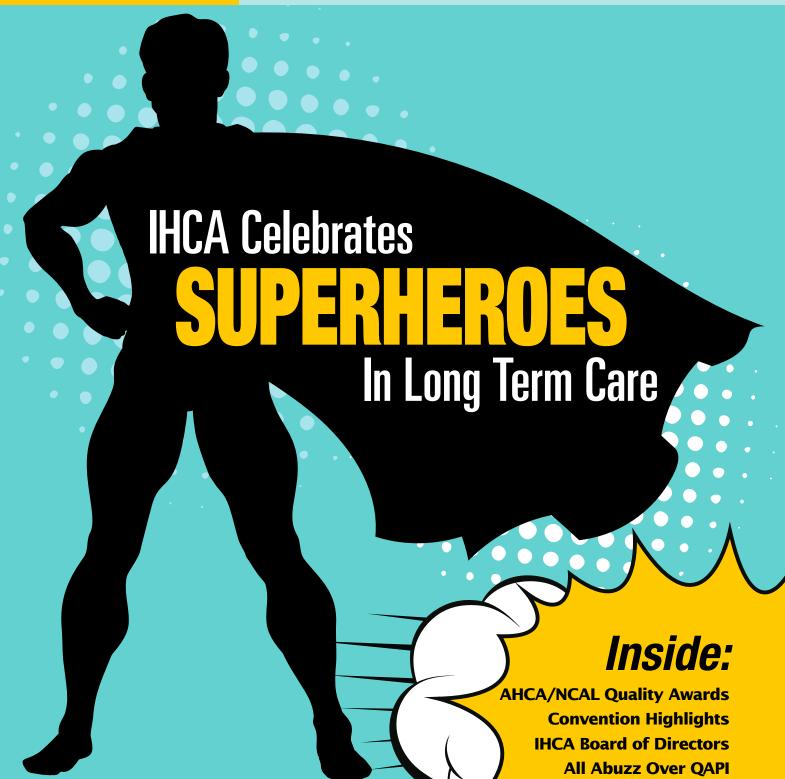
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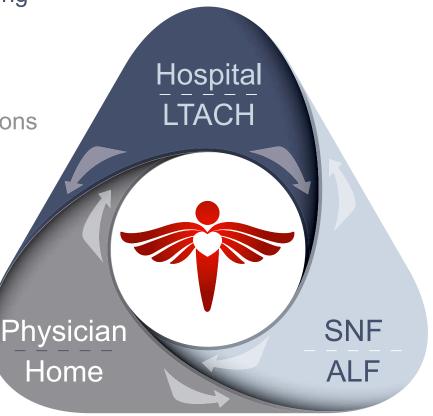
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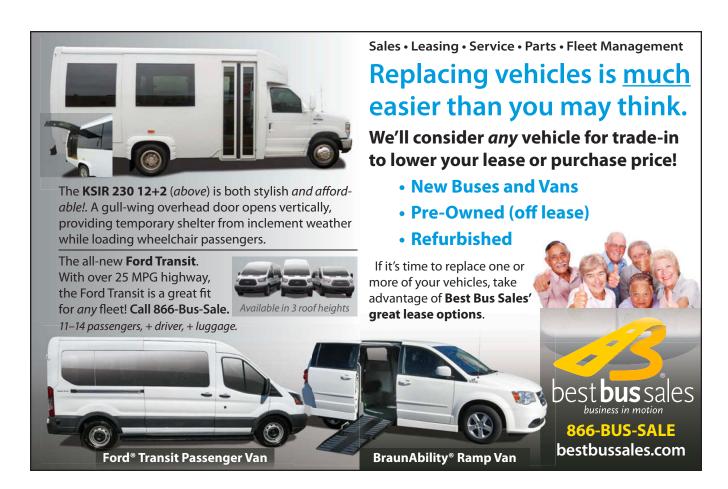
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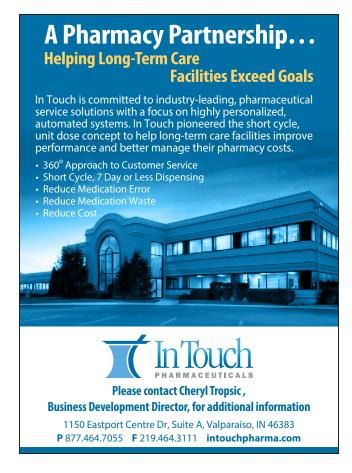
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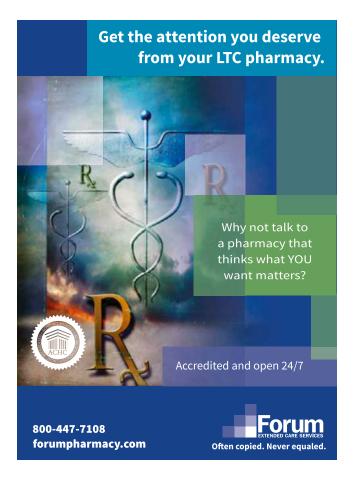


