



# Massachusetts PATRIOT

Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA) FALL 2019

The Residents' Advocate—Management's Friend [www.mlcra.org](http://www.mlcra.org)

## Developing Workforce is LeadingAge Strategic Priority

by Elissa Sherman, President, LeadingAge Massachusetts

*If you ask the CEOs of most LeadingAge member organizations what the biggest concern that keeps them up at night is, they will tell you that it is the challenge of finding and keeping talented and compassionate staff.*

We are currently in the midst of a workforce crisis. Today, there are areas of the state where providers are unable to fill essential certified nursing assistants (C.N.A.), home health aide and nursing positions. With unemployment rates below 3%, the competition for workers is fierce. As the minimum wage rises, individuals can find less demanding work in other fields that offer similar wages to C.N.A. or home health aide positions. Although we all know that these frontline caregivers should be making much more for the incredibly hard

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care. Restrictive immigration policies are also impacting the availability of workers, since so many of our direct care workers come from other countries. The inability to fill these positions and the subsequent increased work for existing staff often has unintended consequences and can put the quality of care and services at risk.

work that they do, many providers are limited in their ability to significantly increase pay. Inadequate public reimbursement and concerns about passing costs on to residents leave many providers unable to offer higher wages as incentive to take on the difficult work of direct



Elissa Sherman

Unfortunately, our workforce crisis is only expected to grow in the future as the demand for services to support our older population is increasing. The population of adults age 65 and older will increase from 47.8 million in

2015 to 88 million in 2050. It is estimated that nearly 70% those who reach age 65 will need some form of long-term services and supports (LTSS) at some point in their life. The United States will therefore need 2.5 million workers in LTSS by 2030 to keep up with the need. This represents an 88% increase in the number of home health aides and personal care aides, a 73% increase in RNs and a 68% increase in C.N.A.s.

Given the magnitude of these challenges, LeadingAge Massachusetts has identified developing our workforce as one of our most important strategic priorities. We are working closely with our members, with our national partner, LeadingAge, and with other important stakeholders to identify promising practices and come up with creative solutions to help our members support their current employees while looking to develop a pipeline (*cont'd on pg. 9*)

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



**Karl Bjork** is retired from sales and marketing in the gift industry. He was involved in Briarwood from the beginning 35 years ago through his church. He helped sell the first unit there. He and his wife Jan moved to Briarwood in 2016. Karl has served on the Briarwood board and was a president in the past.



**Charlie Sokoloff** moved to Orchard Cove in 2018 from Rhode Island where he was engaged in private practice of law. He has served on various boards in many capacities, including the Rhode Island Economic Development Foundation, Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, Northern Rhode Island PAC, the Landmark Health Services, and the Judicial Nominating Commission of Rhode Island.



**Eunice White** moved to Orchard Cove three years ago from Brookline where she was a Town Meeting Member and on the Board of Trustees at her condo association for 20 years. She was a management consultant to clients in the federal government regarding office automation. At Orchard Cove she was the Chair of the Program Committee.

**LeadingAge** (cont'd from p. 1)

of workers for the future. Some promising practices include working in partnership with schools and universities to expose young adults to the many opportunities that exist in the aging field. One particularly innovative program developed in Ohio involved the creation of a poster campaign to promote elementary student awareness of careers in the aging services workforce sector. You can learn more about Ohio's "Careers that Love you Back" campaign at <http://www.careersthataloveyouback.org>

Our efforts to support a strong workforce for LTSS also include advocacy with state and federal policy makers to ensure that

policies support the ability to recruit and retain workers in a variety of positions and in all settings. Having the voice of consumers involved in our advocacy efforts can help to amplify our message.

You can read more about the efforts taking place in Massachusetts and across the country on the LeadingAge Workforce Solutions website:

[www.leadingage.org/workforce](http://www.leadingage.org/workforce) and I hope that you will join us in supporting this critical work.●

*LeadingAge Massachusetts is a trade association dedicated to supporting the work of not-for-profit aging service providers.*

SPEAKING OUT FOR THE PLANET

GLOBAL  
**CLIMATE  
STRIKE**  
20-27 SEPT

Residents of Sophia Snow Place in West Roxbury participated in the Global Climate Strike on September 20, 2019 by making signs and demonstrating in front of their building during evening rush hour. They received many toots of support, cheers, and thumbs up from passing drivers. For pictures of the demonstration, go to the Sophia Snow Place Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Sophia-Snow-Place-183185595204229/photos/>

Here are some of their posters:

