

# The HEALING SPIRIT

NOTRE DAME HEALTH CARE

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WINTER 2021



**I**t will be two years in late March since the first signs of COVID-19 appeared here on our campus and so close to home. Like everyone, we are still working to cope with the lingering effects of the pandemic throughout the region, and its effect on our residents, patients, families, students and staff.

While we have seen significant improvement in both the incidence and prevalence of the COVID-19 infection with our staff and residents, we continue to experience financial challenges associated with ensuring we are prepared and ready to serve, in every way. These challenges include maintaining adequate supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE); to regular, continued and appropriate testing of our residents and staff; to implementing the recently promulgated OSHA regulations for health care providers, which include the purchase and installation of physical barriers to ensure proper infection control practices throughout our facilities and offices; and so much more.

Aside from the financial challenges, the physical and emotional toll the pandemic has wrought cannot be understated. As you are directly aware, our residents, patients and families still struggle at times with the ever changing health and safety protocols. While we all know the protocols are in place to protect us, these very same “protec-

tors” can also feel like barriers to the “normal” life we are trying to get back to. None of us could have imagined what these past nearly two years would bring. On some days, our staff is exhausted, but they carry on and do their very best every single day. They persevere because of the true compassion and dedication they have to their work and the people we serve.

across our campus, we feel so very fortunate to be able to accommodate resident family visits again without scheduling! What a blessing for all involved this is!

I have been so fortunate to be a part of this extraordinary organization for nearly seven years and I am proud of and humbled by our staff’s commitment, despite all the challenges of the past 21 months. For nearly 30 years I have admired and been familiar with what folks refer to as “the Notre Dame difference.” **We are truly a unique and special community.** And while I knew all of this before, this truth has been magnified throughout the pandemic as we continue to strive to bring the very best to those in our care.

I am thankful to you as well—for supporting our work, for praying for us in times of need, and for entrusting us to carry on the important mission of Notre Dame Health Care.

Our du Lac Assisted Living Residence and our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center are wonderful, welcoming “homes” that remain ready to serve. We know our resident’s families are truly grateful for the support and comfort our staff has provided to their loved ones, especially during times when they were not able to visit our campus.

Our Hospice and Palliative Care teams are busy working with

## — The — NOTRE DAME DIFFERENCE

**Thankfully, we are starting to see some very positive signs that things are “looking up.”** Remaining restrictions regarding visitation on our campus, particularly at our skilled nursing facility, have been lifted and we are so pleased to be able to welcome resident family members back for the holidays. We know these special, personal connections are so important to the well-being of our residents. And, though we still have rules to follow, cannot gather in large groups, and need to abide by physical distancing protocols

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## du Lac Assisted Living Happenings

### Dining, Outings and Activities

The du Lac Assisted Living community is starting to return to (the new) normal! Since our last newsletter update, communal dining is in full swing! It is wonderful to see our residents enjoying meals with their friends. Our activities trips to places like Target, Stop & Shop, and Kohl's as well for fun lunch outings at area restaurants have also resumed. We were even able to hold our annual Holiday Raffle in person for residents this year while we streamed it on Facebook Live for all of those who still weren't able to join us in person. The best part about all of this is seeing the joy on our residents' faces as they interact with each other and take part in these trips! Even behind the masks, the smiles are contagious!

### du Lac Renovations Update

After nearly two full years of renovations, we are excited to announce that we are just a few short weeks away from the finish line! The last major piece of the renovations is our beloved Chapel. The Chapel is scheduled to reopen for Christmas Mass. Aside from some furniture and a few pieces of artwork, the reopening of the Chapel marks the completion of the du Lac renovations. This has been a massive undertaking for staff, residents and everyone who is a part of the du Lac community. We truly cannot thank everyone enough for their patience the past 2 years during these renovations! We look forward to watching residents and their families enjoying the newly renovated spaces.

### Like Us, Follow Us, and Tune In . . .

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; and "follow" us on Twitter (@NDHCMission) to see how our mission is being lived out on campus.



◀ Our du Lac residents and staff were able to enjoy a visit from the Kona Ice Truck!



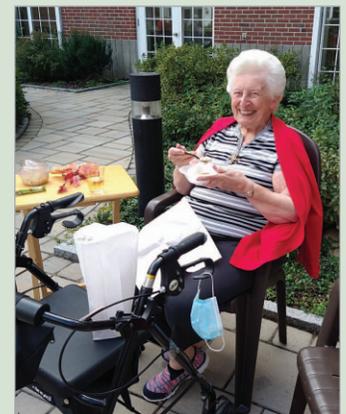
Cinco de Mayo celebrations with friends!



For one of the first trips back out into the community, our residents enjoyed a picnic lunch at one of their favorite spots ... Regatta Point Park!



