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Points of Color: The Collective Impact of United Church Homes

Back in the 19th century, when impressionism was taking the world by storm, Georges Seurat created a most unique style. Called “pointillism,” it was the painstaking layering of tiny dots of paint on the canvas. Up close, the dots seem random; no obvious patterns or images emerge. However, those patterns and images suddenly appear as soon as the viewer steps back from the painting, such as in his *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande*.

This issue of *Spirit* celebrates the many and varied ways in which the United Church Homes family of communities, employees, volunteers and leaders add their color to the organization’s collective impact on people’s lives. We call it collective impact because it enhances the daily mission and the people we serve. Through the many ways we reach out to the communities, people and local causes we support — either as individuals or as groups — United Church Homes’ impact is huge.

The statistics that you’ll read show the portrait of an organization whose heart and reach are always expanding. Whether it is supporting students, local nonprofits, fielding teams for Alzheimer’s research, participating in United Way campaigns or a host of charitable events, the United Church Homes family displays a generous heart and makes a difference to the lives of many.

This energy going out to individuals, churches, community groups and charitable causes are those myriad points of color on our UCH canvas. Our caring spirit extends beyond our own walls out into the lives of individuals, families, organizations and churches that may or may not even know us directly.

Let me paint a few examples:

- Employees organize annual walk-a-thon teams to raise money for Alzheimer’s and cancer research;
- Community organizations request UCH speakers to provide education on the challenges of aging;
- Employees provide furniture and household items to a homeless older adult moving into one of our UCH communities;
- Graduate and undergraduate students find opportunities to do field education with UCH; and
- Many local organizations receive canned goods, household products, mittens, hats and scarves to share with needy families and individuals.

The collective impact of United Church Homes brings color, light and goodness to many inside and outside our campuses and offices. Our mission is to be a force for good in the world. We want to transform the experience of aging as part of this larger effort to bend our society’s conscience toward justice and compassion.

God has provided the canvas. Now we supply the colors. It is beautiful indeed!
ON THE COVER:
Decorating Sinclair Conference Center in Dayton, these flags represented the LGBTQ community for the two-day LGBT Horizons of Aging Summit in February.

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What Does Advocacy Mean to Me?
First, it means learning to love myself. I am a questioning, and queer, woman. I had a moment during the course of the LGBT Horizons of Aging Summit that took place Feb. 11–12, 2019, in Dayton, Ohio. I was sitting in a workshop on intersectionality. I realized, listening to a reminder on what intersections mean, that in our world, none of us are just one thing. And some of us carry multiple identities, such as black and lesbian, and that we also hold intersections of identities within ourselves. In a world full of intersecting identities — and intersecting lives — if I cannot fully support and embrace who I am, how can I embrace others? I am working on this now as a result of the conference.

Older Adult Activists
In that work, I am inspired by Andie Hock, a trans woman advocate, and Lew and Steve, older adult gay men who have used their positions from the margins to change society. Often, I believe, they did it by being who they are in public. It didn’t happen for them overnight. It happened over time. But, in that time, they have inspired young people like me. This is the power of older adult activists. They were in attendance big time at the summit.

Meeting the Needs of Those on the Margins
Advocacy also means to me a never-ending struggle for the needs of individuals on the margins, those oppressed, to be recognized and met. I am reminded of a talk by Georgia politician Stacey Abrams. She said, as an African-American woman, that the struggle to have black people’s needs met in the U.S. is a never-ending struggle. She also said that it is her duty as a leader and
it is the duty of all black people and allies to remain engaged in meeting those needs.

**Awareness of Privilege**
Advocacy also requires awareness of privilege — white privilege, cisgender privilege, straight privilege, ability privilege, middle-class privilege. The list goes on. As one summit participant noted that as a gay man, he often has to strategize about which of his privileged friends’ help he may need to have his healthcare rights heard and addressed. This is an ugly reality. But it is real.

