

# STEPPING STONES

## @-NEWS

APRIL/MAY 2022



## FROM THE DESK OF JON LUNDBERG

Earlier this year we asked all Ebenezer employees to participate in and provide feedback through our annual employee engagement survey. I want to say thank you to the 1645 or 46 % of you responded to this request and provided your perspective through this process. We have received the details from that survey and are now in the process of reviewing the information and identifying ways to properly respond and address topics you shared.

When looking at the seven key indicators, Ebenezer performs better than the US healthcare norm in all 7 categories. While this is good news, we also know that in 5 of these measurement areas we scored lower than we did last year.

**Some of the areas identified as strengths that we want to continue to build on include:**

- Providing a safe place to work
- The strong sense that the work we do on a day to day basis directly impacts our customers
- My manager/supervisor treats me with respect

**Some of the areas that represent opportunities for improvement include:**

- Being more intentional about sharing our mission, vision, values, and strategic plan
- Identifying different strategies or approaches to help alleviate the stress people feel in their jobs
- Identify more intentional and purposeful ways of recognizing a job well done

While we will be taking steps to address these and other issues organizationally, individual sites will also similarly address feedback specific to their community ensuring that we have both a global and local approach. You will be hearing more regarding these responses at your individual community.

We remain committed to making every effort toward creating an engaging and rewarding workplace for all employees. Your feedback has been invaluable as we engage in this work. Thank you for all you do!



## EBENEZER WELCOMES NEW VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

**On April 25, 2022, Brenda Johnson joined Ebenezer as Vice President of Operations.** Brenda has 27 years of progressive healthcare experiences and a range of diverse skills in senior housing and administration.

She began her career as an RN and eventually became the Director of Nursing for Lyngblomsten. She then progressed into the Campus Administrator role where she had overall operational responsibilities for the Care Center and Assisted Living communities on campus. Most recently she has been Director of Program Execution at Lifespark where she had operational experience for 20 Assisted Living communities.

As a strong advocate of life-long learning, Brenda has a BSN from the University of North Dakota and her Master's of Healthcare Administration from the University of Minnesota where she is currently enrolled in the Doctorate program.

### **Welcome Brenda!**

We look forward to working with you.

## BARB DENTINGER I CARE BEAR AWARD WINNERS

Four Ebenezer employees were presented with the coveted Barb Dentinger "I Care Bear Award" Winners. Named for one Ebenezer's beloved employees, the "Care Bear" awards are given to those exemplary employees who routinely go above and beyond the call of duty in caring for our residents. Congratulations go out to:

### **Sara Severson**

Culinary Assistant, The Fountains at Hosanna

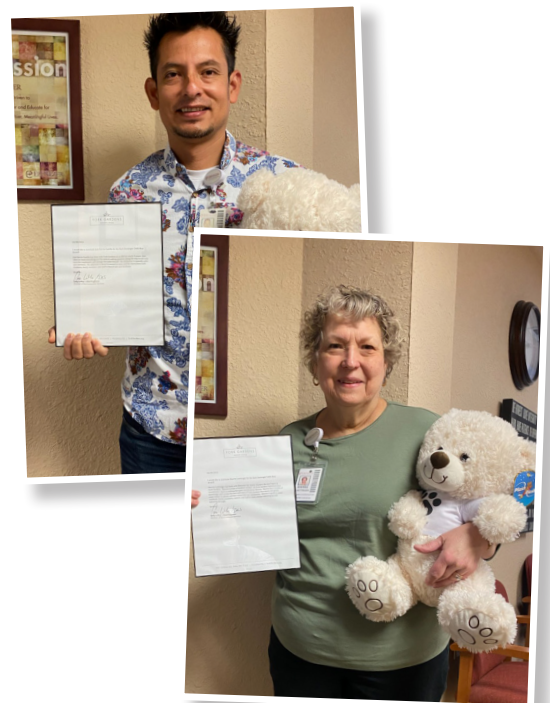
### **Jose Garcia Castillo**

RN, York Gardens

### **Sherri Luettinger**

Administrative Coordinator, York Gardens

**Connie Mowry**, LPN Amira Roseville





# FALLING STARS

## EBENEZER FALLS PROGRAM

According to the CDC, falls are the leading cause of injury-related death in adults 65 and older. With that in mind, Ebenezer created the Falling Stars Program to address ways to reduce falls within Ebenezer communities.