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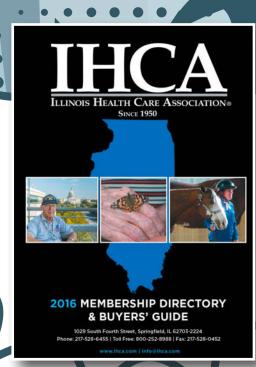
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From the Association

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2016 issue of LTC Today! As always, this past year in our profession has been an adventure - full of ups and downs, new developments, new information and our constant efforts to give our residents the top quality care they deserve.

Quality is a major focus in long term care today. This year's convention theme – Quality Superheroes - paid homage to the hard work and dedication that goes into the quality care you give to the residents in your care each day. Small acts of heroism happen in our centers each day, and often go unnoticed. It's important to remember that each of you, and each member of your staff, is a superhero for the work you do! Turn to page 16 to find out more about the 66th Annual Convention & Expo, and stay tuned for more information about the 67th Annual IHCA Convention and Expo, Quality: The Ultimate Frontier, coming to you in September 2017.

CNAs play a key role in the day-to-day operation of our long term care centers and can have a major impact on the quality of care your residents receive. Earlier this year, IHCA partnered with the National Association of Health Care Assistants (NAHCA) in an effort to bring greater focus to the valuable services that CNAs and other direct caregivers can offer. Turn to page 20 to check out the article written by NAHCA's Chief Operating Officer, Jeff Wellman, regarding the Quality Assurance/Performance Improvement (QAPI) initiative and how CNAs and other caregivers will become involved as it progresses. Also, find out more about NAHCA on page 21.

In honor of the important work that direct care workers do, the Illinois Department on Aging (DoA) presents its Outstanding Caregiver Awards each year. This award recognizes direct care workers over the age of 55 who have provided outstanding direct care to seniors while working in long term care in Illinois. At the state fair in August, the DoA presented the 2016 Outstanding Caregiver Awards. One of this year's winners was Sharon Rigler, a CNA at Timbercreek Rehab & Health Care in Pekin, IL. Find out more on page 12.

In this issue you'll also find information on the IHCA member centers who were awarded an AHCA Quality Award in 2016, as well as an article about Imboden Creek Living Center's Molly Carpenter, who was chosen as a member of the class of 2017 for AHCA's Future Leader's program.

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

Sincerely,



John Vrba **IHCA President**



Dave Voepel IHCA Executive Director



Illinois Health Care Association 1029 South Fourth Street Springfield, IL 62703 Phone: (217) 528-6455 Fax: (217) 528-0452 Website: www.ihca.com

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IHCA Member Centers Receive AHCA/NCAL

Quality Awards

BY ASHLEY CALDWELL, MA

he National Quality Awards Program, launched by the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) in 1996, offers direction for providers of long term care who want to improve their performance excellence. The program has three progressive steps: Bronze Award – Commitment to Quality; Silver Award – Achievement in Quality; and Gold Award – Excellence in Quality. The criteria for the program is based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, a recognized improvement and innovation framework that provides an integrated approach to important quality and management areas.

The application process is arduous and time-consuming, and certainly requires a team effort. However, the distinction of receiving a National Quality Award, of moving through the steps, and the knowledge picked up along the way is worth it. In 2016, five IHCA member centers were awarded the Bronze Award and one received the Silver Award. Keep reading to find out more about these exceptional centers.

Odin Healthcare Center – Silver Award



Odin Healthcare Center is a 99-bed skilled nursing center located in Odin, IL. The building opened in 1975 when two local women saw a need for quality long term care in the area. Morgan Mulvany, the facility administrator, began working at Odin more than a decade ago and worked her way from LPN to DON and eventually to administrator. Shortly after she took over as administrator, Mulvany and her staff began work on the AHCA/NCAL Silver Quality Award. The center had previously received the Bronze Award and retained an interest in the program. Their corporation, Sava Senior Care, has a number of processes in place that helped with the award application process.

"The application process was very challenging and rewarding," stated Mulvany. "It was a self reflection of the building, staff and what we provide for our residents."

In order to complete the application process, a great deal of data had to be compiled and reviewed. This gave the staff an in-depth look at the systems and processes already in place, and what they could change to ensure future successes and positive outcomes.

"When we found out we had been awarded the AHCA Silver Quality Award we were beyond excited," added Mulvany. "The staff was very proud to be able to display their hard work and the quality care we strive to give on a daily basis, to be rewarded for their work."