As an aspiring ally in any struggle for people on the margins, I hope I never forget that my struggle doesn’t bring change. Instead, the voices of the marginalized people bring change. The ones who have fought for so long and could not be heard — they incite it. The role of privilege should only be to give a hand in leveraging those voices, not to take credit. The allies won’t win the fight. Instead, people with privilege have the responsibility of giving a measure of presence, money, time or whatever is asked for, to win those fights that the people on the margins identify as necessary. That is the best use of privilege, no matter the cause.

**Addressing Human Questions**
Another older adult summit participant, Jeannie, put it this way over dinner: advocacy is addressing human questions. Human questions are complicated. Sometimes they don’t have a clear end point. But, I think, Jeannie was pointing out that the purpose of advocacy is to stay on the journey. As Abrams says, it is to stay engaged in the struggle. When I can find meaning, not only in the winning of a fight but also in the journey, perhaps I will better use my voice and commit to advocacy.

**Final Thoughts**
Watching lives intersecting — intersectional — at the summit, along the journey for healthcare needs to be met, inspired me. I noticed joy in the gathering. I felt humanity in the openness about suffering and struggle. I recognized freedom in the willingness to celebrate all people. And above all, God’s embrace was waiting every step along the way.

May we go on inspired to advocate for the well-being of older adults. May we take the inspiration of those older adults, in particular, who readily and bravely shared their stories and their wisdom. Young people also attended the summit — and moved to continue the fight.

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**UCH Furthers Commitment to LGBT Older Adults**

In 2017, United Church Homes obtained the platinum level in SAGECare training, cultural competency training for those working with LGBT older adults. More than 80 percent of staff participated across the entire UCH network. UCH was recertified at the platinum level this year. The move came five years after the United Church Homes Board of Directors voted to become Open and Affirming, a designation within the United Church of Christ that empowers groups to fully accept — not just tolerate — LGBT people to live their most authentic lives.

With the first Miami Valley LGBT Horizons of Aging Summit, held in February at Sinclair Conference Center in Dayton, Ohio, United Church Homes furthered and reaffirmed its commitment to serving LGBT older adults, LGBT family members and staff members who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ). With more than 15 breakout sessions over two days, those serving older adults learned important information about discrimination faced by this underserved community. Topics ranged from legal information for trans individuals to cutting-edge research by national experts on LGBT-related issues.

Co-sponsored by Rainbow Elder Care of Greater Dayton, the event was well received with more than 200 in attendance.
A Family Affair

In May, I will complete two years as the chairperson of the UCH Board of Directors and nine years on the Board, so it seems like an appropriate time to reflect on the connections and influences that draw people to a ministry like United Church Homes.

Over the years that I’ve been involved with UCH, I’ve often heard people comment about ways that the organization reminds them of a family. “Like a family” is used to describe the relationships among residents, between residents and staff and among staff. It’s used to describe the loving care that is provided at every stage of life. It’s occasionally used in observing the generational legacies, such as a staff member with a parent who also worked at UCH, or a staff member with a grandparent who is a resident.

These relationships are also true for some of our Board members, and I am an example. I grew up in St. Marys, Ohio, where my parents, Phil and Mary Maurer, were active laypeople of St. Paul’s UCC. I recall hearing about Fairhaven Community in Upper Sandusky when I was quite young. After my dad retired from his engineering profession, he joined UCH as a part-time member of what was then called the development department. In that role, he helped raise vital dollars so that UCH could sustain its ministry. Some years later, my mom was elected to the Board of Directors, where she served nine years. Hearing stories from my parents and knowing how important UCH was to them is one reason I said yes when asked years later whether I would join the Board.

Another factor, which is true for most of us on the Board, is seeing firsthand the challenges my parents faced in their final years. My father lived with Alzheimer's for about 10 years before his death. My mother and I were with him when he died at Fairhaven in 2007, and I experienced firsthand the care and concern of staff. Watching the toll of dementia on my dad, and on my mom as his principal caregiver, makes me especially appreciative of the programs that UCH has implemented in recent years. Opening Minds through Art (OMA), Music & Memory and Comfort Matters® are all programs that enrich the lives of our residents with dementia and bring peace of mind to their family members.