**The falls group consists of front-line nursing staff and leaders including:**

**Emily Zolin**

Education at Martin Luther Care Center

**Jessie Kellstadt**

Director of Nursing Martin Luther Care Center

**Melvie Gaye**

NAR at Ebenezer Care Center

**Doreen Jensen**

Clinical Nurse Coordinator at Ebenezer Care Center

**Amanda Jackson**

Director of Nursing at Lake City Care Center

**Janet Zastrow**

Sr. Quality Improvement Consultant

**Steve Rosenow**

Ebenezer Health Services Specialist



*Continued >*



# ABOUT THE FALLING STARS

The group met for first time in March of 2020 and created a picture of how the current process worked. From there, they identified potential solutions and created a picture of how the future process would work. The next phase was testing and revising the new process at the pilot site Ebenezer Ridges. One of the biggest changes was going from implementing fall interventions based on a high, moderate, low risk for falls, to implementing fall interventions based on the answer to each question of the fall risk assessment for that specific patient, and initiating the Falling Stars Program for those patients who were at risk for falls or had fallen.

At the beginning of the falls program, Ebenezer's falls rate was 9.88 falls per 1000 patient days. Currently the falls rate is at 7.31 falls per 1000 patient days. Congratulations to the Falling Stars team who continue to meet and offer suggestions on how to prevent a future fall for that patient.







Ebenezer is delighted to announce that our CEO Jon Lundberg was named Executive of the Year by the Minnesota Real Estate Journal in an awards ceremony April 21, 2022.

Since 2018, Jon has led the Ebenezer team. While role of CEO is never an easy one, the last two years have been especially challenging for the senior living industry. COVID-19, a shortage of workers, and complex regulatory changes have contributed to make 2021 an especially difficult year. However, under the steady leadership of Jon Lundberg, Ebenezer managed to thrive under these very difficult conditions.

While Jon's list of accomplishments is long and includes 2021 milestones such as: hiring 2828 new employees, being named a Star Tribune Top Workplace for the 11th year in a row, and being recognized as Minnesota's largest senior housing operator by Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal; it's Jon's personal touch as a leader that makes a difference to the Ebenezer staff.

Jill Nokleby Kaiser, Director of Housing Development, states that "Jon Lundberg exemplifie[s] 'Servant Leadership' in so many ways . . . He has paid attention to the individuals who work for Ebenezer through his sincere interest in their personal life and development . . . He ha[s] led Ebenezer in a thoughtful manner and . . . and has been skilled at getting diverse, and often passionate opinions to a collaborative direction."

Jon's calm and caring leadership has positioned Ebenezer at the forefront of senior care and housing in Minnesota. As Richard Howard, Ebenezer's Chairman of the Board says, "[Jon's] strategic leadership has shown itself by results in continuous growth for Ebenezer across broad marketplaces in the upper Midwest. In short, Jon has a resilient, servant leadership style that includes high integrity, ethics, and getting results across many measurement categories."

As our mission expands, we are thankful for Jon's experience, support and leadership skills. Ebenezer is confident in Jon and in our future. Congratulations Jon, on a well-deserved honor.

# EBENEZER CEO NAMED EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR!



# SKYLARK OPERA TO PERFORM AT

TEN EBENEZER LOCATIONS!

Skylark Opera was awarded a Minnesota State Arts Board grant that will allow them to come to 10 Ebenezer communities to provide a live concert for residents. These performances will include classic opera songs and a performance catered to the people we serve. In the past, Skylark Opera performances have been very well received at our communities.

Hosting the Skylark Opera is a rare and special opportunity that we would not be able to afford without grant support. The concerts are scheduled to take place between May 15th- August 15t.

The following communities will be hosting the Skylark Opera:

SANCTUARY OF BROOKLYN CENTER

STONEHAVEN OF EAGAN

DEEPHAVEN WOODS SENIOR LIVING

SAVAGE AT FEN POINTE

TOWERLIGHT IN ST LOUIS PARK

LAKE CITY CARE CENTER

AURORA ON FRANCE IN EDINA

ARBORS AT RIDGES IN BURNSVILLE

AMIRA CHOICE IN ROSEVILLE

ARBOR GLEN IN MAPLE GROVE

# CODA WINS BEST PICTURE AT THE 2022 ACADEMY AWARDS

While the glitz and glamour of the Academy Awards generates excitement every year, this year's best picture winner held a special place in the hearts of our residents at the Minneapolis Campus. When the movie CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) won three Oscars: Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor and Best Adapted Screenplay, Ebenezer celebrated this special moment of representation and what it means to those who a part of the deaf community.

