



March 2025 — Volume 40



Welcoming Five New Eden Alternative Educators

Workforce Innovation Fund Gifts Support Culture Change and Citizenship Model at CLC

Culture change efforts at Christian Living Communities are getting a big boost in 2025, thanks to the generosity of caring supporters like you! Your gifts to the Workforce Innovation Fund made it possible for five CLC team members to attend a week-long training in December to become Certified Eden Alternative Educators.

Cheryl Meakins (Chaplain at Clermont Park), Molly Nearpass (Director of Community Life at Someren Glen), Kendra Crites (Executive Director at Cappella of Pueblo West), Ryan Ludke (Executive Director at Dayspring Villa) and Jenny Graham (Regional Director of Operations) have all joined CLC's team of Eden Educators – thanks to you.

Jill Vitale-Aussem, CLC's President & CEO, said "Programs may come and go in organizations but the Eden Alternative Principles have been an integral part of CLC for over 15 years, giving us the framework to create person directed environments where all older people, regardless of care needs, can truly thrive." As she explained, "The Eden Alternative is foundational to CLC's Citizenship Model."

When it comes to our culture of citizenship, CLC's Eden Educators have a big role. Every year, they lead Eden Alternative training for team members, residents, and other friends of CLC such as our Board of Directors.

The more members of the CLC community... *Continued on Page 2*

The CLC Citizenship Model is an age-positive empowerment model rooted in the belief that each individual, at every level of abilities, has gifts, passions, talents, and experience that can make the community stronger and better.

Welcoming New Eden Educators (continued from page 1)

...who become certified with the Eden Alternative, the more our citizenship culture can take hold.

Because of you, three CLC communities who previously did not have an Eden Educator (Someran Glen, Cappella of Pueblo West, and Dayspring Villa) now have one on their teams. Jill noted "Having five new educators ensures that our team members, residents, and family members have easy access to the education needed to continue this essential work."

Cheryl's passion for culture change ignited when she attended her own Eden Training. "I wanted to be an Eden Educator because I strongly believe in the principles of wellbeing for our whole community," she explained. "As a chaplain, I believe Eden helps me encourage a practical spirituality among residents and team alike."

Molly attended the educator training to learn how to empower her team and community to eliminate loneliness, helplessness, and boredom. "I learned so much from the others who attended and learned more about myself," she said. "It was such a positive experience, and I looked forward to going each day."

In 2024, CLC's Eden Educators hosted three Eden Trainings, teaching 49 CLC citizens (including eight residents) in the principles of person-directed care and certifying them as Eden Alternative Associates.

The new Eden Educators already have lots of plans for the communities they support (and beyond!) One of Ryan's goals is to inspire more residents to attend Eden Training: "I think that will make a huge difference. We have so many residents who want to contribute to the community and that will help us build off it even more."

Cheryl is looking forward to supporting not only Clermont Park, but other CLC communities, too: "I hope to take on a focused effort in the community to find meaning in our lives, and to support our smaller communities as they grow into the Eden Alternative."



CLC's new Eden Alternative Educators learning intently during their December training

Molly is hoping to use her new training to inspire others through wise leadership. "I hope that we can all work together to be the change in our community, to be the culture change and the bright light that we need each day to help us through the difficult times."

Thank you! By supporting the growth of these new Eden Educators, you are also impacting the lives of all future Eden Alternative Certified Associates. These residents, team members and friends will safeguard our culture and help lead us to continual improvement and build our citizenship model of community living. Truly, an impact that will continue to ripple out for years to come!



Celebrating the Success of the Chaplain Services Campaign

Chaplains are a bright light in times of darkness, ensuring that residents, families, and team members feel loved, known, and supported. In November 2023, we launched the *Strengthening Our Foundation* campaign to sustain and enhance these vital services.

Through an incredible outpouring of generosity from residents, family members, team members, Board members, and Mission Partners, we received more than **500 gifts**, resulting in over **\$221,000 raised for Chaplain Services!** This incredible achievement is a testament to the deep care and commitment of the CLC community.

