

The SOCIETY Scoop

Message from the President & CEO

Spring is a time of renewal and growth, a fitting metaphor for the end of our fiscal year and the beginning of the next. In the spirit of 'springing forward', I want to share a glimpse into what is happening in the next quarter and beyond on our campus.

We have been working on multiple fronts to improve the delivery of services in ways that will have long-term benefit to our residents and clients.

Positioning UHS as a credible voice for seniors – I continue to hold the position of Housing representative on AdvantAge Ontario's Board of Directors. AdvantAge is the leading association of non-profit seniors' services in Ontario, whose members form a coalition of long-term care homes, seniors service agencies, and seniors housing providers. UHS, as an AdvantAge member, is able to contribute to policy discussions seeking to advance the care of seniors and older adults in the province. In early March AdvantAge Ontario hosted an Advocacy Day at Queen's Park to meet with sitting government representatives to advocate for additional supports and policy changes. The Board role provides UHS the opportunity to lobby for greater access to services and funding generally and to raise our presence within the sector, reinforcing our value as a partner and leader within long-term care.

Advancing partnerships with post-secondary institutions – I am so pleased to report that as a result of the work of the Innovation Committee and the reputation that we have built, UHS is the seniors' campus of choice in partnering with post-secondary institutions. Our collaboration with Seneca College has deepened and we have successfully forged a new relationship with York University's Centre for Aging Research. We are working with York to partner on several research projects York is sponsoring, that



L-R: Debbie Humphreys, Senior Director of Corporate and Public Affairs, AdvantAge Ontario; Michele Harris, Director of Homes and Seniors Services, Elgin County; Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, MPP Scarborough North; Abby Katz Starr, President and Chief Executive Officer, Unionville Home Society; Linda Tracey, Chief Executive Officer, Marianhill Long Term Care Home

will support UHS in advancing strategies for 'graceful aging' and furthering best practices in LTC using artificial intelligence.

Moving forward with investments on our campus – Our Board approved the 2024/2025 budgets for our three corporations: Unionville Home Society, Unionville Home Society Foundation, and Wyndham Gardens, allowing us to move forward on strategic initiatives that will enhance our delivery of services. This includes allocations for significant capital projects, long-term dementia planning, and modernizing our nursing equipment.

There is much in development on our campus. Evolving our position within the sector is only one of the many ways UHS is improving the wellbeing of seniors, both now and in the future. I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the Scoop, and wish to extend my sincere gratitude for your continued support. Here's to a beautiful spring!

– Abby Katz Starr



Volunteer Spotlight



Meet ADP Volunteer Matthew Albanese

I started volunteering because I wanted to branch out and follow a more community-based calling.

I have always been interested in understanding people and how we construct our ideas of ourselves. I chose ADP because it gives me the chance to connect with a group of people who I would normally never get the opportunity to meet.

I have a degree in Political Science and History with a minor in Diaspora and Transnational Studies, and you would be surprised at how useful it has been in my volunteer service. The idea behind Diaspora and Transnational Studies is that ideas flow between communities regardless of borders. We often consider the world split up into puzzle pieces based on where we live. But we form 'imagined communities' based on various factors: culture, ethnicity, geography, national identity, and many others. It's all about the relationship between groups of people and how we make sense of ourselves, which means that at the end of the day it is about understanding people.

I can see these concepts in action when I am volunteering at ADP. It's not just the delivery of activities but also understanding who the clients are as unique individuals and human beings, and

using it to curate their day for them. These clients have a wealth of knowledge built up from over a lifetime, so story that starts about something small can expand into a narrative that spreads over 40 to 50 years! You can learn so much about someone and their individual experience by taking the time to listen and ask questions.

Another thing I like is how the clients are so understanding and supportive of each other. If we are playing a game, even if it takes longer for someone to throw a beanbag or ball, they clap say 'good job!'. What surprised me was how committed they are to being here, and how engaged they are with the activities. If we introduce something new to their routine, they welcome it. Last week I brought in my basketball and they were all willing to learn and play a new game, it was so beautiful to see. This experience is challenging my perception of older folks.

I would absolutely say that volunteering at UHS is worth it for yourself and for the broader community. I honestly feel that the true gift in life is giving, and when you volunteer not only are you dedicating yourself to giving back, but you also strengthen who you are as a human being.

My Life: A Resident Profile

Sharing Delia's Story

Delia was born in South Ecuador and is the recipient of many awards recognizing her contributions to the Latin Community.

When she migrated to Canada, she lived for many years in Davenport where there was a large Spanish-speaking community. She loves the arts, especially music. One of her favourite hobbies is singing Spanish karaoke and dancing. She has a soft spot for chocolate and sweets, and always makes sure she looks her best.

She was a secretary for both Simpsons and Petro Canada for at least a decade each. After that, she worked as a sales associate for Alouette Cosmetics, where she would sell products and help customers learn how to apply their makeup.

One of Delia's passions in life was being involved in the Latin community. As Past-Secretary of the Latin American Artists Association, she organized fashion shows and beauty contests at events like the Ethnic Press Council of Canada Festival or the Festival International Del Bolero. She has many photos with musicians (even Tom Jones!), local politicians, and representatives from the Ecuadorian Consulate, including the ambassador. In 2001 she created a company, Marisu Productions, to promote artists from various cultural backgrounds to advance the presence of Latin artists in Canada

and abroad, and was interviewed by Casa Cultural Ecuatoriana, a local non-profit promoting Ecuadorian culture in Toronto.

