



The Culture Chronicles

...of the Franklin Companies

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Franklin Companies Spotlight:

Music Therapy at Franklin Park TPC Parkway

“A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart, and can sing it back to you when you have forgotten the words.”

- Anonymous

The words of this quote cannot be more profoundly felt than by the residents and their families who are served by our Franklin Park Refreshing Waters memory care program. Alzheimer’s and dementia are diseases that progressively rob individuals of their memories, leaving them stranded from the mental images that connect them to their identities. While cures have not yet emerged for these debilitating conditions, research shows a strong connection between music therapy and brain stimulation in memory care treatment.

Music therapy utilizes digital music played through a standard iPod. The selections are chosen based on the music’s specific connection to the individual. Whether the selections are period pieces from a person’s childhood or simply songs that family members and staff recommend, the therapy is as customized as possible. The use of music therapy has been shown to reawaken Alzheimer’s and dementia patients who were once severely withdrawn and unresponsive. The therapy taps into the area of the brain that is connected to music and rhythm, the same cognitive area that controls both motion and emotions. Importantly, this brain area is typically less affected by these debilitating diseases and this is the key to the therapy’s effectiveness. It has been found that after exposure to the music therapy, individuals are able to recall past memories and respond to directed questions.

This January, Franklin Park TPC Parkway implemented Music and Memory, an enhanced music therapy for the residents served by its Refreshing Waters memory care program. Now, every Memory Care unit at TPC is outfitted with iPods and headsets to facilitate music therapy. As part of this program, **Lara Sasser**, Activities Director at Franklin Park TPC, has reached out to residents’ family members and obtained lists of songs with special meaning for each resident. Individualized playlists are integral in music therapy as the hope is that music that is attached to particular moments can trigger a connection in the brain to memories long forgotten. With the help of **Mark Burkett**, Concierge, Lara has compiled the playlists, loaded them onto the iPods, and begun using the music with residents.

The wonders of the science and the technological leaps that make this program possible are marvelous by themselves. What is truly awe-inspiring is that Franklin Park TPC Parkway is beginning to see positive responses to the music from the residents! One example of the therapy’s impact is worth noting.

One Refreshing Waters program participant suffers with her memory loss to the extent that she was prone to loud outbursts at mealtimes. These outbursts were frequent, occurring daily, and they disrupted and upset the other residents. Now that Franklin Park TPC is using music therapy, they are able to provide this particular resident access to her personal playlist during mealtimes. The result has been amazing! She is quiet and calm during meals, and now everyone is better able to enjoy that time together.

We are so excited about the power of our music therapy program! While the music is not a cure for either Alzheimer’s or dementia, we are so pleased that we can provide our residents an experience that brings peace and calm to a reality that is disconnected and challenging. With our supply of iPods, we are able to be a true friend to these residents. We know they have songs in their hearts, and we are singing the words back to them, even though the words have been forgotten.

Sometimes Comfort Food is Just What We Need

In January, **Beth Nixon**, Sales and Marketing Director at Franklin Park Sonterra, was visiting with a prospective Assisted Living resident’s family over lunch. The prospective resident’s wife made the comment that her husband would really enjoy the menu being served that day, stew and cornbread, because those are some of his favorite foods. Beth continued to visit with the family, answering their questions and reviewing the residential offerings and amenities available at Sonterra. She then politely excused herself and made her way to the kitchen where she asked the staff to prepare some to-go containers with stew and cornbread for the prospective resident. The family was so touched by the gesture that they paid their deposit and the resident was moved in by the end of January!

*Beth, thank you so much for your creative follow-up with this family! Your listening skills and ability to **Learn** about the “little things” that were important to this family made the difference that day. Thank you for providing us with a great example of how good listening and a commitment to **Excellence** set us apart from the competition.*

Helping a Colleague in Need at TPC Parkway

Andrea Duncan, Nurse, is a relatively new addition to the TPC Parkway staff, and she is already making an impact in the lives of our residents and her colleagues. One day, Andrea noticed that one of her colleagues did not seem herself. When Andrea inquired if everything was alright, the colleague shared that her mother had just been diagnosed with a terminal illness and that hospice was not an option that was financially available to them. The colleague went on to explain that even the qualifying process for Medicaid would likely take longer than the estimated time left for her mother to live. Andrea took it upon herself to make inquiries with her supervisor to see what could be done. The supervisor called a friend at a hospice provider and within an hour a hospice representative was onsite talking with Andrea's colleague. Her mother was admitted to hospice--free of charge!

