generating opportunities. If you would like a free cost analysis of how we can save you money annually, please reach out!

[PNC Bank](#)

PNC offers a wide range of services for all our customers, from individuals and small businesses, to corporations and government entities. No matter how simple or complicated your needs, we're sure to have the products, knowledge and resources necessary for financial success.

[Member Spotlights](#)

Assisted Living Provider Spotlight: The Residence at Bedford

LCB Senior Living is thrilled to announce the grand opening of its 17th location in Massachusetts – The Residence at Bedford!

LCB brings more than 25 years of excellence to this stunning campus, which features Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Reflections Memory Care. Residents and families will benefit from seven care levels and flexible rental pricing, while enjoying exceptional

dining, engagement opportunities, and a carefree, secure lifestyle. With a prime residential location, abutting the Minuteman Bikeway and offering convenient access to walking and gardens, The Residence at Bedford is a true industry standout.

Business Partner Spotlight: UTMC

UTMC provides all-inclusive representation to over 1,000 Massachusetts employers to help reduce their unemployment costs. UTMC specializes in representing healthcare organizations operating under both the tax rated and the reimbursable method of unemployment. The service entails all five aspects required to reduce your unemployment cost; claim processing, auditing, training, consulting and hearing representation.

With Massachusetts modernizing its unemployment system early next year, tax rates increasing significantly over the next five years and the cost of a single claim now exceeding \$30,000, it is now more imperative than ever that all unwarranted claims and charges be denied. UTMC provides the representation necessary to accomplish this. We offer Mass-ALA members a no cost, no obligation analysis of their unemployment costs and a 15% discount on our all-inclusive fee.

Mass ALA's Training and Webinar Recording Library

Don't forget about this great benefit to help you and your staff get important training on topics critical to the success of your community. [You can access the full catalog of recorded trainings and webinars here.](#) Please note that many, though not all, of Mass-ALA trainings and webinars are recorded and available for later viewing. Topics covered include Conducting an Effective Resident Satisfaction Survey, Hoarding Behavior, Infection Control 2024, Landlord/Tenant Law, and more!

If you need assistance accessing the recording library, give me a call at 781-622-5999, ext. 110. All upcoming, live trainings and webinars are listed on our Events page on mass-ala.org.

Mass ALA's Job Board

Don't forget about this free member benefit to help you attract great candidates to your community! Make sure to share your job postings on our [Job Board](#). Once you have logged in, click on the Career Center link at the top of the page and follow the directions to post a job at your community. If you need assistance with logging in or posting your job, give me a call at 781-622-5999, ext. 110. All jobs that are posted on our Job Board can be viewed by all job seekers by simply going to our website and clicking on Career Search at the top of the home page on our website, mass-ala.org.

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