

The SOCIETY Scoop

Message from President & CEO

One month into 2023, and we're more determined than ever to keep up the momentum we have built in the past year. We are at our best when we work together, and we are grateful for the many friends and partners who continue to collaborate.

Together with the Board, the main priority of early 2023 will be to refresh our planning to ensure we have the right core elements as we move into the future.

Our current Strategic Plan still has 2 years remaining in its term until 2025, but we have reframed and refocused on the following goals: expanding services and optimizing our existing assets for our community; upgrading critical technology; and continued development of our education partnerships.

These goals would be impossible to achieve without the support of the talented team of staff and the dedicated Board of Directors we have on campus. Our team consistently goes above and beyond in pursuit of the UHS mission to deliver the highest quality of life to those entrusted to our care.

Because of that passion, I am incredibly excited to share a glimpse into our 2023 plans below:

- **Upcoming Heritage Village move** – Our Heritage Village residents will be moving into the brand-new Unionville Commons building this March.
- **Investing in Technology** – Together with our partner, the Eastern York Region and North Durham Ontario Heath Team, we have been selected to be part of a pilot of a clinical care application that will alert staff in Union Villa when residents appear to decline unexpectedly. This early warning system is intended to provide care more quickly and efficiently to residents and improve their outcomes. We are also excited about the new iPads that will be rolled out to the PSWs across the



nursing units to increase the efficiency and ease of point-of-care documentation.

- **Diversifying our online footprint** – Our online presence is evolving and will feature more departments this year to highlight our pride in our team, and demonstrate the range of talents and skills that contribute to the incredible care and service to our residents.
- **UHS Foundation** – So much of what needs to be done will depend on financial resources and building a larger donor base, which is why we will be launching a focused Cabinet of Ambassadors to support a future capital campaign.

I believe that 2023 will be a year of excellence and achievement for UHS. To our residents, their families, staff, Board, partners, donors, volunteers and supporters, thank you for continuing to make UHS the vibrant campus of care we want it to be.

I look forward to the remarkable things we will accomplish together.

– Abby Katz Starr

Greetings from the UHS Board Chair

It's a new year and our Boards are looking forward to an exciting 2023.

There are a number of initiatives that the board will be working on this year but the primary focus will be updating our long term strategic plan. This will allow us to refresh our priorities to ensure that we are reflecting and responding to the needs of our current and future clients on the Unionville Home Society campus.

To that end, we are looking forward to the following:

- Collaborating with President and CEO Abby Katz Starr and the UHS management team to design and implement new systems that will improve the organization's day-to-day operations
- Continuing our partnerships with government agencies and research groups to bring innovation to the way we monitor and deliver care to our residents
- Supporting our Foundation's efforts including it's signature fundraisers – Garden by the Greens, Unionville Charity Golf Tournament and the Union Villa Dinner Party



As always, the goal of our Board is to help UHS deliver the highest level of seniors care for our residents and to ensure that the community we serve remains our priority.

The Year of the Rabbit will truly be an exciting one and I look forward to working with our staff and my fellow board members to furthering our mission.

– Philip Gunn

Call for Volunteers



We are looking for friendly, enthusiastic and dependable volunteers who have a passion for seniors and wish to make a meaningful difference in our community. If you can share a few hours per week to provide support to our resident programs, please contact us at **(905) 477- 2822 Ext. 4240** or email volunteer@uhs.on.ca.

We look forward to hearing from you.



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New Initiatives At Union Villa LTC

PSW 1:1 Mentorship Program

We are proud to showcase the PSW 1:1 Mentorship Program, a product of a cross-department collaborative effort to support PSW placement students as they begin their careers in long-term care.

Supporting our placement students is not only good for delivering quality care, it also helps UHS build relationships with post-secondary institutions and further our reputation as a leader in the non-profit LTC sector. Currently, UHS has signed 17 agreements with post-secondary institutions that allow PSW students to apply to our placement program. We are invested in seeing our placement students succeed.

UHS had already taken steps to support students by introducing the PSW Preceptor Education Program in early 2021. Preceptors are staff who mentor placement students while also completing their normal duties. Our Preceptors mentor their students during their required placement hours, which are an average 310 hours.

By mid 2021, however, the PSW Preceptors were voicing the need for improvements. Lori Toal, one of the PSW Preceptors, and other Preceptors, felt that the placement students were not prepared to go on the floor when they started their hours.

“I remember my first day on the job, I knew my stuff (I had top marks in my classes) but I didn’t feel ready, I was terrified,” says Lori Toal, PSW Preceptor and lead on the PSW 1:1 Mentorship Program. “Students coming in straight from school don’t have practical experience in the basics of care such as lifting residents, documenting, and managing the documentation software (PointofCare, StaffScheduleCare). They – and the Preceptors – need more help.”

