



UNITED METHODIST
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

FOUNDATION

For Immediate Release

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United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) Foundation Receives \$500K Gift to Incentivize Educational Training and Support Staff Scholarships

Chelsea, MI, January 15, 2018 – The UMRC Foundation received a gift of \$500,000 from Robert M. and Ellen A. Thompson of Plymouth, Michigan. This multi-year grant supports two initiatives that enhance education and training of UMRC staff, particularly those who provide direct care to older adults. These include UMRC’s new CNA Career Pathway program and the UMRC Foundation’s Staff Scholarship program.

A former UMRC Foundation Board member, Ellen Thompson says, “We are delighted to assist in the work of the UMRC Foundation to support educational needs of staff.”

“We are so grateful for this gift from Ellen and Bob Thompson which reflects their continued pursuit and passion for learning,” says UMRC Foundation President Wendy Brightman. “The opportunities this gift provides will be life-changing for 100 UMRC caregivers to improve their careers and increase their employment skills through education.”

This fall, UMRC’s Human Resources Department implemented the CNA Career Pathway program, using a multi-pronged approach to attract those considering geriatric caregiving as a second career or new primary career. UMRC’s Vice President of Human Resources Michelle Baldwin-Henderson says, “By coordinating training directly with local colleges, 40 new CNA’s will receive the much-needed, hands-on benefit of working with older adults. Incentives will be offered to provide deferred compensation at milestones of six months and one year post training/employment at UMRC.”

In addition, this grant will bolster the UMRC Foundation’s competitive Staff Scholarship Program which launched in 2014. This program offers financial assistance to UMRC employees who are pursuing a certification, degree, or continuing education to support their career goals. “In this case, rank does not have its privileges,” explains Brightman. “The closer a staff member is to direct care of our residents and participants, the greater their opportunity for scholarship

access. This grant will allow an additional 60 staff members to receive scholarships over the next five years.”

Brightman states that the population of older adults is growing at an unprecedented rate. “It is so important for UMRC, and the older adults we care for, to recruit and retain excellent caregivers and give them the training and support they need to serve this population with competence and compassion. We are confident that this grant will result in a better educated and more engaged workforce, reduced costs of staff turnover to our organization, and, ultimately, improved care for the residents we serve.”

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*Building on a foundation of more than 110 years of service, **United Methodist Retirement Communities** is a faith-based, nonprofit organization that promotes the wellness, dignity and independence of older adults, by providing high quality, innovative and compassionate senior residential care services across Southeast Michigan. umrc.com/734.433.1000*