These past nine years have been a joy and a privilege to me, working with UCH leadership and other Board members on strategies and programs that will transform aging and strengthen a culture of community, wholeness and peace. Our work is not done, nor will it ever be, but we have made notable progress in the past year and are committed to making more in the year to come.

Cathy Green
Chairperson, Board of Directors
Sean Riley
Sean Riley joined UCH as the regional director of operations for northern Ohio and Michigan. He is responsible for the operations of Fairhaven Community in Upper Sandusky, Ohio; Parkvue Community in Sandusky, Ohio; Chapel Hill Community in Canal Fulton, Ohio; and Pilgrim Manor in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He will be an active contributor to the execution and growth of these communities, said Chuck Mooney, senior vice president and chief operating officer.

Sean has more than 25 years of senior living experience, including community and executive leadership positions with HCR ManorCare (Toledo, Ohio); Provider Services (North Olmsted, Ohio); and Hamlet Village (Chagrin Falls, Ohio). Sean joins UCH from his most recent position as executive director of St. Francis Senior Ministries, Tiffin, Ohio.

He was drawn to United Church Homes because of its organizational integrity and mission-driven work. Sean said he is excited to be a part of the UCH team and to be able to help UCH residents live their most authentic and abundant lives. “It’s very rewarding to be able to help make a difference in the life of a fellow human being,” he said.

Sean earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in gerontology from Kent State University and a Master of Business Administration from Lake Erie College. He is an Ohio-licensed nursing home administrator and a certified executive for assisted living. Sean is also an active member of LeadingAge Ohio.

Vanessa Norris
Vanessa Norris has joined UCH as the corporate director of housing services.

Vanessa has 30 years’ experience in affordable housing. She began her career in 1989 at Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, a nonprofit affordable housing developer. In 1999, she left her position as assistant vice president of compliance to attain more property management experience. Vanessa also has been the compliance manager at CHN Housing Partners, which developed, constructed and managed its own large portfolio of housing properties. Vanessa later was promoted to the director of property management, where she was accountable for the day-to-day operation of the property management department.

“My experience includes in-depth knowledge of housing operations at all levels,” said Vanessa. “During my early years, I realized the great need for affordable housing and how diminutive the inventory. I believe affordable housing should be a right, not an option. Working with organizations like UCH and others has allowed me to be part of a bigger picture — to significantly impact the development and management of affordable housing. Such organizations continue to be the political voice and the answer to those desperately seeking housing.”

Vanessa holds certifications and designations as an accredited residential manager, specialist in housing credit management, blended occupancy management specialist, certified assisted housing manager, certified credit compliance professional and national compliance professional.
The late Gertrude “Gertie” Stubbs made a long-lasting impact on United Church Homes’ Fairhaven Community in Upper Sandusky, Ohio. United Church Homes’ computer donor records go back to the early 1980s, showing Gertie began giving in 1983 and continued for a total of 22 years before her passing in May 2009 at the age of 98.

In 1999, Gertie worked with UCH leadership staff to create the Gertrude Stubbs Transportation Endowment Fund for Fairhaven with a major gift of $300,000, established to provide funding for the ever-increasing need for transportation for older adults. It was Gertie’s largest donation, although it wasn’t exclusive as she continued to make other donations through the years, including another major gift of $100,000 to support an endowment for staff uniforms.

“Gertie’s husband, Don, was a resident on the second floor for many years,” said Karen Webb, director of nursing. “That is how we all became acquainted with her. She was dedicated and faithful to her husband and visited him twice a day, every day. She not only provided care for her husband, but also identified needs of our staff.

“She once told me that the Lord blesses the silent giver,” Karen said. “And give she did. She created the uniform fund for our staff, purchased a van and assisted staff members on a personal level with whatever they might be going through. She would visit staff members who were ill, did laundry for residents requesting the service — the list goes on and on. Then, when Gertie reached the stage of life when she needed us, what a privilege it was to be able to care for her! She was a wonderful, giving and caring individual who served the Lord by serving others.”

