Leaders Changing Lives with Creativity and Commitment

Honoring the winners of the AAHSA Awards for 2009

AAHSA takes great pride in recognizing individuals and organizations that are advancing the vision of healthy, affordable, ethical aging services through their commitment to Quality First. Our award winners combine leadership, creativity and commitment to make great strides in the field. Through these awards, AAHSA pays tribute to their work and offers public recognition from their peers. We hope these award winners will inspire others to achieve ever-higher levels of excellence and public trust.

Award of Honor

David B. Ferguson

President and CEO
American Baptist Homes of the West
Pleasanton, Calif.

American Baptist Homes of the West

David B. Ferguson has been an exceptional leader in aging services, both with Aging Services of California and AAHSA and in his own organization, ABHOW. While still serving as state association chair, he took on the task of national fundraising to advance the AAHSA Long-Term Care Solution, an initiative to transform how we pay for caregiving in our country. He personally committed ABHOW to support Leadership AAHSA by nominating deserving individuals for leadership development.

With his board, Ferguson was one of the first leaders of a multi-facility organization to commit to Quality First and sign the Quality First covenant. He has championed the ABHOW board through several years of education and training in effective governance. He believes wholeheartedly in local community input and participation. Each director of the ABHOW board is a liaison to one or more communities, and ABHOW maintains two funds (Affordable Housing and Social Responsibility) that support community programs, services and equipment.

Under Ferguson's leadership, ABHOW has been recognized for innovation in technology, care and services, and he encourages staff to take initiative in programs that contribute to better service and quality of life.

As chair of Aging Services of California, Ferguson advanced social accountability, diversity, resident participation and culture change. He has been a member of the AAHSA board, development corporation and Leadership Circle. He is often sought to speak and share with others, and leads by example with untold hours of community volunteer service.

Excellence in Leadership Award

Gary T. Puma

CEO & President
PHS Senior Living
Princeton, N.J.

Gary Puma's tenure of 35 years in various executive positions and now as CEO of PHS Senior Living has encompassed unparalleled growth from two to 26 communities, 1,500 employees and over 4,500 residents.

Puma has broadened the organization's mission to include a significant commitment to affordable communities for seniors. He has brought stand-alone assisted living residences into the PHS system and has shepherded $250 million in construction and renovations since becoming CEO.

PHS Senior Living

He has exhibited stewardship for the future through the development of the PHS Senior Living Foundation and its innovative community outreach programs including the Tomorrow's Leaders College Workforce Development program, the Encore Lifelong Access to Arts and Culture initiative, and the Senior Living Education Institute.

Leading-Edge Care and Services Award

Broadway House for Continuing Care

Newark, N.J.

Broadway House for Continuing Care (BHCC) is New Jersey's only specialized HIV/AIDS nursing care facility meeting the post-acute needs of people living with AIDS. BHCC provides comprehensive medical and rehabilitative services to 250 residents each year, the majority of whom are indigent or low-income. Its high quality services have resulted in an increasing number of residents being discharged back into the community.

A high proportion of BHCC's resident-client population has mental illness and multiple addictions in addition to HIV/AIDS and other serious health conditions. Fully 80 percent of residents being discharged would be homeless if BHCC did not secure housing in its discharge process. Housing and post-discharge supportive services have thus become a major focus of the BHCC service expansion.

BHCC is in its fifth year of providing a range of supportive services to the residents of Saint Bridget's Residence of Catholic Charities through the Newark Homeless Community Support Services Project. This program serves more than 100 adults drawn from the populations of discharged Broadway House residents and clients of Saint Bridget's Residence.

Broadway House for Continuing Care

In Broadway House's Newark Genesis Apartments, a low-income housing building scheduled for completion in December, 25 percent of the units will be designated for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Through collaboration with HELP USA, the City of Newark and Jon Bon Jovi's Philadelphia Soul, BHCC is also pursuing new, affordable housing with services for the HIV/AIDS population. Broadway House will provide a complex continuum of services to the residents of 15 HIV/AIDS-dedicated apartments.

Excellence in the Workplace Award

ACTS Retirement-Life Communities, Inc.

West Point, Pa.