Your Impact in Action

Already, more than **\$40,000** has been invested directly into strengthening Chaplain Services. These funds have helped provide worship supplies,

new hymnals, and essential chaplain support at Dayspring Villa.

During the course of 2024, the CLC Chaplain Team logged over **23,000 connections with individuals**. CLC Chaplains dedicated **69% of their time to personal visits—75% of which were with residents**. This hands-on approach ensures that compassionate spiritual care remains central to life at CLC. It's a defining gift that sets our communities apart, making them truly extraordinary.

We are profoundly grateful for your generosity, which strengthens the spiritual foundation of our communities. Your support allows them to continue providing compassionate care, ensuring that CLC remains a place where everyone feels valued, uplifted, and known. Thank you!

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The State of Christian Living Communities

Hard work, Community, and Focus Lead to Long Term Stability

By Jill Vitale-Aussem | CLC President & CEO

2024—Wow! What an incredible year. While 2024 brought its share of challenges, CLC not only persevered but is now flourishing and stronger than ever. Just two years ago, we were still working through the lingering challenges of the pandemic, massive inflationary pressures, and investment market challenges that took a financial toll on senior living organizations around the country.

In the past two years, through relentless effort, unwavering dedication, and an unyielding commitment to our culture of community and citizenship, we've made up a lot of lost ground. Today, we're strong, securing CLC's stability for years to come and ensuring our ability to support generations of older adults for the future.

For the last three years we've worked with the same four focus areas: *Strengthen our Foundation for the Future, Re-Imagine the Workplace, Revolutionize Aging Services, and Expand our Mission.*

I am thrilled to share that we met or exceeded most of our organization goals.

A few highlights:

1. We exceeded our budgeted net operating margin by 6.5% largely due to very strong occupancy throughout all our communities.
2. We improved our skilled nursing neighborhood 5-Star Ratings as recognized by the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid, with most communities rated as a 5-star for quality.
3. We exceeded our workplace culture scores for 2024, with team members rating our culture at an **83** compared to a **76** the year prior, as measured by

the Barrett Values Assessment. For the second year in a row, we earned the designation of World's Best Culture.

In summary, the state of CLC is excellent and keeps getting better.

2025—We are already off to a great start, and we really feel this year is filled with promise, purpose, and growth for CLC and for each of us.

For 2025 we decided to continue our focus on the four areas previously listed. There is still work to be done, we're gaining momentum with this framework, and for once, I like to use the phrase, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it", so we're not!

I am thrilled to share with you that we will soon launch a new podcast, *Aging Unscripted*. This is a podcast with a different perspective on aging.

We're working on an official launch date but keep your eyes and ears open for our new CLC podcast.

If you would like to learn more about the State of CLC and our plans for 2025, I recorded a State of CLC presentation. That recording is posted on our CLC YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/@christianlivingcommunities2239. We'll also publish a detailed financial report this spring in our Annual Report once we complete our audit.

Thank you to everyone who is part of our CLC family: it takes all of us to build our fabulous CLC community!



Gifts in Memory and Honor

Christian Living Communities is so grateful for the friends and family who directed gifts to CLC in memory or honor of their loved one. Below are the names in **bold** of those being remembered or honored, as well as those making such gifts from August 15, 2024 - February 1, 2025.

