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## *Volunteer Highlights*

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Volunteers are an integral part of Lifesong. Without their commitment of time, support, and presence, a vital piece of the team would be missing. This has been an unprecedented year; however, despite the challenges of a global pandemic, Lifesong volunteers have found new ways to continue supporting residents and their families. Thanks to this diverse group of individuals and their involvement in the organization, the mission, vision, and values of Lifesong are honored through their dedication. It is with great pleasure that we can highlight a few of these devoted individuals.

### ***Eliza Demko***

Eliza is a senior at Hershey High School where she is active in cross country and track. In addition to sports, Eliza participates in a handful of school activities including a community service club and a Model United Nations debate club. Outside of school, Eliza works part-time, volunteers for Lifesong, and enjoys hiking and spending time with her friends. At the age of seven, Eliza began playing the guitar, learning a range of genres from "Mighty to Save" by Hillsong to "Shape of You" by Ed Sheeran. Additionally, she started playing the piano a year ago. Eliza's musical talents will be a great asset to the Lifesong volunteer program. She hopes to begin playing music for residents soon. Besides visiting residents at Country Meadows of Hershey, she has contributed by baking bereavement bread and is participating in the partnering program. Eliza chose to become a hospice volunteer out of her appreciation for the care her relatives had received while in hospice care. She volunteers to "give back" and also because she "just enjoys volunteering."

### ***Amanda Dixon***

Amanda is a registered nurse with more than 20 years of experience in healthcare. She is happily married to her best friend and mom to a very energetic three-year-old. In addition to spending time with family, Amanda enjoys reading, gardening, and watching home renovation shows on television. As a student, Amanda chose to volunteer with Lifesong to fulfill a service learning obligation for her RN to BSN program. Her experience working in both long-term care and oncology nursing opened her eyes to the many benefits hospice services provide to patients and families at end-of-life. Furthermore, she was personally impacted by the presence, compassionate care, and incredible support hospice provided to her grandparents and family during their transitional journeys. Before the pandemic, Amanda visited residents at Country Meadows of Hershey and is now offering support through the partnering program. Amanda strongly believes in the importance of giving back to your community and hopes to provide comfort, peace, and comradery to each resident's life that she is privileged to be a part of.

### Mission

To inspire our caregivers to create harmony for each unique life story

### Vision

To honor legacies with grace

### Values

- Family Values
- Respect
- A Sense of Duty
- Empathy
- Patience

## *Volunteer Highlights Continued*



### ***Kate Grady***

Kate is a busy stay-at-home mom caring for three children ages 3 years, 21 months, and 3 months. Before taking on the many challenges of motherhood, Kate worked with children and families in her role as a social worker. In addition, she has experience working as a medical social worker in both hospital and hospice settings. Wanting to find a volunteer opportunity that would allow her to include her young children, Kate believed hospice volunteering would be a “good fit” for her and her family. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, Kate was not able to begin volunteering in the way she had initially envisioned. Despite visitation restrictions, she has been able to share her love of baking by making bereavement bread for residents and families. Through the partnering program, Kate will be providing support and comfort to residents by making calls and sending cards. Kate looks forward to “getting involved in volunteering with patients and connecting with the other volunteers.”

### ***Valerie Johnson***

Valerie is a retired educator. Her 23 years of working in education have provided her with a wealth of knowledge and experience. Also, she is married with two sons and soon to be three grandchildren. Through in-person visits and phone conversations, Valerie developed a meaningful relationship with one of the hospice residents. She expressed that “he was always glad to see me and chat” and “in turn I felt better after our visits too.” Valerie is participating in the partnering program and plans to offer assistance in the Lifesong office. When asked why she chose to become a hospice volunteer, Valerie replied, “Because my mother said how much hospice had helped my father.” In addition, Valerie had found enjoyment in visiting with other residents when her mother was living in a memory support unit. When she discovered that Country Meadows was looking for volunteers she thought it would be “a good fit.”

**“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart.”**

**- Elizabeth Andrew**



### ***Ray Morrison***

In 1998, Ray and his family came to the United States from South Africa. Ray is married with three daughters and in 2010 the entire family became proud U.S. citizens through naturalization. Now retired, Ray was formerly a Merchant Marine Captain, farmer, and professional hunter. Presently, his time is spent working for Scheid Produce, spoiling his five granddaughters, and utilizing his culinary skills at home. As a world traveler, Ray has visited more than 65 countries and counting. He participates in missionary trips with Wycliffe Associates, recently returning from The Republic of Georgia. Through his missionary work, he has provided aid to hospice organizations worldwide. Ray’s great sense of humor, love of reading, and vast knowledge of the world make him a valuable member of the Lifesong team. At this time, Ray will be offering his support to residents through the volunteer partnering program.

