



# The ROGERSON RECORD

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## From The Desk Of President James F. Seagle, Jr.



So, now we have “health care reform”—or do we? Most people who are questioned have very little understanding of what exactly was in the bill that passed Congress with so much bickering between the partisans. The Democrats claim that everyone who needs health care will now get it and no one will be denied coverage because of prior conditions. On the other side, the Republicans say that the government is intruding way too much and the cost of the reform measures will add immeasurably to the burgeoning national debt. Is it possible that they are both right?

My view of the problem starts from the large picture. We as a nation spend twice as much per capita as the next most expensive industrialized country, Canada. This might be understandable if our health care were twice as good as anyone else’s. But depending on who

is ranking and what is being counted, we are somewhere between 30th and 35th in terms of quality. This is like paying \$100,000 for a used Chevrolet with bald tires. How did we get so expensive with coincidentally such poor results?

One has to look at the lifestyle of Americans to find some of the answers. We are fatter and less physically active than our counterparts. We use and abuse drugs to the point where we not only support a huge pharmaceutical industry but also some of the countries in Central and South America. The average American takes one prescription medicine for each decade of life; i.e. 6 for 60, 9 for 90, etc. Typically, we take very little interest in understanding how to maintain our health counting on the vaunted medical care system, and medication to bail us out when things go wrong.

The consumer, however, as flagrantly irresponsible as he/she is, is the smaller part of the problem. On the provider side we have a system whose only incentive is to do more. Drug companies want to sell more drugs, hospitals want to fill beds and use expensive equipment and doctors get paid by how many patients they see and/or

**Continued inside**

## Over and Above Rogerson Staff Volunteer with Gusto



(Clockwise from far left) Aura Hernandez, Lyudmyla Konyk, Chitra Sharma, Jen Busa, Islande Icart, John Hynes, Marie Ceme, and Terry Resse take a break from spring planting in the garden of the adult day health program on Volunteer Day.

The spirit of volunteerism ran high in the Rogerson Roslindale day programs in April: a host of volunteers gave their time and energy at the Rogerson Adult Day Health Program and Dementia Day Program. The activities ran the gamut: gardening, cooking, Family Feud, Uno, dominoes, Wii Dance, and Wii bowling. Volunteers share their experience in their own words inside.

ROGERSON COMMUNITIES

Rogerson celebrated 150 years in April! Check out our fun historical centerfold in this issue.

## Employee Profile

### Bahamia Ulysse

Interview by Islande Icart, Development Assistant

Pop into the Rogerson Roslindale Dementia Day Program any day of the week and you'll see Bahamia Ulysse smiling and encouraging program participants with her enthusiastic, professional manner. After joining Rogerson Communities in June of 2009 as a staff nurse, she became an Assistant Program Manager, then was recently promoted to Program Manager this past December.

In the nursing industry for five years, she very much enjoys working with Alzheimer's patients—a job for which not everyone would have the disposition. "I value the opportunity to offer help to the families of people who maintain their desire to live at home," she says. "Days can be fun, can be crazy—there's never a dull moment," she laughs.

A typical day in the life at Rogerson for Bahamia includes preparing and assigning daily tasks for the program assistants, checking in with clients and their medications, following up with social service agencies on behalf of clients, checking in with families...and that's just the beginning! "When I'm able to sit with the clients to participate in the morning



**Rogerson Roslindale Dementia Day Program Manager Bahamia Ulysse is all smiles.**

welcome, it makes me feel good. It adds a wholesome feeling to the environment to start the day off on the right foot."

Sheila Place, Rogerson's Director of Programs, is as enthusiastic about Bahamia as Bahamia is about her job. She says, "Bahamia is a delight to work with. The calm, supportive and knowledgeable leadership and nursing skills she brings to the day program add greatly to the quality of life of our participants, families and staff."

Bahamia lives in Hudson, a long commute, but she explains that it's worthwhile for her because of the love she has of being with the clients. A self-proclaimed "extrovert," she was inspired by her mother, a nurse, and her uncle, a doctor, to pursue a career in healthcare.

Born in Florida, Bahamia is one of five children, and her parents are originally from Haiti. When she's not working (or commuting!) she grooves to 60's music, travels, sews, and reads - not necessarily all at the same time.

### From the Desk (Continued)

how many procedures they do. What we have then is the "perfect storm" of health care cost. The consumer on one side allowing his health to deteriorate and the health care providers having no incentive to change that—in fact, truth be told, the providers do better as the public gets sicker.