Lori and the Preceptors advocated very strongly to implement a pre-Preceptor mentorship program. In late October, CEO Katz Starr and management agreed. Lori created the lesson plan in collaboration with Caroline Wiseman, a veteran PSW. They further collaborated with Claire Chester, HR Director, and Cynthia Li, who coordinates the Placement Student Program.

Lori describes why she volunteered to be the one to lead the PSW Mentorship Program: “The people here at



UHS raised me up, told me the truth, and educated me. They told me no question was stupid. They understood that we have to work together as a unit to accomplish our goal of providing the best resident care.”

The first 1:1 mentoring began in November and the positive feedback from each of the students has been consistent: the program provides them with greater understanding of what to expect during placement, and a sense of calmness and comfort because they have been given a feel for ‘the lay of the land’.

Lori says, “The gratitude I have received from students has been overwhelming. I am very proud of this pilot project and it is my hope that it is here to stay.”

UHS is confident that the program will continue given such positive feedback, and it has created a more supportive workplace where new students and staff can thrive.

“UHS is a leader in LTC and that happens with collaboration from all sectors of the home. Together we are brighter, stronger, better. Together we created the best environment for our residents and in the end, that’s what it’s all about.”

Volunteer Spotlight

Giving Time: Meet Volunteer Mei Liou

In May 2016, retired and empty nester Mei Liou was looking for a way to fill her days with purpose and give back to her community.

She worked in the IT industry as a Systems Business Analyst and has lived in the Markham area for the last 15 years. After doing some research on Union Villa and a couple of “drive-bys”, Mei submitted her application and proceeded to start her “path to volunteerism”.

So, what does a full-time volunteer look for in her volunteer experience? Mei volunteers in the Hair Salon and her main role is to assist residents. She porters them to and from their room, chatting all the while and listens to all their stories and she says that she is in awe of some of the residents and their experiences.

Mei’s ultimate fulfilment comes from seeing the smile on the residents’ face; knowing that she is contributing to their self confidence and that they know they are going to look and feel great when they leave the salon.

The most important advice that Mei gives to current and potential volunteers is, “Always give back and stay active because this is a very good and rewarding way to fill your time.”

Mei says that the success of her role in the salon can be attributed to the “family friendly vibe” that the hair stylist has developed in the salon. This has been a relationship building experience and although she was very nervous at the beginning, the staff support and encouragement from others is how she learned to be the great volunteer that we know she is. Mei says, “Be yourself, enjoy the moment, open dialogue and look forward to seeing the friendly faces of the residents!”

Mei’s personal goals when she first started to volunteer were to develop patience, learn new skills, have a sense of purpose and learn how to communicate and make seniors smile. After almost 7



years of volunteering at Union Villa, she has done just that, and we are lucky to have her.

Mei is very active in her volunteer work and spends five days a week volunteering at Union Villa, a local women’s shelter, Oak Valley Hospital (MSH) and Ronald McDonald House and weekends are reserved for her family.

Thank you Mei, for all that you do for the Union Villa residents and for your community.

“The unselfish effort to bring cheer to others will be the beginning of a happier life for ourselves.”

– HELEN KELLER

My Life: A Resident Profile

Living at Union Villa: Bill Burnett

William (Bill) Burnett was born in Toronto and completed his early education there, attending Danforth Technical and East York Collegiate high schools where he participated in many athletic endeavours especially in football teams. Following his high school years, he attended Toronto Teacher's College and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education to become a technical teacher. He began his career in the Toronto District School Board elementary school system while taking degree courses at both U of T and McMaster University in Hamilton. He then moved to the York Region School Board Secondary school system becoming Technical Head at Unionville High School and later a Co-operative Education Head at Middlefield where he completed his teaching career. While teaching, Bill also instituted the basic St. John's Ambulance training to the curriculum in the high schools and received a special award from the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

In addition to his teaching, Bill always found time to give back to his community. He had a real interest in politics and at the urging of some friends ran for Hydro Commissioner in Markham, a part time position he held for some 19 years, and was re-elected 4 times.

After retirement from teaching, Bill and his wife Jo-Anne moved to Stouffville where Bill along with some volunteers was asked by our then Superintendent, Eric Joliffe to form a Community Policing Centre. When the Centre closed, Bill was asked to join the Chief's Community Council that would give input on community concerns to the Chief and his staff.

A fun fact and highlight for Bill and the family occurred when Bill won the 'Stanley Cup for a Day' from a draw at the Hockey Hall of Fame. He chose to donate it to Stouffville Secondary school and it went on display there for the day. The kids loved it!



