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LIBERTY

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# A Liberty

SPRING/SUMMER 2020

## A LEGACY

# Beyond a Garden

One thing that brings joy to Dr. Keiko Miwa Ross is her pretty gardens at The Village at Penn State. For over 16 years she has

landscaped, built and cared for them continuously. Her Japanese culture inspires her selection of plants and features that she uses in her gardens.

The depth and rich history of Keiko's life and her legacy go far beyond her garden. She was born in Hyogo, Japan, where her father was a college professor. In 1953 the old Japanese higher education system was drastically changed to model the American system, and the college education was opened to Japanese women for the first time in the nation's history. Under this new college system, Keiko became one of the first female college students in Japan.

After attending National Kobe University in Japan for two years, she received a scholarship to study at Eastern Washington State University in Cheney, Washington, USA. There she enrolled as a junior student, lived one year at the college dormitory, and another year she lived with an American family in Spokane, Washington. It was also there that she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Education degree in two years with honors from Eastern Washington State University.

After graduation, she went back to Japan, began to teach at a Japanese college, and lived in Nishinomiya City. When Nishinomiya and Spokane

wanted to become sister cities, Keiko contributed a great deal for this sister city program. The mayor of Spokane consequently awarded her honorary citizenship of Spokane, and the Washington Water Company awarded her a scholarship to do her graduate studies in the USA. So, Keiko got her Master of Education degree from Eastern Washington State University in one year, and Doctor of Education degree from Washington State University in Pullman, Washington in two years.

In 1974, the American Embassy in Japan requested Keiko's help for a visit by then President Gerald Ford. "Back then, there were no computers, no cell phones," she points out. "They had to set up an entire floor of the largest hotel in Japan as the communications center to connect President Ford from wherever he visited in Japan to the people he needed to be in touch with in the USA in case of an international critical emergency. It was quite an operation." When President Ford left Japan, he awarded Keiko the Presidential Certificate of Appreciation.

Keiko met her husband, Samuel Thomas Ross, at Expo '70, the world's fair in Osaka, Japan. He was the director of a US-Japan joint venture company in Japan. Eventually, they moved to New York



*Above: Keiko has added Japanese influences to her garden at The Village at Penn State.*

City. When Samuel, a graduate of Penn State University, was ready to retire, the couple decided to live in State College. They moved to The Village at Penn State in 2003, the first year when The Village at Penn State was built.

**"Liberty Lutheran has made positive changes here at The Village." Keiko shares. "They have moved The Village in the right direction with all the new spaces, new atmosphere, and a new attitude."**

In addition to the time she enjoys in her gardens, Keiko enjoys The Village's expansion and beauty. She has generously given to support the fireplace in the library, the main fitness center, and the connector hallway from East Building to the Atrium.

**"I give to The Village because I think it is a good thing for me to do," she gracefully expresses. "I just like to do it."**

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**COMING UP IN  
THE FALL ISSUE:  
HEROES OF  
COVID-19**



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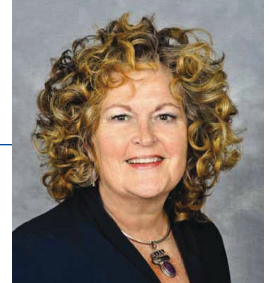
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## Up Front

### Greetings from the President



## A Source of Hope and Care

Inspired by God's grace, Liberty Lutheran was founded with the vision to be a world-class organization that enriches and empowers the lives of older adults as well as vulnerable populations. With the emergence of the coronavirus (COVID-19), the world has changed and the past several months have been extraordinary for our family of services.

As an organization rooted in the Lutheran faith, our motivation to serve is in response to God's love for all of humanity. The celebration of Easter reminds us of God's deep and boundless love, and compels us to answer God's call to walk with others during their life's journey. Our ability to serve as a vibrant and joyful source of hope and care would not be possible without your continued commitment to Liberty Lutheran and our mission.

Within this issue, you will read stories that demonstrate the wide array of offerings within our family of services. Your dedication helps foster the health and well-being of the people we serve every day, from innovative memory care programs to empowering offerings that help independent older adults make the most of their retirement.