Coulterville Rehabilitation & Health Care Center -**Bronze Award**



Built in 1999, Coulterville Rehabilitation & Health Care Center services the rural community of Coulterville, IL. The Tutera Group purchased the 75-bed skilled facility in 2014. The staff at Coulterville Rehab prides itself on its commitment to customer service.

Administrator Whitney Oberlink joined the facility in 2014. He looked at the National Quality Awards as a way to show not only his facility, but long term care in general, in a positive light. Earning the Bronze Award for Quality was a great first step in that direction.

"Unfortunately," explained Oberlink, "the long term care profession is often plagued with mostly negative attention. This program was an opportunity to earn some much deserved positive attention for our profession and our facility."

According to Oberlink, the application process was very structured and detailed. It took several months to complete, and the members of the facility's Quality Assurance Committee worked hard to ensure that everything was done properly. As they worked through the process, staff members were thankful that the facility already had programs and systems in place that helped to successfully reach the goals of the awards program. In addition, the process allowed the staff to reflect on the work they were already doing, and to be proud of it.

"We learned to take credit for the work that we were already doing," stated Oberlink, "and to push our efforts for quality improvement even further."

Evergreen Nursing & Rehabilitation Center – Bronze Award



Located in Effingham, IL, Evergreen Nursing & Rehabilitation Center has been serving its community since 1974. This 120-bed skilled nursing center offers a diverse range of services, allowing it to care for residents with a broad range of medical needs, including complex medical or respiratory illnesses, traumatic brain injuries, stroke recovery, post-surgical care, and wound and orthopedic rehabilitation. Their comprehensive services, including an onsite nurse practitioner, focus on patients' physical, mental and emotional needs.

Administrator Josh Mathis has been with the facility for more than 16 years. Before becoming administrator earlier this year, he spent four years as assistant administrator. He knows the residents and staff inside and out, and wanted the hard work and quality care he saw each day to be recognized. The National Quality Awards program gave the team at Evergreen the perfect opportunity to get that recognition.

"The application process was very in-depth," said Mathis. "At any given time there were around six of us working on it and it took at least six months to complete."

The team at Evergreen got a close up look at the processes and systems they had in place. They were able to further their abilities to solve problems and strategize ways to handle various situations. The entire process was a fantastic learning experience that brought the staff even closer together as a team, which made the announcement that they were successful in their mission even sweeter.

"We were very honored to be recognized as a Bronze Award winner," stated Mathis. "We have a caring staff."

Lakeland Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center – Bronze Award



Lakeland Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center opened in Effingham, IL, in 1971. Today the facility boasts 156 skilled beds and offers a variety of services. In addition to long term care, Lakeland's Lotus unit caters to post-surgical rehabilitation and their Courtyard unit provides care for individuals with memory challenges. As part of the Tutera Group, the center has a strong support network and a number of systems in place to ensure they are providing quality care.

This year, Administrator William Wade felt it was time to see how the center measured up to the high standards set forth by the National Quality Awards Program. According to Wade, the application process was a challenge, but Lakeland has a great team and everyone worked together to get it done. "That is how we approach anything we want to accomplish – teamwork," he explained.

Completing the application was also a learning experience for the entire Lakeland team. "We learned how important continuous quality improvement is," he said. "It really reinforced our commitment to the quality improvement process."

When it was announced that Lakeland had been awarded the Bronze Award, Wade and his staff were thrilled and proud to see all of their efforts come to fruition. "I was personally very proud of our team," Wade stated. "It was validation of all of the hard work our team has put in over the last few years."

Nature Trail Health Care Center - Bronze Award

Nature Trail Health Care Center is a 74-bed skilled nursing center located in Mt. Vernon, IL. Owned by Sava Senior Care, Nature Trail offers residents a safe and comfortable environment in a scenic location. The staff at Nature Trail is committed to providing compassionate, family oriented care, both short term and long term. They focus on the residents, their lives, their health and their families.

During a team meeting, Administrator Tim Bledsoe and his staff decided that earning a quality award was a challenge they needed to meet head on. They trusted that they were already providing a high level of quality care for their residents, but that they could learn from the award process. "We believed that utilizing and applying the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program criteria to our facility would allow us to better define and adapt our process," said Bledsoe, "leading to performance excellence for our residents, their families and the Mt. Vernon community."

The announcement that Nature Trail had received the Bronze Award for Quality was cause for a big celebration at

the center. "I was very proud of our team at Nature Trail," said Bledsoe. "The residents and their families were proud of the staff and the facility. It made them feel better about their decision to live or place their loved one at Nature Trail."

Valley Hi Nursing and Rehab - Bronze Award



Valley Hi Nursing and Rehab in Woodstock, IL, has a lengthy and diverse history in McHenry County. What started as a poor farm in the 1800s has transformed over the years into a state-of-the-art long term care center. This 128-bed nursing center offers a wide variety of services, including short term rehabilitation, long term care and hospice care. Their mission is to take care of those least able to care of themselves.

