



# CONNECTION

Keeping Team Members Connected!

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CEO



Richard J. Hutchinson, CEO

Happy New Year Team DSL! As we wind up 2019 and look ahead to 2020, I find myself feeling very good about our numerous accomplishments for this past year while enthusiastically looking forward to finalizing many of the initiatives and goals of our five-year growth plan known as “Discovery Vision 2020”.

during this upcoming cycle (no rest for the weary!). We have learned so much during the past five years I believe we have both tremendous opportunities to take advantage of the platform and reputation we have created while keeping Discovery “pushing the envelope” on driving innovation in our industry.

Along those lines, I am very excited to present to everyone brand new programs we have developed and even an industry leading product design that we will commence constructing in three locations during this upcoming year. This new product will be known as “Discovery Place” and has been created from a spirit of providing a truly customized living experience for our residents. It will be the first of its kind and truly challenge traditional product design and service delivery in this industry! More to follow on this and several other exciting new programs soon!

As many of you may recall, our five year plan goals were to transform Discovery into a company that utilized more sophisticated business processes, creates a culture of service and innovation, and embraces the changes necessary to meet and exceed the needs and desires of our current and future customers and Team Members..... all the while growing in size and product/market diversity, vertically integrating key components of our business, adding talented individuals throughout our organization to effectuate the needed changes to accomplish our goals, and executing our current performance plans in a difficult labor and competitive environment!

The tempo and intensity required to accomplish all of this has been unprecedented and stressed our organization in many ways....while some, both inside and outside our organization, thought our goals were too lofty and expansive, I knew when we created this plan that our team would work tirelessly and do whatever it would take to be successful....and now, the vision we set is within sight.

While we still have to execute numerous initiatives this coming year to finalize our Vision 2020 goals, including our ongoing pivot to an “Experiential” operating model, we are very close to meeting and in many ways exceeding our planned goals. Of course, the completion of our Vision 2020 plan means that it is now time to look forward to the goals of the next five-year plan and all that we want to accomplish

I know from experience, that being able to have a company that has the willingness and fortitude to create something new and different is not easy work and I feel so wonderfully fortunate to be surrounded at the home office, in our regions and in our communities with such exceptional individuals dedicated to our values and mission in the pursuit of “absolute excellence”.....not “relative excellence” (which I fear many in this industry strive for)! The difference between absolute excellence and relative excellence can easily be summed up as the difference between comparing yourself against mediocrity and comparing yourself against excellence...we don’t want to be better than average...we want to be better than everyone! Better experiences for our customers, their families, our Team Members, our vendors, our investors, our lenders...a full 360-degree experiential focus!

So, I will end by saying once again, I thank-you so very much for your unyielding efforts to provide a wonderful experience to our customers, your trust in our Company and its leadership, and your willingness to embrace change so we can make Discovery a truly unique and differentiated company that we can all be proud of. I look forward to working with everyone on another great year in 2020!!

Richard J. Hutchinson, CEO





# Welcome

Join us in welcoming our newest Team Members!

## **DISCOVERY SENIOR LIVING**

Cynthia Arnold, *Media Buyer*  
Amanda Donnelly, *Regional HR Director*  
Nicole Gassaway, *Regional Vice President of Operations*  
Steven Katin, *Staff Accountant*  
Erin Miller, *Regional Vice President, Portfolio Manager*  
Christian Steil, *Regional Director of Sales*

## **ASTON GARDENS AT TAMPA BAY**

Gabriela Acosta, *Server*  
Marbis Rojas Bacallao, *Care Manager*  
Robyn Bard, *Senior Lifestyle Counselor*  
Christian Gomez, *Dishwasher*  
Rukila Jefferson, *Server*  
Deborah Johnson, *Concierge*  
Ralph Koppe, *Facility Operations Assistant*  
Deidre May, *Driver*  
Ryan Petrus, *Server*  
James Scott, *Server*  
Nardeo Seenjan, *Dishwasher*  
Danny Sexton, *Driver*  
Gabriella Shusterman, *Server*  
Michael Sierra, *Server*  
Michael Terry, *Driver*

## **BLUE RIDGE**

Jason Dearmon, *Director of Maintenance*  
Virginia Hastings, *Care Manager*  
Natalia Hastings, *Med Tech*  
Holly Jones, *Care Manager*  
Yvonne Landers, *Kitchen/Dishwasher*