We are also pleased to add a new section to *At Liberty* called Leading Liberty, which will introduce you to a staff member or volunteer who contributes his or her talents with tireless dedication. This issue features Pastor Julie Stumpf, the director of spiritual care at Paul's Run, who not only offers spiritual support to residents and staff alike but also facilitates so much of the community's activities.

Not only are you supporting our strong preventive actions during this crisis, you are creating rewarding experiences and making an incredible impact for our residents, clients, and members. On behalf of our entire family of services, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude for the contribution you make. As you continue reading this issue, please know that our ability to offer enriching and rewarding experiences is only possible because of you. From all of us at Liberty Lutheran, thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Luanne B. Fisher'.

Luanne B. Fisher, PhD  
President and CEO, Liberty Lutheran



## THE MANOR *at York Town*



*Left: Eileen enjoying The Manor's newly refurbished common area.*

*Above: Eileen and her friends after a great water aerobic workout.*

## Meet You In The Pool

“The moment I step down the ramp into the water I say ‘oh my goodness’ as the pain just melts away.”

Eileen Behm is a resident at The Manor at York Town, and has been attending water aerobics classes for her arthritis several times a week at The Becoming Center, which is located at Artman. Led by trained instructors in a laid back atmosphere, Eileen and her classmates make the most of The Becoming Center's heated pool through a fun and engaging workout.

“The classes were a huge drawing point in me coming here in the first

place,” says Eileen. “Each instructor offers a good mix of exercises so that I come out of every 45-minute session feeling relaxed and refreshed.” Eileen's particular class focuses on helping those living with arthritis to stretch their muscles in a way that takes pressure off of the joints to relieve stress and build strength.

“We focus on each class offering a full range of motion, giving each participant a head-to-toe workout,” explains Eileen O'Rourke, one of The Becoming Center's aquatic instructors. “It makes me so happy to see the women being encouraged both by the classes and each other as well.”

With all the fun of the pool to set the tone, participants have turned the class into a community of their own as well. O'Rourke notes, “they really care for one another. The

ladies will send cards when one of their group members gets sick. They also make sure that all new attendees feel welcome when they come.”

Eileen enjoys her trip to The Becoming Center for more than just the relief and heart healthy exercise it offers. By combining the health benefits, social aspects, and relaxed atmosphere, water aerobics has become an unbeatable highlight of her week. “For those 45 minutes that I am in the pool I can move like I used to again, and that is a real pleasure.”

Residents of The Manor at York Town benefit in a variety of ways from their membership to The Becoming Center, including personal training, exercise classes, and physical rehabilitation.



# Cooking with Bernie:

## A Passion for Food Heats Up

**S**itting beside one another in the personal care dining room at Paul's Run, husband-wife duo, Freda and Bernie Samuels, enjoy a delicious chicken salad sandwich that Bernie made himself. A happily married couple for the past 30 years, Bernie has enjoyed cooking delightful meals for Freda throughout their retirement. Since moving to Paul's Run in October of 2019, it's been Bernie's pleasure to share his wealth of cooking knowledge with all of the friends, families, and neighbors of this community.

Bernie's passion for cooking began many years ago after his late wife sadly passed away. "Freda and I are both in our second marriages," he explains. Bernie's first wife was an excellent cook. "Her food was delicious, but I was not allowed anywhere near the kitchen," he laughs. "After she passed away, I would go to diners to eat," he says disappointedly. "The food was alright, but it wasn't long before it started to taste like cardboard."

As food from the diner became unbearably boring, Bernie decided to do something about it. "I told myself, 'I'm going to learn how to cook,'" he says determinedly. Bernie started watching cooking shows at home and his newfound culinary interests began to heat up.

After seeing professional chefs make cooking look easy, Bernie wanted to give it a try, and who better for a taste test than family? Bernie had his two sons over for dinner and made them gefilte fish. "By the time they were finished eating they said, 'Dad, this tastes better than the fish Mom used to make,'" he smiles. "I thought that was a pretty nice compliment. So, I decided I'm going to cook more often."



*Top: Bernie (left) enjoys sharing his recipes with Paul's Run dining staff.*

*Above: Bernie and his wife, Freda, love to share a good laugh with a delightful meal.*

As Bernie took on his new-found passion, he began developing recipes of his own. Experimenting with numerous cuisines, Bernie enjoys cooking everything from his homemade lasagna and gravy, "that's tomato sauce," he explains, to one of his all-time favorites, his signature salmon. "It's the best," he says. "People would ask where I bought the fish. I'd tell them, 'it isn't where the fish is from; it's how I make it.'"