Administrator Tom Annarella is an active member of the Illinois Health Care Association. When the association rejoined AHCA/NCAL in 2013, he began looking at the various programs they offered, particularly the National Quality Awards. Since Annarella became the center's administrator in 2010, the staff had really started to embrace resident centered care and a more quality focused approach to programming.

"By going for the Bronze Award," explained Annarella, "it did two things. It reinforced what we were doing and the value of those efforts, and it recognized the successes of the hard work we put in to accomplish our goals."

The award application was a little daunting, according to Annarella, and required a lot of data to be compiled and organized. The center's assistant administrator took the lead on the project, working with their Interdisciplinary Team to make sure everything was complete. Thanks to programming already in place at the facility, the necessary information was readily available, though it took several months to prepare it in the correct format.

"During the process, we learned a lot about the strengths of our quality assurance program and identified areas that we could improve upon," said Annarella. "We were extremely excited when we learned that we had received the award, and proud of the efforts put in by our Interdisciplinary Team and the rest of our staff."

For more information on the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program, please visit https://www.ahcancal.org/quality_improvement/ quality_award.





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CNA SHARON RIGLER Honored for Contributions to Long Term Care

Chosen as an Illinois Department on Aging Outstanding Caregiver of the Year Award Recipient



BY ASHLEY CALDWELL, MA

ach fiscal year, the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) presents the Outstanding Caregiver of the Year Awards. The awards program was created in 2011 to recognize direct care workers over the age of 55 who have provided outstanding care to seniors in long term care in Illinois and honor them for their dedication and hard work.

For a caregiver to be considered, the nominator must submit the program nomination form along with a letter of recommendation that explains why they think their nominee is outstanding, including specific examples of their merit. Once all of the nominations are collected, a winner is chosen in each of five categories: Nursing Facilities; Home Health Services; Community Care Program Services; Older American Act Services; and Housing Facilities.

When Lisa McCoy, administrator at Timbercreek Rehab & Health Care in Pekin, IL, found out about the 2016 Outstanding Caregiver Awards she knew she had the perfect nominee – Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Sharon Rigler. Rigler has been a fixture at Timbercreek for more than a decade. She began her career in long term care, a new path for her, after seeing the excellent care, the compassion and the kindness her father received as a resident at the facility. While spending time with her ailing father, Rigler witnessed what long

term care nurses and nursing assistants really do on a daily basis. She decided that becoming a CNA was what she was meant to do, and quickly began working on making that dream a reality.

"It takes a tremendous amount of courage and determination to make a career shift as an adult, and it's very humbling to see someone live their dream," said McCoy. "Sharon's decision to pursue becoming a CNA was, and is, impressive. It is obvious that the choice she made was a great decision."

Rigler is, by all accounts, an incredibly kind, loving, gracious and comforting individual. She exhibits an extraordinary amount of patience with those in her care. She is always ready to help in any way she can and she treats everyone the way she would want to be treated – with

"It takes a tremendous amount of courage and determination to make a career shift as an adult, and it's very humbling to see someone live their dream... It is obvious that the choice she made was a great decision."

Administrator Lisa McCoy, Timbercreek Rehab & Health Care

thoughtfulness, dignity and respect. Rigler does her job with joy and dedication each day.

"Her work ethic puts us all to shame!" McCoy stated. "It is awe-inspiring to see how much she loves her residents and her job. I am honored to have her on our team."

Traditionally, the Outstanding Caregiver Awards are presented at the Annual Governor's Conference on Aging, held each December in Chicago. However, due to the major state budget impasse, the 2015 conference was eventually canceled. Instead, the 2016 Outstanding Caregiver Awards were presented at Senior Day during the Illinois State Fair.

"We are pleased to acknowledge the contributions these individuals have made," said IDoA Division Manager of Community Relations and Outreach Elizabeth Delheimer in a press release announcing the winners. "Their accomplishments have helped make Illinois communities a better place to live and we thank them for their dedication." ■



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67th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo

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MOLLY CARPENTER Chosen as an AHCA/NCAL Future Leader

BY ASHLEY CALDWELL, MA

olly Carpenter, administrator at Imboden Creek Living Center in Decatur, IL, has been selected by the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living as a member of the 2016/2017 class of their Future Leaders program.

The AHCA/NCAL Future Leaders program was created in 2004. It was designed as a year-long program that offers training and guidance for long term and post-acute care professionals in order to help them improve their leadership skills and aide them in their professional endeavors. Those selected are chosen for their leadership potential, and represent the interests of both state and national long term care providers. By taking part in this program, Carpenter joins an elite group of fellow IHCA members who also completed the Future Leaders program, including IHCA President John Vrba, IHCA Vice President Rhonda Luther (COO of Imboden Creek Health Services) and IHCA Secretary Tom Annarella.

