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Soon, all around us, we will be hearing “Seasons Greetings” among the trappings of our days.

Those two friendly words easily reflect the many upcoming variety of observances, celebrations and activities that occur this time of year. When we reach the final three months of the year as we have, there is an excitement and anticipation, along with an onrush of holidays, any of which can mean so many different things to each of us and we can find unity in the diversity of beliefs.

There is the transition of fall to winter, with a thinning number of days left on the calendar as the year winds to an end. We can afford to take a look back at the accomplishments of 2023 and the many things for which Givens Communities can be proud of.

This has been a busy year, a successful year and that is the direct result of working with a renewed vision and mission.

However, let’s not forget that our journey is far from over.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our residents, dedicated board members, exceptional team members, and invaluable community partners. Your presence in Givens Communities has brought forth countless smiles, warm hugs, firm handshakes, unwavering encouragement, and steadfast support. I eagerly await the unfolding of 2024 and all the promise it holds.

Kevin Schwab
Chief Executive Officer
Givens Communities



Did You Know? When Givens is in the News

Givens Communities is committed to working cooperatively with media to maintain positive, productive relationships with the professionals who report the news, whether in print or broadcast or digital.

You may have seen recent TV reports or read newspaper articles about Givens Communities, perhaps coverage of our partnership for an affordable housing project in Jackson County, or our participation in an elder abuse awareness event at Carrier Park in Asheville.

To uphold organizational transparency and achieve positive outcomes with media coverage, best practices are in place.

Some basic guidelines:

- Givens maintains an attitude of openness with editors, reporters, and correspondents.
- To avoid confusion or duplication of efforts, let an executive director know about media inquiries or the presence of reporters.
- Department directors then may be instructed to respond to questions concerning their area of expertise. Questions beyond that scope or about the organization in general should be referred to the Public Relations and Communications Department.
- All news releases are issued by the Public Relations and Communications Department unless a prior special arrangement has been made.
- Please be courteous and professional with the media. Just remember –
 - ✓ *Anything said can be quoted.*
 - ✓ *When reached unexpectedly, you can ask for time to prepare or seek guidance.*
 - ✓ *When approached in advance, ask what questions to expect.*



Scott Farkas Rejoins Givens, Named as Chief Operating Officer

Scott Farkas has been named to the newly created position of Chief Operating Officer for Givens Communities. In addition to providing additional operational support, the purpose of this position is to aid in the identification of internal efficiencies and the development of consistent policies and procedures across our organizations.

Scott is a familiar presence within our Givens Communities, having been controller at Givens Highland Farms and Givens Estates, starting in September 2012. His exceptional leadership played an instrumental role in navigating the campus through an acquisition transition, culminating in the establishment of a financial foundation. Scott has an extensive background of more than 15 years in the nonprofit healthcare sector. His professional journey began in public accounting at Dixon Hughes, where he consulted nonprofits, hospitals, governmental entities, and senior living providers.

A Mission and a Vision for Our Future

During the thoughtful and deliberate work to revise Givens Communities' strategic plan, we also explored updating our mission and vision statements to better reflect who we are and what we stand for. We sought a renewed sense of direction.

At the core of Givens Communities lies the ambition to stand as a national leader in senior living. To that end, we now move forward with the mission of **Creating Community, Empowering Lives** and a vision of **Endless Possibilities, Vibrant Aging**.

We set a benchmark for providing the best in senior living. We strive to demonstrate that age and aging need not limit the potential for growth, exploration, and personal fulfillment. We believe in a future filled with moments of vitality, purpose, and joy. The recently updated mission and vision statements define the essence of everyone who comes together to be Givens Communities and speaks volumes about who we are and what we do.



Philanthropy Supports The Manor House Project



Givens Philanthropy Department invites support to safeguard a shared history of Western North Carolina by restoring The Manor House.

This significant structure has witnessed generations past, stood as a testament to architectural brilliance, and holds stories that have shaped our community. However, time has taken its toll, threatening to erode a piece of our heritage. Contributions are pivotal to breathe life back into this historical gem and ensure its legacy for future generations.

The Manor House is located at Givens Estates on what once was the Far Horizon Farm and the focal point

of a dream for creating a retirement community. It was the home of the first administrative offices, where the Board of Directors first met in 1975, and incredibly where the first two residents lived until their new apartment was completed in May 1979.

