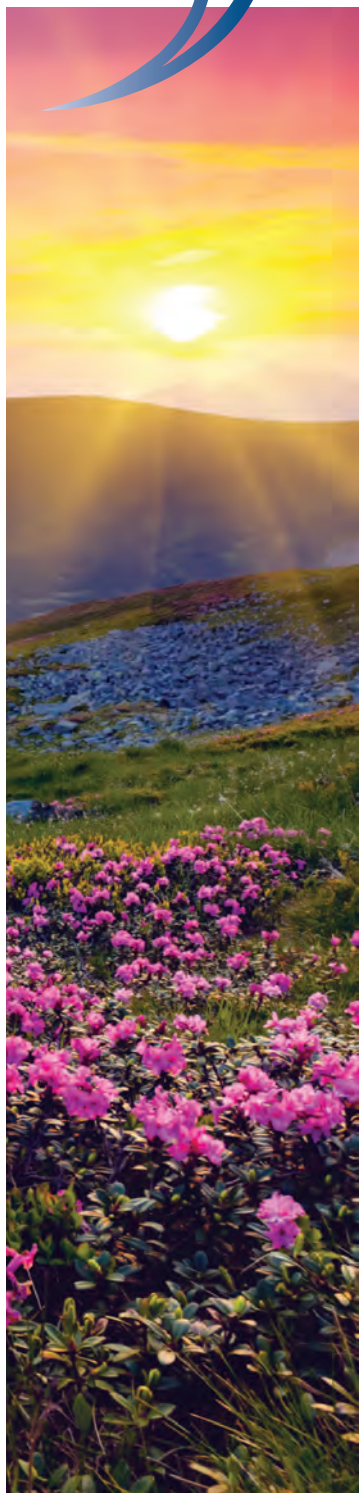


The HEALING SPIRIT

NOTRE DAME HEALTH CARE

Vol. II, No. I

SPRING / SUMMER 2021



For anyone that knows me well, having “writers block” is not really in my nature. I recall vividly, however, struggling to find the right words at this time last year when I sat to write my 2020 Spring Newsletter message.

We were deeply immersed in responding to the initial challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and my heart was breaking—for our residents and patients, their families, our students, our employees, and the rest of the world.

Thankfully, we seem to be coming to the other side of the storm that forced our residents into isolation, and caused us to mourn the loss of some of our more health-compromised residents and patients as well as some of our own loved ones and friends.

Our compassionate and caring staff members are truly remarkable. They have worked hard to master and administer to new regulations brought on by the pandemic, not just once, but dozens of times over the past year, as new guidance is provided by our regulatory authorities. Our staff shows up every day because they know their work matters. They are committed to our mission, our residents, patients, families, students and colleagues.

They are more than “heroes,” yet it’s hard to find a better word to acknowledge the enormous responsibility they have undertaken (and continue to do so!) to ensure we are always ready to serve those in our care. I am so very grateful for all they do, and honored to be their co-worker.

Although Coronavirus infection rates have stabilized in Massachusetts and locally, we will always strive to go above and beyond what is required in our efforts to stem any future outbreak in our buildings. We continue to screen employees

each day they come to work, and we constantly monitor our residents for symptoms. We will keep on testing our residents and staff per the requirements of our regulatory authorities to ensure we can quickly respond if any positive cases are detected. Thanks to regulations specific to skilled nursing communities, we are fortunate to be able to administer vaccines to our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center residents and employees. And, we will continue to facilitate access to COVID-19 vaccines for all of our other employees and residents. Our education on the benefits and new “freedoms” afforded to those who are fully vaccinated is ongoing.

Each day seems to bring a few small victories on our path to “normalcy.” Declining infection rates in our region, along with increased vaccination rates, have allowed us to implement less restrictive protocols for visitation, dining, activities and more. We know these things are so important to the quality of life and emotional health and well-being of our residents, and we rejoice in these triumphs.

As we continue on this journey, we will remain alert and uphold the highest safety standards possible to keep the virus out. Our shared hope is that the pandemic will continue to wane, and that we will soon see the smiles on the faces of those around us. We miss them!

On behalf of all of us entrusted to serve in our mission, thank you for your continued faith, support, prayers, and commitment. It is both humbling and an honor to be a part of your life.