"I'm honored to have been selected to represent our association and more importantly our profession in the Future Leaders program. The opportunity to interact with professionals from other states and glean from them their insights and experiences is exciting."

Carpenter, who holds a bachelor's degree in Christian leadership and

management from Lincoln Christian University, joined Imboden Creek Health Services in 1994 as a CNA and held several other positions before becoming administrator of Imboden Creek Living Center in 2007. She is an active member of IHCA and has served on several of the association's committees.

Additionally, Carpenter was a member of the inaugural class of the IHCA Illinois Leaders program, which was modeled after the AHCA/NCAL program. She and her fellow Illinois Leaders finished their program in September, and were each presented with a plaque commemorating their achievement at the 66th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo. She joined her new Future Leaders classmates a few weeks later at the Future Leaders Symposium in Washington, D.C.

"Molly is truly dedicated to the long term care profession," stated IHCA Executive Director David Voepel. "She continues to prove herself as a leader and is a real asset to our association. We are thrilled for her as she embarks on this new opportunity, and we couldn't be more proud of her."



"I'm honored to have been selected to represent our association and more importantly our profession in the Future Leaders program. The opportunity to interact with professionals from other states and glean from them their insights and experiences is exciting."

Molly Carpenter

IHCA Convention and Expo Honors Superheroes in Long Term Care

he 66th Annual IHCA Convention and Expo was held September 12-15, 2016, in Peoria, IL. The theme this year was *Quality Superheroes*, which was chosen to honor the countless acts of heroism that take place in long term care centers each day. From little things like taking the time to make a resident smile, to major things like life-saving measures and hospice care, long term care providers are superheroes to the individuals they serve.

To help support these superheroes – as any trusty sidekick should – the Illinois Health Care Association (IHCA) strives each day to provide vital services and up-to-date information to its members. IHCA staff work tirelessly to ensure that they are providing the education and advocacy their members need to provide quality care each and every day.

Each year, IHCA hosts one of the nation's biggest and best attended convention and expos for long term care professionals. This year's event saw nearly 1,000 registrants representing more than 100 long term care facilities from around the state, as well as exhibitors from more than 150 companies. Those in attendance were offered nearly 100 educational sessions to choose from, an expo showcasing the newest in products and technology for long term care and a number of chances to kick back and mingle with colleagues and friends.

"We are so proud to be able to plan and execute this convention and expo each year," said IHCA Executive Director David Voepel. "Giving the dedicated professionals who work in long term care the opportunity to learn and share ideas with their peers is our privilege. The positive energy felt during those four days is truly fantastic."

Monday, September 12 turned out to be a beautiful day for the annual IHCA PAC/The Center-PAC golf outing. The 90 golfers who took to the links at WeaverRidge Golf Club enjoyed bright blue skies and sunshine while partaking in some friendly competition for a good cause.

On Tuesday morning, the convention officially kicked off with the Opening General Session and Awards Ceremony, with IHCA President John Vrba and Executive Director David Voepel acting as the emcees. After opening remarks, the inaugural class of the IHCA Illinois Leaders program was brought on stage in recognition of their completion of the year-long program. Tom Annarella, IHCA secretary and chair of the program, joined them on stage to present each member of the class with a commemorative plaque in honor all of their hard work.

Vrba and Voepel then presented the 2016 IHCA Staff and Volunteer Awards, recognizing 70 nominees from IHCA member centers in 14 different categories, including staff awards ranging from Environmental Services to Administrator, as well as specialty



Ninety golfers hit the links on Monday, Sept. 12, for the Annual PAC Golf Outing at WeaverRidge Golf Club.



Lisa Miller of Hawthorne Inn of Danville was named the 2016 Administrator of the Year during the 2016 IHCA Awards Presentation.

Members of the inaugural class of the IHCA Illinois Leaders Program were recognized at the Opening Session in celebration of their completion of the year-long program.



IHCA
Superheroes
Holgeir and
Karen Oksnevad
were all smiles
after finishing
the 5k that was
named in their
honor.



awards like Innovative Program and Volunteer. The longevity, dedication, compassion and creativity represented by this year's award nominees and winners was truly inspiring. Following the awards presentation, keynote speaker Craig Zablocki took to the stage to entertain the crowd with his special blend of humor and inspiration, encouraging everyone to find the enthusiasm and joy that we had as children. (IHCA would like to thank Omnicare/CVS for sponsoring the keynote address this year.)



The Party at the Riverfront (formerly the Kickoff Party) got rave reviews for its new location. Good food and fun were had by all.



Exhibitors had a good time channeling their inner superheroes with this year's theme, and encouraged attendees to do the same!



Expo attendees were invited to browse the booths and reach out to IHCA exhibitors for information on the latest products and services in long term care.



