

A MAGAZINE *from* BRIO LIVING SERVICES

# Community

*Special Edition:* A SPRING UPDATE FROM BRIO LIVING SERVICES AND UMRC & PORTER HILLS FOUNDATION




IS NOW



Brio  
LIVING SERVICES

See How Our Faith-based Nonprofit Helps Older Adults Live Their Best Lives





On March 1, UMRC (United Methodist Retirement Communities) & Porter Hills announced its new brand and name for its corporate umbrella:

A Letter from  
Steve Fetyko,  
President/CEO

## Brio Living Services at MyBrio.org

**E**xactly three years prior, UMRC and Porter Hills affiliated as one organization under shared leadership and governance. During those three years, the organization has become a united and highly effective provider of exceptional, inclusive, and compassionate care and services for older adults across lower Michigan.

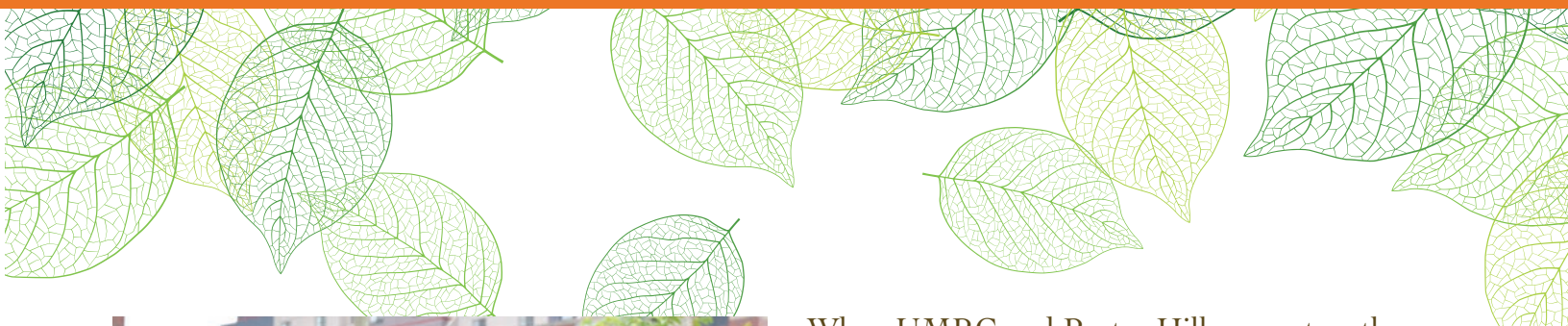
After working together through the toughest possible circumstances of COVID-19, our organization is looking forward again. The time is right to unify under one name that truly embodies the important work we do of bringing life, joy, and vigor to older adults and their families. And, quite frankly, United Methodist Retirement Communities & Porter Hills was simply too long and no longer adequately described our multi-faceted organization.

Following a 10-month process during which strategic leaders gathered insights from residents and families, team members, and communities, the board determined a new brand that reflected its mission, ‘welcoming all, partnering together, enriching lives’ and vision of ‘a world in which all are empowered to age well.’

Finding the right name to represent the organization’s intentional growth was integral to the process. We believe we found it in Brio Living Services. *The word ‘brio’ means vivacity, verve, enthusiastic vigor – the very aspects of joyful living that we aim to bring to the older adults in our care.*

While Brio Living Services is the new name of our nonprofit entity, the names of our 24 individual communities and service lines will not change. Each of our communities, such as Chelsea Retirement Community, Porter Hills Village, and Cook Valley Estates, are well-known and respected in their regions, and we will continue to build on and benefit from the reputations of each of our individual entities and service lines. We will refer to our communities as Chelsea Retirement Community by Brio Living Services, for example.

Although our name has changed, our commitment to providing the very best care and services to older adults remains steadfast. Whether through our market-rate and affordable residential locations, or the home- and community-based services we provide, such as Programs of All-inclusive Care for



**Did You Know?** Brio Living Services serves the most economically diverse population of older adults in the state!

the Elderly (PACE) and Home Health Care, it is our utmost goal – always – to ensure the highest level of independence and vibrancy for those we serve so they can live their best lives. We believe the name Brio Living Services captures that.

I recently gave a State of the Organization address to the older adults and team members of Brio Living Services to show how we are, indeed, ***Stronger Together***. I am pleased to share these points with you, as well – our trusted and devoted friends and donors.