—KAREN LAGANELLI, CEO

Long Term Care Happenings

Last year was unspeakably difficult for everyone in the world. And it has taken a tremendous toll on our residents, their families and our employees. But we are resilient, and continue to do our best to provide the very best care to those we serve. The ever-changing rules we must follow for the health and wellbeing of our residents are challenging. As the world “opens up” we must remain vigilant. There are many blessings as COVID-19 infection rates in our region decline. Our residents are excited to see visitors and family again with limitations. They are also enjoying communal dining, hairdressing services and small group activities on the units. It is beautiful to see relationships reignite and the lilt of conversation and laughter in our day rooms as we see residents gathered around a table or sitting on the patio enjoying a craft. Our staff has worked diligently to keep everyone safe. We appreciate the trust and patience that our families and residents have shown during this difficult time.



Across Campus Happenings

Proud to be an Environmental Steward!

Notre Dame Health Care is proud to be a steward of our earth. As a demonstration of our commitment to this important part of our mission, our employees participated in a variety of recycling projects for Earth Day. We collected old cell phones for “Cell Phones for Soldiers,” eyeglasses for the Worcester Lions Club, and returnable bottles and cans (proceeds were sent to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to support their global Clean Water Project). We also worked together during break times to do some “clean-up” around campus.

Taking our stewardship one step further, NDHC has received the 1st *Tree Campus Healthcare* Award in Massachusetts from the Arbor Day Foundation (ADF). The *Tree Campus Healthcare* program recognizes health institutions that make a mission-aligned impact on community wellness through tree education, investment, and community engagement. There were five steps required to qualify for this award from the ADF. We launched our Care of Creation Committee which includes staff from across Campus as well as a resident/SNDdeN member, Sr. Rosemary Fay. We are building a partnership with the Greater Worcester Land Trust to help maintain the trails that cross our property. Our groundskeeper Stacy OBey shared her plan for maintaining and caring for our trees on Campus and we are providing education to our staff and the community through social media and our website.

We are proud to be the first to be honored with this special recognition and to do to our part to care for “Mother Earth” every single day!



Our Care of Creation Committee proudly displays our Tree Campus Healthcare banner



Earth Day Collections



Mike Randone, Director of Mission Integration organizes cell phones collected for our Earth Day recycling project

Educational Bridge Center Happenings

Staff at our Educational Bridge Center Ramping Up Outreach to Employees

Despite the fact that the Educational Bridge Center remains closed to the public, there is still much taking place. A survey was sent to all NDHC employees to determine what their knowledge base was for Education Center services. Employees were encouraged to sign up for classes, career counseling or Citizenship Preparation. Responses to the survey revealed that NDHC employees are ready to learn! Several employees are in nursing

school programs while others are taking Human Service classes. One student is preparing for a career as a Police Officer. Additionally, Sue Strandberg, Workforce Development Manager for the Educational Bridge Center is hosting “office hours” at our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center to assist employees in accessing services.



Sue Strandberg,
office hours

Virtual Learning Opens a Window to the World

Our Adult Basic Education classes have just finished the first semester and began their Spring/Summer session in May. Both *HiSET* (formerly GED) and *English for the Workplace* (ESOL) are conducted virtually via ZOOM and Google Classroom. Our recent ESOL class had a truly international flavor with students from the local area joined by former classmates who had moved to Spain and Arizona. Dr. Majid Kersandian from Iran is now living in Arizona. Roger Carabano, our student from Valencia, Spain, juggled the time difference to attend classes. Dr. Olivia Carillo from Venezuela is living in Massachusetts as is Juliana DiBoni from Brazil. She is pictured with Dr. Carillo and Mr. Carabano when she presented her story at the *Women's Oral History Project* at the Worcester Public Library a couple of years ago. Olivia, Roger and Majid continue to keep in touch virtually! That's dedication!



