

futureAge

aaahsa

Creating the Future of Aging Services | September/October 2007

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Live Your Story

Where Ethics Underpins Mission and Vision

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Not-for-profit providers are obliged to practice ethical stewardship of resources while protecting their missions and underlying values.

BY DIANNE MOLVIG

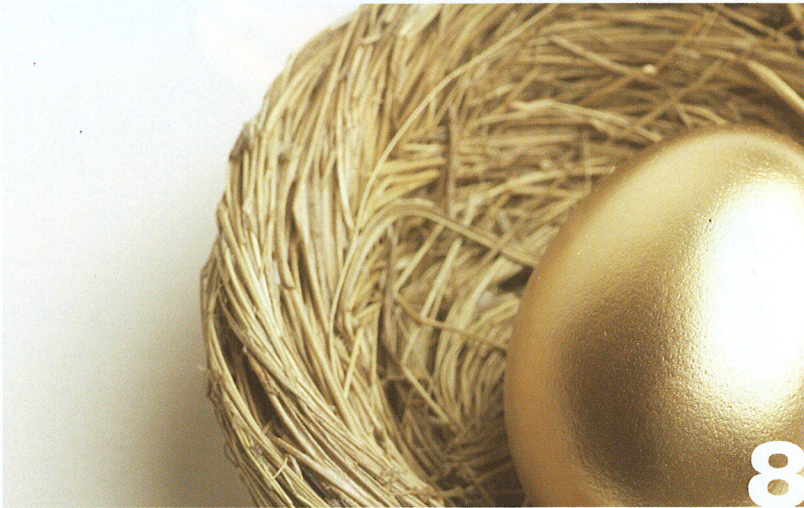
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Mather LifeWays



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Examining Our Moral Imperative



Mather LifeWays

AAHSA's Commission on Ethics in Aging Services has completed a white paper that focuses on the many ethical issues involved in employing caregivers.

The paper includes extensive background information, key questions for self-assessment in each area, and a useful six-page "Workplace Ethics Audit—A Matter of Respect (Going Beyond Staff Pizza Parties)." Download the complete 26-page document at www.aahsa.org/pubs_resources/papers_articles/default.asp.

The new white paper from AAHSA's Commission on Ethics in Aging Services, *Our Moral Imperative: Creating an Ethical Workplace*, addresses the moral responsibilities of providers as caregivers, employers and members of their communities. The Commission draws on providers' mission, vision and ideals as the foundation of a responsibility to serve those in need and to offer meaningful work and an ethical workplace for staff. The Commission's efforts are built on the proposition that, "How employees are regarded, treated, advanced and compensated reflects the moral fiber of our organizations."

The Commission first identifies seven ethical principles that relate to the long-term care workforce: respect, autonomy, participation, justice, stewardship, community and trust. Building on that foundation, it offers recommendations on 1) economic issues, 2) cultural transformation and 3) cultural diversity.

The following are brief excerpts from the paper on the three areas above, along with the Commission's overarching recommendations.

Economic Issue Recommendations

The Commission recommends offering the highest appropriate level of wages and benefits possible as a moral and sound management practice. Since the financing of long-term care poses a number of obstacles to providing sufficient compensation, we further recommend that advocacy efforts and solutions to the future financing of long-term care make adequate compensation of the workforce a major priority.

The Commission also is encouraged by the efforts of local, regional and state coalitions under formation across the country to address compensation and other long-term care workforce issues and recommends that AAHSA members either initiate or become

Vision to Life



Excellence in Leadership Award

Roger W. Paulsberg
President and CEO
Lutheran Life Communities
Arlington Heights, Ill.

Roger Paulsberg has dedicated his life to serving older adults, as did his father, an administrator, and his mother, a director of nursing. When he arrived at the Lutheran Home

18 years ago, it was challenged by a lack of resources and an aging facility. Through his leadership in strategic planning and building relationships, Paulsberg was able to guide the organization through an extraordinary change and growth process that resulted in the creation of Lutheran Life Communities.

Today the original campus is complemented by four other continuing care campuses in Illinois and Indiana. In addition, the organization owns and operates an intergenerational child care center, three adult day care centers and a growing, state-of-

the-art home health agency. It has a network of 250 volunteers and provides more than 1,600 meals on wheels. The campus has been totally repositioned to offer a full continuum of memory support services, skilled care, assisted living and a wide range of therapy services including outpatient services. As a result, Lutheran Life Communities is among the fastest-growing systems in the country, according to the AAHSA Ziegler 100, moving up from number 95 in 2005 to number 50 in 2006.

Eighteen years ago, this organization was financially troubled and did not have a development program. Today, the Lutheran Home Foundation has more than \$25 million in assets and continues to grow. An exceptional leader, Paulsberg believes such progress would not be possible without the commitment of all stakeholders, and a dedicated staff at all levels. That's why, at every orientation for new staff, he presents his vision for Lutheran Life Communities and emphasizes the importance of having "a passion for compassion."

Excellence in the Workplace Award

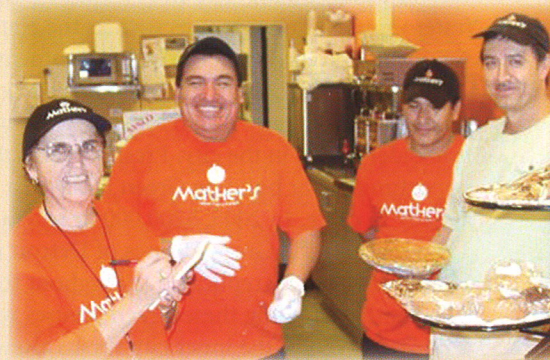
Mather LifeWays
Evanston, Ill.

Mather LifeWays' commitment to serving older adults is equaled only by its commitment to attracting and retaining nearly 500 valued employees, proving that taking extraordinary care of employees translates into extraordinary service for residents and consumers.

In addition to generous benefits valued at an additional 32 percent of annual compensation, other progressive employee programs align with Mather LifeWays' "Ways to Age Well" mission. Examples include monthly health newsletters and assessment surveys; wellness challenges and incentives; pedometers to encourage physical activity; complimentary flu shots; wellness coaching for employees and their families; an online tool for caregivers; financial fitness seminars; and a newly developed work/life balance tool kit. Staff may also request reimbursement of up to \$100 per year for nondegree courses, such as music lessons, yoga or foreign language classes.

At Mather LifeWays, the Culture Team reinforces the Mather experience, and the Fun Squad promotes enthusiasm and pride. The average tenure of a Mather employee is 5.4 years, and it isn't unusual for employees to celebrate 20- or 25-year anniversaries.

Known for its LEAP national workforce development initiatives, Mather LifeWays also offers the PREPARE training program to equip senior living and long-term care professionals around the country to handle disasters.



Breakfast, lunch, or carry-out, Mather's—
More Than a Café staff eagerly await orders.