Our Deaf Services Program at Ebenezer Park Apartments knows first-hand how important it is to educate others about deaf culture. They want to thank their sign language interpreters for continuing to educate others about deaf culture, for all their assistance with residents, and for their ongoing respect and patience.



# BLESSINGS

## ON THE JOURNEY

*Written by The Rev. Chris Beckman  
Corporate Director of  
Spiritual Care*

### **“Those Birds”**

Wonder if you have encountered the same thing this Spring? I have a bird that keeps attacking the window of my house, like they are going after some giant intruder. I’m guessing there is a nest nearby and my poor feathered friend is most likely trying to protect her little ones. I was more intrigued to discover that a different bird seems to think that the mirror on my car is also something to be worried about. I have watched with amazement as that bird has flown at my sideview mirror hundreds of times each day. I wish I could communicate to the bird that the image in the mirror is simply a reflection, but St. Francis of Assisi, I am not.

While not pushing this metaphor too far, it has me thinking about us as we enter this third year of the Covid pandemic. How many of us feel like we have been flying into windows and mirrors these past years as we have tried to keep up with the near constant changing landscape of polices and procedures – trying to combat this nearly invisible Covid foe? We, too, have been trying to protect our “nest” of communities of seniors and no doubt we have felt the emotional stress and weight as we keep flying into so many proverbial walls.

It’s emotionally exhausting and even must feel a bit self-defeating at times. I know that I feel it. It’s no fun flying into windows and mirrors, after all. It hurts. And, yet, we like those mother birds keep at it – getting up each morning to begin anew our mission to care

for seniors. We keep coming up against the walls put up by the realities of the pandemic or one such outside agency or another. Maybe we simply don’t know any better, but I’m fairly certain that we who make up Ebenezer are so committed to our mission that walls, windows and mirrors are just part of the work, the current reality and something for us to manage. We are simply amazing caregivers who even under the greatest of strains still respond each day with energy for this work.

Here’s an anonymous quote I found helpful: I told my friend that I’m emotionally hitting a wall and she said, “sometimes walls are there so we can lean on them and rest.” Try telling that to the birds!



# EBENEZER COMMUNITIES ACHIEVE BEST SENIOR LIVING DISTINCTION

For 30 years, U.S. News & World Report has conducted research to provide consumers with an unbiased reference as they make health, education and other important buying decisions. Year after year, Ebenezer nursing homes have received the “Best Nursing Home” distinction from U.S. News & World Report.

In December of 2021, Ebenezer Assisted Living communities were invited to participate in a survey conducted by U.S. News & World Report. This survey was designed to provide information about senior living settings, and how well Ebenezer communities performed. Residents and families were invited to give their honest opinions of us in this anonymous survey.

We are happy to report that 16 Ebenezer Communities earned the highest possible rating from U.S. News & World Report’s inaugural Best Senior Living ratings. Even more impressive of the top 25 Best Senior Living communities in Minnesota, 15 of them were Ebenezer Communities! Each of these



communities will be eligible to display one or more U.S. News-trademarked Best Senior Living award “badges.”

1. Best Independent Living
2. Best Assisted Living
3. Best Memory Care

Congratulations to all Ebenezer communities.  
We are proud of you!



# SERVICE OF A REMEMBRANCE STORY



When a resident passes in Martin Luther Campus's long term care, we make a point to remember and celebrate their life. One way we do this is with an organized Service of Remembrance for staff and residents to attend. These residents are such an important part of our family, and a special service creates an opportunity to remember good times, to thank them for being a part of our community and to say goodbye.

We recently celebrated the life of a beloved resident, Roger. Knowing him well, the normal candle service in the chapel just was not fitting – instead we opted for a party style event with root beer floats and lively touches – just like the fun and positivity Roger always brought to campus.

Many residents attended and shared special stories of how Roger was the first to welcome them when they moved to Martin Luther and how fun he made activities and living here at Martin Luther. Because he was such an active community member, we had many, many photos of him at activities and enjoying his time

here. His family even traveled from out of state to be here and was very touched to see how loved he was by all at Martin Luther Care Center, stating "he could not have found a better place to live!"

This is a great example of Spiritual Care and Active Living coming together to support the well-being of all residents and staff. It is really important that we make space to process the loss and to say goodbye when someone passes from our community.





# PLATING COMPETITION

## APRIL WINNERS



Mealtime at Ebenezer communities is always a special time. Looking at these photos you can see why. Our Ebenezer chefs are a talented group who always put the best food forward.