For Mothers' Day, our residents traced their hands and shared all of the wonderful (and amazing!) things that their hands have done. It was incredibly powerful to see everything our residents have accomplished!



With the beautiful fall weather we had, our amazing Activities Department organized a very popular Apple Fest where residents were able to enjoy all things apple in our courtyard!

## Long Term Care Happenings

### Welcome Back Carol Kapolka!

Residents, family and staff at Notre Dame Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center are seeing a “new” but familiar face in the building! We are thrilled to welcome back Carol Kapolka, MSM, LNHA as Executive Director/Administrator. Carol served in this same role from March 2014 to June 2017 before taking on a leadership role at a local organization as Executive Director overseeing a skilled nursing facility, an assisted living residence, an adult day health center and child care center. She also served as Executive Director/Administrator for a facility in the MetroWest region of Massachusetts where she was a member of the senior management team and a leader in the facility’s response during the COVID-19 pandemic. Carol re-joined our team in mid November after gaining valuable experience and additional expertise holding leadership roles at both non-profit and for-profit skilled nursing facilities, reinforcing her already strong credentials. Her collaborative style and interdisciplinary approach to her work make her a tremendous asset to Notre Dame Health Care. As a member of our senior leadership team, Carol is charged with the oversight of our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center offering skilled nursing services in both our short and long term care settings.



Carol has a genuine interest in caring for our seniors by overseeing the staff in the areas of clinical care, safety and quality of life. She holds this responsibility in the highest regard.

We are thrilled to welcome Carol back to Notre Dame Health Care!

### Everything Old is New Again!

This year Notre Dame Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center’s Activity Team was able to safely resume their traditional Holiday Raffle to the delight of residents, families, and staff.

We had over 40 raffle prizes donated by residents, staff, and families. The Activity Directors created a booklet with descriptions and photos of all the prizes so that raffle ticket buyers could safely choose which items they wanted to “take their chances” on. We had something for everyone including a “Tru Spa Unwind and Relax Gift Set,” the always popular “Money Tree,” and an amazing “Red Wagon Filled with Ultimate Toy Surprises.” All proceeds went to the Resident Activities Fund. Thank you to all involved who helped make the Holidays Merry and Bright again!



### Residents Enjoy Activities & Fellowship



Residents at Notre Dame Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center have enjoyed being able to gather as a community in the Chapel for Mass, outside on our beautiful patios for music, and in our day rooms for fellowship. Each unit rotates going to Chapel as a group, while the other residents



### New Social Workers Join the Long Term Care Team

Upon the retirement of two of our long term, well respected social workers, Notre Dame Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center is pleased to welcome (L) Diane Dattis LSW, Director of Social Services and (R) Judy Knoll LSW, Harmony Village to our team. Both have years of experience in the field as nursing home social workers. Thank you both for coming on board!



## At Home — Hospice & Pedi Pals — Happenings



### What's Going On in Pedi Pals?

Our Pedi Pals Team recently hosted a special Halloween Carnival for patients and families thanks to the generous support of *Talon's Christmas Wish*. This special "drive-through" event included fun games and costumes to the delight of all who attended.

We are so grateful for the ongoing support of *The Frank and Rosemary Iovieno Caring for Children Foundation* and *Talon's Christmas Wish* for their generosity this holiday season. Each year these amazing organizations provide gifts in support of the families we serve. The past year has been difficult for many families who have experienced hardships through job loss and challenges related to medical treatments.



*Talon's Christmas Wish* provided several of our families with gift cards toward their holiday meal as well as presents for the Christmas holiday.

Since 1997, *The Frank and Rosemary Iovieno Caring for Children Foundation* has supported families with children suffering from life-threatening and chronic illnesses. They provided gifts for the children in our program.



### Welcome to Our Team

We are pleased to welcome David Day, MSW, LICSW as our Business Development and Project Manager in our At Home Division. David began his early career working in long-term care as a nursing assistant and recreation director. He later went on to earn his undergraduate degree from Anna Maria College in 2000 where he was the recipient of the Bishop Harrington Award for compassionate service in the promotion of peace and justice. He graduated with his Master's degree in social work from Boston University in 2003. David has worked clinically in health care in Worcester County for over 20 years and the majority of that time has been employed in the hospice industry. He previously held a private practice specializing in loss and grief. He has served as a supervisor and hospice social worker in the field and was Notre Dame's first hospice social worker in the beginning phases of development. David had been employed as a hospice administrator for the past several years before joining the team at Notre Dame At Home. David is excited to be "back home" in a caring and positive culture at Notre Dame Health Care and looking forward to using his experience and creativity to help further the development of the program and its mission of caring.



