Joyous Giving = Caring

Friends,

Many of us are familiar with the Bible verse depicting how “God loves a cheerful giver.” Recently, we completed our Campaign for Abundant Life at United Church Homes. This 5-year comprehensive campaign was an unprecedented effort to raise money for mission-critical programs and services including: affordable housing, benevolent care, capital projects, endowments, pastoral care and The Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging. The campaign resulted in the largest fundraising effort in the history of the organization raising over $47 million dollars! We are grateful for the many volunteer leaders who helped cultivate the many cheerful givers!

The stories reflected here illustrate the impact of joyous giving from individuals and community partners to United Church Homes and help communicate the exponential benefit of this type of caring. We are grateful for the generosity, kindness and caring that affects us all—the giver, the receiver and the communities we serve.

Your gifts CARE for the resident who may not be able to remember their loved one’s name anymore, but family and caregivers can witness them “come alive” by the simple act of listening to a beloved hymn or favorite song with our Music & Memory program.

Gifts from grants through our commitment to and collaboration with academic partners demonstrate CARE for our team members by engaging them in research. This research provides for opportunities that may bring ideas or new solutions to benefit the individuals and families served.

Gifts from our team members illustrate the CARE they have for each other, the residents they serve and their work community. Their sharing of personal resources is an act of caring that benefits our work at UCH in countless ways.

As we continue to serve more individuals, families and communities in this new (post-covid) world, we know we will experience other disrupters that will challenge and change us along the way. However, we also know that we have countless loyal friends and partners that will continue giving, sharing and caring and walk beside us in our mission as we continue to care for those we serve. Thank you for your commitment to United Church Homes and for being a cheerful giver!

With gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Kenneth V. Daniel
President and CEO

ABUNDANT IMPACT
SPRING 2023

The following stories represent the abundant impact generous donations make for the people United Church Homes serves.

Donate online at unitedchurchhomes.org

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JOYOUS GIVING = CARING
Music & Memory is a nationally recognized program that is transforming the treatment and care of people with Alzheimer’s disease, cognitive decline, physical limitations and ongoing health challenges. The impact reaches far beyond providing access to music to a generation of individuals who aren’t always able to easily listen to their favorite songs.

One of our residents recalled that when she was a girl growing up in the great depression, they could only listen to music when they could save up enough to buy some batteries to power their radio for a short time. Her life was filled with her favorite music again when Howard Cole, United Church Homes’ Music & Memory Coordinator, provided her with endless opportunities to listen to her playlist through her very own iPod and headphones!

Another resident couldn’t attend many activities or leave her room due to physical limitations. Thanks to having access to her personal soundtrack through Music & Memory, she would sing out with such joy that the staff and other residents could hear her throughout the community.

Music in her Heart

Recognizing that even quick interactions and activities between staff and older adults living with dementia improves their overall mood and happiness has led to an important and impactful partnership. Two grants totaling $295,000 from the National Institute on Aging have funded the partnership between United Church Homes and Miami University Scripps Gerontology Center for research that positively impacts aging between United Church Homes and Miami University Scripps Gerontology Center for research that positively impacts aging.

The approach to Music & Memory is simple and effective: create personalized music playlists on mp3 players for residents. These playlists — in essence, a soundtrack of someone’s life — can tap deep memories not lost to dementia and can re-awaken residents, enabling those who are withdrawn to become social, those who are non-communicative to converse and those who are depressed to become more responsive. Thanks to donor support, since 2015, United Church Homes has been a certified partner with Music & Memory. Today, your donations continue to sustain this vital program that offers residents the gift of music and memories — a true gift from the heart!

Grant Research Influences Residents with Dementia

More than 50 percent of residents in UCH healthcare communities have a diagnosis of dementia. Improving the quality of care for residents living with dementia is a high priority. Research indicates that residents thrive when engaged in programming that provides meaning and purpose specific to them.

Residents’ individual preferences including their favorite music, programs, comfort foods, holidays, hobbies and spiritual practices are gathered through assessments. Engagement opportunities are facilitated around these areas which are unique to each individual. Honoring personal preferences and routines is a major component of the practice of person directed care and in turn, creates abundant life. The IPPI is a brief 10-minute engagement which focuses on a topic that is meaningful to the resident. We believe the IPPIs will further enhance the programming offered to the residents.

Already this study has created positive outcomes for residents, staff and family members alike. A Memory Care Staff STNA explained, “One of the things I enjoy is sitting and talking with people, getting to know them and reminiscing about the things that they remember. I think the most comforting thing is just to listen to others when they have things to say.”

United Church Homes values this relationship with Miami University and other academic partners, said Amy Kotterman. “We are excited to be teaming up with Dr. Abbott and Scripp’s Gerontology on this research to improve the quality of care and quality of life for individuals living with dementia and their care partners.”

Employees of United Church Homes demonstrated their robust spirit of philanthropy by enthusiastically participating in the fall annual employee giving campaign. Employees who donate express their reasons for giving:

“It’s nice to know we can give something of our own to fully support the residents.”

“I can participate in our vision of ‘where the spirit creates abundant life in community’ by giving back and I know my gifts help our residents live the abundant life we are all seeking for them.”

“I love helping others—it satisfies a need and is for a very good cause—our residents!”

“I see firsthand what our gifts do for the residents and this community, and it is good!”

“I am pleased to know that my contribution will play some part in supporting UCH in creating joy, peace and sustainability for the older adults and the families we serve.”

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