



2009 *Pathways to Greatness*

A Recognition Program for Aging-Services Organizations

Well•Spring Greensboro, North Carolina

October 2009

Under the leadership of senior management and board of directors, Well•Spring demonstrated its Pathway to Greatness through its:

- High employee satisfaction scores,
- Prudent fiscal management, which made this stand-alone CCRC financially successful in this economic climate,
- Unique Growing Green initiative,
- Commitment to ensuring a diverse resident population, and
- High level of community involvement both as an organization and as individuals.

Located in Greensboro, North Carolina, Well•Spring provides a full array of aging services to a socio-economically diverse population. Its campus includes 238 independent living apartments, garden homes, and villas as well as 71 assisted living units, 60 skilled nursing units, a 20-room memory care facility, a 10-room rehab/transitional stay area, and an outpatient clinic.

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2009 Pathways to Greatness Award Recipient—Well•Spring

LarsonAllen LLP, a national CPA, consulting, and advisory firm and [American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging](#) (AAHSA) sponsor the *Pathways to Greatness* program. This is a nationwide effort to help AAHSA members improve the quality of their organizations. *Pathways to Greatness* is designed to define the primary attributes of high-quality aging-services organizations and recognize them for their excellence.

Key organizational attributes and practices leading to greatness

The five attributes of an aging-services organization used to select *Pathways to Greatness* recipients are leadership, superior performance, distinctive impact, best practices and innovation, and the ability to inspire public trust and confidence. While Well•Spring was considered exceptional in all of these categories, the organization's efforts were particularly unique in four areas.

Low turnover and high satisfaction

“To be a great place for residents to live, we have to be a great place to work.”

—Well•Spring CEO Stephen P. Fleming

- Well•Spring had a 13.8 percent staff turnover rate for full-time staff in 2008—an impressive drop from a high of 57 percent in 2000. In 2006 and 2009, Well•Spring scored 95 percent on its Holleran employee satisfaction surveys.
- Well•Spring was the first facility in North Carolina to be awarded the North Carolina New Organizational Vision Award (NC NOVA), a special licensure designation award issued by the North Carolina Division of Facilities Services. The goal of the program is to improve recruitment, retention, and quality of direct care workers who serve the elderly and is based upon the AAHSA Better Jobs Better Care program.

Growing Green initiative

Originated by a resident's generous contribution, Well•Spring's Growing Green initiative aims to explore and implement alternative energy sources or green power. Well•Spring now utilizes solar energy to pre-heat water used for the kitchen and dining facilities. Additional efforts include occupancy sensors, Energy Star appliances, coreless paper towel and toilet paper dispensers, and recycling appliances through the Habitat Restore Program.

While most of these programs are budget neutral, the Growing Green initiative is another way Well•Spring demonstrates its commitment to the community. For example, its newly-approved water reduction program has a direct impact on the Greensboro region, which relies on runoff water for its water supply.

As part of their paper reduction efforts, Well•Spring now communicates daily with staff through an updated PowerPoint presentation on a continuous loop at each time clock and employee break room throughout the campus. In partnership with their residents, most resident communication materials and public relations information are now in an electronic format.

Contribution to community goes beyond financial commitment

Originally founded by nine area churches, Well•Spring embraces its community not only by donating a significant portion of its gross revenues back to local organizations but by encouraging management to “pursue their passion” by including an annual community involvement goal in their performance plan. Well•Spring is involved either financially or through staff volunteering in more than 47 different

community and industry-related organizations. Examples of their exceptional community involvement include:

- A contribution of \$500,000 from the Well•Spring School of Nursing Health Centers Fund (established in 2008) to support University of North Carolina Greensboro School of Nursing Health Centers located in Greensboro Housing Authority residences for the elderly. These centers provide valuable, first-hand clinical experience for the UNCG nursing students.
 - Well•Spring’s Benevolent Trust Fund contributed \$230,000 in 2008 to residents who had exhausted their personal resources.
 - As part of Well•Spring’s goal to enhance resident diversity in its resident community, the Entry Fee Financial Assistance Program was established to provide financial assistance to prospective residents. Preference is given to those who had careers in older adult-focused fields or service fields (police officers, firefighters, teachers, religious clergy or staff, and social services or human services providers). This program is expected to grow to \$300,000 annually.
- The Employee Financial Assistance Fund has benefited more than 70 employees by providing cash assistance (one-time maximum of \$250 per employee; \$1,000 lifetime maximum) to those who fall on hard times. This employee-sponsored program is managed by human resources and an employee panel.
- Well•Spring’s total 2008 contributions through its Community Benefit/Social Accountability Program exceeded \$806,000. One of Well•Spring’s 2009 projects includes funding the building of a Habitat for Humanity house in Greensboro.

**“Being good citizens,
community leaders,
and advocates for the
needs of older
adults.”**

—Well•Spring core value

Fiscal forethought and planning

In 2008, the changing economic picture started to come into focus just as Well•Spring finalized its 2009 budget. With that in mind, Well•Spring leadership met to develop three financial reduction scenarios. They engaged staff and residents in a strategic financial planning effort. From this input, Well•Spring prepared their progressive financial scenarios for implementation should the need arise.

Solid financial planning in conjunction with the board of trustees’ retreat, which focused on the anticipated economic pressures, helped it weather the recession without unplanned mid-year increases in its resident fees. In addition, the planning led to a transformation in its growth strategy from bricks and mortar to less capital intensive growth—(home health care and the exploration of a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)).

Congratulations, Well•Spring!

LarsonAllen and AAHSA are proud to recognize Well•Spring for its remarkable accomplishments in the aging-services field. We congratulate CEO Stephen P. Fleming and CFO K. Alan Tutterow, the staff, leadership, and board for their commitment to the *Pathways to Greatness* journey.