## **CONSERVATORY AT ALDEN BRIDGE**

Stephanie Campbell, *Server*  
Crystal Lauder, *Cook*  
Landon Smith, *Kitchen Utility*

## **CONSERVATORY AT PLANO**

Tipton Crews, *Senior Lifestyle Counselor*

## **CONSERVATORY AT NORTH AUSTIN**

Evan Lyon, *Senior Lifestyle Counselor*

## **DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT ALLIANCE TOWN CENTER**

Charmaine Sherriff, *Senior Lifestyle Counselor*

## **DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT SARASOTA BAY**

Jody Stanfill, *Business Office Manager*

## **DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT SUGARLOAF**

Bishop Gilda, *Caregiver*  
Sushannah Holmes, *SHINE<sup>SM</sup> Memory Care Director*  
Devin Ketzler, *Community Relations Director*  
Robinson Koreen, *Caregiver*  
Kehbila Lesiga, *Waitstaff*  
Adderley Pamela, *Waitstaff*  
Marci Stevens, *Activities Department Assistant*  
Makeisha Stewart, *Cook*  
Campbell Takerra, *Waitstaff*  
Micah Thomas, *Waitstaff*

# Congratulations

Join us in congratulating your fellow Team Members!

## **DISCOVERY SENIOR LIVING**

Keani Aabel, *promoted to Assistant Marketing Manager*  
Bernardo Baraya, *promoted to Graphic Design Specialist*  
Kristen Cittadino, *promoted to Graphic Design Specialist*  
Theresa Manz, *promoted to Graphic Design Specialist*  
Eric Przybylski, *promoted to Marketing Specialist*

## **ASTON GARDENS AT THE COURTYARDS**

Crystal Ortiz, *promoted to Executive Chef of Assisted Living*

## **ASTON GARDENS AT TAMPA BAY**

Myrtha Hernandez, *SHINE<sup>SM</sup> Memory Care Director*  
Hayden Knight, *Culinary Services Supervisor*

## **BLUE RIDGE**

Kiersten Seagle, *promoted to Shift Supervisor*  
Tina Stover, *promoted to Lead Med Tech*

## **CARUTH HAVEN COURT**

Cynthia King, *promoted to Director of Recreation and Events*  
Kadie Tejan-Sie, *promoted to SHINE<sup>SM</sup> Memory Care Director*

## **THE TRACE**

Kimberly Epps, *promoted to Business Office Manager*  
Frank Cardaronella, *promoted to Director of Culinary Services*  
Chrystle Dickmeyer, *promoted to SHINE<sup>SM</sup> Memory Care Recreation & Events Coordinator*



# A SEASON TO BE THANKFUL

## Giving Thanks for Some of the Best Gifts of All

The holiday season is a special time of year that's great for slowing down life's normally hectic pace, reflecting a bit, and perhaps also thinking about the future. So many of us can probably look back on holidays past and remember well the excitement and anticipation we felt as kids, or maybe the elation the moment we saw holiday decorations going up at home or around town, or even the joy of tearing open that wrapping paper and finding the special gift we wanted most.

Now fast forward to today, and it's funny to think about how the holiday season isn't about receiving gifts anymore; instead, it's about witnessing and really soaking in the joy you give others. It seems that's just what happens as we get older and become parents, or grandparents, aunts and uncles, or even big brothers, big sisters or special friends ourselves.

The irony is that creating joyful experiences for others—our residents and their families, in particular—is what we do every day as Discovery Senior Living Team Members. And while it usually happens without the same celebration and fanfare of the holiday season, the care and kindness you show others all year long touches the lives of countless people...and that's a gift far greater than any toy or tech gadget!

So, as you take some time to reflect on the year that was, as we now enter 2020, be sure to celebrate your many valuable contributions, and may your heart be full knowing that you and your work are crucial and deeply

appreciated, both at the community level and throughout the Discovery Senior Living home office.

The holidays are also a great time to express your appreciation for those who have made a meaningful impact in your life. So, whether it's a fellow Team Member who's great to work with, a resident with whom you've developed a closer bond, or a family that took the time to make you feel valued for your continuing efforts, tell them. The spirit of the season provides ample chance to spread kindness and maybe pay some overdue thanks to those who rightfully deserve it.