In Memory

Ken and Peggy Andersen

Richard Andersen

Charles and Alyce Atler

Doug and Betsy Atler

Rose Behr

Alice McLean

Ernie Blanchette

Elsie Blanchette

Lauren (Wiersma) Byma

Emilie Wiersma

Roy Christensen

Lori Castle

Dana and Betsy Christensen

Victor and Sherry Laidlaw

Roger and Sandra Roberts

Cheryl Shaw

Paul Thompson

Cindy VanEpps

Eve and Allen Cole

Bobbie Young

Bea Daggett & Elmer Ritthaler

Teri Lotvedt

Judith Ann Den Braber

Lisa Den Braber

David E. Dennis

Dorothy Carol Dennis

Robert and Virginia Dobbs

Rick Dobbs

Roberta Dore

Amy Dore

Phyllis R. Dye

Polly Dudley

Donald & Patricia Echtermeyer

Theresa Echtermeyer

Patricia Ehline

David A. Ehline

Judy Farley Johnson

Carol Dennis

Don and Betty Frensley

Marcia Lynn Frensley

Chaplain Jan Friend

Janice DeGroot

Michael and Virginia Galvin

Bruce and Char Prather

Donna Vogt

Pat Hagen

Cathy Anderson

Mary and Rod Ham

Thelma Boer

Hank and Beth Ham

Jean A. Hanke

Roger Stephen Hanke

Ron Hanscom

Jean Davenport

Dorothy Harvey

Jean Davenport

Ruth Heaton

Jean Davenport

Glenn R. Hill

Gary and Judy Hill

Alice Hulings

Scott and Trish Kramer

Dennis F. Jones

Rickie Jones

Anne Marie Junio Connor

Teresa Neal

Walter Kowalchik

Kathy Swezy

Clarence & Jane Kroonenberg

Steven and Adele Kroonenberg

Joanna Krutsch

Jean Davenport

Marion Lammers

Don and Sheila Lammers

Doyle and BJ Marshall

Donna Lea Van Stone

Dianne McCallister

Karen Meyer

Donald F. Megnin

Daniel Megnin and Family

Jane Nagel

Jean Davenport

Richard Harvey

Bob Nagel

Janet Jean Nyberg

Connect Church

Walter Ordelheide

Jean Davenport

Betty Steinmann

Millie Orendorff

Donald Orendorff

Ralph Pedersen

Lois Pedersen

Simon Prowse

Sylvia Prowse

Louis and Elsie Strauss

Natalie Pollock

Mitchell Sieniawski

Tracy Lewis

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Memory and Honor ...continued from page 5

Lloyd Steinmann

Betty Steinmann

Michael Steinmann

Marilyn A. Stevenson

Carol Hofelmann

Lois Thomas

Sharon Hart-Palmer

Annie Trujillo

Olivia Grogan

Andrew Vander Ploeg

Paul and Mary Johnson

Trudy Vander Veen

Doug and Debra Borger

Joan Vasil

Michael and Patricia Denton

Jackie Velgersdyk

Jim and Aletha Oostenink

Ginger Roerig

Joyce Vande Griend

Steven and Sheryl Vriesman

Joseph Vitale

Bethany Sprague

Marge Vitale

Jill Vitale-Aussem

Jane Walker

Cheryl Shaw

Janice L. Welty

Linda W. Teves

In Honor

Jack and Char Barker

Barry and Arlene Hirschfeld

CLC's Amazing Chaplain Team

Pam Sullivan

Marilyn Dekker

Judy Aylor

Dave Dookeeram

Pager Health

Dayspring Library Board

Stormie Foust Maley

Lydia Friend

Janice DeGroot

Merv Graham

Barry and Arlene Hirschfeld

Patricia Goff

Ross and Suzanne Goff

Janet and Don Guizzetti

Lisa Haft-Robison

Olivia Mayer

Bryan and Rachel Vinz

Char Prather, June Just, and Patricia Seal

Donna Vogt

Thank you to the supporters who have paid tribute to those they hold dear.

Unless otherwise directed, your gifts are designated to specific communities to provide opportunities for purpose, connection, and joy.

Your Incredible Year of Impact

CLC's amazing, caring supporters gave more than **\$600,000** in 2024 to make life better for older adults and the compassionate team members who support them. In ways big and small, your gifts touched so many lives last year - bringing purpose, security, connection, meaning, and joy. What a blessing - thank you!

In 2024, more than **\$492,000** in gifts were applied to support our mission. Here are some of the wonderful ways you made a big difference last year.

Supporters of CLC in 2024 provided:



17 team members with tuition assistance totaling more than **\$48,000** through the **Employee Scholarship Fund**.

\$75,000+ applied via the **Resident Assistance Fund** to assist residents, who through no fault of their own, needed financial support for rent and medical equipment.