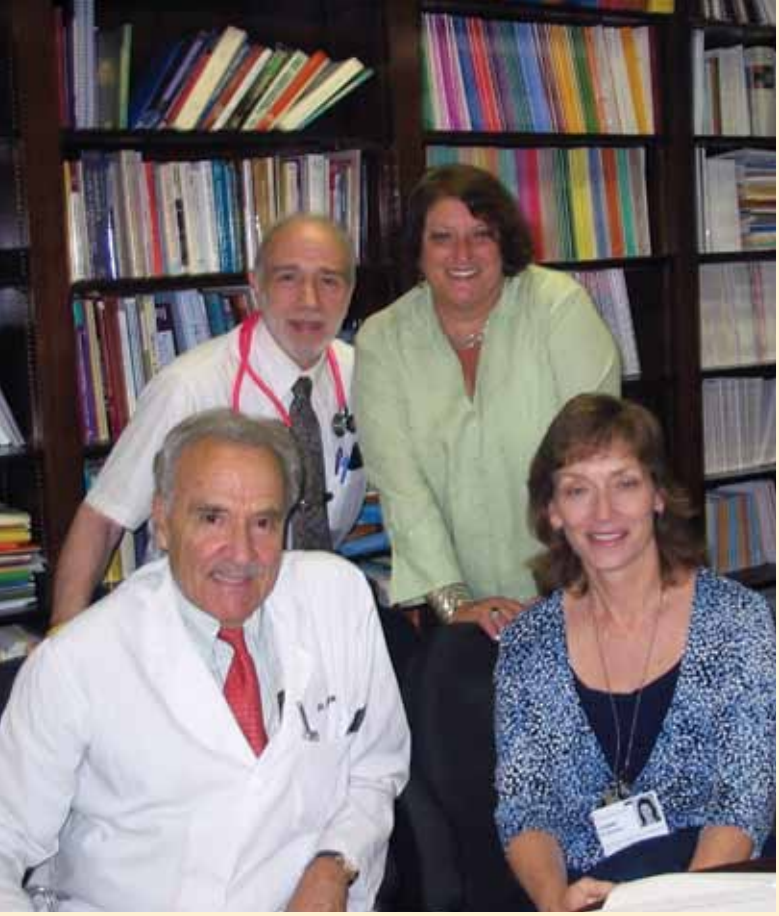
ACTS Retirement-Life Communities' employee turnover is less than half the national average, a reflection of its efforts to provide a positive work environment with fair employment practices, competitive pay and benefits, career opportunities and programs that help employees achieve personal growth and satisfaction.

ACTS believes every employee is a key contributor, and employees respond positively to the organization's Culture of Loving-Kindness initiative, as indicated by staff satisfaction survey results. ACTS' commitment to the fair treatment of employees is accomplished through an "open door" culture and a collaborative approach to problem solving. ACTS provides a comprehensive benefit package including a pension plan, transportation service for employees, numerous staff recognition awards and free access to ACTS communities' fitness centers.

ACTS Retirement-Life Communities, Inc.

Students in one of ACTS' English as a Second Language classes celebrate their graduation.

A pioneer program, ACTS Corporate University, is enormously popular among employees. ACTS invests nearly $2 million annually to have more than 2,000 employees participate in training programs ranging from trade skills education to advanced business degrees. A generous tuition reimbursement program is available to full and part-time employees.



Jewish Home Lifecare

The staff of Jewish Home Lifecare's Research Institute on Aging (left to right): Leslie Libow, M.D., distinguished clinical professor; Richard Neufeld, M.D., vice president of medical affairs; Amy Horowitz, Ph.D., director, Research Institute on Aging; and Joann Reinhardt, associate director of research.

Excellence in Research and Education Award

Jewish Home Lifecare

New York, N.Y.

Research and education have been at the heart of Jewish Home Lifecare since 1892. It is a recognized research and applied technology center that seeks synergies between basic research and applied clinical practice for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, and best practice approaches to diabetes, falls prevention, end-of-life care, person-centered care, dementia, telehealth and disease management.

Through publications and presentations by staff, the supervision and mentoring of students, and internal and external learning opportunities, Jewish Home Lifecare affirms its commitment to quality in aging services. Its Research Institute on Aging has a multidisciplinary research staff consisting of physicians, psychologists, cognitive scientists, public health specialists, sociologists and social workers.

Research staff from Jewish Home Lifecare have faculty appointments at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York City and at other academic institutions. Training is provided for masters' level students as well as doctoral and post-doctoral fellows. Currently, 18 research studies are in progress.

Hobart Jackson Cultural Diversity Award

The Hebrew Home at Riverdale/Project HOPE

Riverdale, N.Y.

Project HOPE is an alternative education program that serves as many as 55 minority high school students each year. Project HOPE offers a full-day program that includes academic instruction and job training on the Hebrew Home campus.