And finally, be sure to take time every day to be thankful. Certainly, for family and loved ones, but also for the many blessings and opportunities we may lose sight of from time to time. Things like our ability to inspire happiness in others every day through care, kindness, service, or just through friendly interaction. Or being a part of something bigger than any one of us. Discovery Senior Living's role as an industry-leading provider comes with powerful responsibility; one that you do much to uphold each day. So, here's hoping your work helps to fill your own heart and soul in much the same way you do for others.

And to each and every Team Member in our Discovery Senior Living family, welcome to 2020, and heartfelt thanks for all that you do!



# Going Above & Beyond

*Sending well-deserved “Shout Outs” to all our communities and Team Members who go the extra mile. Your hard work and commitment touch the lives of so many each and every day!*

## **GERALD SCHULER & TEAM MEMBERS** The Trace

I want to thank all my amazing Team Members for their hard work and dedication during our recent storm. We didn't have any power for two full days, and the team did great. They went out of their way to make sure the residents were well taken care of. A shout out to Gerald Schuler for working extra hours to try and get our community up and running as soon as possible.

## **HOUSEKEEPING TEAM** Conservatory At Alden Bridge

We would like to give a big shout out to the Housekeeping Team at Conservatory At Alden Bridge, whose members were all named Employee of the Month for October! This entire team always goes above and beyond for our residents, and we celebrate each and every one of them: Sarah Harvey, Antonia Bonilla, Annie Howard, Rose Ann Reyna, Shana Bergman, Jannette Fuentes and Danelia Aguirre.

## **ALEXIS VARGAS** Discovery Village At Sugarloaf

Alexis joined our team in March of 2019 as a Sous Chef. He quickly made a huge impact on setting a strong example of how customer service should be upheld. He serves the residents with his heart through the love he puts into the food. He not only truly cares about the residents, but he listens to their needs. He is a true leader in how he always puts the residents and his team first. Within the first week Alexis found out about a couple that had concerns with meal deliveries and room trays. Once he heard about their concern, he personally sat down with both the husband and wife to listen to them. He addressed all of their concerns and the couple and family are very happy. Thank you, Alexis!

## **CURTIS CHANCE** Discovery Village At Alliance Town Center

Shout out to Curtis Chance. He is our part time dishwasher and driver who is also a resident at our community! He is a HUGE asset to our team. He stepped up to the plate and filled in as a full-time bus driver while we searched for a new one. He goes above and beyond on a regular basis to help as a Team Member and also to help residents! His level of professionalism is extraordinary and his ability to keep resident relations and Team Member relations is just as extraordinary. Curtis... THANK YOU for all you do for Discovery Village At Alliance Town Center.

## **JONAM EDWARDS** Welstone At Mission Crossing

I would like to do a shout out to Jonam Edwards, he is our Welcamp Fitness Coach. He has only been here at the Welstone for a few months, but he already fits in with the team so well, and everyone loves Jonam's smile. The residents really like Jonam, and he is able to get some of our residents who have never been to the Welcamp to participate. Joe has started some new exercise classes as well as Brain Fitness Classes. Thank you, Jonam!

## **LORI GERVAL** Aston Gardens At Tampa Bay

Shout out to our Senior Lifestyle Counselor, Lori Gerval, for stepping up as Aston Garden's At Tampa Bay's Alzheimer's Walk Team Captain. Lori worked hard to ensure our presence in the event was a success. Our residents, Team Members and families joined us in raising nearly \$900 for the cause. It was a wonderful event and we are thankful Lori stepped up as our leader!

**KITCHEN TEAM & ANNA PALMER**  
Blue Ridge Assisted Living

Shout out to the entire kitchen team at Blue Ridge Assisted Living and Memory Care for making our annual Thanksgiving Day Celebration a resounding success. Another thanks to Anna Palmer, Director of Health and Wellness, for extraordinary work and effort in support of a sister community. Your dedication and expertise proved to be invaluable.

**MEREDITH BOCCACCIOY**  
Conservatory At North Austin

Shout out to a superstar Team Member, Meredith Boccaccio, our Celebrations Activities and Events Director. She is awesome, and our residents love her and the wonderful programs she has been implementing in and around the community.