When UMRC and Porter Hills came together on March 1, 2019, we made commitments that I am proud to say – together – we have been able to keep. These included commitments to:

- Right the ship – we’ve done that!
- Affiliate with a strong partner – we’ve done that!
- Make much needed updates and improvements – we’ve done that!
- Conduct master planning for Cook Valley Estates and Porter Hills Village, including investment of over \$15 million as we develop comprehensive plans and explore the feasibility of Assisted Living at Cook Valley Estates– we’ve done that!
- Test comprehensive, philanthropic support of Assisted Living at Cook Valley Estates, master planning, and programming across the state – Our UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation is doing that right now!

Today, Brio Living Services is in good financial shape, and we look forward to the future for continued improvements and growth across the organization to serve older adults. ■



In Service,  
**Steve Fetyko**  
Brio Living Services  
President & CEO

# Supporting the Vision

The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation  
will keep its name, but with a twist:

## The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation, in support of Brio Living Services.

**T**he foundations for both UMRC and Porter Hills were originally established as the fundraising arms for the corporate organizations,” says UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation President Wendy Brightman. “By keeping our name, we pay tribute to our faith-filled histories and let our devoted donors know that their gifts continue to be used as they intend. Evermore, we remain committed to supporting the vision and strategy of our corporate entity, Brio Living Services.”

This is also reflected in the Foundation’s new mission statement: *As faithful, philanthropic stewards and steadfast advocates for vibrant aging, we support the mission of Brio Living Services.*

“Our Foundation board members wanted our new mission statement to explain the fundamentals of what we do, as succinctly as possible,” explains Wendy. “Key points we wanted in our mission statement included: our abiding faith, our stewardship of gifts entrusted to us, and our advocacy role as one of the nation’s most successful foundations in helping older adults live as vibrant and independent lives as possible. In each of these ways, we continue



**Did You Know?** The Thome Rivertown Neighborhood offers Detroit’s first and only affordable assisted living option for low-income older adults. Rivertown is one of eight Brio affordable living communities across Michigan.

to support the mission of Brio Living Services: ‘Welcoming all, partnering together, enriching lives’ and its vision of ‘a world in which all are empowered to age well.’

“We are grateful for our donors’ continued, faithful support to help older adults, their families, and our compassionate team members live their best lives.” ■

Visit our website at  
[Foundation.UMRCPH.org](http://Foundation.UMRCPH.org)  
to learn more.

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## Reezie DeVet and Barbara Hohman Add Depth of Expertise to Foundation Board!

The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation is delighted to welcome Reezie DeVet and Barbara Hohman to its Board of Directors! Reezie, a former nurse, hospital administrator, and teacher; and Barbara, a retired nonprofit fundraising professional, bring complementary expertise and a shared compassion and commitment to serving older adults.



**Reezie DeVet** first served the Porter Hills Board from 1992 to 2000. Today, Reezie says she is at a point in her own retirement to want to become more involved with volunteer work, and the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation is a good fit.

“I continue to appreciate the mission and vision of the organization,” says Reezie. “There is a lot of appeal to raising money for children, but not always for older adults. It is important as a society to recognize the life-long

contributions of older adults, and we can thank them through our work with the Foundation.”

With degrees in nursing, nursing administration and education, and a doctorate in educational leadership, Reezie is also supportive of the Foundation’s **Team Member Support Services** program. “Obviously, I love education!” says Reezie. “I derived a lot from it – building from one degree to the next. Our Team Member Scholarship program allows our team members to do that, too. There is such a return on investment when you help people grow. It’s the most satisfying feeling!”



**Barbara Hohman** joins the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation Board with two decades of nonprofit fundraising experience, including working with older adults at Senior Neighbors, Inc. and leading her own consulting firm.

“Senior living really resonates with me, especially for older adults with limited means,” says Barbara. “I feel very drawn to Brio by the services they provide for low-income older adults.”

Barbara has a depth of experience with fundraising campaigns. “I’m a believer in

relationships,” says Barbara. “If you have developed those relationships, a campaign can be very creative and energizing.”

Last July, Barbara moved to Cook Valley Estates. “I’ve known for years I wanted to live here. Many of my friends now live at Cook Valley Estates. It’s like coming home.” A Master Gardener, she was happy to bring some of her favorite plants, including twelve rose bushes. She is also active in her church and sings in the Chancel Choir.

A self-described “strategic planning geek,” Barbara is pleased with Brio’s positive strategic plan: “It is so essential to stay on track and grow. I think Brio has a very strong future. I’m happy to help in any way I can.”