Bill was very much a family man, and he and his wife raised 3 children. He enjoyed coaching softball and being involved with Markham Minor Hockey Association. In addition, he was an Ontario Softball Umpire, a position he maintained with his rating until well into his 60's having started umpiring as a teenager in the "Beaches League" in Toronto.

Bill has been a resident of Union Villa since July of 2021. He has met many new friends and participates in some of the varied activities. He really enjoys the new fish tank in the foyer and likes to check it out several times a week.

Content contributor: Mrs. Burnett

~Thank you for sharing Bill's story with us.

Employee Spotlight

25 Years of Service and Counting: Congratulations Gavin Tamaya

“Hello, this is Unionville Home Society, how can I help you?”

Anyone who has called our front desk in the past 25 years has most likely been greeted by the same friendly voice, that of Gavin Tamaya, our hard-working Customer Service staff member who celebrated a quarter-century at UHS in 2022. Today, we are spotlighting Gavin and appreciating the positive impact he has had on the UHS community.

Gavin didn't start in long-term care. He was a Seneca college graduate in accounting who was volunteering at the local hospital when he saw an ad in the paper for a customer service job at UHS. He has been the face of UHS Customer Service ever since.

What he likes about UHS Customer Service is that he feels like he is helping people.

In his role, he answers the phone, delivers messages, screens visitors/family members, refers questions to the right people, tracks data, assists with Villa events, participates in group activities, and even does the occasional bit of tech support (televisions count!). He also works with the screeners to ensure there is always coverage at the front desk, which means filling in for them and vice versa while they are on lunchbreak.

Even though he has been here for years, he still feels like he learns something new every day.

When asked about what he feels about UHS's mission, he says, “Everyone cares for the residents, listens to the family members concerns, and tries to engage in events.” In the past few years, UHS has grappled with various issues like most non-profit LTCs, but he feels that despite the difficulty, “we have done the best we can to meet and exceed the residents needs.”



More than that, he likes getting to know our residents at this stage in their lives, when their social circles are smaller but they have so much to share. He is happy to discuss grandchildren, visitors, and holidays, all while helping deliver mail or convey a message. “It feels like I am helping in more ways than one.”

Thank you, Gavin, for your dedication and commitment to UHS, our residents, staff, volunteers, and supporters. It wouldn't be the same without you.

**“Some people feel like they outgrow their jobs,
but I feel like the job has grown with me.”**

– GAVIN

Seniors Active Living Fair – Connecting seniors to resources

On Wednesday, January 25, 2023, the day of the first snowstorm of the year, the Unionville Community Centre for Seniors (UCCS) hosted a Seniors Active Living Fair in partnership with the Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario (OACAO) with funding support from the Government of Ontario.

The in-person Fair welcomed almost 100 seniors to the drop-in format, with 22 exhibitors from non-profits, government agencies and for-profit organizations.

Live presentations included: Hearing Loss and Aging; Preventative Health Tips for an Active Winter; Fighting Seasonal Depression; Specialized Geriatric Outreach Services; Alzheimer's and Dementia; Estate Planning; and York Region Transit, An Orientation for Seniors.

Participants enjoyed healthy snacks, learned about valuable resources, networked, and re-connected with

UCCS and its programs. The UCCS fair was one of many Seniors' Active Living Fairs across the province, which set out to promote active and healthy living for seniors through social engagement opportunities, highlighting partnerships, independence and learning for older adults.



Thank you to our Fair Exhibitors



Funding provided by:



SAVE THE DATE: 2023 Fundraising Events

Join us in enhancing the home environment and resident experience for those living at Union Villa LTC.



presents

HOME GROWN

Bringing Food, Family and Friends Together

THURSDAY APRIL 20, 2023

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 (by March 10, 2023)... \$70

Regular price (after March 10, 2023)... \$85



**2023
UNIONVILLE
CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC
WEDNESDAY JUNE 21, 2023**

ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB SOUTH COURSE

6:30 am Registration | **7:30 am** Shotgun

TICKETS

Per Golfer... \$300

Early Foursome (until April 30)... \$1,100

Foursome (after April 30)... \$1,200

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

2023 UNION VILLA DINNER PARTY

*Our Spirit
Never Ages*

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2023

ANGUS GLEN GOLF CLUB

6:00 pm Cocktails

7:00 pm Dinner

TICKETS

Early Bird (by Sept 15, 2023)... \$225

Regular price (after Sept 15, 2023)... \$250



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

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

Our Mission: Enhancing the experience of aging, one person at a time.

Our Vision: A progressive community where older adults thrive; aging well and living better.