**CINDY WORKS & THE IMPRESSIONS TEAM**  
Regency Pointe

Huge shout out to our *IMPRESSIONS* TEAM, led by Cindy Works, for the fabulous job they do keeping our community clean and in order year-round. This can be challenging during the holidays and they always step up! We appreciate you!

**JOSE SANCHEZ-GARAY**  
Caruth Haven Court

We would like to recognize Jose Sanchez-Garay, Facility Operations Assistant, for being named Team Member of the Quarter. The award is certainly well-deserved and reflective of all his hard work and dedication to our residents and the community.

**FACILITY OPERATIONS TEAM**  
Discovery Village At Sarasota Bay

Our Facility Operations team epitomizes customer service. Marge, Donna, Maggie and Corina in Housekeeping; Patrick in Maintenance; and Sandy, our Driver continually go above and beyond, and make up the backbone of this department. Whether it's additional or specialized cleaning services, hand building a Life Care Station for our SHINE<sup>SM</sup> Memory Care neighborhood, or even coming in early and staying late to ensure residents get to the appropriate medical facility on time, the Facility Operations team has always stepped up to the plate. They demonstrate service before self and attain excellence in all they do. You won't find a better team anywhere!

**CECILIA MYERS**  
Aston Gardens At Parkland Commons

Cecelia works predominantly on the 11-7 shift but will also work other shifts if she is available. She is the "mother hen" of the care managers in that she makes sure that all her coworkers are fine and not in need of assistance. If they are, she is the first to offer it. They are very hard workers!

**MARILYN JACOBS**  
Aston Gardens At Pelican Pointe

Marilyn achieved a Deficiency Free Two-Day Biennial Survey from AHCA. We are very proud of her and the team, as this is a tremendous accomplishment! This continues Aston Gardens At Pelican Pointe's streak to 13 Years Deficiency Free!

**MICHELLE ANDERSON**  
Discovery Village At The Forum

I would like to shout out Michelle Anderson. She is the Business Office Manager in our Independent Living building. Michelle is new with Discovery and has consistently been in the top communities with lowest amount owed to us in collections! Since Michelle has come aboard, she has been an integral part of our team and is my right hand! I am so glad and honored that she is part of our Discovery family!

**TINA MANSARAY**  
Rittenhouse Village At Floral Vale

I would like to give a shout out to Tina Mansaray our Lead Med Tech who has gone above and beyond stepping into her new role to assist the Director of Health and Wellness with scheduling and anything else that comes up. Tina is very caring with residents and Team Members as well. Tina does not hesitate to step in and help in any capacity. Tina is always pleasant and a pleasure to work with. Thanks for being you, Tina!

**JOSEPHINE RODRIGUEZ**  
Conservatory At Plano

Josephine is an asset to our community. She is always on time, always smiling and always serving with a caring heart. Thank you, Josephine.

**MIRACLE BEY AND THE CULINARY TEAM**  
Conservatory At Champion Forest

Our Sous Chef, Miracle Bey, is leading a great team of professionals in our culinary department. And the food has generated five-star reviews in the last 30 days alone. Thank you to Miracle Bey and the culinary team!

**ALEX WINTERS**  
Oakleaf Village At Lexington

Alex is an outstanding Team Member who was named Employee of the Month for October. He is a part of the *Connections* and *Sensations* team and is adored by Team Members and residents for all the hard work he does on a daily basis. Thank you for all you do, Alex!

# THE MANY FACES OF DISCOVERY SENIOR LIVING



**DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT SARASOTA BAY**  
*Team Members Celebrate a Deficiency Free Rating*