**We are pleased to announce the winner of April's plating competition are:**

**1. SCOTT LOGELIN**

Mediterranean Shrimp, with pepper and rice pilaf

**2. PAULY FOHRENKAMM**

with his braised short ribs

**Congratulations! We appreciate all you do for our residents.**





# AMPLIFYING AGE ART COMPETITION



Ebenezer's Lifelong Learning community was recently selected as the winner of the Amplify Aging art competition. The contest was sponsored by Art Against Aging and the Old People Are Cool initiative

The winning artists will receive 50 "Older People Are Cool" stickers which they will use and incorporate into our

Older Americans Month celebrations next month.

In addition, our community was invited to speak about this project on a webinar that was held on April 26, 2022.

# 2021 EMPLOYEES ANNUAL REPORT

## WAGES, BONUSES, AND RECRUITING



**\$221,000**

Referral bonus  
paid to current  
employees



**\$2,117,590**

IRA match 401k/403b Contributions

**\$180,000**

Recruiting  
bonuses paid to  
new employees

**161**

EVENTS AND  
CAREER FAIRS



**\$9,000,000**

**INVESTED ANNUALLY**

in enhanced wages for current and incoming staff



**2828**

EMPLOYEES HIRED

**\$404,495**

spent on employee scholarships

## EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING



**\$869,435**

SPENT ON PPE



**4000+**

**EMPLOYEES**

COVID VACCINATED



## EBENEZER FOUNDATION SUPPORT



## SCHOLARSHIPS AND EDUCATION



## ACHIEVEMENTS



OUR CORE VALUE ARE: DIGNITY, INTEGRITY, SERVICE, COMPASSION, INNOVATION.

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# SIMPLE WAYS to Manage Stress at Work

for Health Professionals

## Breathe

**Practice belly breathing.** Place one hand on your chest and one on your belly. Take even, deep breaths, making sure your belly moves out when you inhale and comes in when you exhale.

**Do 4-7-8.** Inhale to the count of four, hold your breath for the count of seven, and then exhale through your mouth slowly to the count of eight. Repeat three times.

**Invoke the relaxation response.** Taking deep breaths, repeat a soothing word in your mind (such as “one,” “peace,” or “calm”) with each slow exhale.

## Talk to Someone

If you're feeling stressed, don't let your worries consume you—talk to a friend or trusted colleague. Simply describing your feelings can often lessen the burden they impose, and by sharing you're likely to learn that you're not alone.

## Be Grateful

In the middle of a tough day, take a moment to focus your mind on something you feel grateful for, no matter how small. Go an extra step further and write down your blessings in a journal or an app on your phone, or share them aloud with a colleague.

## Take 5 for Self-Compassion

Speak to yourself like you would speak to a friend. Psychologist Kristin Neff says, “Practicing self-compassion is honoring and accepting your humanness. Things won't always go the way you want them to. There will be losses and frustrations. You will bump up against your limitations, fall short of your ideals. This is the human condition, a reality shared by all of us. Acknowledge your own difficulties and stressful situations as you would for a friend, with kindness and compassion.”

## Walk Mindfully

Anytime you're walking down the hall, you can take a break. Rather than thinking about the place you're heading to, let your attention focus on the journey there—the sensations and sounds of your shoes on the floor, the firmness of the floor beneath you, the air on your arms or face.

## Live Your Values

Chances are that if you work in healthcare, you value compassion, integrity, and wellbeing. Reconnecting to those values during the workday can help mitigate the stress of working in a demanding field. Take a few moments to recall your core values and actively integrate them into your work—one easy suggestion is to silently wish your patients well whenever you see their names.

## Connect With Nature

If you can, take a walk outside for a few minutes in the fresh air. Can't get outside? No problem. You can take a nature break indoors by watering a workplace plant, gazing out a window or at nature photography, or watching a 2-minute Wellsfapes nature video on your phone.

## Inhale Calm

Tuck an essential oil inhaler in your pocket so you can breathe in a relaxing scent when you're feeling overwhelmed. Lavender, rosemary, and citrus are particularly healing during stressful times.

## Stretch

Get your blood moving and endorphins pumping by bending over to touch your toes slowly, stretching your arms above your head, and rolling your ankles in small circles. Stretch out tense neck muscles by gently dropping your chin to your chest and rolling your head from side to side.