## *Volunteer Highlights Continued*

### ***Surav & Judy Sakya***

Surav and Judy are both 4<sup>th</sup>-year medical students. Surav attends Penn State College of Medicine in Hershey while Judy is at Texas Tech Health Sciences Center in Lubbock, Texas. As a married couple, Surav and Judy both chose to become hospice volunteers to provide support to family and friends of loved ones during the process of death and dying. Surav explained that “as medical students, they only work with patients through the lens of the medical perspective, but through Lifesong volunteering, they can play a larger role in communicating with people during the bereavement process.” Surav and Judy have visited residents and participated in bereavement calls, giving them a new perspective on death and dying. The couple expressed that, “although death and dying taught in medicine was more towards black and white, during our experience with Lifesong, we have seen this emotional process through sadness, but also through beauty and enrichment.”

### ***Barbara Sommer***

In her teenage years, Barbara and her parents came to the United States from England. She spent most of her adult life living in the state of New York. Barbara has four children and six grandchildren. She has always been very involved in her church and has volunteered for various organizations including bloodmobiles. When Barbara’s husband passed away, hospice was a tremendous support to her. She was “impressed with the care they provided” and remembers how “loving and caring” the staff were to her husband. So, when Lifesong reached out to Barbara’s senior center about their need for volunteers, her first thought was “maybe I could help.” As a retired senior with more than 40 years of experience in business, Barbara felt that volunteering with hospice would be a great way for her to “broaden her horizons” and meet new people. Barbara began her role as a volunteer by assisting in the office. This included reaching out to local churches and businesses to recruit new volunteers. With her talent for sewing and love of creating new things, Barbara has been busy making masks, lap blankets, and walker bags for residents and staff. She is also participating in the partnering program.

### ***Philip Stuck***

Philip is the father of three wonderful children. He served in the armed forces for 35 years, has been self-employed since 1991, and currently works part-time for the state, as a motorcycle safety instructor. Philip chose to become a hospice volunteer after witnessing the heartfelt care his father received while living at Country Meadows. “I feel it as a way to pay it forward for my father. I want to be able to help others receive the same quality care he was given and work with a team of professionals like Lifesong.” As a veteran himself, he looks forward to participating in the veteran pinning ceremonies. Philip will be supporting residents through the partnering program, hoping to provide comfort to the residents of Lifesong.



**In this life we cannot  
always do great things.**

**But we can do small  
things with great love.**

**- Mother Theresa**





## *Meet the Team*

**David Madara, MDiv.**

Lifesong Hospice Spiritual Care Coordinator



**Q:** Where is your hometown?

**A:** I grew up in the small town of Greene, NY (near Binghamton). My grandparents lived in Shamokin, PA, and it was like my second home. I met my wife, Melissa, in grad school and moved to her home state of New Mexico for twelve years, living near Albuquerque.

**Q:** Tell me about your educational background.

**A:** I have a Master of Divinity degree from Duke University Divinity School and a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from Duquesne University. I am also a Master Fire Chaplain with the Federation of Fire Chaplains.

**Q:** Tell me about your work experience.

**A:** I worked as a United Methodist pastor in New Mexico, leading churches, preaching, and teaching for twelve years. I also served as a fire chaplain and volunteer firefighter during that time. I found that I really loved my work as a chaplain, maybe even more than as a pastor, so I applied for a one-year chaplain residency at WellSpan York Hospital. I was a chaplain resident there from August 2019 to August 2020. I primarily served Behavioral Health and Pediatrics, and I also participated in the on-call rotation for the entire hospital on nights and weekends.

**Q:** Please explain your position/role within the organization.

**A:** As chaplain, I provide emotional and spiritual support to patients, staff, and families. I recognize that each person is different with unique needs, experiences, and faith backgrounds. I want to make each person feel honored and supported, and sometimes I have the privilege of “going deep” and discussing spiritual issues or helping to resolve spiritual distress. I help people engage their spiritual practices and beliefs to make the end of life experience as meaningful and whole as possible.

**Q:** Why did you choose Lifesong?

**A:** I chose Lifesong because of the legacy projects and the emphasis on exceptional, creative care for each patient and family.

