

Fall/Winter 2017

LTC today

A publication of the Illinois Health Care Association

QUALITY: THE ULTIMATE FRONTIER

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**Excellence Award for
Long Term Care Centers**

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5



11



12

contents

LTC Today ■ Fall/Winter 2017

in this issue

FROM THE ASSOCIATION 4

IHCA MEMBERS AWARDED BRONZE 5

More than a dozen member centers take the first step toward the Gold National Quality Award.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 8

IHCA elected and installed new officers to lead the Board of Directors and the association membership at large.

BRINGING RECOGNITION TO OUTSTANDING CENTERS 9

IHCA introduces its Excellence Award for Long Term Care Centers.

NATIONAL ASSISTED LIVING WEEK 11

NALW annual observance offers a chance to celebrate life in assisted living communities.

IHCA CONVENTION AND EXPO EXPLORES *QUALITY: THE ULTIMATE FRONTIER* 12

FUTURE LEADER 14

Alisha Heyen, administrator at Carlinville Rehabilitation & Health Care Center, joins the 2017/2018 class of the AHCA/NCAL Future Leaders Program.

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS/ADVERTISER.COM 14

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PUBLISHED OCTOBER 2017
IHC-B0217 • 7631

From the Association

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2017 issue of *LTC Today*! As we head toward the end of another year, we realize just how accurate the old adage “time flies” really is. These past months have certainly flown by, and they’ve been jam-packed with hard work, determination and change – both in long term care and in our association.

A few months ago, the IHCA Board of Directors went through a few changes with the election of new officers. After serving more than four years as the IHCA president, John Vrba chose to hand over the reins and Rhonda Luther was elected as the new president of IHCA. To find out more about the election and our new board officers, turn to page 8.

In September the annual IHCA Convention and Expo was held (find out all about it on page 12). This year’s theme once again dealt with quality — an ever-present concern in today’s long term care environment. *Quality: The Ultimate Frontier* was chosen to honor the hard work and dedication that goes into providing quality care for the elderly and developmentally disabled residents you serve every day. Stay tuned for more information about the 68th IHCA Convention and Expo, *Lights, Camera, Action: Spotlight on Quality*, coming to you in September 2018.

Speaking of quality, a number of our IHCA member centers took their first step toward quality gold by earning the *Bronze – Commitment to Quality Award* (turn to page 5). The Bronze is the first step in the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program, and helps to provide applicants with the tools and resources they need for continuous performance improvement. Visit AHCA’s website for more information about the National Quality Award Program.

IHCA introduced a new award of our own this year, focusing on the quality of care being provided in member centers around the state. The IHCA Excellence Award for Long Term Care Centers is based on facility data – like census information, quality measures, resident satisfaction survey results and more. Nine fantastic centers submitted their nominations for this first year, and narrowing it down to just one winner was difficult; we had to call it a tie! Flip over to page 9 to find out more!

As you read through this issue you’ll also find information on National Assisted Living Week (NALW) and a short article about IHCA Illinois Leader Alisha Heyen, who was chosen as a member of the class of 2018 for AHCA’s Future Leaders program.

We hope you will enjoy this issue. If you have any questions, or suggestions for a topic in a future issue, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Rhonda Luther
IHCA President



David Voepel
IHCA Executive Director

IHCA Member Centers **AWARDED BRONZE** – Commitment to Quality Award *Take first step toward Quality Gold*

BY ASHLEY CALDWELL, MA



The National Quality Award Program provides a pathway for providers of long term and post-acute care services to journey toward performance excellence. Introduced by the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) in 1996, the program is based on the core values and criteria of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program and is made up of three progressive levels: *Bronze Award – Commitment to Quality*; *Silver Award – Achievement in Quality*; and *Gold Award – Excellence in Quality*

Earning a National Quality Award is an arduous and time-consuming process. However, the distinction that comes with receiving the award, as well as the experience and lessons learned along the way are worth the effort. In 2017, more than a dozen IHCA member centers began their journey to the Gold Award by earning the Bronze. Keep reading to find out more about these exceptional centers.



Ambassador Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

Ambassador Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is a skilled nursing center located on the north side of Chicago. An integral part of the community since 1976, Ambassador provides residents with a wide variety of health care services in a nurturing, home-like environment. They offer a tailored Hispanic unit with bilingual staff members and regularly celebrate Spanish customs. Ambassador's staff strives to address

residents' needs on an individual basis with respect and dignity and to provide the highest quality of life for those in their care.