## Laugh

A sense of humor can boost resilience and get you through the really tough days. When appropriate, find ways to laugh with a colleague, watch a funny video on your phone, or recall the last time you had a deep belly laugh.



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# RECENTLY, EBENEZER RIDGES CHILDCARE WAS HONORED BY THE CITY OF BURNSVILLE. CONGRATULATIONS!



## P R O C L A M A T I O N

### PROVIDER APPRECIATION DAY

**WHEREAS,** Child Care Aware of America and other organizations nationwide are recognizing child care providers on this day; and

**WHEREAS,** Over half the children under the age of six nationwide are estimated to spend some time in a nonparental care arrangement on a weekly basis, which provides critical enrichment opportunities and nurtures development for children of all backgrounds and is a vital building block of our state economy; and

**WHEREAS,** The COVID -19 pandemic has created tremendous hardship for child care providers and the families of Minnesota who depend on them, who have continued to meet the needs of families while risking their health and financial stability to remain open; and

**WHEREAS,** Minnesota recognizes these hardships through proposals to provide much-needed relief to providers to help sustain the viability of child care; and

**WHEREAS,** Our future depends on the quality of early childhood experiences provided to young children today; and

**WHEREAS,** Support for high-quality child care represents a worthy commitment to our children's future.

**NOW THEREFORE,** I, Elizabeth B. Kautz, Mayor of the City of Burnsville, proclaim May 6, 2022 as

### PROVIDER APPRECIATION DAY

and urge all citizens to recognize child care providers for their important work.

PROCLAIMED this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2022.

  
Elizabeth B. Kautz, Mayor

# FRONTLINE WORKER BONUSES

The Governor, House and Senate have finally reached a deal on frontline worker bonuses and replenishing the unemployment insurance trust fund. Long-term caregivers can apply if they eligibility requirements noted below.

Eligible workers will have to apply through a Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) online portal. The portal is not yet open, but eligible workers will have 45 days to do so once it is up and running. We will provide additional details to staff as they are made available from the Department of Labor. The state recently launched an website outlining additional details where you can track updates and details as well.

## **To be eligible for Frontline Worker Pay, the applicant:**

- must have worked at least 120 hours in Minnesota in one or more frontline sectors between March 15, 2020, and June 30, 2021.
- for the hours worked during this time period the applicant
  - was not able to telework due to the nature of the individual's work and
  - worked in close proximity to people outside of the individual's household;
- must meet the income requirements for at least one year between Dec. 31, 2019, and Jan. 1, 2022 –
  - workers with direct COVID-19 patient care responsibilities must have had an annual income less than \$350,000 for married taxpayers filing jointly, or less than \$175,000 for other filers and

- for workers in occupations without direct COVID-19 patient care responsibilities, the annual income limit is \$185,000 for married taxpayers filing jointly, or \$85,000 for other filers; and

- must not have received an unemployment insurance benefit payment or serve a nonpayable week for more than 20 weeks on a cumulative basis for weeks between March 15, 2020, and June 26, 2021 (Minnesota Statutes, section 268.085, subdivision 1, clause 6).

## **The frontline sectors include:**

- long-term care and home care
- health care
- emergency responders
- public health, social service, and regulatory service
- courts and corrections
- child care
- schools, including charter schools, state schools and higher education
- food service, including production, processing, preparation, sale and delivery
- retail, including sales, fulfillment, distribution and delivery
- temporary shelters and hotels
- building services, including maintenance, janitorial and security
- public transit
- ground and air transportation services
- manufacturing
- vocational rehabilitation





## TRISHAW BICYCLE FOR EBENEZER RIDGES CAMPUS

In the past, the Ebenezer Ridges Campus held an annual Blessing of the Bikes for the Burnsville community. Now this campus is being blessed with the gift of a new bike, thanks to the Ebenezer Society Foundation. The project is from the Mark Thomas Innovation Fund, named in honor of Ebenezer Society's previous CEO from 1988 to 2017.

The bike is actually a trishaw bicycle. And in the words of Brendan Bannigan, Director of Philanthropy for the Ebenezer Foundation, "It is difficult to describe a trishaw bicycle, but this picture is worth a thousand words. Essentially, in the back, one 'pilot' pedals and steers while two passengers are safely and comfortably seated in the front.



## SHARE WITH US!

**Stepping Stones is your newsletter.**

If you have a great idea for a story or a story to share, we'd love to include it.

**Please send your ideas to**

[jean.rowe@fairview.org](mailto:jean.rowe@fairview.org)