### 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 Peggye, Bereavement Coordinator at 508-852-5505.

## We are Growing!

We are proud to announce the addition of an Adult Palliative Care Program to our ever growing list of services we offer to the community here in Central Massachusetts.

This comprehensive, compassionate palliative care delivered as a part of our Notre Dame At Home Division and aims to help patients and families as they endure the difficulties and challenges associated with serious illnesses, life-limiting, and terminal illnesses.

*What is Palliative Care?* By definition, “palliative care” is any care approach that provides support and improves quality of life for both patients who are facing a life threatening illness, and their families, by preventing and relieving any suffering, identifying and treating any physical pain, and addressing their psychosocial and spiritual needs.

Both palliative care and hospice care focus on support, comfort, and quality of life for patients with serious or life-limiting illnesses—but they

are not the same. The illustration highlights the important differences between the two. Our team provides palliative care services to both adults and children in personal homes, other nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, or wherever patients call home.

To learn more about our services or patient eligibility, please feel free to call (508) 852-5505.



## THE NOTRE DAME DIFFERENCE

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patients and families throughout the community. They have honed their skills around the use of technology to ensure they can manage their patient consultations with the use of “telehealth” and regular “phone” visits if the need arises. Their outreach has enabled families to stay intact, home as much as possible, and well supported.

Our Educational Bridge Center, which provides adult basic education, English language assistance, Citizenship test preparation, and more, continues to be physically closed as a result of the pandemic. Despite these difficulties, staff and volunteers have been supporting students via phone, Facetime and Zoom. And remote learning systems and curriculum have helped ensure we can support the educational needs of our staff and students going forward. We are so blessed that our instructors have quickly adapted to the use of technology to sustain our educational offerings!

At this time of year in particular, we reflect upon the many gifts we have been given, and the numerous ways that we have been blessed. As we wind down this calendar year, I am incredibly grateful that through all of the challenges we have faced, we remain committed to providing our mission-centric programs and services in a safe and responsible manner. We are grateful for the role you play in keeping us strong in times of need and for your faith in our work, and we thank you for your continued support.

May God’s love and care be upon you all this holiday season and in the New Year.

—KAREN LAGANELLI, CEO

## Notre Dame Health Care’s Fresh and New Website

After nearly a year of intense review, revision and reorganization we are so excited to be launching our brand new website! Please check it out at [www.notredamehealthcare.org](http://www.notredamehealthcare.org). An organization’s website is such an important tool which enables the community and those we serve to easily access information. Some of our new features include easier navigation, better functionality, and photos and visuals that help tell our story. We have also created sections of the website to specifically meet the needs of various types of “visitors” whether they are just starting their research to learn about our programs and services; are “new” to our community and services; or are already a part of the Notre Dame Health Care family. New blog postings can be found at least monthly with some new and interesting topics on the horizon. We hope you enjoy our new website! We welcome your constructive feedback, please email [pthayer@notredamehealthcare.org](mailto:pthayer@notredamehealthcare.org).

## Educational Bridge Center Happenings

### Here to Serve

The Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center continues to provide programs and services virtually to support the needs of staff and community students.

Our **Adult Basic Education Classes** which include our *HiSET* and *ESOL* classes are being offered via ZOOM and Google Classroom with instructors and staff working hard to ensure students are supported and connected.

Tutors continue to work with students in our programs by phone, Facetime, Zoom and more!

While we are still unsure of all that the future holds, one thing is certain: the Mission of the Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center will continue. Along with our current offerings we are embarking on a program to provide our employees with not only the mandatory trainings required under our licensing, but also with specialized training geared to the populations we serve such as memory care, palliative care, and hospice. We will continue to develop the skills of our staff and do our best to help them attain their dreams.

### Citizenship Program—Did you Know?

Notre Dame Health Care supports employee immigrants and others from the community in their journey to achieve U.S. Citizenship through services provided in the *Sister Helen Wright Citizenship Program*.

*Sr. Marietta Brown, SNDdeN with Rose Ngigi and Edwin Kithinji and son Leo*



### Facts about the Sister Helen Wright Citizenship Program

- ☆ Achieving U.S. Citizenship requires intense study of 100 questions about U.S. history, civics and government. Do you know who wrote *The Federalist Papers*?
- ☆ Each candidate must show proficiency in understanding, reading, and writing English.
- ☆ Candidates are assisted to accurately complete the 20-page Citizenship application with a 2-hour appointment with a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDdeN) volunteer.
- ☆ Each hopeful citizen is paired with a tutor (in most cases, a SNDdeN) and spends as many hours as necessary in 1:1 sessions until they demonstrate proficiency. As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, all tutoring is being completed via distance learning. The many different options include ZOOM; WhatsApp; and Skype. In-person tutoring will return soon with fully vaccinated candidates.
- ☆ We prepare our students with a Mock Interview to simulate the actual Citizenship Interview experience. This helps to reduce anxiety and increase confidence.
- ☆ 44 *Sister Helen Wright* citizens have taken the Oath of Allegiance since 2020. There are an additional 23 students awaiting interview dates. More than 200 new citizens have been assisted.
- ☆ Citizenship benefits not only the community and individual but also his/her family. Becoming a U.S. Citizen bestows citizenship on foreign-born children who are under 18 and living with the new Citizen. Keeping their families whole is a motivation for many candidates.