When Bernie came to Paul's Run in October and met Executive Director, Bill Hines, he shared a few of his recipes. One of them was Bernie's crab cakes. Impressed, Bill passed on the recipe to Dining Services, and Bernie's crab cake recipe was served in the dining room that same week.

"Those crab cakes were excellent," Bill confirms. Lucky for Paul's Run, Bernie never keeps his recipes a secret, and his passion for food continues to thrive as he shares his culinary expertise with the entire community.



# LEADING LIBERTY

WITH PASTOR JULIE STUMPF, *director of spiritual care at Paul's Run*

**Q: How does Liberty Lutheran compare to other organizations, and what impact does that make for the people we serve?**

**A:** Before Liberty Lutheran, I served in a local congregation for three years. This gave me ample opportunity to visit with parishioners and experience senior care in a variety of communities. While I felt called to work with seniors, I honestly had no idea what it would be like to work for Liberty Lutheran; however, the genuine reflection of the Gospel that I witnessed in the care that was given to residents was enough for me to know this was an organization that I would be proud to serve every day. The impact we make is best understood by the happiness of our residents expressed in how they live life to its fullest while feeling safe, loved and valued at a critical time in their lives.

**Q: How do you see the work that you do inspiring others in the community?**

**A:** At Paul's Run there is a team approach to inspiring one another on a daily basis. I'm just part of a larger network of people who truly care for those we serve and look for creative and exciting ways to meet the needs of each individual. Daily and weekly worship services strengthen and sustain members of our community from a wide variety of faith backgrounds. This is a source of relationship for many of our residents that inspires them to carry on the volunteer roles they held before coming here. The Spiritual

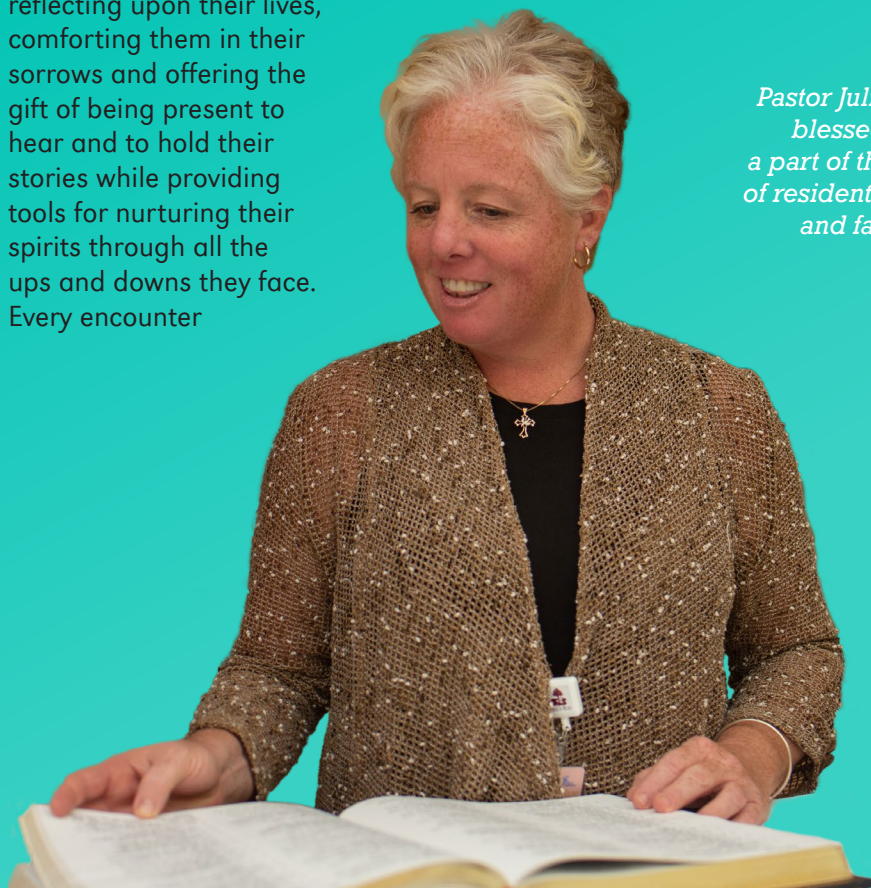
Care Department offers residents opportunities to serve others and stay connected to the wider community through Community Service Club activities. I never realized how much it would improve their sense of self and perspective on life. It is truly a joy to watch and learn from them that the need for connection and reaching out to others remains intact throughout our lifespan.

