



CONNECTIONS Spring 2020

"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." To this day, especially in times of disaster, I remember my mother's words, and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers, so many caring people in this world."

-Fred "Mister" Rogers

A Message from Circle Center's New CEO

I wish I was writing my first newsletter as the new CEO of Circle Center Adult Day Services under better circumstances. But I am sure many of you are uttering that same sentiment in your own corner of the world: "I wish". These past days and weeks have been filled with our collective wishes and hopes. I have wished and hoped not to have to close our Center during this crisis. I wished not to have to tell staff, caregivers, and participants they can no longer gather here as of March 19th. It was a heartbreaking decision but given the current climate and the fact that this virus is hitting our elders the hardest, it was the right decision at the right time.



I am sure, like me, you've hoped for things to go differently, or to take a turn, or for a quick solution to appear. Like us you've made sacrifices and are thinking heavily about sacrifices yet to come. As I walk these empty halls this Monday morning, I am reminded that nothing on earth can take the place of the sounds of people and hearts connecting. Nothing makes you miss the sound of music and laughter so much as when it is this quiet. The care that happens in these walls is nothing short of remarkable. Our staff and participants make it so.

We are doing everything in our power to hold on, hang in and weather this unprecedented series of events. As friends of the Center, we hope you are too. This week we will start twice weekly calls to our participants and caregivers. Those calls are meant to check in on them and provide any resources we can until we can reopen the Center safely. But honestly, those calls are just as important to those of us on staff who are making them. We miss our folks deeply. They are our friends. We are a family here. And just like families who are located far away from one another, we are treating our weekly calls as check ins until one day soon...we can all meet again!

Until then, stay connected. Stay well. And remember to look for the helpers. Sending each of you virtual love.

P.S. Our lights might be off but we are keeping busy. Keep reading to learn more ways we are adapting to meet the needs of our participants and caregivers at home.

Heather

Adapting During Crisis

As you may have noticed, this version of our Spring Newsletter is online only. Just one change reflective of our current situation. We have rallied together to face these unprecedented circumstances, and truly don't know what the future holds. We do know that we will be more than excited to open our doors as soon as we can safely do so, and welcome back our friends, volunteers and staff.

This time at home has likely made us all more aware of the benefits of social programming. We've long known the detrimental effects of social isolation and have thoughtfully designed our programming over the years to increase engagement and socialization in our participants and we create a full day of multidisciplinary activities that meet their changing emotional, physical, and mental needs. While we've all been following the means necessary to hopefully minimize the effect of COVID-19 on our most vulnerable members of the community, we've had to think of ways to bring our programming to everyone at home.

Our staff and students have worked hard to create online options for our participants to follow along with a schedule that will closely align with a typical day at Circle Center. A familiar routine can be an often overlooked tool that can be very effective in combating the types of overwhelming feelings that a change in our day to day can often bring, especially for our senior population and those with cognitive decline, dementia or other conditions that make it difficult to express their feelings or concerns.

We've instituted a procedure where our staff checks in twice a week with our participants and caregivers to ensure them that we are still here for them. We've maintained a long list of resources on our website, everything from virtual tours of museums to food resources, alongside our virtual programming, and welcomed all seniors and anyone else in our community who might benefit from them, to use it.

This has strengthened our resolve to continue to be a resource in our community for our aging population and their caregivers. As we've watched with pride as our community has come together to ensure the safety of our most vulnerable, we remain hopeful for the future of our Center and our ability to serve our participants and families for years and years to come.



Volunteer Appreciation Month

Certainly as we have faced this time of adversity, it has also allowed us some careful reflection on what makes our Center so unique and special. Of course our staff and team make Circle Center an incredible place to work and to attend, but we would be remiss if we didn't also recognize the important role that our volunteers play in keeping us up and running.

April happens to be National Volunteer Month, and though we appreciate our volunteers ALL year long, we didn't want to miss the chance to shine the spotlight on our many special volunteers. We are fortunate to have volunteers of all shapes and sizes, from our individuals

who have a dedicated time weekly and quite honestly, feel so much like a part of our team we almost forgot they aren't staff members, to our groups who come in to entertain, sit with, and engage with our participants.

We truly wouldn't be able to do what we do without them. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered, either at our Holiday Shoppe, serving breakfast, repainting our walls, planting our gardens, or just sharing their time and playing a game of checkers with our participants. We thank you!

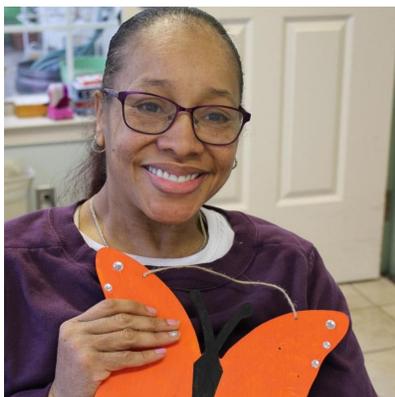
Help Circle Center Weather This Storm. [Please Donate.](#)

While we are all navigating these uncertain times, we are keeping the health and safety of our participants and staff as our main priority. **As such, we are facing an unknown future where the consequences of a prolonged closure on our future ability to serve participants is uncertain and looming large on our minds.** Like other small nonprofits and small businesses, we have had to make tough decisions that impact our staff and the people that we serve. We are thinking creatively about how we can offer our programming virtually to those who now find themselves isolated at home.

We need YOUR help now more than ever as we need funding to be nimble and best serve our participants and caregivers during their time away from the Center. Though much of what is happening is out of our control, we are inspired by the support of our community to look out for one another and to maintain the services and industries so vital to the lifeblood of our cities and our citizens.

We know that Circle Center is just one of the many institutions you can choose to give to during this crisis, and we are hopeful that as you continue to see the importance of social programming in your own lives, that we can successfully engage with our supporters and friends and give you all a meaningful way to affect change in trying times. We need your help to continue to keep Circle Center sustainable for those that truly need us after this crisis and for years to come.

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Circle Center Adult Day Services
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