### The Healing Spirit

*is published as a service to the community.*

EDITORS: Paige Thayer  
and Cathy Smith

### NOTRE DAME HEALTH CARE

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notredamehealthcare.org

We recently launched our annual fall appeal to raise funds to support the *Sister Helen Wright Citizenship Program*.

For many, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have lasting effects. Although the government offices that handle Naturalization have reopened, there is a significant backlog of cases to handle. All aspects of the process now take much longer. We have citizenship candidates who have waited more than one year to receive their interview dates, requiring our tutors to provide additional assistance once the date is determined.

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## Citizenship Program *(continued from page 6)*

At the same time, the demand for our resources has increased as people work diligently to strive to become citizens so that they can provide security for their families while making their voices heard in the voting booth. We welcome your investment in this program! Your gifts help ensure we are able to support our Citizenship candidates with their studies, interview preparation, individualized tutoring and applications fees.

Please visit our website to make a gift online ([www.notredame-healthcare.org](http://www.notredame-healthcare.org)) or mail your gift to Notre Dame Health Care, simply note “Citizenship Program” in the memo section of your check.

## Scholarship Awards Announced

We were happy to support the efforts of several employees seeking scholarship assistance through the Wisdom’s Way and the Sister Mary Gardner Scholarship programs.

Four employees were awarded Wisdom’s Way Scholarships for the 2021-2022 Academic Year. Congratulations to:

- **Yewande Adeyinka** from our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center
- **Marydinnah Ekeh** from our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center
- **Sharon Guidaboni** from our At Home Division
- **Julie Walusayi** from our du Lac Assisted Living Residence

Seven employees were awarded Sister Mary Gardner Scholarships. Congratulations to:

- **Julie Walusayi** from our du Lac Assisted Living Residence
- **Susan Keefe** from our At Home Division
- **Ioanna Tchangova** from our du Lac Assisted Living Residence
- **Jeremy Reynolds** from our du Lac Assisted Living Residence
- **Angela Lajoie** from our Central Administration staff
- **Sharon Guidaboni** from our At Home Division
- **Raymond Hardy** from our Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center

## Welcome New Managers



**Diane Dattis, LSW** was recently hired as Director of Social Services, Notre Dame Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center



**Mark Moses** was recently hired as Supervisor of Environmental Services, Notre Dame Long Term Care and Rehabilitation Center

## 2021 Educational Forum a Success



We hosted our 2021 Educational Forum on October 27 “virtually” this year as an event to raise funds to help support Notre Dame Health Care’s mission.

Our featured speaker was Hannah Brencher, writer, TED Speaker and mental health advocate with a heart for building leaders. She shared her inspirational perspectives with her talk—*“The power of presence: your call to show up and be a light in the world around you.”* Hannah is an alumna of Assumption University with ties to the local area and not only provided a wonderful presentation, she also engaged in the “live chat” during the event broadcast. Her message of the difference we can all make to be a “light” to others and to make a difference in the world around us was such a gift.

We are grateful for the outstanding support of our sponsors, contributors and attendees who helped make the event a success. Special thanks to our Presenting Sponsor, F.L. Putnam Investment Management Company; our Partner in Care Sponsors: Cutler Associates, J.J. Bafaro Mechanical Contractors and People’s United Bank; and our Production Sponsor, MediaBoss for their leadership support.

A link to view the event is available on our event webpage: [www.notredamehealthcare.org/annual-educational-forum](http://www.notredamehealthcare.org/annual-educational-forum). You can also view our event program booklet and see a full list of our very generous sponsors and auction item donors. We are so grateful for the generous support of all of our contributors, and online auction donors and bidders—you all helped make this event a success.



Sisters, Residents, and Staff enjoying the 2021 Ed Forum

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## 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](mailto:pthayer@notredamehealthcare.org).



*May God's  
Blessings  
be upon you  
during this  
holiday  
season.*

Merry Christmas &  
Happy New Year  
from your friends at

NOTRE DAME  
HEALTH CARE

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*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, talent and treasure throughout the year.*

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We invite you to visit with us, take a tour and learn more about how we can help you or your loved one benefit from Notre Dame Health Care programs and services.

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