Fairhaven currently has a 16-passenger bus, paid for by the endowment years after her passing, and a wheelchair-accessible van that is used to take residents to medical appointments and on activities and trips that help them stay actively engaged in the community. Fairhaven Community provides transportation for approximately 800 medical appointments for residents every year.

The community offers a low-to no-fee transportation program for residents. This is especially beneficial because many insurers do not cover transportation services. A $2,000 grant from the Wyandot County Community Foundation and the endowment fund enable Fairhaven to cover a greater share of transportation costs, which helps residents stretch their personal dollars even further.

The transportation program is not Gertie’s only legacy at Fairhaven. She funded the construction of a garage, the Stubbs Garage. The former Stubbs Behavioral Care Unit also was named after Gertie.

"Mother loved the people of Fairhaven," said Judy Horobec, Gertie’s daughter. “I hope her story encourages others to give. She had a real passion for giving back to residents.”

Ruth Adams, who knew Gertie for more than 20 years and served on the Volunteer Service Group with her, said her friend accepted the call for assistance, no matter the need.

“She was such a giver,” Ruth said. “A lot of it she did anonymously. She was always doing something.”

Gertie offered communion to Catholic residents every Saturday and organized style shows to help raise funds for Fairhaven. “She would talk to the local stores and get all the clothes,” Ruth said. “She was always there. If there was anything to be done, Gertie did it.”
As part of its core value of transparency, UCH has begun documenting community benefits in three areas:

- **Creating Abundant Life in Community**
- **Investment in Transforming Aging**
- **Building a Culture of Community, Wholeness and Peace**

Staff members track data related to the mission, vision and values by answering questions such as:

- “How can we help to build influence in the larger culture and nurture their understanding of Abundant Life?”
- “How does our mission lead us into the larger community to help transform aging there?”
- “What are the things we do in our communities that contribute to building the culture of community, wholeness and peace, thanks to the philanthropic support of others?”

The results from 2018 show United Church Homes remains committed to transforming the culture from ageist to age friendly.

Watch for the annual report video at [abundantaging.org](http://abundantaging.org) and on our social media channels.
Financial Overview

For the 12 months ending December 31, 2018

Financial data relating to United Church Homes, Inc., and affiliates has been combined with data of several affiliates including the long-term care (LTC) communities, affiliated housing entities, central office, advancement, Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging, United Church Homes Management, Inc., and Pilgrim Manor Foundation. (all numbers are shown in thousands)

Revenue | $104,439
- LTC Government Service Revenues | 45,061
- LTC Resident Service Revenues | 38,825
- Affordable Housing | 17,511
- Management Services | 1,649
- Other Revenues | 1,393

Expenses | $108,352
- Personnel | 55,222
- Facilities | 16,260
- General Operations | 13,175
- Administrative Support | 12,861
- Interest | 1,982
- Depreciation | 8,852

Other Income | $2,770
- Bequests and Contributions | 667
- Specific Purpose Contributions, Restricted | 222
- Endowment Contributions, Restricted | 60
- Other Gains and Losses, net | 479
- Investment Income (excluding unrealized loss on investments) | 1,342

Balance Sheet

Assets | $203,731
- Current | $40,000
- Limited Use | $80,000
- Long-term | $83,731

Liabilities | $179,971
- Current | $0
- Long-term | $179,971

Net Assets | $23,760
- Current | $40,000
- Long-term | $23,760
Uncompensated Care
For the 12 months ending December 31, 2018

United Church Homes has been “Celebrating the Spirit” of older adults for more than a century. The nonprofit, faith-based organization is one of the nation’s largest providers of senior living services, with more than 1,800 dedicated staff serving nearly 5,000 residents of all faiths in 74 senior living communities in 14 states and two Native American nations. UCH is in covenant with the United Church of Christ and welcomes residents of all faiths. Through our residential services, in 2018, we provided over $11.9 million of uncompensated charity care that was not reimbursed by user fees or government funding.