"Achieving this award was definitely a team effort," said Administrator Aaron Cohen. "Each of our departments across the facility worked together to make it happen."

Astoria Place Living & Rehab Center

Astoria Place Living & Rehab Center is a 164-bed skilled care senior community that offers advanced clinical care and personalized service in a warm, diverse environment. The residents' comfort and peace of mind always come first with Astoria's team of compassionate health care professionals who provide around-the-clock care. The center offers a full range of traditional therapies, as well as innovative therapeutic services including massage and neuromuscular therapy.

When it came time to complete the application for the Bronze Award, then administrator Bill Pfeiffer took on the monumental task of gathering the information and completing the forms himself.

"I really enjoyed preparing the application," said Pfeiffer. "It really helped me focus on what systems and programs we had and how we help

our community. It also allowed me to focus on improving our facility's quality measures."

Brighton Gardens of St. Charles

Located in historic downtown St. Charles, IL, Brighton Gardens of St. Charles is a 116-bed assisted living community providing assisted living, memory care and short-term stay services. The center offers a variety of amenities, including physical, creative, social, educational and spiritual programming, in an intimate, home-like environment. Residents are encouraged to live with purpose – to engage, to enjoy life, to express themselves – each day. The dedicated staff at Brighton Gardens of St. Charles works hard to ensure that each resident has an individualized service plan that not only meets their specific health care needs, but takes their personal preferences into account as well.

Burgess Square Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre

Burgess Square Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre, located in Westmont, IL, is an independently owned and operated 203-bed skilled nursing facility. With an exceptionally knowledgeable and experienced administrative team that has more than

50 years of experience between them, the staff at Burgess Square provides a full complement of health care services and continuously strives to stay ahead of the curve in long term care.

"The Baldridge criteria truly represents quality outcomes and accountability at all levels," said John Vrba, chief executive officer at Burgess Square. "Going through the application process allowed our organization to learn our strengths and identify opportunities for development."

"Successful completion of the application is dependent on the input of each department and their analysis of the department's strengths and weaknesses," added Administrator Kristin Thrun. "It served as an incentive and a reminder of what our primary mission is and that everything centers around quality care."

Calhoun Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, LLC

Located in Hardin, IL, Calhoun Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is an 80-bed long term care center that provides skilled nursing care, respite care, inpatient therapy, outpatient therapy and contract home therapy services. At Calhoun Nursing and Rehab the focus is on individualized, resident-directed care. By emphasizing the "Perfect Day" approach, they have developed an environment that fosters resident choice and specialized care.

Barb Ledder, executive director at Calhoun Nursing and Rehab, took a team approach when it came to submitting the center's application for the Bronze Award, gathering and sharing information among all departments.

"The application process was a very worthwhile challenge leading not only me, but the rest of the staff as well, to focus on our strengths and weaknesses," stated Ledder. "It emphasized the importance of managing data and using it for decision making and determining if actions are successful and what changes need to be made. Managing a nursing home is fluid, not at all static."

Dixon Rehabilitation & Health Care Center

Dixon Rehabilitation & Health Care Center is a Tutura Senior Living & Health Care Community located in Dixon, IL. The 97-bed skilled facility offers a variety of services, including long term care, short-term rehabilitation and Alzheimer's/dementia care. The staff at Dixon Rehab understands resident-centered care and works closely with residents and their families for the best possible outcomes.

Throughout the Bronze Award application process, Administrator Kathryn May worked with her team to gather the necessary materials and include their input. Overall, it was an excellent learning experience for the Dixon team.

"We learned that this was an opportunity to do in-depth self-assessments of our facility and the services we offer to our community," said May. "The process has led to us having an increased focus on utilizing our performance improvement systems to address strategic challenges and key performance indicators so that we can achieve systemic and sustained quality improvements."

Granite Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, LLC

Located in the Metro East area of Illinois in Granite City, Granite Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is an 86-bed skilled nursing center that offers a variety of health care services. From wound care and IV therapy to bariatric care, mental health services and several therapy options, residents have access to the care that they need when they need it; Granite Nursing and Rehab even offers outpatient therapy services. The staff at Granite Nursing and Rehab is committed to providing excellent care to facility residents, and making sure that each of their individual needs are being met.

The Grove Evanston

The Grove Evanston is a 105-bed skilled nursing center located in Evanston on Chicago's north side. The facility offers individualized care

with proven clinical outcomes for both short-term rehabilitation and long term care residents. The Grove's boutique style, along with its wide array of clinical capabilities, adds a personal touch and sense of luxury for each resident.