**Q: Tell us about an experience you have had here, that your role impacted the residents and families?**

**A:** In the role of chaplain you are blessed daily with opportunities to be part of the lives of residents, staff and families. This includes celebrating their accomplishments, reflecting upon their lives, comforting them in their sorrows and offering the gift of being present to hear and to hold their stories while providing tools for nurturing their spirits through all the ups and downs they face. Every encounter

with a resident and family is an opportunity to encounter God and experience holiness and compassion in this life. I am most aware of how my role impacts the lives of others when they call me Pastor or Chaplain. I have discovered in my time at Paul's Run that while degrees and ordination are wonderful things—the only real things that make me a chaplain are God's call to serve this community in this way and permission of those that I serve to share their lives and be their Chaplain.

*Pastor Julie feels blessed to be a part of the lives of residents, staff, and families.*





Above: The IN2L's interactive programs make sessions engaging for residents.

# Memories Shared Together

For residents at Artman, the link between memory and care is closer than you may imagine. By using an easy-to-use software called *It's Never Too Late* (IN2L), residents in memory care are able to revisit the past through an assortment of media from their youth including movie clips, radio shows, and music. As part of *Inspiring Today*, the software empowers users by triggering memories to stimulate the mind in a positive, encouraging way.

"Things that they would not be able to remember come back to them in a rush," says Katherine McGinnis, a nurse at Artman who leads a group session focusing on IN2L every Wednesday. "They may struggle to remember the name of a song or singer, but as soon as we put their favorite music on they are able to sing along to every word."

Katherine also uses the program to lead trivia games for the residents. By asking questions comparing prices of goods over time, or popular pastimes, participants are able to better connect their past memories with present information. *It's Never Too Late* offers a wide variety of



media comprising decades of entertainment, guaranteeing that every participant will find a piece of their past to connect with. Not only does the program help with memory, but it also encourages community building as discussion grows naturally over each session.

Katherine notes that "when I put on a radio show like Bob Newhart, it prompts the residents to share with me and each other what life was like during that time. They talk about what was important to them, and that is wonderful to hear about."

*It's Never Too Late* benefits residents at Artman both mentally and emotionally. By bringing the community together and celebrating what residents love, IN2L sparks memories as well as friendship. The program is offered to all residents in Artman's memory care program, and is an integral part of Liberty Lutheran's *Inspiring Today* model.



## Congratulations. You've Made the Team!

**I**t's mid-morning at The Hearth at Drexel and the sound of cheering rings through the *Inspiring Today* household, which is home to the community's memory care residents. The excitement grows as each resident takes a turn to participate in the neighborhood basketball program.

As they shoot the ball, the support each resident receives from their neighbors and staff increases, their confidence grows, and they make progress to improve their overall wellbeing.

"We incorporated adaptive sports games into our activities, knowing that they would provide a variety of benefits. One of the most popular is a balloon-bop program, where residents attempt to keep a balloon in the air while counting the number of times they touch it," Jessica Buck, director of community life shares. "We recently added the basketball program to grow on that success, and because we know that there would be even more added benefits since residents will be targeting a small hoop at a distance."

Simple activities, such as throwing a basketball have shown to improve functions that are important for activities of daily living. For instance, while it may be simple enough for many to shoot a basketball, the exercise presents important benefits to older adults who may need assistance with activities such as showering or eating.



Since the program was added, residents feel better about themselves. They are forming bonds with their neighbors and building relationships.

"There's an incredible feeling when we bring out the basketball hoop," Jessica says. "Residents perk up and start talking about their experiences, whether they played basketball or another sport when they were younger, or if they enjoy watching the 76ers. They become expressive and start conversations with each other and the staff."

Georgyn, an *Inspiring Today* resident shares her experience, "I like the basketball program because I'm good at it, and I feel good when I make the shots," she says. "It's nice talking with my neighbors. Sometimes, we talk about basketball games that we saw on TV."