*Andrea, thank you for your **Tenacity** in helping your colleague in need. Your efforts **ELEVATED** your fellow team member, and we are so grateful for your contribution to the Franklin Companies. We are glad you have joined our team!*

A Specialized Skill Set Makes a Difference

Jennifer Hambright, Resident Services Coordinator, has many responsibilities at Rancho Sierra, and she touches the lives of our residents every day. Since the beginning of the year, she has been able to provide much needed, individualized help to one resident with a particular need. Jennifer learned that one of the community's residents, who had served in combat, was suffering from the disabling effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Jennifer has a counseling degree and specialized training to work with military personnel and those suffering from PTSD. She took the time to work with this resident to set goals and articulate how to achieve them, as well as discussing ways to overcome obstacles. Most importantly, Jennifer gave this resident the courage not to give up. Since Jennifer has begun working with this resident, she has made incredible progress and she is immensely grateful for the contribution Jennifer has made to her mental health.

*Jennifer, thank you so much for your tremendous support for this resident. You are truly **ELEVATING** her and making a huge difference in her life. We are thrilled that you are a part of our Franklin Companies team! Thank you!*

Watching Out for Others at Artisan Ridge

In January, **Janessa Lawrence**, Resident Services Coordinator, and **Aryin Thompson**, Assistant Manager, had the opportunity to help out a family at Artisan Ridge. In this family, the elderly grandmother watches her grandson each day while the resident is at work. This particular day, the resident called the office and was very upset because she had tried calling her mother to check in, but got no answer when she called. After trying to call a few times she became quite worried. She asked if someone from the office could check on her family, and Janessa and Aryin quickly headed over to the apartment. When they arrived, the resident's mother

answered the door and confirmed that she was fine. However, she could not find the phone and had not been able to answer it. Aryin and Janessa helped her look around the apartment, and they eventually found it wedged between some couch cushions!

*Janessa and Aryin, thank you for taking the time to respond to this resident's request in such a timely manner. Your actions and **Attitude** showed this family how much we value them. Thank you!*

Taking the Time to Help at Artisan Rush Creek

In early January, **Beatrice White**, Business Office Manager at Artisan Rush Creek, had the opportunity to help a former resident in need. This former resident was in the process of purchasing a home, and his rental verification showed that he owed more money than he anticipated. Beatrice took the time to meet with him to review his account. She discovered a couple of bookkeeping mistakes that accounted for the amount shown on his verification statement. Beatrice adjusted his account, and he was able to repay the full amount that day. With a corrected rental verification in hand, he was able to proceed with his home purchase process. The former resident was so thankful that he had roses delivered to Beatrice as a token of his appreciation!

*Beatrice, thank you for taking the initiative and expending the **Energy** necessary to research this former resident's issue. Your time allowed him to purchase the home he wanted. Plus, you adeptly recovered a bad debt expense that benefited Rush Creek! Thank you for your diligence!*

Cool as a Cucumber In DeSoto

Shatovia Bryant is the Leasing Director at Franklin Park DeSoto. Every day she is pulled in many directions as she serves the residents there. In addition to her direct responsibilities, Shatovia is the go-to office staff member for residents with questions and issues in the business center. At least four or five residents a day will come to Shatovia with questions about the computers, printers, and the Internet. She has become the office trouble shooter for answering the questions such as:

- How do you turn on the computer?
- Why will this page not print?
- How can I get my e-mail to work?

Her patience is limitless, and she never loses her cool or exhibits any signs of frustration. With each and every question, she stops what she is doing and walks with the residents to the business center, where she resolves each issue. She does all of this even when the answer is as simple as pushing a button!

*Shatovia, you are an angel for our residents! Your patience and **Attitude** show them that you care; and that you even care about the 'little things'. Thank you for your **Tenacity** and commitment to **Excellence**!*