Some health economists say that there is between \$600 and \$800 billion dollars wasted in the system each year. Three years of savings here would fund coverage for all the uninsured for a decade. There's gold in them there unnecessary procedures and prescriptions. But, very powerful interests have a big stake in maintaining the status quo. Not only health providers and drug companies but large health insurance companies, the food industry and the medical equipment manufacturers are all lobbying against change. It's no wonder that anti health reform messages were so effective as to have people now buying insurance from com men to protect them from the "death panels." What the consumer has not internalized is that much of the wasted money spent on health premiums would come to them in wages or other benefits. That would certainly be the case at Rogerson Communities.

**So, what is to be done?** Hopefully the parts of the new health care reform bill that address excess utilization will take hold. It is not the expense of any given procedure that is the problem, it is the number of times it is done. Also, and again hopefully, consumers will begin to take more responsibility for maintaining their own health. Our programs at Rogerson are aimed at both of these areas. Through careful health monitoring and advice, we are keeping people out of the hospital and away from unnecessary procedures and medication. "Healthy Rogerson" works to educate consumers about their health and provides avenues for exercise and other healthy lifestyle choices. We are doing our part and as yet are not being paid for it.

Things in health care must change; you can't convince me otherwise. One statistic is proof enough: If we continue to increase health care cost at the same rate as in the last decade, by 2050 the cost will equal Gross National Product. This means that every dollar in the U.S. economy will be spent on pills, procedures and hospital or nursing home beds. The only good news here is that no one will be able to buy Twinkies.

### Bahamia's Favorites

<b>Restaurant</b>	<b>Sonsie</b>
<b>Movie</b>	<b>Sister Act</b>
<b>Vaca Spot</b>	<b>South Africa</b>
<b>Book</b>	<b><u>A Measure of a Man</u></b> <b>Sidney Poitier</b>
<b>Hobbies</b>	<b>Travel</b>

## SPEAK UP: Employees Spend Time Volunteering

"I felt a bit uncertain at first because I don't have any particular training or experience in an adult day program. But that uncertainty quickly went away once we began our activity and engaged with the clients. It was very rewarding to share what was really a small amount of time giving attention to our clients."

Mike Keller  
*Vice President, Finance*

"I definitely had a wonderful time. I think what surprised me the most was how competitive the participants were (playing the Wii) and showing us a thing or two when it came to dancing. I truly loved their energy which left me tired!"

Debbie Cawley  
*Administrative Assistant*

"I played UNO with some of the clients and I was amazed at their ability to "refresh my memory" in playing the card game. They were extremely animated and engaged in the activity."

Sandy McWhirter  
*Vice President, Administration*

"I competed against participant Hazel in the Wii dancing activity. She kept up with me the whole time and I think I was more tired by the end. When I saw her this week as I walked through the activity room she and I both held our hands up together and said at the same time 'My dancing partner.' It made my day!"

Sheila Place  
*Director of Programs*

"I was really pleased by how much fun they seemed to be having. Not just in playing the games...but with each other. It reminded me of a bunch of friends hanging out poking fun at each other, joking around. It was very relaxed and warm and I really loved that – I'm happy to work in a place that provides that type of environment for people who might otherwise be alone."

Leyre Gillis  
*Director of Human Resources*



(clockwise from top) Cosmas Darkwa with Francesca Ricci; Chelsea Jurena and Mike Keller; Mary Moynihan, Gentilia Guillaume, and Clarence Howard; Leyre Gillis, Carol Louis-Marie, and Hazel Bennett; Jeffrey Marcil.

## Golden ARCHES Rogerson House Expressive Therapy

Rogerson House, which houses an assisted living facility and a day program in Jamaica Plain, is one of the premier facilities in the area for people suffering with memory loss. Its progressive expressive therapies program ARCHES (which stands for Art, Recreation, Community, Holistic, Expressive, Spiritual) is a key in helping older adults cope with their illness.

Executive Director Besty Ross explains the evolution of the program, "Rogerson House had offered expressive therapies for a while before I got here, but when I first came to Rogerson House I knew I wanted to make the program more robust; so the staff and I had a big brainstorming session to really try to think outside of the box, and they came up with some interesting ideas."



An ARCHES art project Rogerson House

Projects can often involve music and yoga, decorative artistic expression, or even focus on historic or contemporary artists. A recent project involved building and decorating an entire dollhouse, to donate to a women's and children's shelter nearby. The male residents seemed particularly happy to be able to do something useful with their hands; they tiled the floor, wallpapered the walls, and shingled the roof.