**ASTON GARDENS AT TAMPA BAY**  
*Alzheimer's Walk*



**DISCOVERY SENIOR LIVING**  
*Home Office Team Members participate in the 2019 Office Olympics*



**DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT NAPLES**  
*Fall Cocktail Party*



**CONSERVATORY AT ALDEN BRIDGE**  
*Conservatory At Alden Bridge Housekeeping Team*



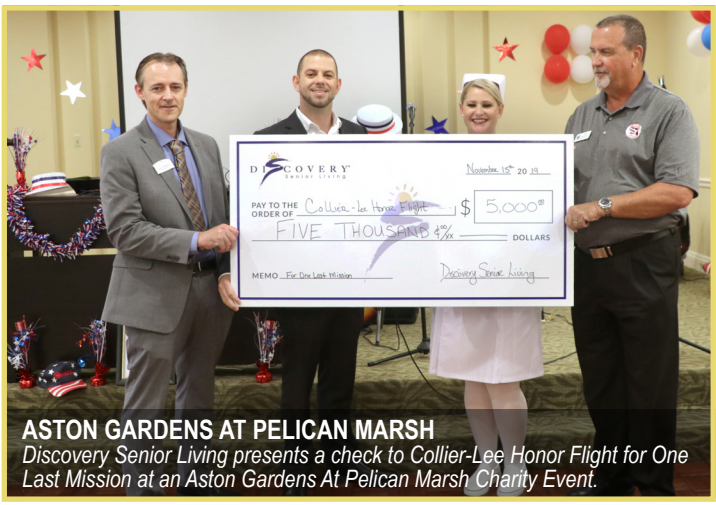
**DISCOVERY COMMONS AT COLLEGE PARK**  
*Executive Directors, Business Office Managers, and Directors of Health & Wellness from our 6 Indiana communities met up to share best practices.*



**CONSERVATORY AT ALDEN BRIDGE**  
*Halloween Event*



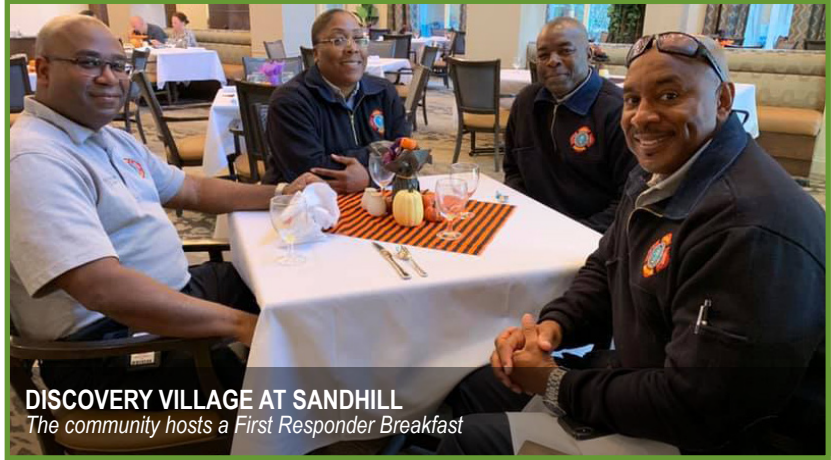
**OAKLEAF VILLAGE AT LEXINGTON**  
*Wellness Team Halloween Celebration*



**ASTON GARDENS AT PELICAN MARSH**  
*Discovery Senior Living presents a check to Collier-Lee Honor Flight for One Last Mission at an Aston Gardens At Pelican Marsh Charity Event.*



**DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT SARASOTA BAY**  
*Team Members on Halloween*



**DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT SANDHILL**  
*The community hosts a First Responder Breakfast*



**COUNTRY CLUB AT WOODLAND HILLS**  
*Octoberfest & Car Show benefiting Honor Flight Network*



**DISCOVERY VILLAGE AT CASTLE HILLS**  
*Family & Charity Event*



# The Road Ahead

2020

## EXPERIENTIAL LIVING

### Q & A With CEO, Richard Hutchinson

*We recently sat down with CEO Richard Hutchinson for an interview recapping 2019 and discussing some of what's new and exciting for our company in 2020 and beyond. Read on for Richard's candid insights regarding "Experiential Living," DSL's 2020 vision, and the current state and ongoing evolution of the senior living industry as a whole.*

**You've been speaking about "Experiential Living" as a central component of your vision for the future. How would you describe "Experiential Living," and has your vision evolved at all as DSL and our competition race to be the first to provide the lifestyle experience of the future?**

Experiential Living really means creating customization, choice and optionality with an intense customer service focus in all aspects of the products and services we provide. Every customer is an individual with unique likes, dislikes and desires for how they want to live.

For a very long time, this industry was just trying to provide the basic, common- denominator services to our customers because it was very difficult to be able to implement unique services for individuals or small

groups due to the lack of analytics, labor management systems and service-level pricing ability. We have always tried to be differentiated and have continually aimed to customize as much as possible, but about four years ago, we created our Discovery Vision 2020, a five-year plan through which we challenged ourselves to provide a more experience-focused program of products and services that would highlight the individuality of our customers. We still have work to do, but we have made tremendous progress for sure, and in 2020, we will be launching brand new Experiential Living products and services that have never been seen before in this industry.