"The Bronze Award application process was truly a great team building experience," stated Etan Bleichman, regional director of operations for Legacy Healthcare. "It allowed us to think globally about all the things we do that truly make us unique."

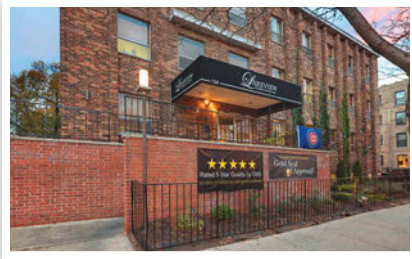
"We learned that we do many great things at The Grove, but there is so much more we have to work on," added Shilpi Chona, the facility's administrator. "The Bronze Award is a commitment to quality; however, quality takes constant effort and consideration. What we learned most is that this is only the beginning of our work."

Hamilton Memorial Rehabilitation & Health Care Center

Hamilton Memorial Rehabilitation & Health Care Center, a Tutura Senior Living & Health Care Community, is a 60-bed skilled nursing center located in McLeansboro, IL. The dedicated team at Hamilton Memorial Rehab works each day to provide a wide variety of health services in a safe, residential environment and to ensure that they are providing top quality care.

Administrator Kelly Boggess worked with a team of department heads to complete the award application and asked members of the floor staff for their input as well.

"At first the process seemed overwhelming, but we watched the AHCA videos and that helped us to understand," stated Boggess. "We learned through the process to look at our areas of improvement through new eyes, as sometimes you get tunnel vision. This process helped us to improve our leadership, opened up areas for discussion to floor staff, and made us closer as a team. We were thrilled when we found out we were going to receive the award."



Lakeview Rehabilitation and Nursing Center

Located in the heart of Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, Lakeview Rehabilitation and Nursing Center is a 178-bed skilled nursing center that offers a variety of services to help ensure residents' needs are being met – medically, culturally and emotionally. At Lakeview, the staff is focused on one main goal: providing the kind of care they would expect their own loved ones to receive. They are committed to making residents feel at home and making sure they have the best care possible.

"It's an honor to be recognized for our commitment to delivering quality care," said Administrator Michael Elkes. "Going through the process of achieving the Bronze Award has made our organization stronger. Our Lakeview staff works tirelessly to render quality care around the clock to patients and their families."



Resthove Home of Whiteside County

Resthove Home is a private, non-profit facility located in Morrison, IL. It has been providing the seniors of Whiteside County dedicated and compassionate care in a home-like environment for more than 50 years. Resthove's 70-bed skilled nursing center provides long term care, short-term rehabilitation stays and respite care. The staff works each day to promote human wholeness and to provide the best care possible to the residents who depend on them.

When working on the Bronze Award application, Nursing Administrator

Jill Smith worked closely with a team of staff members, holding weekly meetings and utilizing AHCA resources to complete the detailed project.

"Going through the application process caused us to take a look at our processes, particularly with quality improvement and what we do with the data we collect and how we utilize that data to improve our overall quality," said Smith. "It also helped us to take a look at our local market, where we fit into that market and how we can utilize our strengths within that market to grow and develop referral sources and census."



Southpoint Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

Located on Chicago's south side, Southpoint Nursing & Rehabilitation Center is a 228-bed skilled nursing center that provides comprehensive medical, mental health and rehabilitative therapy services for both short and long term patients. The dedicated staff provides a caring environment where seniors can recuperate and recover to return home or lead a fulfilling life and receive top notch care.

"It's an honor to be recognized for our commitment to delivering quality care," said John Stare, administrator at Southpoint Nursing & Rehabilitation Center. "This entire process has been a team effort for our staff and we have all benefitted from the process."

Sunrise Senior Living of Barrington

Located in the village of Barrington in the Chicago suburbs, Sunrise of Barrington offers personalized memory care options for seniors in a quaint, Victorian-style home. With three different floorplans to choose from, a fun and varied activity program, and a team of experienced and compassionate caregivers,

Sunrise of Barrington provides high quality, individualized care for each resident.

Sunrise Senior Living of Bloomingdale

Sunrise of Bloomingdale is an 82-unit assisted living community located just 25 miles from the city of Chicago. It offers a variety of services, including assisted living, memory care, short-term stays and coordination of hospice care, all in a comfortable and convenient environment.

The team at Sunrise of Bloomingdale is passionate about what they do and they welcome each new resident with open arms. They go above and beyond to make residents feel at home and provide personalized service and a variety of activities, scheduled group trips and various other programs.