Sen. Sam McCann and Rep. Michael Unes (pictured here with members of IHCA and the IHCA staff) were both recipients of the Voice of Senior Care Award at this year's Legislative Reception.

The expo took place both Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. Each year, IHCA works to offer both attendees and exhibitors the best experience possible. This year was no exception. The expo floorplan was carefully designed to lead attendees past as many booths as possible as they walked through. Lunch was served on the expo floor and there was a fun photo booth complete with a superhero themed background and costumes. Exhibitors got into the spirit of the theme this year, too, with booth decorations and giveaways, and even some costumes! New for 2016, attendees could earn CEs in the expo. By visiting select vendors each day, collecting the educational materials provided, taking a short test and submitting their tests at the registration desk, attendees could earn one CE each day of the expo, for an extra two CEs. This new opportunity seemed to go over well with the vendors and participants, and will likely be offered again next year.

"This year's convention and expo was full of energy. It 'rocked' with an agenda of events to accommodate all," said Rick Leskovisek of M.E.S. of Illinois, Inc./HPSI, an IHCA exhibitor and Preferred Vendor. "I really enjoyed the opening session, awards presentations and speaker, not to mention seeing so many attendees and vendors at one gathering. Production at its best! Great job to team IHCA!"

The 4th Annual Oksnevad 5k Run/ Walk, an event that continues to grow in size and popularity each year, was held Tuesday evening on the Peoria Riverfront, followed directly by the opening night party. A total of 80 individuals registered for this year's race (up 20 from last year) and some even came dressed up as their favorite superhero! Proceeds from the race will help the IHCA PAC support legislators and candidates who support long term care issues. In addition, 15 percent of the money raised will be donated to the Leukemia Research Foundation in honor of former IHCA President Holgeir Oksnevad and his wife, Karen, who have both battled cancer in recent years. Congratulations to Medline's BJ

Flock for being the all-around winner of the event.

Ovations: A Celebration of Long Term Care Nurses was held Wednesday morning, paying tribute to the remarkable efforts of the nursing staff in long term care centers. The Long Term Care Nurses Association (LTCNA), in conjunction with IHCA, presented the 2016 Nursing Awards, with nearly 40 nominees recognized among the five categories. After the awards, Laurie Guest gave a keynote address that was both entertaining and motivational, bringing this celebratory event to a close on a high note. (Both LTCNA and IHCA would like to thank Ability/ eHDS for sponsoring this address.)

After educational sessions came to a close on Wednesday, 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. Michael Unes and Sen. Sam McCann were both presented with the Voice of Senior Care award for their hard work and commitment to issues pertinent to long term care. Other legislators to be honored with this award include Sens. Dale Righter, Heather Steans and Chris Nybo.

Educational sessions concluded Thursday afternoon, officially bringing the 66th Annual Convention and Expo to a close. Please join IHCA next year for the 67th Annual Convention and Expo and have some fun with our Star Trek themed event: Quality: The Ultimate Frontier. \blacksquare

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.

IHCA Says Goodbye to Board Members, Welcomes New Faces

ver the summer, the IHCA membership elected representatives from the association's four constituencies (associate and individual members, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living centers and facilities/programs for the intellectually and developmentally disabled) to serve on the IHCA Board of Directors. As a result, the board is bidding a fond farewell to two of its outstanding members and welcoming a few new faces to the group.

Outgoing Members

Scott Wilson | ONR, Inc.

Scott Wilson of ONR. Inc. has been a member of IHCA for nearly 20 years. He was elected to serve as the associate and individual member vice president



in 2012. For the past four years he has served the interests of his constituency, and the IHCA membership overall, on the IHCA Board of Directors, bringing his own unique perspective and experience to the group. Wilson has held various positions in long term care during his lengthy tenure in the profession, from clinician to business development. He has worked with small facilities, county and community based facilities and some of the largest corporations in the profession. His years of experience have given him a true understanding of long term care.

"It's truly been an honor to have a seat at the table and discuss the issues surrounding our profession with some of the best and brightest in Illinois. I've had the privilege to work with this group in Springfield as well as D.C. to make sure our voice is heard. My term on the board has come to a close, but I will remain very active with IHCA and help support our PAC to make sure our issues continue to be heard. I want to thank the staff at the IHCA office for their support. You are the best! I would also like to thank Dave Voepel and John Vrba, as they lead our association. And finally, to the associate members that elected me to this position, thank you for your support and allowing me to represent our voice."

Martha Warford | Beverly Farm Foundation

Martha Warford is the executive director of the Beverly Farm Foundation in Godfrey, IL. She has more



than 25 years of experience in the long term care profession dealing with the intellectual/developmental disabilities population. Over the years, she has gained a wealth of knowledge regarding ICF/DD facilities, Day Training programs and Community Integrated Living Arrangements.