As far as evolving our thought process...for sure, we initially had something in mind that was a bit watered down compared to our final products and services,



and frankly, that is the direction which many of our competitors are heading. Kind of a half step, which is progress for the industry, but not consistent with our DNA of never doing something in a half measure.

---

**Traditionally, most companies tend to adhere to “industry standards,” but our company is one that emphasizes innovation and challenging those standards. How do you know when to buck traditional and go your own way and when to follow the herd?**

Very good question; I have never really been a “follow the herd” person, and in our company’s history, we have numerous examples of Discovery leading the way through innovation. Typically, the process revolves around staying connected with trends via communication with our regional and community leaders, as well as staying in tune with our competitors and the latest innovations both inside and outside of our industry.

When I or someone in our organization sees something that others are doing or gains an understanding of a new technology or capability being employed in any industry, it almost immediately will strike me as being complementary and enhancing to what we are doing currently or not applicable. Sometimes it is as simple as instinct based on being so closely connected with our customers over the past quarter century. I think it is also important to have an intellectual curiosity, and as you know, I have always wanted us to be an organization that differentiates ourselves. Clearly, that means we have to be willing to invest in “what’s next”.

**And subsequently, when breaking tradition, how do you determine how far to push the envelope and where is “too far?”**

That can be a delicate process because even further to that question is the differences in “too far” between one customer group and another. Our industry is best served locally, and that means while we have concepts of innovation and programs, we have to implement and customize those locally. That is where our talented community leadership teams have to provide both feedback on whether a program has traction, and what types of refinements may be necessary to make it more applicable to their local customer base. Sometimes they also just have to tell us that we made a mistake, and that’s where our culture of open and honest communication is very important. “Too far” quickly becomes pretty clear with our analytics and customer-

focused information provided from the communities. But having said that, we must be willing to try new things and be willing to pay a little “dumb tax” in our quest to stay on “the edge.”

---

**What will it take to erase the lingering stigma in society that senior living communities aren’t suitable destinations for newer retirees or more active seniors?**

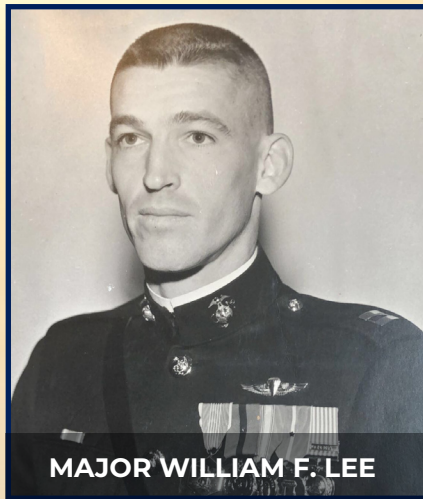
Hard work and innovation...I think it is happening, but not quite as aggressively as I think the industry should be trying for. This is where market forces will assist our industry’s evolution. While some folks in the industry lament competition, I actually am a fan of competition because it forces an environment of innovation or extinction. If our industry continues to just provide the same, old services and products, others will fill the “lifestyle” void and that will be very unfortunate.

As a matter of fact, you are starting to hear about products such as Margaritaville seniors housing communities popping up in certain markets. These communities will focus on the lifestyle and experience of their customers, and while some may be frightened by that type of competition, I am not. We at Discovery, and generally in this industry, have been serving seniors for a very long time, and we have the advantage of being able to provide both the lifestyle components and the more healthcare-focused components that our customers want and need. We can provide a more holistic experience for our customer, one that balances both, and do it better than a newcomer to this industry. But we as a company, and the industry as a whole, must be brave enough to defend the more active lifestyle space and innovative enough to make it attractive to current and future seniors.

---

**Is there anything else you would like our Team Members to know about Discovery, the senior living industry or our 2020 vision?**

I think most of our Team Members understand what we are trying to accomplish. I have said this numerous times, we are and will continue to be different and we, together, will build a company that is innovative, exceptional and driven by our common values and beliefs, the result of which will be a company we can all be proud of. Accomplishing this will be imperfect because we are all human, but I have zero doubt that together we will achieve these goals!