Sunrise Senior Living of Schaumburg

Sunrise of Schaumburg offers residents a wide range of services and amenities in a safe, cozy environment. Located in the northeast suburbs of Chicago, the 99-unit assisted living community provides not only assisted living care, but Alzheimer's and memory care and short-term options as well. Residents are invited to make use of the center's large, secure patio area or to participate in any of the daily activities offered.

Sunrise Senior Living of Park Ridge

Sunrise of Park Ridge is a 110-unit senior living community offering assisted living services and short-term stays, as well as a new memory care neighborhood that offers therapeutic programming in a smaller and more intimate environment. The community's knowledgeable and experienced team provides individualized and person-centered care to each resident. At Sunrise of Park Ridge, communication is key, and all residents are treated like family.

The National Quality Award program is an educational and rewarding experience. To find out more about the program, or how your center can apply, please visit www.ahcanca.org/quality_improvement/quality_award. ■

IHCA Elects **New Board Officers**

The Illinois Health Care Association (IHCA) recently announced a few changes to its board of directors with the election of new board officers. At the IHCA Annual Business Meeting in September association members installed a new president, vice president, secretary and treasurer for a two-year term to help lead the board and the association overall.



PRESIDENT RHONDA LUTHER

Rhonda Luther, chief operating officer for Imboden Creek Health Services, is a dedicated and experienced professional with more than 20 years of experience working in long term care. She received her bachelor's degree in family services from Eastern Illinois University and has a master's degree in gerontology from the University of Illinois at Springfield. She joined Imboden Creek Health Services in 1994 as the administrator of the Living Center and moved into her current position in 2004.

In 2013 Luther was featured in *Provider* magazine's "20 to Watch," and in 2014 she completed the AHCA/NCAL Future Leaders program. She joined the IHCA Board of Directors in 2010 as the nursing facility first vice president and was appointed the IHCA board secretary in 2013. In 2015, Luther was elected vice president of the IHCA board. She has also served on several other IHCA committees and is actively involved in other association activities.

"The senior care profession in Illinois is comprised of an amazing group of talented, dedicated, determined and compassionate people," stated Luther. "It is my honor to serve and represent them

as we embrace the challenges of our profession while caring for others. My sincere thanks to Tom, Steve and Sam for their willingness to step up and be a part of the solution, along with the entire IHCA board and staff."



VICE PRESIDENT TOM ANNARELLA

Tom Annarella is the administrator for Valley Hi Nursing and Rehab, a McHenry County owned nursing home located in Woodstock, IL. He earned his bachelor's degree in health care administration from Southern Illinois University in 2000 and became a licensed nursing home administrator in 2002.

Annarella has been an active member of the association since the beginning of his career. He joined the IHCA Board of Directors in 2012 as the nursing facility second vice president and in 2014 was elected nursing facility independent owner vice president, a position that was created when the association's bylaws were changed in 2013. He became an officer of the board in 2015 when he was elected secretary.

Annarella has also been featured in *Provider's* "20 to Watch" and is a graduate of the AHCA/NCAL Future Leaders Program. He serves on several IHCA committees and is the chair of the Illinois Leaders Program.

"The association is only as strong as its members," he stated. "An active and engaged membership is needed now more than ever. With challenges in Illinois and nationally, it is the membership's voice that needs to be heard. We need our members to get involved and drive the health care discussion, to join us in our advocacy for all of our residents, families and teammates."



SECRETARY STEPHEN MILLER

Stephen Miller has a wealth of knowledge and experience in the long term care profession. He has owned and operated Bridgemark Healthcare since 2001. In that time, the company has gone from being comprised of three intermediate care facilities (ICFs) to 13 long term care communities, 11 of which are located in Illinois.

Miller has been actively involved in IHCA since joining the organization. He regularly participates in IHCA events and meetings and advocacy work both in Springfield and in Washington D.C. He has served on several association committees, including the IHCA Public Policy Committee, Nursing Facility Constituency Committee, Administration/Finance &

Continued on page 10

IHCA Introduces **NEW EXCELLENCE AWARD** for Long Term Care Centers

For more than 20 years, the Illinois Health Care Association (IHCA) has offered an awards program to bring special recognition to their outstanding members. Since its inception, the program — including the Long Term Care Nurses Association (LTCNA) Nursing Awards — has grown and evolved as the association's membership has evolved. However, the awards have always been focused more on the staff who provide resident care and keep long term care centers running than on the centers themselves.