Warford has a master's degree in public administration and is a licensed nursing home administrator. She has been a member of IHCA since 2002 and served on the IHCA ID/DD **Constituency Steering Committee** prior to serving as secretary/ treasurer of the board of The Center for Developmental Disabilities Advocacy and Community Supports (The Center). She actively participates in legislative efforts for the profession and has served as The Center's representative to the IHCA board for the last two years. "Both IHCA and The Center continue to advocate for our profession, our organizations and quality in services," said Warford. "I encourage all providers to get involved with our association."

Incoming Members

Andrew Cutler

is the new

Andrew Cutler | FGMK, LLC

associate and individual member vice president. As managing director for FGMK, LLC, he specializes in resolving operational, reimbursement and regulatory issues for health care providers across the continuum of care. He puts his expertise to work for his clients, advising health care providers on repositions, buy-sell agreements and operational systems analysis. He is also an authority on Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement systems fraud and abuse, regulatory compliance, health care accounting and contract negotiations.

Prior to joining FGMK, Cutler was a partner in the health care group of Frost, Ruttenberg & Rothblatt (now Marcum LLP). He regularly speaks on reimbursement and regulatory changes, operational management strategies and profit and loss issues. Cutler received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Illinois in Political Science; has authored articles for prominent trade magazines and journals; and is involved in several organizations, including American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Illinois CPA Society.

"I have been associated with the Illinois Health Care Association for the better part of the past 20 years. I have served on the Administration and Finance Committee and the Associate and Individual Constituency Committee for the past five years," said Cutler. "IHCA is a wonderful organization that benefits a tremendous profession. The organization and the membership is passionate about their profession, and I look forward to serving in my new role on the board of directors.

Gerald Harman | Faith Care Center

Gerald Harman brings a lifetime of health care provider knowledge and experience to his new position on



and the Metropolitan St. Louis

Hospital Association.

In 2004, Harman became CEO of Faith Countryside Homes, a not-forprofit organization that has been serving the Highland, IL, area for more than 30 years. They offer a full range of care options, including independent living apartments, assisted living care and long term care. As the nursing facility non-proprietary vice president, Harman will represent the interests of IHCA members in the notfor-profit sector. "The Illinois Health Care Association provides beneficial services, education and representation for members and the residents we serve. I look forward to serving on the board," said Harman.

Ron Messner | Apostolic Christian Services

Ron Messner's experience in long term care is both extensive and diverse. He has a master's degree in social



work and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker as well as a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator. During his time at Apostolic Christian Timber Ridge, he has also taken on additional responsibilities at the state level. Messner has served on the Quality Committee of the Statewide Advisory Council. He is also the agency representative to the North Central Network Advisory Committee of the Illinois Department of Human Services.

A longtime member of IHCA, Messner served as the president of the association's first Special Population Chapter. He began serving on the ID/DD Constituency Steering Committee when it was established by the association, and was active in other areas of IHCA as well. Messner currently serves as the vice president of the Center for Developmental Disabilities and Community Supports (The Center) and has served in this position since its inception. In addition to being elected for another term as the vice president of The Center's Board of Directors during the recent election, he was also chosen to serve as one of the two CDDACS representatives on the IHCA Board of Directors. "I think we have both a tremendous opportunity and a tremendous challenge in addressing the conflict of shrinking public resources and growing service needs for people who are elderly or disabled," said Messner.

The new members of the board of directors were installed for a 2-year term during the 66th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo in Peoria. They will be up for election again in 2018. IHCA will hold an election next year for the officers of the board of directors.

Long Term Care is All Abuzz Over QAPI

BY JEFF WELLMAN

ave you heard your administrator, Director of Nursing Services or Quality Assurance Nurse mention QAPI? If not, then it's quite likely that in the very near future you will. Long term care (LTC) has long been committed to quality. In the early 90s, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), which is now The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), established a series of regulations to promote quality assurance (QA) activities in nursing facilities. As a result, nursing centers quickly began implementing quality assurance programs.

For more than 20 years long term care providers have been working to make sure that our QA activities promote efficient and effective ways of addressing problems like falls, weight loss, wound care and others. The QA process works by looking at various reports, like the Minimum Data Set (MDS), the falls report, the In-take and Out-put (INO) sheets and other documents that help identify areas that may be improved on in the delivery of care. Once issues have been identified, the QA nurse or QA coordinator will get the QA committee together to come up with a plan to correct the presenting problem.

Recently, CMS identified the fact that they intend to add a new element to LTC's QA processes: Performance Improvement (PI). Performance Improvement is different from QA activities in that PI uses information to predict future issues and to implement solutions before they actually become a problem. Performance improvement also differs from quality assurance processes because PI activities tend to be more participatory in nature. What that means is that CNAs and other departments in nursing centers may become more involved in producing quality of life and health in the future.