During their 5½-hour school day, students receive four hours of instruction from New York City Department of Education teachers. Guidance counselors and speech therapists are available for student support. Students spend the remainder of their day working directly with residents and staff. Staff provide one-to-one attention, job training and mentoring. Residents provide attention, affection and rich intergenerational learning opportunities. HOPE students are a heterogeneous group, ranging from students with developmental disabilities to those capable of grade-level academic work.

For many, Project HOPE is a life preserver, giving them the skills, confidence and drive to become self-sufficient. Within the Project HOPE structure and support system, many of the students become interested in some level of work in a residential health care environment. Resumes of graduating students who are not yet employed are kept on file at the Hebrew Home for priority consideration for future job openings. Project HOPE quite literally gives these young people the hope—and skills—necessary to lead successful adult lives.

The Hebrew Home at Riverdale

Arelli Sosa, a Project HOPE student, shares a moment with Hebrew Home resident Irene Adler.

Kendal at Oberlin

Kendal at Oberlin residents are bringing positive news about Oberlin schools to the public eye with the Publicity Plugs program. The Kendal residents who participate are also reinforcing positive images of aging.

Dr. Herbert Shore Outstanding Mentor Award

Darren Trisel

Chief Operations Officer/Administrator
Asian Community Center Nursing Home
Sacramento, Calif.

Darren Trisel encourages the Asian Community Center Nursing Home staff to take ownership and leadership of culture change. He mentors them and they mentor others, in turn, by hosting visits to the center to demonstrate how culture change can look and how it can be implemented. Trisel and nursing home staff also travel to other communities and schools to teach about culture change.

New employees are paired with experienced staff to model performance standards. Trisel also encourages continuing education through scholarships, classes and free access to online learning. In addition, Seeds College CNA classes, Western Career College nursing program classes and others are held at the home. Allowing students to get their clinical orientation at the Asian Community Center Nursing Home affords the organization a good "first look" at potential employees.

Asian Community Center Nursing Home

A certified preceptor, Trisel has mentored numerous administrators-in-training, who are now enjoying successful careers.

Public Trust Award

Kendal at Oberlin

Oberlin, Ohio

Kendal at Oberlin began the Publicity Plugs for Oberlin Schools program to focus positive attention on local schools. Facing difficult funding issues, Oberlin's schools no longer had a staff person dedicated to community and public relations. With this loss, there had been a considerable decline of positive news about the schools.

With school administrators' blessing, in 2005 Kendal provided initial training to eight residents who volunteered to pilot a program to increase good news about the schools. Teams of two residents per school (for two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school) paired with an assigned liaison at each campus. With a resource packet of media and school contacts and guidelines on writing press releases, the residents made their way into the schools to discover the up and coming news. At the end of the academic year, the superintendent, principals and teachers enthusiastically asked that the program continue. It has flourished, and press releases and photos by Kendal residents are published regularly, even receiving front-page placement.

These dedicated journalists have forged strong relationships in the schools and the local press. Publicity Plugs not only spreads good news about Oberlin schools and contributes to positive community relations, it also presents an image of positive aging and the potential for continuing contributions in later life.

The Ohio Masonic Home

Outstanding Advocacy Award

David Bannerman

CEO
The Ohio Masonic Home
Springfield, Ohio

David Bannerman has been a model for maintaining strong relationships with his members of Congress and encouraging others to do the same. He is "on call" for AAHSA to fly in for congressional visits when needed. His telephone calls, letters and e-mails to his delegation have put Bannerman and his organization on the map with his representatives.

In addition to mobilizing his own organization, Bannerman has been instrumental in marshaling the impressive resources of the national Masonic community for the benefit of long-term services and supports. He has worked with the Masonic Homes Executive Association of North America to network with national political leaders who share a concern for the care of seniors. He is a trained AAHSA Long-Term Care Solution ambassador and has carried the message of the need for long-term care reform to every corner of Ohio and beyond.

Bannerman's advocacy efforts have been tireless, and he is making a difference in senior services nationally.

It's Not Too Early to Think About 2010 Awards Nominations

Nominations for next year's awards in these same nine categories will open in February 2010. Information and entry forms will be posted on *www.aahsa.org* that month.

In the meantime, AAHSA invites you to be thinking about worthy organizations, programs and individuals who deserve national recognition for excellence, and prepare to nominate them for national honors next year.

Questions? Contact Deborah Cloud at *dcloud@aahsa.org* or (202) 508-9458.