For many residents, shooting a basketball brings back a feeling of youthful exuberance. Tom shares, "I used to play basketball when I was younger, so I liked when they started the program," he says. "It's nice having things to do like this because it makes us feel good."

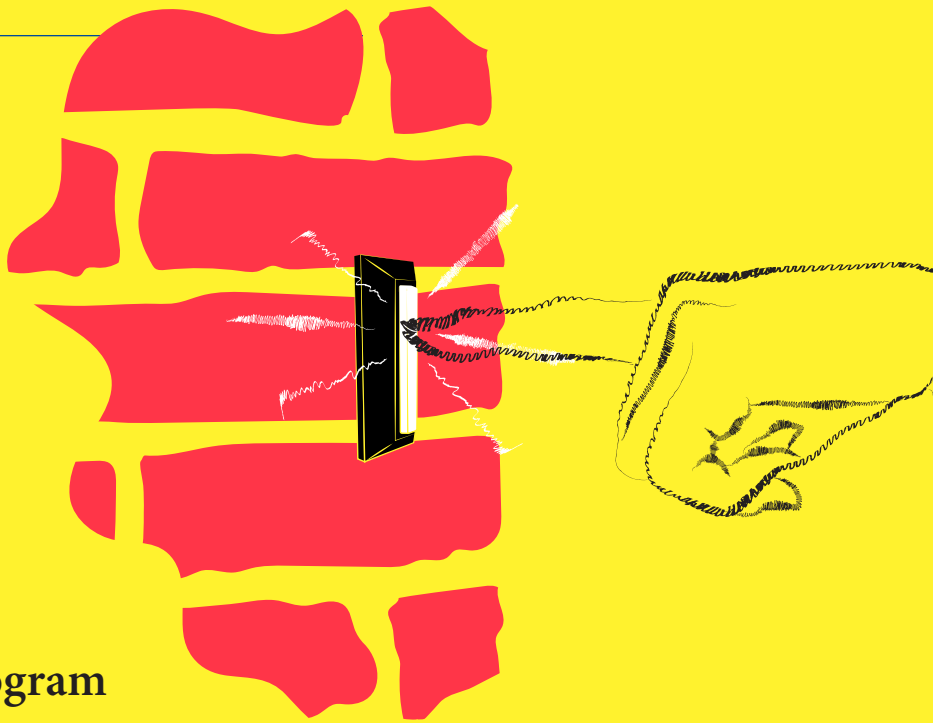
As each program concludes, staff members line up in front of the residents, shaking each person's hand, "Congratulations," they say to each smiling face. "You've made the team!"





# Inspiring Independence

with the In-Home Support Program



**T**hroughout our later years of life the significance of independence and dignity become increasingly important. For The West Philadelphia Senior Community Center's (WPSCCC) In-Home Support Program (IHSP), independence and dignity are among the guiding principles that continue to empower older adults who live in this community.

Primarily benefitting older adults who are temporarily unable to leave home without personal assistance or supervision, the IHSP provides invaluable services to the underserved population of adults ages 60 and over in West and Southwest Philadelphia. Some of these services include providing home-delivered meals, transportation, senior companionship, assistance with household tasks, personal care, and more.

The individuals who help live out this program's mission have an immense dedication to uplifting the lives of others. Together, they provide the opportunity for older adults in West and Southwest Philadelphia to feel fulfilled and proud of their continuing independence.

Andragina Johnson, a supervisor of the In-Home Support Program, recalls a service they provided this past winter for West Philadelphia resident, Sandra Walker, who was unable to leave her home because of the steepness

of her front steps. "I have two bad knees," shares Sandra. "I could not climb those front stairs without a railing and I am at a point in my life where I don't have the ability to pay for certain things. The In-Home-Support Program has been a blessing for me, a great blessing."

The IHSP came to Sandra's house and installed a secure railing that leads safely to her front door. Now, she is able to enter and exit her house through the front entrance and can do so with confidence and stability. "I don't know what I would do without the In-Home-Support Program's help," Sandra affirms.

The IHSP also installed a doorbell for Sandra as her current doorbell was not functioning properly. "For older adults in this community it can be startling if someone knocks on your door, or maybe they can't hear the knocking. We installed the doorbell and she can hear it throughout the entire house," Andragina affirms.