The restoration of The Manor House goes beyond bricks and mortar—it's an investment in Givens Communities identity and pride. A restored landmark becomes a hub and gathering place, and a home base to foster a sense of belonging, and a command post to drive us into our future. To be a part of that history and its future, contact Kristine Buckwalter, Philanthropy Associate Director, at 828-357-3605.

Meet the Givens Home First Team

Givens Home First, a new home and community-based services program that empowers participating older adults to age gracefully in the comfort of their own homes, is up and running. The website is live and may be found at www.givenshomefirst.org.

Currently offered at the two Life Plan Communities, Givens Highland Farms and Givens Estates, program expansion for the broader community and Givens' Affordable Communities is in the planning stages. Here's an introduction to the Givens Home First team:

Jessie Bosshard, Executive Director

Jessie brings experience and passion for aging services, with a background that includes a Master of Science in International Health Management from Imperial College London, Operations Management at Elder, the UK's largest live-in care agency and previous experience with Givens Communities.



Lisa Constantine, Director of Home Care Operations

Lisa's 30-plus years of nursing experience, coupled with her passion for senior advocacy, ensures the highest standards of care.



Julie Moses, Aging in Place Program Director

Julie, an occupational therapist assistant and certified aging in place specialist, has been empowering residents of Givens Estates since 2004 to age gracefully in their homes.



Kimberly Bailey, Life Plan Community Nurse

Kimberly's specialized training in hospice and palliative care, coupled with her empathetic approach, fosters an environment where each individual feels heard and valued.





Webster Village Project Set for Jackson County Near Sylva

Givens Communities is a leading partner in Webster Village, a recently announced project that is planned to have a large impact on regional housing needs by providing new options for Jackson County seniors, low-income families and business professionals.

Along with Western Carolina University and Mountain Projects of Sylva, and with financial support from Dogwood Health Trust, the affordable housing endeavor is expected to create 211-237 new housing units.

“Studies of the Jackson County housing market have shown a significant demand

for affordable senior housing,” said Teresa Stephens, Vice President of Givens Affordable Communities. “Independent older adult can thrive by the Givens model of housing with supported services.”

Webster Village is a highly creative project, set to play a positive role in three very different sectors of housing. This is a great example of the cooperative approaches that are taking place to tackle big issues like affordable housing to help seniors age in place and offer a place to live for the workforce serving them.

“We believe that by introducing this approach to Jackson County, we will be able to address some of the county’s most pressing housing challenges,” Stephens said.



Injured Owl Rescued, Returned to Wild at Givens Highland Farms

The incredible rescue of an injured great horned owl at Givens Highland Farms came full circle when he was returned and released back into the wild on the Black Mountain campus.

It began when environmental services team member Devon Gray discovered the bird of prey lying in a clump of grass, suffering dehydration and a sore wing and injured foot. He reached out to Wild for Life, a local non-profit organization that

specializes in raptor rehabilitation and education. With the assistance of Britta-Kidd and Mark Norwood on the facilities services team, they ensured the owl was secured safely.

“Gus” as residents and team members call him, was brought to the north end gazebo and took flight back into the skies of his Givens Highland Farms home. Please remember, if you spot Gus during your daily strolls around campus, give him the space and respect he deserves, to ensure his transition back into the wild is as seamless as possible.



Philanthropy Documentary ‘The Spirit of Giving’

Recently, a special screening was held of “The Spirit of Giving” a documentary about the generosity and support that have helped sustain Givens Communities from the very beginning. The moving, 16-minute production features interviews with notable figures and demonstrates how contributions are put to use, and how assistance is provided. The documentary is available at <http://bit.ly/GivensSpirit>.



Givens Communities Supports Blue Ridge Pride

With Givens Communities as a platinum sponsor, Blue Ridge Pride held its annual Pride Festival at Pack Square Park in Asheville on a bright Saturday, Sept. 30. Thousands of people were in attendance, including residents and team members, and many stopped by the Givens Communities booth near the Café Stage, with a special contest conducted for an Echo Show 15, thanks to generous friends at Katalyst.

An important part of Blue Ridge Pride is recognizing the contributions of older adults in the LGBTQ+ community. The generation known as Baby Boomers have played a crucial role in advancing gay rights, changing social attitudes and advancing tolerance and acceptance. Givens Communities is nationally recognized for inclusivity by SAGE USA, an advocacy group for elders who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. An outreach effort of Blue Ridge Pride is GenPlus, a partnership to reduce isolation, build social networks, educate and celebrate “Aging with Pride.”