Uncompensated Charity Care $11,951

- Medicaid Provider Deficit — Long-term Healthcare $9,593
- Medicaid Provider Deficit — Assisted Living $689
- United Church Homes Affordable Housing $1,006
- Community Education and Spiritual Care Programs $631
- Benevolent Care Benefits — Independent/Assisted Living $32

Campaign for Abundant Life
Goal: $20,000,000

Current results: $13,801,505
NAMED ENDOWMENTS

The vision of United Church Homes is realized through our legacy endowment gifts. United Church Homes recognizes our Pillar Society donors who have established a named endowment that provides support for its designated purpose in perpetuity.

The Jeanne M. & Maynard J. Aldridge Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Samuel Jacob & Emma Rachel Ault Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Fairhaven Community

The Jack & Betty Bailey & Cynthia Bailey Kennett Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

Dr. J. Albert Beam & Dr. Lillian E. Beam Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Trinity Community

The B.E. & Dorothy A. Beaton Endowment Fund
Physical Therapy Equipment, Fairhaven Community

The Rev. & Mrs. Robert F. & Elizabeth H. Beck Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Thomas J. & Rosanna M. Becker Housing Endowment Fund
Housing Needs, Housing Services

The Laurence A. & Karen E. Bettcher Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Parkvue Community

The Suzanne & Robert* Schoedinger Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Fairhaven Community

The Corinne Flocken Boryczka Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Fairhaven Community

The Burlin B. & Vera K. Brombaugh Landscaping & Maintenance Fund
Landscaping, Trinity Community

The Bruce R. & Ruth E. Burgan Endowment Fund
Rehabilitation Services, Chapel Hill Community

The Thomas A. & Kathryn E. Coons Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Joan R. Coulter Landscaping & Horticultural Endowment Fund
Landscaping and Horticulture, Parkvue Community

The Joan R. Coulter Nursing Scholarship Named Endowment Fund
Nursing, United Church Homes

The Robert G. & Eleanor W. Diller Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, United Church Homes

The Walter & Philamine Dubley Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Trinity Community

The Joan Ernst Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The William O. & Janet O. Fahrenbruck Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Fairhaven Community

The Grace V. Finney Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Fishel Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, United Church Homes

The Friends of Chapel Hill Community Chaplaincy Endowment Fund
Chaplaincy Needs, Chapel Hill Community

The Glenn & Mildred Royer Endowment Fund
Glenwood Community Operation, Glenwood Community

The Robert L. & Margaret A. Haff Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Vernon A. & Hester B. Horst Transportation Endowment Fund
Transportation and General Maintenance Needs, Parkvue Community

The William Boyd & Sarah Albert Huff Endowment Fund
Specialized Training, Uniforms, Awards, Continued Professional Growth and Tuition Reimbursement for Staff, Chapel Hill Community

The Delmar & Miriam Indorf Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Robert L. & Margaret A. Keener Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Helen E. Kurt Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Fairhaven Community

The John Rainey & Gene Finnegan Landscaping & General Maintenance Endowment Fund
Beautification of the Grounds, Parkvue Community

The David & Ann Nice Memorial Fund for Endowment
Benevolent Care, United Church Homes

The Rev. & Mrs. Theodore Schory Christian Ministry and Pastoral Care Endowment Fund
Spiritual Life through Christian Ministry, United Church Homes

The Anna Louise Prentice Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Fairhaven Community

The Wayne H. & Patricia A. Pressler Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Ralph C. & Sue Quellhorst Program for Leadership Development Endowment Fund
Educational and Staff Leadership Development Missions, United Church Homes

The Philip E. & Mary M. Maurer Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Fairhaven Community

The Louis & Mary Anna Speller Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Emma C. Smith Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Ralph D. & Mildred Roeroy Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Sawmiller Family Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Trinity Community

