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Engage SAGE

FALL/WINTER 2021

290 Broad Street, Summit, NJ 07901 908-273-5550 • www.sageeldercare.org

Dear SAGE Friend,



Pitching in to get SAGE ready to reopen in July.

As I sit to write this letter today, I am optimistic for SAGE's future, yet increasingly worried about older adults and how they will be supported as this segment of the population continues to grow. According to the Census Bureau, the current number of older adults in the United States is close to 48 million. By 2060, that number is expected to be 98 million, making it 25% of the population. This is a staggering number and will make services,

like SAGE's, more important than ever.

It has already begun. In July we reopened our Spend-A-Day Medical Adult Day Center. The temporary closure, due to the pandemic, was extremely difficult on program participants and caregivers. Without it, these older adults lacked socialization, structure and stimulation. "The virus caused so many of our participants to decline," said Demi Pavlakos, Spend-A-Day Social Worker. "Isolation took such a toll on these poor people." Caregivers, as well, lacked the crucial downtime the program provides. Spend-A-Day is a "life saver," said multiple caregivers upon returning.

In fact, the number of new Spend-A-Day inquiries has never been so high. Between a mix of day programs closing, home health aides being laid off and the negative impact of isolation on older adults, many family members had to become caregivers before they were prepared to be. With businesses reopening, they need our help. We are doing everything we can to accommodate these inquiries while upholding the safety guidelines set by the CDC for current participants and staff.

"We are doing everything we can to accommodate these inquiries while upholding the safety guidelines set by the CDC for current participants and staff."

-Adam Psychos

Our Meals on Wheels program has also had an uptick in enrollment. In 2020, we served 7,000 more meals than the previous year. Half of our clients live alone and nearly 80% report that they rarely have a visitor other than their Meals on Wheels volunteer. This makes our job twofold—delivering a nutritious meal and providing a safety check. Many of the people we visit do not have family in the area. Family members and clients regularly call the office to thank us for caring. It's gratifying and heartbreaking.

Fortunately, our HomeCare department has managed to meet the increasing demand for in-home support. Even with the shortage of job applicants around the state, we were recently able to hire a new nurse and several home health aides.

I am writing this letter to state our case for needing your support and hope you will answer this call for help. Like many businesses hurt by this pandemic, SAGE suffered as well. Our Spend-A-Day closure meant we operated at a loss for 16 months. Our HomeCare department lost revenue as people left jobs to care for their loved ones and did not want to risk having non-family members in the home. Lastly, our limited fundraising functions were disappointing, understandably, due to the uncertainty in our world. All of these factors have hurt SAGE. As a

trusted community resource depended upon by many, I am asking you to please help us with as generous a donation as you are able to make. With your help, we can continue to do the important work we began 67 years ago, caring for the older generation who at one time cared for us.

Thank you very much,


Adam Psychos

SAGE Eldercare Board President

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SAGE ELDERCARE! • THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SAGE ELDERCARE! • THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SAGE ELDERCARE!

SAGE Redesigned!

We have updated our facility with new safety measures and a fresh new look. Call us today at 908-273-5550 for a private tour.



VOLUNTEER AT SAGE

Marguerite Stewart has been with SAGE (both as an employee and a volunteer) for 20 years. Recently, she came in to help us sort and bag peanut butter and jelly donations to bring to Meals on Wheels clients.

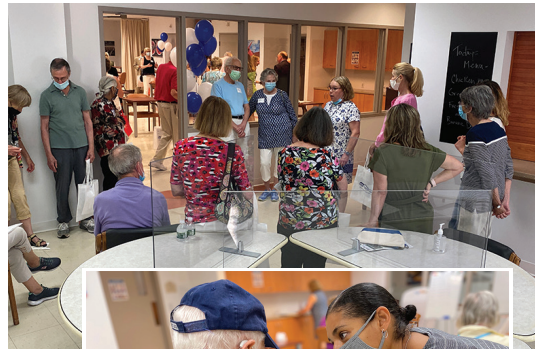
If you would like to learn more about volunteering at SAGE, please call 908-598-5554 or visit www.sageeldercare.org to get an online application.



FURNITURE TLC

Bob McAnally, SAGE Furniture Workshop Manager, delivered recaned chairs to Anne Tyno of Madison. Ms. Tyno said when she brought the chairs in for repair she felt as though she was walking into Geppetto's Workshop. "It's such a wonderful place and the work is beautiful." Call 908-598-5531 to discuss your furniture repair needs. Remember the holidays are coming.

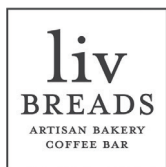




From top: Susan Wirth, SPAD Recreation Manager, giving group tours of the updated facility; Diana Lara, Activities Coordinator, working with a SPAD client on an art project; and Margaret Serwaa, Program Assistant, comforting a participant.

Millburn Cares

We are so appreciative of all the local businesses who support SAGE. We'd like to call out two Millburn businesses, LIV Breads and Trader Joe's. Every week LIV Breads surprises our Meals on Wheels clients with baked goods—a welcome luxury for those who can no longer bake. For nearly five years, Trader Joe's has been delivering flowers and plants to SAGE, bringing happiness and much appreciation from our clients. Thank you both for your generosity and kindness. Your donations mean more than you will ever know.



Spend-A-Day Reopens!

During the Spend-A-Day temporary closure, we received a grant to update the center. Floors were buffed, walls were painted and large colorful photographs were hung everywhere. New tables with plexiglass partitions were installed as well. Upon returning, participants and caregivers noted how great the center looked. Participant Monika K. added how much she misses her friends and the staff on the days Spend-A-Day is closed. "SAGE keeps me alive. I love being here," she said.