LifeMinistries Promotes Diabetes Prevention

November is National Diabetes Month, as designated by the National Institutes of Health. This year's focus is on taking action to prevent diabetes health problems, an initiative fully supported by Givens LifeMinistries, an outreach division of Givens Communities working throughout Western North Carolina to address health disparities.

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when blood sugar is too high and can damage eyes, kidneys, nerves and heart, and is linked to some types of cancer. Exercise, healthy diet and weight loss can help prevent diabetes health problems.

In 2019, Givens LifeMinistries was recognized by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention as a National Diabetes Prevention Program provider. Recently, a cohort of 10 residents of

Givens Gerber Park residents celebrated the successful completion of the program.

“This has been a fun group and extremely dedicated to completing the program, supporting each other through challenges and victories, and especially dedicated to making the slow and steady proven lifestyle changes part of their daily lives that will prevent them from developing Type 2 diabetes,” said Cheryl Wallen, director of Givens LifeMinistries.

“We all did a vision board of where we want to be, health wise, and each was as unique as they are,” Abby Bates, an Asheville native living at Givens Gerber Park, said upon receiving her certification. “Being in the class was empowering and Cheryl is always there for us, including one-on-one, which helps tremendously.”



Open Enrollment Coming Soon

This year, open enrollment for team members is going to be a little bit different. We will be working to have a benefit election process in your Paycom portal. If you understand your benefits and would prefer to complete your enrollment electronically, you can do that and do not have to attend an in-person session.

We are making a few changes to our AFLAC policies, **so all team members that currently have AFLAC need to attend one of our open enrollment sessions.**

AFLAC needs to explain these changes and for many of you, your policy may cost a little less.

In person session will include AFLAC, SONA, Healthgram, USI, Principal, and Givens HR. These will be held:

- Monday, November 27 at Givens Estates Health Center from 1-6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 29 at the Givens Estates Performing Arts Center from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 30 at Givens Highland Farms Assembly Room from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Halloween Dress Costume Day

It's that spooky time of year! On Tuesday, October 31, team members can dress up in a work-appropriate Halloween Costume (nothing too scary). If you'd like to share your costumes, please email a photo to stories@givenscommunities.org to be featured on social media!



Team Member Anniversaries

Givens Communities celebrates the work anniversaries of everyone who joined our team during the months of October, November and December. Congratulations team members!

Name	Department	Campus	Service
Dorothy Gosnell	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	10/01/1984
Aubrie G. Pippin	Food Service	The Givens Estates	10/01/2021
Brian Guengerich	Development	Givens Communities	10/03/2022
Angela Toomey	Administration	Givens Affordables	10/03/2022
Alison L. Forgeron	Administration	Givens Affordables	10/05/2020
Cody Moore	Grounds	The Givens Estates	10/05/2022
Hannah Taylor	Environmental Services	Givens Highland Farms	10/05/2022
Lyssa A. Williams	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	10/06/2021
Lakisha Sanders	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	10/07/2009
Lucy A. Hillman	Life Enrichment	The Givens Estates	10/09/2019
Dylan R. Lower	Grounds	The Givens Estates	10/09/2019
Karen R. Valentine	Food Service	The Givens Estates	10/11/2006
Jessie Bosshard	Home Care	Givens Communities	10/11/2022
Carolyn N. Watson	Financial Operations	Givens Communities	10/12/1981
Raymond Watkins	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	10/12/2016
Diana M. Pavlick	Administration	The Givens Estates	10/12/2022
Thomas J. Simonetti	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	10/12/2022
Susan R. Randolph	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	10/13/2021
Lauren N. Pippin	Life Enrichment	The Givens Estates	10/13/2022
Farrah G. Calloway	Maintenance	The Givens Estates	10/14/1996
Tabitha Hinman	IT	Givens Communities	10/16/2007
Ryan P. Feimster	Maintenance	Givens Highland Farms	10/16/2020
Sawyer Bigelow	Human Resources	Givens Communities	10/17/2018
Christopher E. Hall	Grounds	Givens Highland Farms	10/18/2017
Kate Pedemonti	Food Service	The Givens Estates	10/19/2016
Kevin J. Dalton	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farms	10/19/2022
Monica Green	Life Enrichment	The Givens Estates	10/19/2022
Lori N. Garren	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	10/20/2021
Dev Gray-Hernandez	Environmental Services	Givens Highland Farms	10/21/2020
Crissy D. Sowers	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farms	10/24/2012