# Remembering Lena Meijer

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Brio Living Services and the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation remember Lena Meijer who passed away in January at the age of 102.

Lena and her husband, Fred, made Cook Valley Estates their home for nearly two decades. Fred Meijer served on the Porter Hills Foundation board from 2000 to 2002.

**W**elcoming. Loving. Warm. Kind. “All the nice adjectives you’ve heard about Lena Meijer are true,” says long-time friend and President of the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, David Hooker. “She was all of those things and more, and she was completely genuine.”



Lena and Fred Meijer

David’s father, Bob Hooker, who enjoyed a 60+ year friendship with Fred and Lena Meijer, including as neighbors at Cook Valley Estates, agrees. “Lena was one of the most joyous, upbeat people I’ve ever known,” says Bob. “She was always thinking of others. She would ask about my kids and say, ‘Aren’t you proud of them?!’ She was upbeat right up to the end.”

David remembers Fred and Lena visited the Meijer Gardens often: “Invariably, someone would stop to thank them for the beautiful gardens or to say they had worked at a Meijer store and how awesome it was to work for their company. Lena would always engage in conversation with that person and ask about their lives and their families. She always wanted to know what was going on in YOUR life.”

It was the same at Cook Valley Estates, according to Kelly Mockerman, Independent Living Manager. “Lena always had a smile on her face and a warm greeting for anyone she saw. She knew everyone’s names, all the residents and team members, from the housekeepers to the kitchen staff to management. She was incredibly gracious and thankful for any help provided by our team. She particularly enjoyed attending tea parties with her friends at Cook Valley as well as the educational Forums.”

“Lena and Fred meant so much to their family and friends as well as to the community,” says UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation President Wendy Brightman. “We are grateful for the privilege of providing loving care and a beautiful home for Lena in the later years of her life.” ■

## Jack Wheeler of Chelsea knows what excellent healthcare management should look like.

He is a Professor Emeritus of the Department of Health Management and Policy in the University of Michigan's School of Public Health. So the fact that he trusts Chelsea Retirement Community's Kresge Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center to care for his 97-year-old mother, Dorothy, speaks volumes.

"Mom loves it at Kresge," says Jack, "especially the caregivers. She also loves Chaplain Deb (Geiger), who has been a great friend to my mom, and the music therapy and other programs. She doesn't see or hear very well, but is an avid University of Iowa sports fan (her alma mater). The Kresge team will set up her TV to watch Iowa sports, which she loves!"

Dorothy had lived at The Pines, another Brio Living Services community, until a fall led her to require more care. After a series of moves, including living with Jack's sister in Texas, Dorothy came to the Kresge Center three years ago.

"I am very impressed with the management and care quality – efficient, with a soft, gentle touch," says Jack. "I think this place is wonderful, not just for my mom but for the parents of several of my friends as well."

Jack and his wife, Francey, are active in the Chelsea community, including Jack's service



Dorothy Wheeler celebrates her 97th birthday.

on the hospital, Education Foundation, and 5 Healthy Towns Foundation boards. Francey was president of the United Way in Chelsea.

Read more about two of Dorothy's favorite Kresge Center caregivers, Carrie Candelario and Bruce Douglas, in our *Caregiver Spotlight!* ■

## Did you know?

19 of Brio Living Services' 24 communities and programs provide care for low-income older adults.

# Caregiver Spotlight

The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation is pleased to feature these two Team Member Scholarship recipients in our Caregiver Spotlight.

## Carrie Candelario

had plans to become a nurse, but quit nursing school to take care of her mom who had a stroke. Carrie worked as a waitress instead, but never gave up on her dream. Her mom is now completely healed and able to walk and talk again, Carrie shares. “After helping her, I knew I wanted to be in the healthcare field.”

Carrie completed training to be a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and got her job at the Kresge Center two years ago – the same day the restaurant where she had been working closed due to COVID-19.



Carrie and Betty work on a puzzle at Kresge Center.



Carrie and Wilma pause for a selfie.

Thanks to the **Team Member Scholarship** she received, Carrie can now complete what she started, taking classes at Jackson College to become an RN. “Thank you for the education scholarship – you are making my dreams come true!” says Carrie.

Now a Neighborhood Coordinator at Kresge Center, Carrie says her favorite part of her job is “connecting with the residents. They just light up, and they’re so happy to see me – that feeling is the best part of my job, the best feeling in the world.”