43 team members with **\$44,000** in **Critical Needs funding** for housing, transportation, and medical emergency needs.

More than \$125,000 in **General Mission support** to address urgent needs, funding training, community enhancement, and flexible support where it's needed most.



More than \$160,000 in **Resident Enrichment** opportunities for art, education, fitness, music, and more. Plus, **Community Enhancements** such as beautification, safe showers, enhanced dining experiences, and courtyards.

\$43,000+ toward **Chaplain Services** for supplies, hymnals, and support, fostering spiritual care for residents, families and team members. Our successful *Strengthening Our Foundation Campaign* raised more than **\$220,000** for these vital services.



CLC Board of Directors

The volunteer CLC Board of Directors is carefully selected for a variety of experiences and skillsets to serve older adults and advise for our future success.

Dave Dookeeram — <i>Chair</i>	Eric DenBraber	John Reinsma
Jill Vitale-Aussem, CEO	Dave De Ridder	Tom Rogers
Eric Keesen — <i>Vice Chair</i>	Luci Draayer	Jan Roth
Rosina Aragon	Bill Pichè	Kalen Van Maanen
Briana Beasley	Rick Pilgrim	
Sandy Clark	Christine Powers	

Enhancing Safety at Clermont Park

A Generous Gift Makes a Lasting Impact

Residents of Clermont Park's Residential Living apartments in the Willows and Aspen neighborhoods are now enjoying a safer living environment, thanks to a generous gift from a dedicated supporter.

Their wonderful contribution made it possible for Clermont Park to enhance bathroom safety by applying a non-skid surface to showers and tubs, significantly reducing the risk of falls. According to the National Institute on Aging, 80% of falls for older adults occur in the bathroom, with 66% happening in the tub or shower—making this upgrade a vital improvement for resident well-being.

Don Backstrom, Executive Director at Clermont Park, emphasized the importance of this project, stating, "It's about doing what's best for residents."

Residents appreciated the benefits of this enhancement. One resident remarked, "I love it! It means a lot knowing that my safety is a priority. Thank you to everyone who made this happen."



Clermont Park's Don Backstrom and Tim Kiehn demonstrate the new non-skid shower surface

Planned Giving: A Legacy That Lasts

Planned giving is a way to create a meaningful and lasting impact by designating a portion of your estate to a nonprofit organization like CLC. These gifts honor your values and legacy while supporting causes you care about well into the future. Legacy gifts can take many forms, such as bequests, beneficiary designations, or donations of assets like real estate or stocks. Every legacy gift is meaningful, strengthens CLC in transformative and lasting ways, and is received with deep gratitude.

To learn more about planned giving or to download a free estate planning guide, visit www.clclegacy.org.



COMPASSIONCIRCLE



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Stay Connected!

For questions, or to update your communications preferences, including opting out, please contact Donor Relations:

Email: donate@clcliving.org
Phone: 720.974.3642

Our Vision: Creating Communities Where Aging is Honored and Celebrated

Save the Dates!

Founder's Day Breakfast



Friday, May 9th from 8:30 am -10:00 am

Denver Marriott South at Park Meadows

10345 Park Meadows Drive | Lone Tree, CO 80124

Please plan to join us to celebrate 53 years of CLC!
Connect with long-time friends or make some new ones as we share stories of impact and honor our Earthen Vessel Award recipient, someone who has allowed God's gracious work to be done through them, a plain, earthen vessel.

Watch your mailbox and inbox for an invitation, coming soon!

20th Anniversary Aged to Perfection



Thursday, October 9th from 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Holly Creek Community

5500 E. Peakview Ave. | Centennial, CO 80121

Thank you to everyone who helped us raise more than **\$138,000** at our 2024 event with proceeds benefiting the Chaplain Services program.

We hope you can join us in 2025 as we gather for fellowship, amazing happy hour delights, and a festive and fun silent auction.

If you have something you would like to donate to the silent auction please reach out to Pam Sullivan, 720.974.3558, psullivan@clcliving.org.