At the beginning of 2017, IHCA unveiled its newly revised awards program. In addition to rebranding the awards program as the IHCA Excellence Awards and separating the nomination process for the Staff and Specialty Awards from the LTCNA Nursing Awards, IHCA also moved the presentation of those awards to coincide with National Nursing Home Week and began personally delivering the awards to the winners in their centers. IHCA also added a new award: *The IHCA Excellence Award for Long Term Care Centers*.

"While we recognize the importance of offering our members a way to recognize their staff and specialty programming, we also felt it was time to add an award that recognized the facility as a whole," explained IHCA Executive Director David Voepel. "The Excellence Award for Long Term Care Centers focuses on the processes and procedures put in place within a facility to ensure that residents are receiving the best care possible."

To nominate a center for the new award, a member of the center's staff must complete the nomination form, detailing the center's performance in specific areas of quality care, like antipsychotic usage rates, Five-Star Quality Ratings, census information and more. They are also asked to provide information regarding staff



Mike Hensley, chief marketing officer for Burgess Square, and Gordon Oksnevad, owner and operator of Alpine Fireside, accepted the first ever IHCA Excellence Awards for Long Term Care Centers during IHCA's 67th Annual Convention & Expo.

and resident satisfaction surveys and any innovative programming taking place in the center. Nomination forms are then processed by IHCA staff to remove any information that may indicate which member center the form is from and passed on to the IHCA Awards Task Force for judging and selection of the winner(s).

Nine outstanding IHCA member centers submitted nominations for the award's inaugural year, and after a very careful review and much deliberation, two facilities were chosen to receive the award.

Alpine Fireside Health Center

Alpine Fireside Health Center is a 99-bed skilled nursing facility serving the Rockford, Illinois, area. It has been owned and operated by the Oksnevad family since the early 70s and has been a member of IHCA for nearly 40 years. The center's leadership consistently strives to stay on top of current trends in long term care and offers a wide variety of services. The center has an excellent record of staff longevity, and they all live and work by the motto, "family taking care of family." Their hard work and dedication is reflected in Alpine Fireside's long-standing Five-Star rating and other facility data.

Peg Washington, admissions director at Alpine Fireside, worked with other members of the center's staff to prepare the nomination form. "One thing that I really liked about the nomination process was that it did require us to pool our staff knowledge in order to complete the form," she stated. "We worked on it together."

"I feel very strongly when it comes to things like recognition

programs that appreciation is a fundamental need for everybody,” added Washington. “There’s a lot to be said for having your hard work recognized, because when your work is recognized then you know that it is valued, and when you know your work is valued your job satisfaction and productivity rise and as a result residents receive exceptional care and our Alpine Fireside community grows stronger. Our staff here was so excited to hear that we were recipients of this award. It really does mean a lot to us.”

Burgess Square Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre

Burgess Square Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre, a 203-bed skilled nursing center located in Westmont, Illinois, offers its residents a wide variety of health-related services. The facility’s staff works tirelessly each day to stay on the cutting edge of long term care to ensure that their residents are getting the best care possible. From QAPI and INTERACT to satisfaction surveys and innovative programs, like the Music and Memory Program that has been implemented at the

center, the staff is constantly on the lookout for tools and techniques to help improve their care practices. All of this hard work paid off recently when Burgess Square was awarded the Five-Star quality rating, as well as the Bronze National Quality Award from AHCA/NCAL.

“Our facility’s motto is to ‘take care of the residents, patients, families and staff...and the rest will take care of itself,’” said Burgess Square CEO John Vrba. “We nominated our facility because we felt that the qualifications for the award aligned with the work that our organization does every day.”

“The staff in skilled rehab centers work hard every day, often with limited resources, to provide quality care. Regardless of how difficult the work is, they have a passion to help others and continue to come back day after day to provide care for others,” added Administrator Kristin Thrun. “It is nice to have an award that highlights the positive impact that skilled facilities have on the health care system. It serves as the inspiration for the staff to continue their diligent effort to provide quality, cost efficient care.” ■

2017 IHCA Excellence Award for Long Term Care Centers NOMINEES

- Alpine Fireside Health Center
Rockford, IL
- Burgess Square Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre
Westmont, IL
- Centralia Manor
Centralia, IL
- Coulterville Rehabilitation & Health Care Center
Coulterville, IL
- Hamilton Memorial Rehabilitation & Health Care Center
McLeansboro, IL
- Hawthorne Inn of Danville
Danville, IL
- Helia Healthcare of Olney
Olney, IL
- Niles Nursing & Rehabilitation Center
Niles, IL
- Regency Care of Sterling
Sterling, IL

Continued from page 8

Operations Committee and the Political Action Committee.

