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ENRICHING SENIOR LIVES

Why I am so overwhelmed with gratitude for my community

Three months ago, when the COVID-19 pandemic first hit and we all went into sheltering in place mode, I wrote an article for The Voice that shared a quick checklist of ideas on how readers could calm their fears about the future by focusing on staying connected, entertained, grateful, and present. It was a checklist to remind myself that this too shall pass, and to never lose sight of the gift that each day can bring.

The safety of our residents has always been our priority, but when a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic hits and everyone's health is threatened, you really get to observe how people react and interact with others. I have witnessed so many acts of kindness by staff and residents that show the true character of the Lions Gate community.

The following is a LOVE letter to all of our residents, family members, staff, and general community members. I want all who read this to celebrate your courageous spirits, your generous hearts, your never-ending creativity, and your unfaltering kindness. Please know that each and every one of you is the rea-

son that our community has become stronger and "We Are Better Together."

As I reflect upon the past 90 days, although my heart is heavy, I am also overwhelmed...

- I am overwhelmed with sadness at the loss of residents during this time, and I send my thoughts and prayers to their families.

- I am overwhelmed with gratitude for all residents and staff who continue to remain safe.

- I am overwhelmed with pride for all the hard-working and dedicated Lions Gate employees and everything they accomplished on behalf of our residents.

- I am overwhelmed with gratitude to our residents who have endured sheltering in place for over three months and continue to be thankful for the services that our staff continues to provide and making each day brighter than the last.

- I am overwhelmed with gratitude to our family members

who continue to be so supportive of Lions Gate by taking the time to send emails thanking staff for taking such good care of their loved ones.

- I am overwhelmed by the generosity of the Lions Gate residents and family members, as well as the general community for their donations to our Solidarity Response Fund so we can continue to purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) and other items related to infection control.

- I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the continued support of our Board of Trustees, my Lions Gate colleagues, Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey colleagues, and industry colleagues who continue to offer assistance, share ideas, and check in to see how all of us at Lions Gate are doing during these most challenging times.

The LOVE of our residents is seen throughout the community in various ways, such as the culinary team creating various

surprise snacks, including Muffins and Mimosas, Wine and Cheese, and Ice Cream Sundaes, etc., which are delivered to residents several times a week. Another way our employees show their LOVE of our residents is our management team calling daily to see how they are, asking if they need anything, and to chat with them for a bit so they are not lonely. These are just a few examples, as I could go on and on about each department and the employees who show their LOVE each and every day.

So while this letter highlights so many in the Lions Gate community, it really only begins to scratch the surface of the amazing staff who have come together as family to support our residents. I hope all who read this will look to the individuals who have made even a small difference in their own lives over the last three months, and thank them for making their day a little brighter and the burden of worry a little lighter. No one knows what tomorrow will bring, but I have confidence that we can face whatever that may be with a clear eye and an open heart

because we are sharing this journey together.

As we begin to see the state opening up and life as we know it begins to return to some sense of normalcy, Lions Gate is proceeding with great caution. We are implementing essential protocols, services and precautions necessary to protect our residents and employees to the best of our ability.

I look forward to the day when the entire Lions Gate community can come together and share a rousing collective cheer of *L'chaim!* Stay safe and healthy and may you all find a little light in the solitude.

In light of the current COVID-19 restrictions, Lions Gate is not currently open for personal tours. However, it would be our pleasure to walk you through a virtual tour, meet you outside on our patio or yours, and we would be happy to talk to you about the many ways Lions Gate would be a good fit for you.

Call Donna at (856) 679-4682 or go online to set up an appointment at DCoonley@lionsgateccrc.org. We'd love to share with you all the amenities Lions Gate has to offer. ▲ slowe@lionsgateccrc.org



SUSAN LOVE

*CEO/Jewish Senior Housing
and Healthcare Service*