Dr. Majid
Kersandian



Dr. Olivia Carillo, Roger Carabano
and Juliana DiBoni

2021 EDUCATIONAL FORUM

SAVE THE DATE

This year's annual Educational Forum will be held on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 and will feature a special presentation by Hannah Brencher, author, TED Speaker, and mental health advocate with a heart for building leaders. She is the author of three best-selling books- "Fighting Forward," "If You Find This Letter," and "Come Matter Here." She is the founder of More Love Letters—a global organization using the power behind social media to write and mail letters to strangers in need across the world. We are looking forward to her presentation: *The power of presence: your call to show up and be a light in the world around you.*

Our event this year is planned to be held “virtually” but we hope to incorporate some “live” surprises into our program. Sponsorship opportunities are available, please “Like” us on Facebook and check our website for details as our plans evolve. You can also reach out to our Development Director at 508-852-5800, X2509 or via email pthayer@notredamehealthcare.org.



du Lac Assisted Living Happenings

du Lac Renovations Nearly Finished

Since our last newsletter, we have reached several HUGE construction milestones. The first is that our Harmony neighborhood renovations are officially complete! Harmony reopened at the end of January and we could not be more thrilled with how it turned out. With the nice weather, Harmony residents are able to go outside and enjoy their new courtyard. The space is now so warm and welcoming, and we simply cannot say enough about how beautifully it all turned out!

The other big highlights: renovations to all of our traditional apartments are now complete and now every single apartment in the entire building has been renovated. Additionally, our main entrance and lobby have been transformed.



As we continue to navigate through these times, we are truly blessed to have staff that remains committed to providing quality care for our residents. We cannot thank them enough for all that they do to keep our residents feeling happy and cared for.

The Easter Bunny came to du Lac to spread some cheer to our residents!

Our Activities Department created a scavenger hunt to assist residents in discovering temporary spaces during our construction. Every resident that participated was entered into a drawing for a goodie-filled basket. Our happy winner is pictured here!



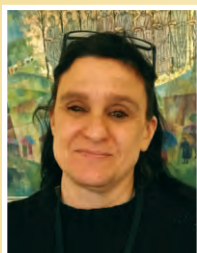
Residents participated in a St. Patrick's Day themed cocktail hour this year!

Next on the checklist are renovations to the du Lac Activities Room, Hair Salon and our new Fitness Center. This phase is scheduled for completion in the Fall of 2021.

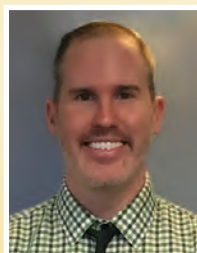
Beyond these exciting renovation completions, communal dining has resumed for all meals! For almost a year, due to COVID restrictions, our residents were eating in their rooms. Now, not only do they get to enjoy their newly renovated dining room, but they are able to go back to eating and socializing over scrumptious food with their friends as a community. Though we are not quite fully back to "normal," seeing everyone dining together makes it feel like we are that much closer to it.

Welcome New Managers

The Healing Spirit is published as a service to the community. / EDITOR: Paige Thayer
For additional stories and information, please visit our website notredamehealthcare.org



Hope Bagley, MSW, LCSW was recently hired as Director of Social Services, Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center



Steven Burokas, NP-C was recently hired as Nurse Practitioner, Notre Dame At Home in our Hospice Program



Jemima Quarm, LPN, CDP was recently promoted to Director of Harmony Programs, du Lac Assisted Living Residence

At Home — Hospice & Pedi Pals — Happenings

Notre Dame At Home Participates in National Quality Care Program

Notre Dame Hospice is participating in the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's latest initiative, *Measures of Excellence a Quality Connection Program*. Quality Connections is a national program designed to support hospice and palliative care provider delivery of high-quality, person-centered care. The program goals are to enhance the knowledge base, skills, and competency of hospice and palliative care staff through education, tools, resources, and opportunities for engagement and interaction among hospice and palliative care quality professionals. Executive Director Susan Keefe, RN, BSN, CHPN, CHPCA believes this program will strengthen our ability to continue to deliver the quality care our patients deserve.



At Home Collaborates with QCC to Help Train Nursing Students

Notre Dame Health Care's At Home Division is working with nursing students from **Quinsigamond Community College (QCC)** in a program to help provide students with practical experience in our Pediatric Palliative Care Program (Pedi Pals). The students shadow our Pedi Pals staff for a month. Four students per day are paired with all of the disciplines on the Pedi Pals team. Our team consists of Nurse Case Managers, Social Workers, Child Life Therapists, Music Therapists, Massage Therapists, and Spiritual Care Providers. We always enjoy sharing the great work we do and to benefit from the perspectives of these aspiring nurses from QCC!