“While the challenges facing long term care are many,” said Miller, “I believe that the voices of engaged, knowledgeable IHCA members are the key to meeting them.”

Treasurer Sam Thompson

Sam Thompson, president and CEO of Southgate Health Care, has been in the long term care profession for more than 30 years. Thompson earned his Bachelor of Science degree and became a CPA in 1987. He has held positions in the internal audit divisions of several banks and as a pension and health and welfare fund auditor for a third party administrator. He has also been a member of the board of NHRMA Mutual since 1996.



Thompson is an active member and avid supporter of IHCA. He was elected treasurer of the IHCA Board of Directors in 2013, a position he previously held from 1995 to 2005. Additionally, he is the chair of the Administration/Finance & Operations Committee.

“I am very honored to have been re-elected as the treasurer of

IHCA,” said Thompson. “I look forward to working with my fellow board members to meet the many challenges that face our member facilities and improve the quality of life of the residents we serve.”

“We have four very intelligent and dedicated leaders in our new officers,” said IHCA Executive Director Dave Voepel. “I look forward to working with them and the rest of the board as we move forward.”

“I was so honored to be in attendance to see the new IHCA Board Officers installed,” stated Immediate Past President John Vrba. “The association could not be in better hands with the leadership of Rhonda, Tom, Sam and Steve. I will support each of them any way possible as they work so hard to support those we serve and employ.” ■

National Assisted Living Week Celebrates Life in Assisted Living Communities

BY ASHLEY CALDWELL, MA

In the United States today, there are more than 30,000 assisted living (AL) communities providing approximately 1,000,000 licensed beds across the country. These communities offer residents a variety of services, like housekeeping and maintenance, meals and dining services, transportation and more in a safe, secure environment.

To recognize the importance of the role of assisted living in the continuum of care for seniors and individuals with disabilities, the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) established National Assisted Living Week® (NALW) in 1995. Since its inception, NALW has provided a unique opportunity for assisted living centers to celebrate with their residents, family, staff, volunteers and their local communities. This annual observance also acts as an opportunity to educate the public about this specific sector of long term care.

Each year, NCAL announces a specific theme for NALW and assisted living communities across the country are invited, and encouraged, to plan

activities that not only play into the theme, but that also celebrate AL residents and staff and the wonderful things happening within the communities every day.

The theme for NALW 2017 was *Family is Forever*. It was inspired by a quote from Maya Angelou: "Family isn't always blood, it's the people in your life who want you in theirs: the ones who accept you for who you are, the ones who would do anything to see you smile and who love you no matter what." Facilities were encouraged to plan activities that paid homage to the deep connections that form between residents and staff.

For some, it's traditional events like family picnics, movie nights and ice cream socials; for others it's new ideas each year – sports day, family game night or special family council meetings. Regardless, NALW is an opportunity to go the extra mile to do something special for community residents and their loved ones and to show appreciation for the staff who care for them.

"We participate every year," said Amy Connor, director of Courtyard Estates of Bushnell, a 40-bed assisted living center in Bushnell, IL. "We always kick off NALW with a family picnic on Grandparents Day to celebrate our tenants and their families. The



best part of the week or any day is hearing the laughter and conversations among the tenants, staff, families and visitors. This year's theme was *Family is Forever*. We had a lot of discussions about family traditions, recipes and sharing family photos. We learned so many new things about our tenants that help us know them even better."

"We did a different activity every day," explained Laura Baisley, marketing director at Arden Courts of Glen Ellyn, a 60-bed memory care AL center located in the suburbs of Chicago. NALW wasn't typically celebrated at the center before Baisley joined the staff earlier this year, but she felt it was an important tradition to start.

"I think it's important because I think we need the acknowledgement. The staff here does a wonderful job. We are creating a home for people, and that takes a special person who can be warm and caring and add a sense of quality to our residents' lives. I think that should be recognized by everyone. Plus," she added, "I like doing it because it also impacts the residents in the sense that they are able to have fun and see a different side of their caregivers, and it really does create a sense of family and improves the quality of everyone's life." ■

For more information about National Assisted Living Week, visit www.ahcancal.org/ncal/events/nalw.



Residents of Courtyard Estates of Bushnell took part in a special family tree project during NALW 2017.