## Expressing Our Heartfelt Thanks to All Veterans

*On Monday, November 11, our nation observed Veterans Day, formally paying tribute to millions of brave men and women who served the U.S. Armed Forces, defending America and its allies in pursuit of freedom around the world.*

*Today, hundreds if not thousands of U.S. veterans are a part of our Discovery Senior Living family as well, either residing in our communities across the nation, or serving as valued Team Members. Veterans Day may have passed, but then and every day, we stand unified with all Americans to honor and thank our veterans, whose lives and remarkable stories of valiant service and sacrifice make indelible marks on our nation and society. This is the story of one such veteran.*

### **MAJOR WILLIAM F. LEE**

Bill Lee's life and 20 years of decorated service in the United States Marine Corps included combat tours in both Vietnam and Korea, two purple heart and bronze star medals, as well as a central post on President Kennedy's "Death Watch" detail following the infamous assassination in 1963.

While stationed at the country's oldest posted accord, the US Marine Corps barracks at 8th and I Streets in Washington, DC, Bill served as Commander of the Silent Drill Platoon, a mainstay at high-profile events and commemorations from coast to coast. And with then Commander Lee at the helm, this collection of Marines would be both integral and most visible following Kennedy's tragic assassination.

From escorting Kennedy's casket back to the White House, to standing guard throughout the public and



*Major Lee stands guard throughout the public and private viewings of late President John. F. Kennedy*

private viewings that took place up until burial, Bill and his Platoon quite literally stood at the forefront during one of the most emotionally charged periods in American history. Bill himself was even pictured on the inside cover of Time Magazine while standing guard at the head of President Kennedy's casket.

Today, Major Lee resides at our Conservatory At Plano community, located on the outskirts of Dallas, Texas. He has authored seven books, and his sword and other personal belongings are enshrined in the Book Depository Museum in downtown Dallas.

Lee's life and his honorable service are distinctive and inspiring, befitting of a man whose love of country, family and the American people created a foundation for his journey and legacy. He speaks humbly and fondly about passing interactions with President Kennedy, as well as playing with a young John Kennedy, Jr. at Camp David while off duty on one occasion.

As a regular presence at the White House for ceremonies, special events and state dinners, Bill's usual post, which saw him standing mere feet away from dignitaries, heads of state, and some of the most influential figures in all the world at the time, gave him a unique, firsthand perspective of history, even though he himself was always anonymous.

Perhaps most fascinating is the way Major Lee describes his own experience, saying that his life in service provided "A unique opportunity to walk across the pages of history, so to speak, and never leave a footprint."



# DAH CORNER

## Big Changes Are in Store Right Out of the Gate in 2020

In our last update, I wrote that Medicare had announced sweeping changes to our industry and just a few days ago, on November 1, Medicare announced the final ruling, so now we fully know what is ahead.

Imagine that for the last 19 years, you have been paid by the hour, and you completely understand how this works. If you work an hour, you get paid for an hour. You understand your benefits, your paid time off (PTO), how you build up your PTO, and you get paid every two weeks for the time you have worked. You might even get a productivity bonus or overtime if you work additional hours or do some special work. This has been our world for 19 years. Maybe some minor changes, but the structure has always been constant, we knew what we had to do, and we knew how we would get paid...until now!

What will soon become our new world is quite interesting, but also quite scary to many. Not only are we being paid differently, but our version of overtime (i.e. physical and/or occupational therapy) has been removed. Or perhaps better said, how they factor those disciplines into (possibly) adding to our payment has been eliminated. There's no more extra credit. We still have to do it; we just don't get any extra funding for it. Skilled Nursing facilities just underwent a similar change on October 1, 2019 and they responded by laying off 30-50% of their therapy teams.

We used to get one payment for 60 days of work. We'll now have to bill for two, 30-day periods, instantly doubling our billing, which for us is not as simple as pushing a button. We doubly audit everything we bill, so that effort now instantly doubles again. This is like submitting two time sheets per day, one for 8:00 am - 2:00 pm, and another for 1:00 pm - 6:00 pm, every day!

The top 5 reasons we admit patients for home care are being eliminated by Medicare. Going forward, if we admit a person for one of those 5 reasons, the electronic processing will deny anything having to do with that

patient.. Instead, they are asking that we delve into more of the root causes for our care, so we need to ask more questions of the patient and referring physician, and of course document all this in our clinical records. This is a lot more work for our clinicians, as well as a complete change in the questions they normally ask!