The Schory Professional Advancement Endowment Fund
Specialized Training, Awards, Continued Professional Growth and Tuition Reimbursement, United Church Homes

The Rev. & Mrs. Theodore Schory Christian Ministry and Pastoral Care Endowment Fund
Spiritual Life through Christian Ministry, United Church Homes

The Louis & Mary Anna Speller Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, United Church Homes

The Rev. & Mrs. Theodore Schory Christian Ministry and Pastoral Care Endowment Fund
Spiritual Life through Christian Ministry, United Church Homes

The Naomi Ruth Hegnauer Martin Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, Chapel Hill Community

The Rev. & Mrs. Theodore Schory Christian Ministry and Pastoral Care Endowment Fund
Spiritual Life through Christian Ministry, United Church Homes

The Louis & Mary Anna Speller Endowment Fund
Benevolent Care, United Church Homes
Endowment Fund

The Lowell & Marian Zechiel Endowment Fund

The Freda J. Zieber Endowment Fund

Wood Endowment Fund

The Ernest W. & Karen B. Wood Endowment Fund

The Ruth A. Stonebrook Endowment Fund

The Charlene Thornburg Endowment Fund

The Uberta Family Named Endowment Fund

The Herman A. & Helen F. Van Guelen Endowment Fund

The E. Kathryn Wadsworth Endowment Fund

The Robert & Betty Walker Endowment Fund

The Alfred A. & Frances A. Wilhelm Endowment Fund

The Wolsdorf Memorial Endowment Fund

The Freda J. Zieber Endowment Fund

The Lowell & Marian Zechiel Endowment Fund

PILLAR SOCIETY

The Pillar Society recognizes those who have remembered our communities through the use of a planned gift. These gifts include bequests, trusts, charitable gift annuities, named endowments and other estate planning vehicles.
We are grateful for the generosity of our donors. The list includes all cash gifts (of $100 or more) received during 2018.

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Meijer
Ms. Lynn Miller
New Vision United Church of Christ, Canton, OH
Mr. & Mrs. Lucian Norman
Ohio Spirited Hands Care
Wear Volunteers
Outback Steakhouse
Outfront Media
Ms. Carol A. Parsaca
Mr. Robert Posthumus
Prime Time Center
Ms. Marianne Ramsey
Mr. & Mrs. Dave Reatini
Riverside Homemade Ice Cream
Rogers Concrete and Construction
Ms. Glorystan Roskilly
Salvation Army Kroc Center
Sam’s Club
Mr. & Mrs. Lynn Sartor
Scarlett O’Hair
Shots Restaurant & Shots on the River
Siegel Jewelers
SMG
Mr. Gary Snyder
Sports Connection
Starbucks
Mr. & Mrs. Jose F. Suarez
Mr. James Swain
Target
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Thomas
Mr. Glen A. Tibbitts
Trinity United Church of Christ, Canal Fulton, OH
Trinity United Church of Christ, Canton, OH
Trinity United Church of Christ, Akron, OH
Trinity United Church of Christ, Wadsworth, OH
Vine & Olive
Mr. Scott Vogel
Walmart Foundation
Mr. Eric Wehner
Whiskers Resort & Pet Spa
Ms. Ingrid Wolf
WZZM 13/Gannett Companies
Zion United Church of Christ, North Canton, OH

Errors & Omissions
We wish to thank those who make our work possible. Every effort has been made to ensure that this list is accurate. However, if errors or omissions are discovered, please contact Carol Gordon, database manager, United Church Homes Advancement at 740.223.2032 or cgordon@uchinc.org

*Occasional
Sue Sheidler has spent the past 11 years serving tirelessly on the United Church Homes Board of Directors. Throughout her tenure, Sue has served on every committee, including as chair of the nominating committee from 2009 – 2019. She was Board secretary from 2014 – 2018.

Sue’s background in nursing helped her contributions to the Board, she said. She started working as a nurse aide at age 16, graduated from nursing school at the University of Toledo and worked nearly every area of nursing, primarily in medical-surgical nursing. Sue then contributed to staff development for several years before retiring as vice president of nursing at Fisher-Titus Medical Center, a hospital in Norwalk, Ohio.