IHCA **Convention and Expo** Explores Quality: **The Ultimate Frontier**

The Illinois Health Care Association (IHCA) hosted its 67th Annual Convention and Expo September 11–14, 2017, in Peoria, IL. The theme this year, *Quality: The Ultimate Frontier*, drew inspiration from the iconic science fiction hit, *Star Trek*, and focused on moving forward in the increasingly quality driven environment of long term care.

To assist their members in reaching that ultimate frontier, IHCA strives each day to provide vital services and up-to-date information to its members. Association staff work tirelessly to ensure that they are giving the support their members need to provide quality care each and every day. The Annual Convention and Expo is a key part of this support.

Each year, IHCA presents a four-day event that is packed with opportunities for attendees, including nearly 100 different educational sessions, an expo showcasing the newest in products and technology for long term care and a number of chances to have a good time with colleagues and friends. This year's event drew more than 860 registrants representing long term care centers from around the state, as well as exhibitors from nearly 140 companies.

"As a former nursing home administrator, I have a good understanding of the profession and I try to keep that perspective in mind when working with the Education, Convention and Trade Show Committee when choosing topics and speakers for convention," stated IHCA Vice President of Education and Clinical Services Debbie Jackson. "It is important to me that we provide these dedicated professionals with sessions that will help them in their daily work and, hopefully, make their job a little easier."

Per IHCA tradition, the week started Monday morning with the annual IHCA PAC/The Center-PAC Golf Outing at the beautiful WeaverRidge Golf Club. A total of 74 golfers showed up ready to enjoy a round of golf and some friendly competition, all while contributing to a good cause. Dollars

raised at the annual outing will aid in promoting long term care issues in the upcoming 2018 elections.

The convention officially kicked off Tuesday morning with the Opening General Session, where the 2017 Class of the IHCA Illinois Leaders Program was recognized for completing the year-long program. Also, the Associate Member of the Year award was presented to the hardworking team at ONR, Inc., and the first ever IHCA Excellence Award for Long Term Care Centers was presented to two outstanding member facilities – Alpine Fireside Health Center and Burgess Square Healthcare and Rehabilitation Centre (turn to page 9 to find out more about this new award).

After the awards presentation, IHCA honored outgoing board president John Vrba by bringing to fruition an idea he had been talking about for

The expo was open both Tuesday and Wednesday for attendees to browse the exhibits.



Vendors were on hand during the expo to speak to convention attendees about their products and services, and even offer some demonstrations.



The Shamrock Services team got into the spirit of this year's theme at the Annual Oksnevad 5K.

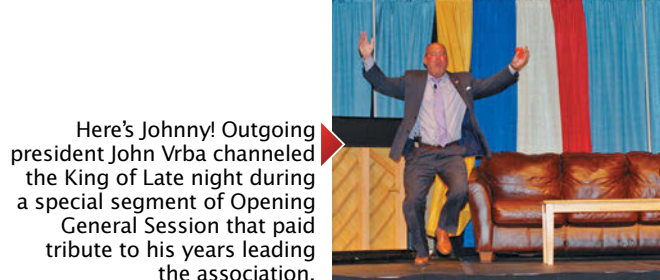




Brookly Becke, Scott Wilson and Diana Williams accepted the Associate Member of the Year Award on behalf of ONR, Inc.



Rep. Norine Hammond (seen here with the IHCA Public Policy staff and Executive Director Dave Voepel) was presented with the Voice of Senior Care Award at the Legislative Reception.



Here's Johnny! Outgoing president John Vrba channeled the King of Late night during a special segment of Opening General Session that paid tribute to his years leading the association.



IHCA's Ashley Snively was there to cheer racers on, including former IHCA president Holgeir Oksnevad, as they crossed the finish line.

years – a Johnny Carson-style talk show at Opening Session. With a stage styled to channel the King of Late Night, and surprise guests ranging from State Representative Patti Bellock to Burgess Square resident Jayne Hail, the *Johnny Vrba Show* was an entertaining and heartfelt end to Vrba's board presidency.

"Words cannot express my gratitude for such an incredible surprise at opening session," stated Vrba. "I will never forget that incredible day for as long as I live. Having Mark Parkinson, Rep. Bellock, Kristin, our administrator, my partner Mike and my incredible wife and sister there was simply priceless! Their kind words will never be forgotten. It has truly been my honor serving as the president of IHCA for the last five years and I will continue to work diligently on our board of directors to further advance this wonderful profession."

