

# The Journal

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AN ELIZA JENNINGS SENIOR CARE NETWORK PUBLICATION

## SUCCESSFUL REFINANCING LEADS TO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AT THE RENAISSANCE



*The CapEx Task Force meets bi-weekly to direct upgrades at The Renaissance.*

**E**liza Jennings Senior Care Network has received a significant vote of confidence from the financial markets, successfully restructuring its debt and closing the sale of new revenue bonds. The bond sale provides the organization with an even stronger financial base, and enables the Network to make significant capital improvements at The Renaissance over the next five years.

The CapEx Task Force will prioritize and oversee the capital improvements. Its members include Board members,

staff, HGF Architects, Kiczek Builders, Lee Meier Interiors, and the following Renaissance residents; Marge Donley, Doris Geist, Charles Greenwald, John Hawkins and Phyllis Nacey (also a Board member). Sound system and audio/visual upgrades have already been made, and concrete replacement in the villa neighborhoods has begun.

“The bonds were sold on the basis of a feasibility study of the organization,” said Deborah Lewis Hiller, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Network. “After the feasibility consultant did

its due diligence, the bond market and Sovereign Bank validated our long-term financial health.”

Details of the refinancing were announced at a celebratory Champagne and Chocolate reception on Wednesday, October 3rd at The Renaissance. Residents, Board members and staff attended. “I recognize the hard work that has gone into the refinancing,” said Marge Donley. “Most people feel more comfortable with the situation at Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network. We can see progress going forward.”

BY DEBORAH LEWIS HILLER, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
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Helping our residents and program participants strive for multi-dimensional wellness is essential to providing services that are both high quality and person-centered. Every interaction we have provides us with an opportunity to “exercise” one or more of the six dimensions of wellness: physical, social, intellectual, emotional, vocational and spiritual.

From the beginning of the Network’s person-centered care journey, two aspects of wellness have proven to be the most difficult to define and address: *intellectual* and *vocational*.

Vocation is defined as work that has meaning to the individual performing it. In our culture, we tend to view our work as helping define who we are. It is very telling that, upon becoming acquainted with someone, we often begin by sharing information about what we *do*. Work helps us develop skills and the resulting self-respect, dignity and self-worth. And staying home to care for children, volunteering at a soup kitchen or even passionately pursuing a hobby are as much about real work as punching a time clock or being paid for a 40-hour week.

I have recently had the



chance to witness intellectual and vocational wellness being brought into play at meetings of the Common Goals Task Force (CGTF) at The Renaissance, which includes staff, residents and Board members.

The members of the CGTF have learned together better communication skills and to work as a team. We will continue to improve communication community-wide and seek out opportunities to include residents in decision making.

A direct outgrowth of the CGTF is the CapEx Task Force, which is charged with determining and prioritizing the order of capital improvements to be made at The Renaissance. This Task Force, like the CGTF, will be exercising vocational and intellectual wellness while working to better The Renaissance community.

## KATHLEEN M. SHIELDS NAMED VP OF FINANCE AND CFO

Kathleen M. Shields has been named Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer of Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network. Shields, who previously served as Director of Finance for the Network, assumed her new position July 1 and will continue to oversee internal accounting controls for the organization, as well as assume responsibility for all aspects of corporate financial functions.

“Optimal contribution to our mission is dependent upon proficient business analysis, financial planning, and problem-solving” said Deborah Lewis Hiller, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Network. “Kathy has successfully directed the financial and accounting functions over the past few years, and I am confident that she will meet her new responsibilities with the same zest and professionalism.”

In addition to her financial management responsibilities, Shields will develop financial plans and policies and function as a member of the business-planning team for the entire Network, which includes all residential and community-based services.



## THE RENAISSANCE HEALTH CENTER RECOGNIZED FOR SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

The Renaissance Health Center was recently presented with the Silver Award for Overall



From left to right: Amy Shaver, Nurse Manager; Kara Serger, Director of Human Resources; Kathy Bassani, Caregiver and Housekeeper; and Kathy Thome, Director of Nursing

Performance by Ohio KēPRO, Ohio’s Medicare Quality Improvement Organization. It was recognized for achieving remarkable quality measure numbers and overall performance in the areas of pain, pressure ulcers, depression, use of physical restraints, and staff turnover. These measures have been identified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as key indicators of how well skilled nursing providers are delivering care to their residents.

The Renaissance Health Center attributes employee retention and outstanding quality measure numbers to the implementation of best practices including in-services, retreats, front-line staff involvement, Ohio KēPRO interventions, and interdisciplinary team setting of targets and goals.

## THE WESTERLY PROJECT: HOME-BASED WELLNESS SERVICES TO PRESERVE THE INDEPENDENCE OF LOWER-INCOME SENIORS

Lower-income older adults who live alone and become frail often find that their options are limited. Many do not have family members living nearby, or have insufficient resources to give them access to assisted living communities or private pay, in-home care. At a critical point, their desire to remain independent is overshadowed by their need for help with activities of daily living. Sadly, the result is often admission to a hospital or Medicare/Medicaid reimbursed nursing home.

Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network leadership is addressing this need with new home and community-based wellness programming for older adults. Thanks to generous start-up grants from the Mt. Sinai and William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundations, the new Westerly Project will provide health and wellness services to the nearly 500 lower-income older adults at the Westerly -- a HUD senior housing community in Lakewood.

"An extremely important outcome is that it will help the

Network build organizational capacity, serving as the means by which we become Medicare and Medicaid certified for home and community-based care, specifically," said Mark Beggs, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Network. (Only the organization's residential skilled nursing communities are currently certified for Medicare and Medicaid.) The new certification will enable the Network to offer home and community-based services to all older adults throughout the Westside community, not just those who can afford to self-pay.