Welcome Back Volunteers!

We are so happy to see our volunteers get back to the work they love! We are grateful to these incredible people who have become a part of our Hospice team "family" here at Notre Dame Health Care. One of our volunteers, **Frank McGuire**, has been with us for 9 years! He exudes joy when he flashes his wonderful smile. Frank says it is important to do this work, "Because if I were in the same situation as a Hospice patient, I would want someone to visit me, especially if I were alone." All of our volunteers have their very own personal stories as to why they have been called to volunteer for Hospice, but they all share a common desire to bring compassion, kindness, and a smile to brighten the day for those we serve.



Pedi Pals Program Hosts Virtual Events

During these ever changing times, our Pediatric Palliative Care Team (Pedi Pals) has continued to meet the challenges of keeping our patients and their families connected by hosting many virtual events. Our goal is to help our patients and families stay connected with staff and to also stay connected with other families that may feel isolated, due to the challenges of caring for a child with life limiting illness. Our families have expressed how this support, and being a part of a larger community, has helped them in many ways. One of those events was our "Let's Hang" program for teens 14+.

Bereavement Support Group



Notre Dame Hospice hosts an online Bereavement Support Group on the first Monday of each month from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. Sessions are ongoing. If you would like more information please contact Peggie, Bereavement Coordinator at 508-852-5505.

Like Us on Facebook . . .

We love to share all of the wonderful things happening around campus. We invite you to get "social" with us—"like" us on Facebook (@NotreDameHealthCare) for regular updates on what we are doing.



NOTRE DAME HEALTH CARE

555-559 Plantation Street • Worcester, MA 01605-2350

Tel: 508-852-5800 • Web: notredamehealthcare.org



NON-PROFIT ORG

U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 2
Worcester, MA

TRIBUTE GIVING

Remember and honor a loved one with an inscribed leaf on one of our *Trees of Life* which are located in the vestibule of the Notre Dame du Lac Chapel and the lobby of our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center. By request, and with your gift of \$250 or more, we will inscribe a "bronze leaf" in memory or honor of someone special in your life and will have it placed on one of our "trees." For details, please contact pthayer@notredamehealthcare.org.



We are grateful for the privilege to serve and fulfill our mission to provide our residents, patients and families with the care they so deserve. And, we are grateful to all who support our work with gifts of time and treasure throughout the year.

du Lac Chapel Renovation Campaign

Notre Dame Health Care has made extraordinary investments for renovations to du Lac Assisted Living with millions of dollars in bank financing which has some limitations on its use. Importantly, the restrictions prohibit the monies to be allocated for some additional renovation and rehabilitation work needed in our beautiful Chapel at du Lac. Because of some prior roof leaks, we have a need to do some repair work to the ceiling. Additionally, the entire Chapel and third floor meditation room need painting—this hasn't been done in *many* years and it is sorely needed. And, there is work to be done on our sprinkler system in the Chapel, which is a critical health and safety requirement. The cost of this important work is estimated to be \$220,000.

Truly, the other beautiful renovations around us really shine a spotlight on the tremendous need to take care of these projects within the Chapel which for many here is the very heart and soul of their home.

To help in funding this expense, we have launched a special fundraising campaign to help to defray some of this cost, especially in light of the additional debt we are absorbing to cover the many other renovations.

The Chapel is a very important space in our building.

It is used daily for activities such as Mass, Rosary groups, evening prayer and a variety of other pastoral and spiritual care programs. It is a place of peace, quiet and "home" for our residents; and a welcoming place for families and visitors. When COVID restrictions are fully lifted, we hope to soon be able to utilize the space more widely for concerts, funerals, memorial services, wakes and more. Additionally, our Chapel has been used regularly as a place for our Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to gather and celebrate the lives of those who have passed.

We invite you to join us in contributing to this considerable undertaking. The investment we make together today will honor those before us and is a gift to our current and future residents, families and visitors. Please feel free to reach out to our Development Director with any questions, pthayer@notredamehealthcare.org.