Delia came to Union Villa after suffering from a stroke that temporarily robbed her of her speech. At first she could only say two words: "yes" and "ok". When her son visited her in the hospital and asked if she knew his name, she said "Yes, okay". After a year of recovery, she regained her speech and her memories, but there were many difficult months where she was functional enough to leave the hospital but needed assistance with daily living. She was stressed that she could not communicate, and her mobility had also been impacted by the stroke. Now she is comfortable using a walker when she needs it, and is an active participant in Recreation activities, especially the ones with music.

Her two sons, Christian and Andrew, are relieved that their mother is in good hands at Union Villa. Christian, the oldest, spent a lot of time and effort researching homes and visiting them to make sure they would be a good fit for Delia. He put Union Villa at the very top of his list. The family was very happy when a spot opened up here, and that there was such a variety of artistic programs for her to participate in. She can't wait for summertime and live music in the courtyard starts again.



Delia enjoying live music in the courtyard.

Special Event Highlights

Celebrating **St. Patrick's Day!**



On St. Patrick's Day and everyday, the residents of Wyndham Gardens gather for friendship and good times.



Celebrating the Lunar New Year with pan-Asian delights at our seniors active living centre (UCCS).

Celebrating **The Year of the Dragon!**



Residents enjoying the Year of the Dragon event.



ADP clients making corsages with fresh flowers in honour of Women's Day.



Celebrating
International Women's Day!



UCCS members connecting through camaraderie and conversation.



Celebrating International Women's Day at Union Villa.

UHS Employee Highlight



Residents at the Sweetheart dinner.

Union Villa Dietary Team

Every day, our Dietary Team delivers a resident-centred dining experience where food is fresh, made-in house and catered to individual needs.

Meals are prepared in the Union Villa kitchen by 22 experienced staff. They have professional certifications in food service, sanitation, and handling, and carry out their serving duties with sensitivity and compassion.

Union Villa's 160 residents receive three meals and snacks each day that meet their dietary and cultural needs – that is 480 full meals daily, not including snacks! The Dietary Team sets up the dining room in each neighbourhood, the nourishment carts, trays for room service, cleans the servery between each meal service, and ensures meals are served on-time (with a smile).

“Building trust with families is so important to resident care. They know what their loved one likes

“I believe that the role of a Dietary Aide is to serve with love, to serve with care and to serve from the heart.”

– **Almas Ifraimov**, Dietary Team Manager

and how they wish to be treated, and when they see we are listening to them, they feel confident their loved one is in good hands,” says Almas Ifraimov, Dietary Team Manager.

The Dietary Team works collaboratively with our Dietician, Nursing Team and families to ensure residents receive the highest quality nutrition and care. Almas meets monthly with the Resident Council to receive feedback regarding dining service and menu planning. The team in partnership with the recreation staff also host memorable dining experiences such as the recent Sweetheart Dinner Party, which featured a multi-course meal, elegant table settings, and a piano player.

The Dietary Team is a crucial part of Union Villa's resident experience. “I feel tremendous satisfaction when assisting residents during mealtime,” says Uresha Wijerama, a long-serving Dietary Aide.



Almas and Kevin (Compass Group) getting ready to serve.



Uresha serving a meal.

“When families visit their loved ones and see they are fed well, it makes me very happy.”

– **Uresha Wijerama**, Dietary Aide



Thank you to our incredible Dietary Services Team

Top L-R: Anitha S, Uresha W, Emily Z, Almas I, Kalamathy S, Kumudu P, Sarmila V.

Bottom L-R: Vijepamini M, Betty A, Siska W, Agra R

Absent: Katherine E, Sandhyad P, Sivananthony S, Lakshmi D, Sanaa A, Coumuduni J, Jeya B, Sophia L, Gaurab L, Sinthupriya T, Vinotha B, Neha K, Manisha B

SAVE THE DATE: 2024 Fundraising Events



TOGETHER WE BLOOM

Thursday, April 25, 2024

ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB

10:00 am Garden Marketplace
11:30 am Floral demo by event host, Kate Seaver
12:00 noon Lunch and Presentation

TICKETS

Early Bird (until March 28)... \$80
Regular price (after March 28)... \$100



Guest Speaker: Charlie Dobbin

Charlie Dobbin is a well-known horticulturist and landscape designer with professional gardening experience world-wide. She is the host of the Garden Show on AM740 every Saturday at 9am and delivers practical and entertaining garden tips on a variety of television networks.

Charlie has co-hosted the HGTV-show 'One Garden Two Looks', was the Horticultural Director or Canada Blooms, The Flower and Garden Festival for 12 years, and a volunteer judge for Communities in Bloom – Ontario.



2024
UNIONVILLE

CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB SOUTH COURSE

7:00 am Registration | **8:00 am** Shotgun start

TICKETS

Per Golfer... \$300
Early Foursome (until May 17)... \$1,100
Foursome (after May 17)... \$1,200

Includes: 18 holes of golf/cart, Continental Breakfast, Lunch, Passport & Activities



For tickets, more information on these events or sponsorship, please contact us at 905.477.2822 ext 4270 or at mdimson@uhs.on.ca.

*A portion of ticket fees may be eligible for a tax receipt, subject to CRA guidelines

Our Mission

Engaging our communities through a continuum of services that enhances the experience of aging.

Our Vision

A progressive community where older adults thrive, age well and live better.