The Network's Board and management have always prided themselves on being fiscally responsible stewards of the organization. Their firm rule is that all new projects must become self sustaining; this one is no different. Following start-up funding and required "pro bono" care during the six-months to one-year Medicare and Medicaid certification period, the Project will generate its own revenue stream by means of reimbursement.

The overarching goal is to improve residents' happiness and quality of life and to prolong, or even forestall, the need for them to leave their homes at the Westerly to move to institutional settings. Plans include educational seminars, an on-site wellness clinic and one-on-one, in-home geriatric assessments designed to help residents identify their own barriers to independence and develop strategies for dealing with those barriers. New staff -- including a nurse practitioner, registered nurse and office support person -- will be hired to manage the clinic, conduct the seminars and ensure the documentation leading to certification. As is the case with all Network services, emphasis will be on all dimensions of wellness and principles of person-centered, or self directed, care.

The Westerly was chosen as the site to launch the Project for two main reasons. The Network has had a presence there since 2003, providing therapy services to some of its residents. And since the majority of residents

are in the low-income category, their continuing eligibility for Medicaid coverage ensures that both the need and the method for sustaining the services will persist.

The Project has the enthusiastic support of Lakewood Senior Citizens Incorporated (LSC), the not-for-profit owner/manager of the Westerly and our collaborating partner on the Project. They believe their residents will truly benefit from this proactive approach for accessing high quality services in their homes.

## RENAISSANCE POET JULIA WEBER EARNS 1ST PLACE AWARD

Renaissance resident Julia Weber was awarded First Place in the Association of Ohio Philanthropic Homes, Housing and Services for the Aging (AOPHA) 2007 Resident Forum Northeast Region Art & Writing Show. Her poem *Badges of Courage* won highest honors in the Poetry category and was entered in the Annual State AOPHA Conference in Columbus, Ohio in September.

Inspired by her age and personal experience, Mrs. Weber said the message of the poem is both "philosophical and optimistic."

Mrs. Weber currently writes for *The Grapevine*, a quarterly newsletter produced by the residents of The Renaissance. She and her husband Dick have resided in a villa at The Renaissance for three and one-half years.

## MARGOT GILBERT RECEIVES AOPHA AWARD



Margot Gilbert was honored by AOPHA, the advocate of not-for-profit services for older Ohioans, with the 2006 Board Member of Distinction Award for her dedicated tenure as a member of the Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network Board of Trustees, recognizing her significant organizational contributions and efforts on behalf of seniors.

Mrs. Gilbert has been a member of the Network Board for nearly four decades, perpetuating the legacy of her mother who served on the Board for over 25 years. A consistent financial supporter and an active voice in seeking assistance for the Network, she has chaired the Board and nearly every Board committee. Her work helped to solidify the organization's strengthened focus on measurable quality outcomes.

# NETWORK LEADERS TRAVEL TO NEW YORK CITY TO TEACH PERSON-CENTERED CARE

**E**liza Jennings Senior Care Network continues to gain national recognition as a model of person-centered care. Denise Gannon, Vice President of Clinical and Support Services, and Elise Tareshawty, Executive Director of Eliza Jennings, the Network's flagship community, recently traveled to the Big Apple to provide an intensive course in culture change at Gouverneur Nursing Facility. This hospital-like nursing home in Manhattan's Lower East Side is about to undergo major renovations, both physical and philosophical, transitioning from an institutional model to a more person-centered care community.

"The purpose of the trip was to teach them, first, what person-centered care is, and, second, how the Network approached its own transition, which started at Eliza Jennings," said Gannon. "They wanted to know about our processes and how we moved our group forward."

In preparation for the training, Gannon and Tareshawty created a video featuring Network personnel who went through culture change several years ago when the



*Denise Gannon and Elise Tareshawty prepare teaching material on person-centered care for their trip to New York City.*

community evolved into a model of person-centered care where residents have control over their own wellness and live in an environment that is their home, not an institution.

According to Tareshawty, at the beginning of the culture change process, the staff expressed doubts about its potential for success.

Following the change to the neighborhood model and person-centered care, however, staff reports improved job satisfaction, better teamwork, a smoother-running work environment and an overall sense of pride in the caliber of care they provide to residents.

The Network is now often asked to share its person-centered

care expertise through speaking engagements and at conferences in part because of the Network's involvement in the Ohio Person-Centered Care Coalition. The significance of this trip is that it proves that the Network and its leaders' expertise is increasingly national in scope.

Gannon felt the New York trip was successful. The direct care staff at Gouverneur responded to the new concepts with many questions. After their concerns were addressed and they heard more about the Network's experience with culture change, many of the Gouverneur staff became more excited, asking "when can we start?"

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If you would like information regarding memorial gifts to Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network or one of its communities, please contact the Development Office at (216) 226-5000, ext. 240.



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## PHILANTHROPY FOCUS



The American Heritage Dictionary's primary definition of philanthropy is "[t]he effort or inclination to increase the well-being of humankind, as by charitable aid or donations."

When Eliza Jennings Senior Care Network receives philanthropic gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations, the root cause of the

inclination to give has a common theme. The act of charity, and reaching out a helping hand to others, is a deep-seated tenet of our culture.

Is there any one among us who has not been offered a helping hand at some point in their lives?

How good did it feel when you were the one able to extend that helping hand?

*To our valued donors:  
thank you for your  
philanthropy, for being  
inclined to reach out to  
others. We only wish you  
could see the thankful  
faces of those whose  
hands you are grasping.*