The following have been implemented for the health and safety of our participants and staff:

- HVAC system cleaned and disinfected
- Needlepoint Bipolar Plasma Ionizers (NPBI) installed in rooftop HVAC units to keep indoor air quality clean.
- COVID-19 vaccine required for staff and participants
- Weekly random COVID-19 testing required for staff and participants
- Staff and participants wear face masks
- Furniture and plexiglass purchased to encourage social distancing
- No-touch soap and hand sanitizer dispensers installed
- Spend-A-Day participants encouraged to wash hands frequently and high-touch surfaces disinfected throughout the day
- Anago Cleaning Company contracted to disinfect at the end of each day

For more information about Spend-A-Day, please call 908-598-5520.



ROBIN HANDWERGER, MOW MANAGER, STANDING BESIDE AN IMAGE HER CO-WORKERS CREATED FOR HER.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT MEET ROBIN HANDWERGER MEALS ON WHEELS MANAGER

SAGE: How long have you been working with Meals on Wheels (MOW)?
Robin: Five years. I was promoted to manager last year.

SAGE: What did you do prior to MOW?
Robin: I was in the fashion industry in production. I worked with Ralph Lauren, Kate Spade and Tommy Hilfiger. It was great pre-children.

SAGE: Are you currently doing any other work?
Robin: I've been a hospice volunteer since 2012. I'm grateful I am able to help the patient or family escape for a little bit and talk about something other than illness. We talk about things that brought them happiness in their lives. In most cases, family is at the top of the list.

SAGE: What do you enjoy most about the work you do for MOW?
Robin: The people! It's so nice to work with a group of staff and volunteers who share the same passion—to keep older adults safe and fed.

SAGE: Tell us something about your job we don't know.
Robin: Meals are only part of what we do. Amy Stuart, Community Engagement & Volunteer Manager, and I make upward of 25 safety calls every month. These happen when either a client doesn't answer the door or when a volunteer is worried that something didn't feel right. I can't tell you the number of times our volunteers have helped save a life by alerting us that something was wrong. Our work is a great comfort to clients as well as their families. It's nice to know someone cares.

For more information about Meals on Wheels, please call 908-598-5554.

www

Keeping your Loved Ones Safe

If you are concerned a loved one may be showing signs of needing in-home support, contact SAGE's HomeCare Department at 908-273-8400. We offer part-time, full-time and overnight support by our professionally trained home health aides.

In the meantime, follow this helpful list of precautions provided by the Alzheimer's Association:

- Store potentially hazardous items (medication, alcohol, matches, sharp objects, etc.) in a locked cabinet
- Keep cleaning products out of sight and secured to avoid ingestion
- Keep the local poison control center number handy or saved in your phone
- Make sure carbon monoxide, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are functioning and replace batteries twice a year during daylight savings time
- Remove tripping hazards (throw rugs, extension cords, etc.)
- Keep walkways and rooms well lit
- Secure large furniture (book shelves, TVs, etc.) to prevent tipping
- Ensure chairs have armrests to support going from a sitting to standing position
- Apply stickers to glass doors at eye level to ensure doors are visible
- Install a latch/deadbolt either above or below eye-level on doors
- Remove locks on interior doors to prevent the person living with dementia from locking themselves in
- Consider enrolling in a wandering response service. Contact the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900 to learn more.

Visit www.sageeldercare.org and let us know how we can help you today!

Medicare Open Enrollment for 2022 is October 15 - December 7

During open enrollment, SAGE's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) will offer free support and information. We will host Zoom webinars on Wednesdays (10:00 am - 11:30 am) and Thursdays (6:00 pm - 7:30 pm) and will offer assistance via phone and in-person. Below is a schedule of 'Medicare and You' programs we are hosting both virtually and in-person. For more information, please contact Tenisha Morgan-Brathwaite, SHIP Coordinator, at tmorgan@sageeldercare.org or 908-273-6999.

'MEDICARE AND YOU' EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (IN-PERSON)

September 24	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Hosted by Linden Library
October 19	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Hosted by Summit Public Library
November 4	TBD	Hosted by Cranford Public Library

'MEDICARE AND YOU' EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (VIRTUAL)

September 21	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Hosted by Garwood Library
September 29	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Hosted by Springfield Library
October 5	6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Hosted by Plainfield Public Library
October 7	11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Hosted by Cranford Public Library
October 12	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Hosted by Garwood Public Library
November 9	6:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Hosted by Plainfield Public Library

INTERN INTERVIEW MEET ISABELLA LORA



ISABELLA LORA
SAGE INTERN

We had the pleasure of having Isabella Lora join us for eight weeks this summer. She was engaged, helpful and all around wonderful. Randi Mazella, writer and SAGE volunteer, spoke

with Isabella at the end of her internship.

SAGE: What made you come to SAGE?

Isabella: I saw a posting for a not-for-profit supporting older adults. The internship offered a mix of marketing and communications I thought SAGE would be a good fit for me.

SAGE: What surprised you most about SAGE?

Isabella: At the beginning of my internship, I watched a film about the challenges older adults face, including isolation and neglect. I was shocked and upset to learn about these issues, especially elder abuse. It was an eye opening experience.

SAGE: What is one project you worked on at SAGE?

Isabella: I began the internship right as SAGE was implementing a new system, Electronic Visit Verification, which the state required. It's a system that processes Medicaid reimbursement.

Side note from Marianne Kranz, Volunteer Director: "Without being asked, Isabella dove in and project-managed the entire undertaking. Not only did she train our home health aides in how to use the system, she trained all the staff as well."

SAGE: What was the work environment like?

Isabella: Everyone at SAGE is so nice. They truly care about the important work they are doing. And even though they were super busy, they always made time to see how I was doing. Some interns get lost in the shuffle, but all of my co-workers were so caring. They even celebrated my birthday with a little party!