Ellen A. Maddock	Administration	Givens Affordables	10/24/2016
Linda D. Campbell	Administration	Givens Affordables	10/26/2022
Chad Murphy	Security	The Givens Estates	10/26/2022
Rosa M. Huerta	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	10/27/2021
Editha P. Justice	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	10/27/2021
Cathy Naber	Administration	The Givens Estates	10/30/2019
Peggy A. Moore	Life Enrichment	Givens Highland Farms	10/31/2006
Stacey E. Beamon	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	10/31/2012
Patty Pelletier	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farms	10/31/2018
Jennifer Swann	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	11/01/2005
Gregory E. Braddy	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	11/01/2016
Kathleen H. Caldwell	Life Enrichment	The Givens Estates	11/01/2021
Nico Roland	Food Service	The Givens Estates	11/02/2022
Hillary A. Power	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	11/04/2020
Becky Seagle	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farm	11/07/2003
Cheryl L. Wallen	Life Ministries	Givens Affordables	11/07/2006
Marta E. Argueta	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	11/07/2018
Barbara K. Carney	Home Care	Givens Communities	11/08/2004
Glenda A. Carballo	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	11/08/2017
Dorothy E. Tuttle	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	11/09/2011
Jade M. Banks	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	11/09/2022
Blake Holmes	Maintenance	Givens Affordables	11/09/2022
Sheri S. Caldwell	Assisted Living	The Givens Estates	11/12/2014
Vanessa B. Metcalf	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	11/13/2019
David S. Hock	Maintenance	The Givens Estates	11/14/2018
Mike Youngblood	Life Enrichment	The Givens Estates	11/16/2016
Miles D. Eyman	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	11/16/2022
Allison T. Kronk	Grounds	The Givens Estates	11/16/2022
Lanny D. Reid	Security	The Givens Estates	11/16/2022
Serina Sharpe	Environmental Services	Givens Affordables	11/16/2022
Renee T. Davis	IT	Givens Communities	11/17/2021
Maria E. Ramos Mountford	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	11/21/2007
Nethaniel T. Boland	Security	The Givens Estates	11/23/2022
Jordan Ramsey	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	11/23/2022

Kimberly Bailey	Campus Nursing	The Givens Estates	11/24/2021
Cyrus H. Glance	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	11/25/2009
Kayla Welch	Human Resources	Givens Communities	11/28/2022
Trent Moore	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farms	11/29/2017
Joey Abel	Life Enrichment	Givens Highland Farms	12/01/2021
Reyna Martinez	Environmental Services	The Givens Estates	12/01/2021
Eric Ross	Assisted Living	The Givens Estates	12/02/2009
Kathryn L. Valliere	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farms	12/05/2022
Kacia D. Stuart	Food Service	The Givens Estates	12/06/2017
Maria Madison	Home Care	Givens Communities	12/06/2021
Brooke Hamlin	IT	Givens Communities	12/07/2016
Cheryl Miller	Grounds	The Givens Estates	12/07/2022
Channing D. Rice	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	12/07/2022
Dave Kerestes	Financial Operations	Givens Communities	12/08/2014
Chainsaw Anderson	Food Service	The Givens Estates	12/11/2019
Joshua Mull	Financial Operations	Givens Communities	12/11/2019
Nicole M. Allen	Administration	Givens Affordables	12/12/2016
Erin R. Strain	Givens Choice	Givens Choice	12/12/2018
Shelbi E. Bonney	Administration	Givens Highland Farms	12/14/2022
Joseph Cole	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	12/14/2022
Kurt A. Mcentire	Grounds	The Givens Estates	12/15/2021
Nateara D. Bradley	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farms	12/16/2014
Carlene J. Stricklin	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	12/16/2020
TJ Wood	Maintenance	The Givens Estates	12/17/2018
Amy Hill Moore	Home Care	Givens Communities	12/18/2019
Justin B. Kidd	Maintenance	Givens Highland Farms	12/19/2018
Douglas J. Cooper	Food Service	The Givens Estates	12/20/2017
Robert J. Dirscherl	Human Resources	Givens Communities	12/21/2015
Willow Garrison	Food Service	Givens Highland Farms	12/21/2022
Jenna M. Travis	General Nursing	Givens Highland Farms	12/21/2022
Elaine Case	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	12/22/2022
Gabrielle Todd	Food Service	The Givens Estates	12/22/2022
Prentice Y. Richardson	General Nursing	The Givens Estates	12/23/2020
Cowboy Pridgen	Maintenance	Givens Highland Farms	12/31/2007