## Bruce Douglas

found “my home and my calling” working with older adults when he was still in high school. As a National Honor Society student, he needed volunteer hours and began helping at an assisted living center near his home in Jackson. His bubbly personality made him a favorite among the residents there, and his path was set. While still a high school student, he completed his CNA certification during his senior year and was dually enrolled at Jackson College where he took prerequisites for the nursing program.



**Did You Know?** The UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation raises funds to support Team Member Scholarships and Emergency Aid for our dedicated team members across the state. **Since 2014, 202 scholarships have been awarded, totaling over \$440,000!**



Dorothy Wheeler and Bruce

Bruce has worked as a CNA for 2 ½ years and began his role at Kresge Center eight months ago.

“This is their home and it’s my job to make sure they are comfortable and feel at home,” says Bruce. “Your heart has to be in it, and it takes good people, a good work ethic, and a good work environment so residents are happy. They feed off of our positive attitude.”

As a recent **Team Member Scholarship** recipient, Bruce is excited to begin the LPN program in July. Eventually, he wants to go into geriatric rehabilitation “to help older adults improve and to be their support system,” says Bruce. “I want to help people be happy and independent. Making others happy makes me happy.” ■



IS NOW



**Brio**  
LIVING SERVICES

## Mission

Welcoming all, partnering together, enriching lives.

## Vision

A world in which all are empowered to age well.

# Brio Living Services

offers a wide array of living options and services to meet the needs and desires of 8,000+ older adults annually across Michigan.

Continuing Care Retirement Communities  
Affordable Living  
Home- and Community-based Services

The Foundation remains  
**UMRC & PORTER HILLS  
FOUNDATION**

### *Our Mission Statement:*

As faithful, philanthropic stewards and steadfast advocates for vibrant aging, we support the mission of Brio Living Services.

The Foundation's fundraising initiatives include: Benevolent Care, Team Member Support Services, Capital Improvements, and Life Enrichment for Older Adults.



**"LIKE" AND FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM, LINKEDIN, AND FACEBOOK!**

FAITH-BASED & NOT-FOR-PROFIT

**LEARN MORE AT  
[www.MyBrio.org](http://www.MyBrio.org)**

## How Brio Living Services Reflects our Faithful Heritage



**Did You Know?** Brio Living Services provides care and services to approximately 2,400 low-income older adults each year – **30% of the total served** – through skilled nursing, affordable housing communities, and home- and community-based services like PACE (Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly).

**T**he importance of our faith-based roots as a mission-driven nonprofit remains at the very heart of Brio Living Services. Pastors and lay people of both the Methodist and Presbyterian churches were vital to the vision and success of United Methodist Retirement Communities and Porter Hills, and we honor our Christian heritage through our mission and vision statements and our guiding beliefs of Integrity, Wellness, Inclusiveness, Stewardship, Excellence, and Community. **We believe this faith-based, nonprofit difference is reflected in all that we do at Brio Living Services to provide the utmost care for the older adults we serve – of ALL income levels – and in our support of our dedicated team members who provide such outstanding service.**

Although our organization operates independently from the churches that helped found us, we embrace our faith-

based history and maintain relationships with both the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids. The name change was discussed between our leadership and church leadership to ensure their support of a new name for our organization.

As Brio Living Services, we will continue those relationships as we have in the past. We will continue to have church representatives serve on our Board. We will also maintain our memberships in the United Methodist Association and Presbyterian Association of Homes & Services for the Aging – national faith-based organizations serving older adults.

Rooted in faith, Brio Living Services is committed to providing the utmost in quality care, services, and joyful living for older adults. ■



# Did You Know?

## Real Advantages of Real Estate Gifts

**F**or many of us, the bulk of our wealth is tied up in non-cash assets, such as real estate, stocks, or business interests. Only a fraction is liquid assets like cash. Still, most of our giving to charities comes from that small portion of the pie.

By considering a gift from your non-cash assets, instead of your checkbook, you can increase

your support of the charities you care about – like the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundation! For example, do you have a family cottage “Up North” that is no longer being enjoyed? You can contribute all or a percentage of real estate to charity. Plus, your gift may result in significant tax benefits for you! ■

To learn more about how a gift of non-cash assets can bless the lives of the older adults we serve, contact:

**Melissa Goodson** at [MGoodson@UMRCPH.org](mailto:MGoodson@UMRCPH.org) (east)

**Joanna Hogan** at [JHogan@UMRCPH.org](mailto:JHogan@UMRCPH.org) (west)