**Q:** Tell us a little known fact about yourself.

**A:** I love to ride rollercoasters!

**Q:** What is your favorite quote?

**A:** “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind(s).”

## *Meet the Team Continued*

### **Beth Miller, LPN**

Lifesong Hospice Liaison



**Q:** Where is your hometown?

**A:** York, PA

**Q:** Tell me about your educational background.

**A:** I attended York County Vo-Tech Practical Nursing Program and York College.

**Q:** Tell me about your work experience.

**A:** I started my nursing career in 1982 at Memorial Hospital in York, working as a floor nurse for 13 years before transitioning to their home health and hospice for the next six years. From there I've done marketing in-home health and hospice as well as working at OSS and growing their home health the last six years before coming to Lifesong. My passion has been helping patients with healthcare needs find the services they need to care for them in the best possible way and develop and build relationships with the social workers, nurses, physicians, and discharge planners who refer them.

**Q:** Please explain your position/role within the organization.

**A:** As hospice liaison, I interact and assist with referrals from our Leader family communities, coordinate admissions, review patient referrals, discuss hospice options with patients and families, and prepare them for hospice care. Liaisons build provider relationships with physicians, discharge planners, nurses, and facility staff. In addition, we provide educational in-services, and we enhance communication with our hospice staff and facilities. We ensure equipment and other items and services are available for patients referred. We are often the first point of contact for our patients going on hospice care. Our goal is to provide the best positive outcome and customer service experience in meeting the needs of our referral sources, patients, families, and facilities.

**Q:** Why did you choose Lifesong?

**A:** COVID caused my previous job as a home health liaison and marketer to dissolve. I was unable to market my accounts and I became a home health field nurse. I longed to be back in the liaison/marketing and relationship role, so I applied at Lifesong and was hired.

**Q:** Tell us a little known fact about yourself.

**A:** I ride a Harley. I've ridden motorcycles since age eight.

**Q:** What is your favorite quote?

**A:** "Google it."

## *What is Legacy?*

In today's culture, legacy is often thought of as leaving something of oneself behind for future generations. Frequently, people think of material or monetary legacy, which is leaving money or material and familial possessions to loved ones after death. More recently, the concept of helping an individual leave behind a legacy has garnered support from hospice and palliative care fields. For terminal patients, it's common to spend time reflecting on life—their values, accomplishments, and what matters most to them. Often, they need a transcendental hope that their lives

will last beyond death in the memories of others and that their life has had value and not been wasted. At the end of life, many individuals desire to share the meaning of their life with those who remain, communicating their values and beliefs along with their life stories. There are many ways to help a dying individual accomplish this task. Some may choose to document their life through an autobiography or recorded interview while others prefer to create a collage, scrapbook, or photo story album. Creative activities including art, music, and writings of stories and poetry can also be incorporated into a legacy project. Creating a legacy can conserve the dignity of the dying

by allowing for their control over some aspect of the dying process, by maintaining hope for the meaning of life, and by acknowledging the value and worth of the dying individual. Lifesong's philosophy is that each person has a unique life story. The legacy of those served by Lifesong is honored with grace through writing, recording, and symbolizing their life stories to ensure that their legacies live on.



Lifesong Hospice honored two of its veterans with a special ceremony on October 6. The event took place on the grounds of Country Meadows of Hershey. The vibrant colors of fall foliage surrounded the residents and their families, volunteers, and staff on this beautiful autumn day. Lifesong staff led those in attendance in singing 'God Bless America'. United States Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Chang began the ceremony by providing a brief history of World War II before recognizing each veteran.

## *Veteran's Pinning Ceremony*

Donald DiClemente, 92 years old, served with the U.S. Army First Cavalry Division, in Japan during WWII. Clem Roman, 102 years old, served with the Armored Division of the U.S. Army during WWII. Mr. Roman fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and he was awarded a Purple Heart for injuries sustained during combat. Lt. Col. Chang placed a pin on each veteran and presented them with a certificate to honor and recognize them for their service to our country. The volunteer coordinator for Lifesong provided the veterans with a patriotic lap robe as a token of appreciation. More than a few tears were shed, when Mr. DiClemente thanked the staff, family, and friends for

taking the time to acknowledge the veteran's commitment to America. The celebration closed with taking photographs of the veterans with their families and caregivers. This was a day to say thank you in a special way to these brave men who made many sacrifices to make our nation a better place. Their service to our country will live on as their legacy.

**"The willingness of America's veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude."**

**-Jeff Miller**

# Veteran's Pinning Ceremony Continued



PICTURE CAPTION: Left to right: Lt. Col. Mark Chang, Clem Roman



PICTURE CAPTION: Left to right: Donald DiClemente, Lt. Col. Mark Chang



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