The main reason CNAs and other departments might be more involved in QAPI is because a basic principle of PI is that the people closest to the potential problem have to be involved in identifying possible solutions, implementation and assessment of those solutions once they are enacted. If the problem is the potential for increased falls, who would have the most knowledge and experience with this subject? In this example, you would want nursing, CNAs, physical therapy, housekeeping and maintenance involved because they are most likely to have information and ideas that relate to the potential issue of concern.

QAPI is an important issue.

NAHCA will be working to provide valuable information about QAPI so our members will be well-informed. If you are interested, please go to the QAPI-at-a-glance page on CMS' website: http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertification GenInfo/Downloads/Survey-and-Cert-Letter-13-05.pdf. ■

Jeff Wellman is chief operating officer of the National Association of Health Care Assistants.

QAPI: The Five Elements

CMS developed a general framework for implementing a QAPI program in long term care centers, based on five key elements of effective quality management.

Element 1: Design and Scope

A QAPI program should be ongoing and comprehensive and should address all systems of care and management practices, and should always include clinical care, quality of life and resident choice.

Element 2: Governance and Leadership

The governing body and/or administration of the center need to develop a culture that involves seeking input from facility staff, residents and their families. They should foster a culture where QAPI is a priority by ensuring that policies are developed to sustain it and that staff is comfortable discussing quality problems and areas for improvement.

Element 3: Feedback, Data Systems and Monitoring

The facility should put systems in place to monitor care that actively incorporate input from staff, residents, families and others as appropriate. This includes using Performance Indicators to monitor a wide range of care processes and outcomes, and reviewing findings against established benchmarks.

Element 4: Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs)

A Performance Improvement Project (PIP) is a concentrated effort on a particular problem in one area of the facility or facility wide; it involves gathering information systematically to clarify issues or problems, and intervening for improvements.

Element 5: Systematic Analysis and Systemic Action

The center should use a thorough systematic approach to determine when in-depth analysis is needed to fully understand the problem, its causes, and implications of a change. Centers will be expected to develop policies and procedures and demonstrate proficiency in the use of Root Cause Analysis.

The National Association of **Health Care Assistants**



Motivating, educating and developing frontline excellence!

ealth care assistants play a huge role in the daily operation of a long term care center. In every department, these dedicated individuals are there, offering assistance and ensuring that the needs and wants of the individuals they serve are being met. Without certified nursing assistants (CNAs) and other caregivers, skilled nursing facilities and other long term care centers would not be able to provide the quality care their residents deserve.

For more than 20 years, the National Association of Health Care Assistants (NAHCA) has been focused on elevating the professional standing and performance quality of health care assistants through recognition, motivation, education and advocacy. Established in 1995 by two former CNAs, Lori Porter and Lisa Sweet, NAHCA is a non-profit organization that represents nursing assistants with the goal of assuring the highest quality of care for the elderly individuals residing in our nation's long term care centers. Both Porter and Sweet also wanted to ensure that nursing assistants were getting the recognition they deserve for their hard work and dedication.

Today, the organization boasts more than 26,000 members representing more than 500 nursing centers from across the nation. NAHCA has members in 29 states and the District of Columbia and is active in the legislative arena, speaking out on important issues that affect CNAs and the long term care profession.

To help members get the support they need, NAHCA offers several membership options for both facilities and individuals. Members have access to the association's professional resources, like advocacy and key information delivered both electronically and in print, as well as other important tools for CNAs. NAHCA CareForce membership offers long term care centers even more resources, giving them the opportunity to focus on staff development, turnover reduction and performance enhancement. Through their educational programming, the Virtual Campus of Care, CNAs can further their education and professional knowledge by taking part in leadership development, peer mentoring, state-of-the-art continuing education and specialty certifications. NAHCA strives to help transform frontline caregivers, resulting in confident, cooperative and dedicated employees who give top quality care.

In February of this year, IHCA and NAHCA initiated a partnership to benefit both of their associations and their members. "NAHCA is very excited about this partnership with Illinois Health Care Association," said NAHCA Chief Operating Officer Jeff Wellman. "By working toward a common goal in educating and developing our frontline caregivers, we will improve the overall care of Illinois' frail and elderly citizens."

The collaboration will allow NAHCA to work closely with long term care providers in Illinois in order to recognize the valuable contributions of nursing assistants and other direct caregivers and to bring a focus to quality care in centers throughout the state.

"We consistently hear about staffing shortages and CNA retention issues from our members," said IHCA Executive Director David Voepel. "IHCA is proud to enter into this new partnership to bring light to these important issues and to work together to alleviate them."

"This partnership is based upon a shared desire to positively impact quality through education and advocacy," added Lori J. Porter, co-founder and CEO of NAHCA. "Our organizations are uniquely positioned to help shape the future of care."

For more information about NAHCA and the services they offer, please visit www.nahcacareforce.org.

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