Betsy explains, "I think it's really helpful for people with memory loss to be able to see something concrete that they created. And I will admit they had a hard

time letting the house go after all the hard work!"

Recently the residents also studied the French artist Matisse. Inspired by his unique creations, they cut out large scale shapes from colorful paper and made a huge mural. Often, finished projects are installed in the building as a part of its permanent art collection.

Betsy explains that these types of expressive therapy can help greatly with hand-eye coordination, in addition to giving a great amount of joy during the activity itself.

"You have to remember that when you're dealing with people with memory loss it's all in the moment. And if it makes them happy in that moment, then that's a great thing."

## HR Focus

**Chelsea Jurena**  
Human Resources Associate



April was National Volunteer month: what did you do to help out? Volunteering is not only about helping others, but it is a great way for you to do something that makes you feel good, too! The best part is,

there are tons of opportunities to volunteer in your own neighborhood and it doesn't cost a thing.

Whether you choose to read to children at Mattapan Community Health Center, distribute Food at the American Red Cross Food Pantry in Boston, visit the elderly at one of Rogerson Communities' properties, or knit for the Boston Living Center, there is an endless list of options in an area that you are passionate about! I have personally been volunteering at the Quincy Animal Shelter by

walking and training the dogs that are available for adoption. Volunteering at QAS allows me to meet new people in my area, give love and attention to the dogs while they are waiting for their forever home, and I'm given the extreme satisfaction of knowing that I am giving back to my community.

Whether you can volunteer for one day or on a project that is long term, every effort makes a difference. It only takes a small amount of work on your end to find a mission to volunteer for, and the

payback will be tenfold. You'll be amazed how easy it is to make great things happen.

At Rogerson's Annual Meeting, panelist Dr. Ken Minaker, a renowned geriatrician at Mass General, even praised volunteering in relation to healthy aging. "Absolutely, any volunteer activity that gets people involved in helping others is beneficial," he said.

For a list of volunteering events in your own neighborhood, visit the HandsOn Network at their website [handsonnetwork.org](http://handsonnetwork.org).

## New Hires & Promotions

**Courtney Barth**  
Admin  
Director of Individual Giving

**Roderick Potter**  
Admin  
Property Accountant

**Katherine Schipper**  
Property Manager  
Pond Meadow

**Vanitte Delice**  
Rogerson Roslindale ADHP  
Program Assistant

**Faniesha Hunter**  
Rogerson Roslindale ADHP  
Program Assistant

**Patrice Comstock**  
RN  
Rogerson House

**Marie Sanon**  
LPN  
Rogerson House

**Johanna Healey**  
LPN  
Rogerson House

**Thais Oliveira**  
CNA  
Rogerson House

**Sandra Theagene**  
CNA  
Rogerson House

**Paris Alston**  
CNA  
Rogerson House

**Jean Louis**  
CNA  
Rogerson House

**Cassandra Handorff**  
CNA  
Rogerson House

**Celia Shapiro**  
Program Assistant  
Rogerson House

**Robert Chapman**  
Dietary Staff  
Rogerson House

**Rosevelt Deus**  
Dietary Staff  
Rogerson House

**Yanik Bruny**  
Recreation Staff  
Rogerson House

Check out properties and programs that are currently hiring at [www.rogerson.org](http://www.rogerson.org).

## Healthy Rogerson Summer Skin Safety

Cancer of the skin is by far the most common of all cancers. Although melanoma accounts for less than 5% of all skin cancer cases, it causes a large majority of skin cancer deaths. You can use a mix of methods to shield yourself and your family from the harmful rays. Some tips to help you stay safe through the summer months:

**Apply sunscreen.** Put it on yourself, put it on your kids, put it on your parents. And make sure it's at least 30 SPF. It should be applied a half hour before going outdoors, then every two hours (even waterproof sunscreens) after that.

**Wear protective clothing.**

Sunglasses, hat and clothing that covers you up will help you avoid unsightly - and unsafe - sunburns.

**Seek shade.** Bring an umbrella to the beach or camp out under a tree during the hottest part of the day.

**Avoid tanning salons.** It's true: people still tan at the salon. But, have you *seen* the older folk who come out of those places? Is that what you want to look like in 30 years? 'Nuff said.

**Stay inside at all times.** Just kidding! Go out, enjoy the outdoors, but stay safe with these guidelines.



*The*  
**ROGERSONRECORD**  
A Rogerson Communities Publication For Rogerson Communities Employees

**Story ideas? News items? Comments?**  
Email [news@rogerson.org](mailto:news@rogerson.org) or call 617-469-5809.

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