Cedars

Creative, Productive, Joyous Lives

This week our hearts feel heavy from the profound loss of Sharri McNeal, yet full of memories we've shared with her and the legacy she has left embedded in this organization. We heard from many of you – sharing your own memories and deep appreciation for Sharri. Thank you for reaching out and we will let you know how we will continue to honor our beloved Sharri.

This update contains a lot of information, including **critical, late-breaking news about significant cuts to our state reimbursements**. Please be sure to read through to the to the end of the email.

Dear Cedars Family Members,

Day 64 of Cedars Sheltering In Place with no residents or staff having symptoms or having contracted COVID-19—congratulations to all.

I was happy to see many of you at **our first ever virtual Cedars Family Association Meeting** last week and found it to be a great way to connect with families who live farther away or otherwise cannot attend these meetings.

Yesterday, **Cedars Board of Directors also had their first video Board Meeting.** As most of us are discovering, Zoom is turning out to be an efficient and effective way for individuals to "be together" to carry out important work (or even just chat with friends and families). And it was yesterday.

I thought you might be interested in knowing a bit more about **who** Cedars board members are, **how** they operate and **what** they discuss.

Currently there are **17 board members**, 7 with family or former family members residing at Cedars and 10 caring and capable community members who simply are committed to helping Cedars achieve our lofty goals - another example of how Cedars is successfully connecting to our broader community. Several individuals have been on the board for less than two years and one, **the honorable Terry Ross, has served on Cedars Board for more than 25 years!** Importantly, the group is highly effective and definitely enjoys their work together. Click here to read more about our Board.

The Board meets three times a year for 2 ½ - 3 hours, over a homemade meal by Cedars chef, in addition to a full day retreat at the Textile Arts Collaborative in mid-November. Of course, we are currently meeting remotely, consistent with social-distancing protocols. **Generally, the Board is responsible for setting and strategically guiding the Cedars mission, setting big-picture policy, and ensuring Cedars short and long term financial sustainability.**

The highlights of yesterday's meeting included the following reports/discussion topics:

- Board President Scott Clifford opened the meeting by saying how "**astonished and proud**" he was of all the Cedars staff for proactively developing plans to protect residents as well as finding ways to excel in their "normal" responsibilities!
- I noted that though our work on organizational values was highly aspirational, it was quite remarkable that we are **embodying them daily** in our work together addressing COVID-19 challenges. As a result the spirit and well-being of all staff and residents seems to be at an all-time high.
- We reported that **residential and day program staffing was at 100%** probably for the first time in Cedars history. Our goal is to ensure that we **retain the terrific new staff** who have come on board well after the pandemic subsides.
- The $700,000 remodel of the Textile Arts Collaborative dining hall is **on schedule and under budget** and is projected to be completed in late Fall.

- All Strategic Planning teams continue to meet and are **making good progress** towards our 8 critical goals.
- Cedars finances currently are in terrific shape, largely due to a robust anniversary campaign, strong and ongoing support for annual giving, and significant success in securing Legacy Circle members (those committed to including Cedars in their estate plans). However, the **significant reduction in the May Revise of the State's annual budget** means that **Cedars and all other service providers in the field will have reimbursements reduced by between 7-15%.** If those reductions are maintained in the final State budget, it will have **catastrophic implications for Cedars and all other service providers. Please read below to help us urgently advocate for your loved ones.**

Cedars thrives because of the many people dedicated to its mission and committed to its success - we're grateful for all of them.

Sincerely,

Chuck Greene
Executive Director

HELP ADVOCATE FOR/WITH YOUR LOVED ONES

As stated above, Cedars and all other service providers in the field risk having reimbursements reduced by between 7-15%. We are doing everything we can to provide our participants with the highest quality services possible, but **now we ABSOLUTELY need your assistance** in speaking out on behalf of your family member/Cedars participant, **to prevent their services from being drastically compromised.**

Please email info@cedarslife.org and we will send you tools to reach out to your representatives.