The In-Home Support Program's commitment to supporting independence for older adults unable to leave their home demonstrates immense compassion, and is an essential resource for the people of this community. This vital program continues to inspire strength and carry out Liberty's mission to promote the wellbeing of those we serve.

# The Village

AT PENN STATE



*Above: The Recycling Committee meets to facilitate a successful recycling culture at The Village.*

## Sustaining an Active Recycling Culture

**R**esidents of The Village at Penn State take pride in their efforts to sustain a successful recycling culture. In fact, this eco-friendly practice is so important to their community that residents developed a committee to ensure its progress several years ago. Fulfilling their mission throughout the years, The Recycling Committee has played an instrumental role in developing The Village's progressive recycling program and they continue to make steady strides in furthering its success.

For resident and current chairman of the committee, Jim Tate, recycling is more than an interest. It's his passion. "Recycling is something I learned when I was a child and it's been with me ever since," he says.

Before moving to The Village in 2018, Jim lived in Malvern and served as chairman of the Willistown Township Recycling Committee for 25 years. While there, he developed a comprehensive recycling program for all residents and businesses. Part of his responsibilities included applying for grants from the PA Department of Environmental Protection - Recycling Fund.

With plenty of previous experience in developing and implementing a successful recycling program, Jim hoped to achieve similar goals at The Village when he assumed his role as chairman of the committee. The group established

three objectives: convince residents about the importance of recycling; educate residents on the types of items that can and cannot be recycled; and establish an efficient recycling system at The Village to complement the service provided by the community's recycling vendor.

"The residents are key to the success of the entire recycling program," Jim emphasizes. "If their number of questions about which type of items can be recycled is any gauge of success, The Village's program is making great strides," he affirms.

Indeed, as residents' curiosity about recycling continues to heighten, the committee has managed to increase the number of recycling bins for plastic bottles, jugs and jars, and mixed paper throughout the community. Additionally, they've expanded access to The Village's corrugated cardboard dumpster and are continuing to work on adding non-traditional recyclable items to their program.

As the committee looks forward to the future, the positive impact they progressively make on the environment as well as their community is clear. When asked if The Village Recycling Committee is on its way to facilitating a successfully recycling culture, Jim proudly responds, "WE ARE!"



## Experience Meets Compassion: Helping Newcomers in Philadelphia

**After Hurricanes  
Irma and Maria hit  
Puerto Rico in  
September of 2017,  
more than 6,000  
individuals  
evacuated from  
their homes  
to greater  
Philadelphia.**

While hundreds of families found employment and housing quickly, there were scores of people who needed support that went beyond extended friends' and families' ability to help them. Lutheran Disaster Response—Eastern Pennsylvania came together with partners from across the region to form the Greater Philadelphia Long Term Recovery Committee (GPLRTC) to help newcomers from Puerto Rico identify everything from housing, childcare, and work opportunities.

Charlie Perez and his family were fortunate enough to connect with the long term recovery group and Lutheran Disaster Response shortly after arriving in Philadelphia in November of 2017. "The group referred us to various resources, which helped us to move forward. For both my family and I, the biggest challenge was adapting to the city of Philadelphia," says Charlie.

Rather than allow a new environment to slow him down, Charlie extended his hands to fellow Puerto Ricans coming to Philadelphia. By combining his understanding of first-hand knowledge of challenges newcomers faced, with his relationships at the long term recovery group, Charlie got to work helping anywhere that he could.

"With God's help, I had the opportunity to work with an agency that offered help to others, who, like I did, needed help," Charlie says. "From my unique position I was able to give it to them. Thanks to the GPLRTC, many families have

overcome hardship and been able to pull forward after tragedy."

The relationships and partnerships developed between Lutheran Disaster Response – Eastern Pennsylvania, Charlie, and other community organization leaders continue to prove their worth. In the beginning of this year, together we supported the Puerto Rican community following the devastating series of earthquakes starting in December 2019, and now together we are making sure resources related to COVID-19 response are getting to communities across Pennsylvania who are chronically under-resourced.

"In my case," Charlie concludes, "I will continue to help any person or family who needs me. I will do everything to provide my knowledge and perspective to Philadelphia and the long term recovery effort that helped me."



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