Along with being an acute care hospital, Fisher-Titus has assisted living, long-term care and skilled nursing. “People often ask me if I had to do it all over again, would I go into nursing?” Sue said. “The answer has always been yes, I would. Nursing has the ability to get you into just about any area of healthcare.”

Sue grew up in the United Church of Christ. After she started attending St. John’s UCC in Milan, Sue became deeply familiar with the excellent care provided at United Church Homes communities. St. John’s regularly donated canned goods and visited residents at Fairhaven. “When I was asked to join the Board, my husband had been ill, and we knew his health was declining. I was looking for something to do where I wouldn’t be gone all the time, so I could still be available for him,” said Sue. “I was reading devotions one morning and one said there are different ways to serve. I took that as a sign to see what I could do on the Board.”

Many years later, Sue has learned to appreciate UCH’s affordable housing ministry. “Affordable housing was one of the most impactful areas for me,” Sue said. “I knew about the senior living side from my experience in nursing, but I had not been involved with affordable housing.”

Sue traveled with the Board on several visits to UCH affordable housing communities. She said talking to those residents made the biggest impact on her. “Sometimes that’s the only way they have any place to live,” she said. “Those learning experiences remind you about the increasing need for affordable housing.”
Rhonda Farley was tired to the bone. She had spent the past several years waking at 4 a.m. daily to help care for her aging mother. With the assistance of her grown son, Rhonda was providing around-the-clock care for her mother, Georgena, who was experiencing the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease. But Rhonda promised her mother that she wouldn’t send her to a long-term care community. Whatever it took, Rhonda was going to ensure her mother lived independently through the end of her life.

When Rhonda found Cherry Arbors, a United Church Homes affordable housing community in her hometown of North Lewisburg, Ohio, she immediately felt a sense of relief. Finally, her mother would have a safe place to call home.

What Rhonda didn’t know was how the residents would become like a second family to her mother.

Rhonda and Georgena worked with the service coordinator to get the necessary supports for Georgena in her new home. From home health services, visiting physicians, Meals on Wheels, exercise classes and potlucks, Georgena would have the extra care she needed.

Eventually, Georgena required in-home hospice services before she died. But by then, Rhonda and the other residents had already bonded in a way that made them just like family.

“She might not live here, but she’s part of us,” resident Joan said. “She does so much for all of us.”

Rhonda continues to volunteer regularly at Cherry Arbors. She takes homecooked meals and treats for the residents. Rhonda also sponsors a monthly birthday party at the community, providing lunch and cake. She brings in homemade jelly for her friends, who refer to her as their daughter.

“Rhonda is a godsend,” said Housing Manager Shawn Hoffner. “She’s right where she’s supposed to be.”

For all this and more, Rhonda received the annual Community Volunteer of the Year Award from Cherry Arbors.

Rhonda gets as much back as she gives. She said she would recommend Cherry Arbors to anyone with aging parents. Qualified residents pay only 30 percent of their incomes for rent, providing an affordable housing option for residents age 62 and older.

“It took about three or four months for Mom to get settled,” Rhonda said. “Once she did, all the residents were so kind and looked after her. Neighbors here take care of one another. There isn’t a better place to call home.”

Rhonda and Shawn joke that her apartment is ready after retirement — but it’s a joke with some truth. Rhonda hopes to live at Cherry Arbors one day.

Volunteer Finds Family at Cherry Arbors

Rhonda Farley (right) visits with residents of Cherry Arbors.
COMMUNITY BRIEFS
NEWS AND NOTES FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

Glenwood Community Celebrates 20 Years
Glenwood Community in Marietta, Ohio, recently celebrated its 20th anniversary with a gala hosted by Glenwood residents and staff. More than 150 people attended the March event, which included a ribbon-cutting ceremony by the Marietta Chamber of Commerce and remarks from the mayor of Marietta. Attendees raised their glasses in a toast to the United Church Homes’ mission of transforming aging by building a culture of community, wholeness and peace. Congratulations, Glenwood!

