

Spirit of Walker

Spring 2022



A newsletter for family and friends of Walker Methodist

MISSION STATEMENT

Life. And all the living that goes with it. Enhancing the lives of older adults through a culture of care, respect, and service.

VALUES

Respect.

Imagination.

Collaboration.

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What is Servant Leadership?

by Scott Riddle, President and CEO



Think about someone you've worked for or with whom you respected. What were some of their qualities? Maybe they were a good listener or went out of their way to help. Whatever you admired about them, chances are they were a servant leader. Not only were they good at their job, but they cared about their job, other people, and you.

At Walker Methodist, our vision is to be the best place to live and work. We know we can't take great care of our residents and provide superior service without excellent, engaged team members. That's why we focus on taking care of our team as well as our residents. In fact, it's part of our strategic road map: creating the culture.

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Danielle Cross Named District Caregiver of the Year by LeadingAge Minnesota

Danielle Cross, director of life enrichment at Westwood Ridge in West St. Paul, was recently honored by LeadingAge Minnesota with the District G Caregiver of the Year Award.

This award honors individuals who demonstrate exceptional commitment to older adults and enhance and enrich the quality of life of those in their care. Danielle was one of seven caregivers selected for the regional award out of a field of 50,000 professional caregivers throughout the state.

“During the pandemic, she helped each resident feel less isolated,” said Catherine Bergler, director of housing at Westwood Ridge. “She is also always the first person to come up with creative ways to make team members feel appreciated and seen.”



Servant leadership, cont.

Creating a culture of servant leadership is the most important part of our strategic road map. But what is servant leadership, and why is it important? Anyone can be a servant leader. Putting others first, they are the type of people we all want to work with. There's a saying that summarizes this well: “No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.”

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There are three pillars of servant leadership: relationships, energy, and excellence. All are important, but relationships are foundational. In any setting, relationships are built through fostering mutual respect and trust by showing love. In short, servant leaders put people first, and they lead with love. Consider the Apostle Paul's definition of love from 1 Corinthians: “Love is patient; love is kind. It does not envy, it doesn't boast, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, self-seeking, or easily angered; it keeps no record of wrongs. It doesn't delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Love always protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres. Love never fails.” That's the perfect definition of a servant leader.

Why Servant Leadership Matters

It's hard to create a culture without caring. That's why we're training everyone at Walker Methodist, from accountants to caregivers, on how to be a servant leader. Because servant leadership is about putting others first to lead with love, another way to strengthen relationships is by encouragement. Encouragement unites team members as they work toward goals together. We do this at Walker Methodist by recognizing outstanding team members. When people feel valued, respected, and trusted, they become engaged and empowered. A culture of servant leadership is key to our vision.

Servant leadership could change the culture at your job, home, or community. One person leading with care, love, and encouragement can cause a ripple effect reaching beyond what you imagined. How can you lead with the heart of a servant today? ■



Making Friends and Serving Residents for 23 Years—and Counting

Twenty-three years ago, Jackson Obiri was making microchips in Texas. But when he was laid off and the company closed, he decided it was time to start a new career as a Certified Nursing Assistant. He moved to Minnesota, trained, and got a job at the Walker Methodist Health Center in Minneapolis. Ever since then, he's been a committed, well-loved presence to residents, families, and team members. Jackson's a friend to everyone he meets.

"You really get to know residents and their families. You walk with them, feed them, talk with them," he said. "They tell me their stories, backgrounds, and hardships. They share their dreams." He hears about grandchildren's tennis meets, favorite memories, and family vacations. With his calm, welcoming demeanor, it's easy to see why some residents schedule their trips to the beauty salon for times when Jackson's can bring them to their appointments. People who were residents or patients years ago still stop by to see him or call just to check if he's still working at the Health Center.

When residents come to the Health Center, they find a kindred spirit in Jackson, someone who's also been to a new place and faced the unknown. Jackson moved from Kenya in 1985 and still has family living overseas. Part of why he appreciates his job is the flexibility that allows him to spend time with his family. "When my kids were younger, I could help take care of them and spend time together. I was able to be with my family when my mom passed away. I can go visit my family in Kenya," he explained. "It feels good to work at a place where I can care for my loved ones, too. It's like a family here." ■

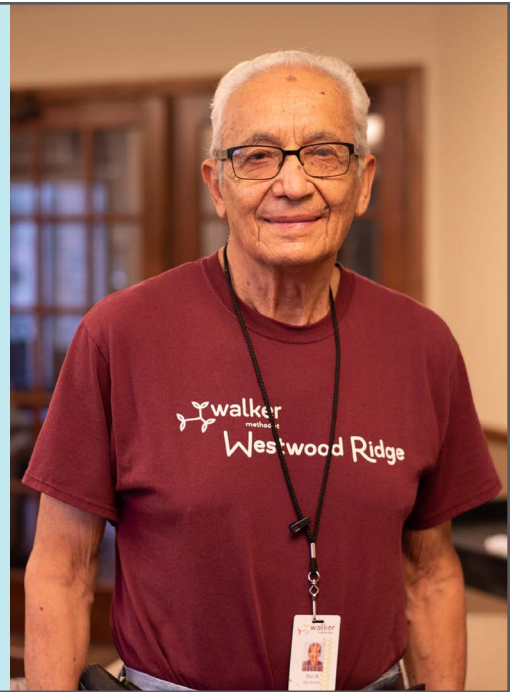


Del Bravo Gives Back After Retirement

Del Bravo retired in 2001, but he saw an ad for a job that interested him: Walker Methodist Westwood Ridge in West St. Paul was looking for a bus driver. He took the job in 2015, which he now calls his ministry to others.

"This has been one of the best experiences of my life," he shared. "I get to interact with people and encourage them." Del will be the first to say it's not a one-way street. Residents and team members at Westwood Ridge return the love and friendship Del generously gives them.

In his own words, Del's best job is the one he started after retirement. "The leaders here are people of service. They care, work hard, and lift people up," he explained. "This job gives me purpose."



Stride for Seniors

17th Annual 5k/10k

Lake Harriet Bandshell Park or virtually
June 4, 2022 | 9 a.m.



Save the date!

Join us to support the more than 3,000 patients, residents, and clients we serve annually. In-person and virtual options available; dog- and stroller-friendly. Register now at www.walkermethodist.org/runwalk or scan the QR code.



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