The Opening General Session concluded with nationally acclaimed speaker and comedian Jeanne Robertson, who delivered a keynote address that had the audience in stitches and encouraged everyone to "find the humor" in life. *(IHCA would like to thank Omnicare, A CVS Health Company for sponsoring this address.)*

The expo was open both Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. With more than 150 booths displaying products and services designed to assist long term care providers in their daily

efforts, there was plenty for attendees to see. To help drive traffic to the expo floor, lunch was served in the exhibit hall and attendees could earn one clock hour of continuing education each day by visiting select booths for educational materials, completing a brief test and turning in their finished tests to the IHCA registration desk.

In its 5th year, the Annual Oksnevad 5K Run/Walk continued to be a popular event. Held Tuesday evening on the Peoria Riverfront, 80 individuals took part in this year's race with ONR's Brookly Becke taking 1st Place with a time of 23.41. Proceeds from this year's race will not only help support the IHCA PAC, but a portion of the of the money raised was also donated to the Leukemia Research Foundation in honor of former IHCA President Holgeir Oksnevad, and his wife Karen, who have both battled cancer in the past.

Ovations: A Celebration of Long Term Care Nurses was held Wednesday morning, paying tribute to the remarkable efforts of long term care nursing professionals. At the breakfast, the Long Term Care Nurses Association (LTCNA) presented the 2017 Nursing Awards, with more than 30 nominees recognized among the four categories: Certified Nursing Assistant, Nurse, MDS Coordinator and Director of Nursing. Prior to the awards presentation, Kay Frances gave a keynote, sharing her message, "lighten up, stress less and take care

of ourselves." *(Both LTCNA and IHCA would like to thank Forum Extended Care Services for sponsoring this address.)*

Wednesday evening, attendees were invited to attend the Legislative Reception held at the Peoria Marriott Pere Marquette and sponsored by Medline Industries, Inc. During the reception, Rep. Norine Hammond was presented with the *Voice of Senior Care* award for her hard work and commitment to issues pertinent to long term care.

Educational sessions concluded Thursday afternoon, officially bringing the 67th Annual Convention and Expo to a close. Please join IHCA next year for the 68th Annual Convention and Expo and have some fun at their movie-themed event: *Lights, Camera, Action: Spotlight on Quality.* ■

IHCA would like to offer its gratitude to everyone who helped make this year's event a success. Thank you to the IHCA Board of Directors, the IHCA Education, Convention and Trade Show Committee, the IHCA staff, all of our session speakers, expo exhibitors, sponsors and attendees. IHCA would also like to thank the staff at the Peoria Civic Center, Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Peoria Marriott Pere Marquette, Courtyard Peoria Downtown and other local hotels for their assistance with this event.

ALISHA HEYEN

Chosen as AHCA/NCAL Future Leader

Alisha Heyen, administrator of Carlinville Rehabilitation & Health Care Center, a Tutura Senior Living & Health Care Community, in Carlinville, Illinois, has been chosen by the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) as a member of the 2017/2018 class of the Future Leaders program.

The AHCA/NCAL Future Leaders program has been offering training and guidance for long term and post-acute care professionals since its inception in 2004. AHCA/NCAL introduced the program in order to assist providers by helping them improve their leadership skills and aide them in their careers. Future Leader participants represent the interests of both state and national long term care providers. They are chosen for their leadership potential and dedication to the profession.

In June 2014, Alisha Heyen began working as the admissions and marketing coordinator at Carlinville Rehabilitation & Health Care Center, where her background in communications made her a valued member of the team. It was this position that helped her realize that long term care was the right field for her.

In 2015, Heyen took an important step forward, in both her education and her career, by obtaining her Master of Speech Communication Degree in Health Communication. Later that year she was promoted to administrator at Carlinville Rehab & Health Care, a position at which she has excelled since day one. She is a well-respected and dedicated professional who strives each day to go above and beyond for her residents and staff.

As a member of the IHCA Illinois Leaders program Class of 2017, Heyen has worked throughout the year to build on her leadership skills and expand

her professional knowledge to become a stronger and more productive leader. By becoming a part of the AHCA/NCAL Future Leaders program, she hopes to continue building on her leadership potential and growing in her professional career.

"I am honored to be given the opportunity to participate in the Future Leaders Program of 2017/2018," said Heyen. "I believe this opportunity will give me a chance to strengthen my leadership skills and create a positive impact on my residents and staff. I look forward to networking and expanding my professional knowledge in the next year."

"Alisha is a dedicated and compassionate long term care professional," added IHCA Executive Director David Voepel. "We are proud to have her as a member of our organization and look forward to seeing where this exciting new opportunity will take her in the future." ■

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