South Haven Woods to Be Dedicated This Spring
South Haven Woods in Cleveland, Ohio, has received a facelift thanks to $2.2 million in renovations. The project included a building addition to create 12 studio apartments, a front-entry canopy, an emergency backup generator, new lighting, paint and flooring in the hallways. Additionally, the building now has a larger public restroom, compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, among other renovations. The building will be rededicated this spring.

Tahoma Vista Village Undergoes $11 Million in Renovations
Tahoma Vista Village in Tacoma, Washington, recently completed renovations totaling $11 million, ensuring the community will remain affordable housing for another 40 years. Originally built in 1978 as part of Housing and Urban Development’s 202 program, Tahoma Vista Village was sponsored by Christian Church Homes of Washington and is managed by United Church Homes. The community has 100 apartments. Apartment renovations included new kitchen cabinets, countertops, sinks, appliances, air conditioning, bathroom vanities and light fixtures. Additionally, the community now has new paint and flooring throughout.

Two Graduate from Nollau Leadership Program
Linda Dailey and Emily Howard are United Church Homes’ newest graduates of the Nollau Institute, a learning program through the UCC’s Council for Health and Human Service Ministries.

Linda, executive director at Glenwood Community in Marietta, Ohio, and Emily, an intern for the Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging and the Advancement Office at United Church Homes and CPE graduate from United Church Home’s ACPE Center at Trinity Community, attended the graduation ceremony as part of CHHSM’s annual gathering in Chicago in early March.

“The group that I got to know this year inspired me to share the joy and challenges of leading people with a servant’s heart,” Emily said. “UCH has many leaders who care deeply for others.”

Linda said she feels grateful to United Church Homes for its investment in her and others to provide a foundation of servant leadership to valuable and talented teams.

“This experience provided an environment of gracious space that fostered communication and mutual learning while transcending traditional educational programs,” she said. “Not only did I receive the training promised in the institute syllabus, but my life was changed as well.”
Mazel Tov! Barb Wolf Announces Retirement

After 20 years leading the campus of SEM Haven in Milford, Ohio, a United Church Homes managed community, Barb Wolf has announced her retirement. Barb has shown exemplary leadership from the moment she started at SEM Haven. Barb arrived with a vision to educate herself and her team on person-directed care, implementing the Eden Alternative philosophy and developing plans to renovate the community incorporating the household concept.

“Barb will be greatly missed, yet she leaves the legacy of focusing on each individual’s needs and preferences that has become the firm foundation to provide the best care and services at SEM Haven,” said Chuck Mooney, senior vice president of Senior Living Services and chief operating officer.

“I look forward to retirement but will really miss the people I have worked with and the residents and families we have had the privilege to care for,” Barb said.

SAVE THE DATE

The Promise of Technology for Aging Abundantly

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Joseph Coughlin, PhD

Joseph F. Coughlin, PhD, is founder and director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology AgeLab. He teaches in MIT’s Department of Urban Studies & Planning and the Sloan School’s Advanced Management Program. Coughlin is a recipient of the Maxwell A. Pollack Award for Productive Aging — one of the highest honors bestowed by the Gerontological Society of America for translating research into practice and was named a Home Health Hero by the Visiting Nurse Association for his work in telemedicine and telecare.
Our Mission is to transform Aging by building a culture of community, wholeness and peace.

NATIONAL AND STATE AFFILIATIONS:
American Health Care Association: ahca.org
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM): chhsm.org
LeadingAge: leadingage.org
LeadingAge Ohio: leadingageohio.org
Midwest Affordable Housing Management Association (MAHMA): mahma.com
Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging: ohioaging.org
Ohio Healthcare Association: ohca.org
Southeastern Affordable Housing Management Association (SAHMA): sahma.org
UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns: ucccoalition.org