Next, Medicare has legislated that if you get most of your patients from a hospital or Skilled Nursing facility, and tell them this (which they will verify), they will pay you a little more than usual. If you are referred patients directly from the patient's physician, they will pay us considerably less—somewhere between 15% and 20% less. If you provide great clinical outcomes—which we have for years—you might get a break, but there are no promises.

Lastly,(as if all that isn't enough), they have told us that they will pay us more slowly. Less money up front, to the tune of 20% of the fee, when we take a patient, and the balance (80%) when we finish care. That differs from today when we get 60% when we begin, and 40% at the end.

So, are we ready? Yes. We have attended educational seminars, attended association learning sessions, read online, subscribed to webcasts, and watched and re-watched them! We are as ready as ready can be for 2020.

That previous hourly wage earning scenario looks pretty sweet today, but these changes will help us as the industry shrinks by those who were not ready or did not have a plan for success. Change means opportunity. More on that later. Welcome to the New Year.

**Dan Cundiff**

President, Discovery At Home

# LETTERS FROM OUR COMMUNITIES

Over the years we have had the privilege of serving thousands of residents. They are the reason we love what we do. We are humbled by their gratitude and love hearing about their positive experiences at our communities.

*My wife Venita and I call Discovery Village At Castle Hills home and we love our apartment and the residents and the team members are always happy to help you out if needed. Our management does an excellent job meeting all of our needs. The food is well prepared and well worth the money and excellently served by our excellent staff. We have lived here for 6 years and looking forward to many more. Mr. Bob is the finest manager you will find any where in the Metro Plex. He goes the extra mile and will never let you down. Our Activities Director will keep you as busy as you want to be. The community meets all state safety and fire prevention state standards. The house keeping meets all of the needs you might have. All in all you will not find any other that can match what we have.*

*Despite the fact I owned a lovely home in an active Country Club community, when I lost my dear wife of 67 years, my life became very lonely and I soon realized I needed a change of lifestyles. I visited all the near-by Independent Senior Living communities, had lunch or dinner at most, and had a chance to compare the variety of features that each one offered - the features we old people feel important for our comfort. Without any question, when you look at the TOTAL outstanding amenities offered by Discovery Village At The Forum, my decision was an easy one. No long term leases, just monthly rent. No big bucks up front. Wonderful dining. A dedicated theater (not just a bunch of chairs in a big room) with movies most days. Of course, a beautiful pool, plus a putting green for us old golfers. Add in a huge slate of planned activities and exercise programs with my new family and you'll know why I suggest you come visit us.*

*Thank you,  
Raymond J.*

Dear Friends,

I wanted to write a letter thanking all of you for visiting my mother in the hospital, for taking time to counsel with us about our mother's care, and, for working with Courtney from Lexington Medical Center, and, All Seasons Hospice to make it possible for my mother to return to Oakleaf.

You all have been so good to me and my family since my mother has been at Oakleaf. I know she is well taken care of by a professional and caring staff. Thank you all for working so tirelessly to help her return to her home at Oakleaf where she is comfortable. It was a weight lifted from us when Courtney told us she could return to Oakleaf. We worried that she would not get the quality of care she has had at Oakleaf.

Again, thank all of you for your caring and concern for her. Also, thank all of those wonderful people at the front desk for making me and my family feel at home while visiting mother. Not to forget especially those wonderful people in Oak Haven who take care of mom on a daily basis. Please express our utmost gratitude and praise to them for caring so tirelessly for patients in Oak Haven.

Again, from the bottom of my heart and my family's, thank you being God's caring angels at Oakleaf. Please express our gratitude and thankfulness to all at Oakleaf and Oak Haven.

Sincerely,

*Marla E. Clower*

Marla E. Clower, POA for Jewel Boyles  
And her thankful daughter for Oakleaf

**Read more letters from  
our communities on our  
website:**

[DiscoverySeniorLiving.com/  
Letters-From-Our-Communities](http://DiscoverySeniorLiving.com/Letters-From-Our-Communities)

*Hope  
We don't know who's respon  
sible for the beautiful Walk  
of Honor, but whoever did it  
should be promoted and given  
a sizable raise. We look for  
excuse to go down and enjoy  
it again + again + again.  
Job well done!*

*Dan + Sherie*