



# Profiles OF CARING

The care you need, the comfort you deserve.

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### Omega Health Care

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**Coming soon! Offices in Liberty,  
St. Joseph and Marionville,  
Missouri, and Topeka, Kansas**



VOLUME 2

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NUMBER 2

## Our chaplains' toolboxes contain more than just compassion

When Omega and Sunflower Chaplain Martin Bush visits a hospice patient, he brings the tools of his trade: his listening skills, spiritual guidance and a desire to comfort, all acquired through more than 20 years as a church pastor in eastern Kansas.

But those aren't his only tools. Martin also totes less likely implements for a chaplain: things like hammers, nails and power tools. You see, Martin is also a certified professional building designer and often takes it upon himself to fix a few things for patients.

"In the beginning, I volunteered to help with something and told the staff I was a contractor and had all the tools," Martin explained. "So, now my title on the phone sheet is chaplain/contractor. I've built ramps, put up grab bars and hand rails and repaired cabinets—anything to make patients' lives a little easier."

It's all part of Omega and Sunflower's commitment to going the extra mile, something which Martin and fellow Chaplain Craig Scheidecker say stood out for them when they first joined the Kansas City-based hospice company.

*continued inside...*



One of the unique ways Chaplain Fred LaCuesta comforts Omega/Sunflower patients and families is through his music.

## Omega office opens in Springfield

### A letter from the president

We are pleased to announce that on July 1 Omega Health Care opened a new office in Springfield, Missouri. The office, located at 2041 South Stewart, will provide the same high quality hospice care that we've earned a reputation for in the Kansas City area. Current staff includes registered nurses, social worker, licensed practical nurse, chaplain, home health aides, volunteers, marketing manager and secretary. The office will serve a 13-county area surrounding Springfield.

If you'd like to contact our Springfield office, you may call our staff at (417) 886-6995. Or, you can contact me personally with any questions you might have about the services they offer.

During the next 12 months, we plan to open additional offices in Liberty, St. Joseph and Marionville, Missouri, as well as in Topeka, Kansas. It's all part of our mission to provide a deeper level of care and comfort to our hospice patients and their families.

We credit our continuing growth to this special care and to our relationships with patients and health care professionals. They have experienced the effectiveness of our emotional support and medical attentiveness—so much so that patients sometimes improve and no longer need hospice care on the short term.

Stay tuned for further announcements about our continuing growth. ■

## Our Chaplain's toolboxes, continued...

"The management staff here gives us the support and flexibility to go the extra mile in all aspects of patient care," said Craig, whose rural upbringing and family military background help him connect with patients in the Leavenworth area. "Plus, there is a lot of mutual respect for the various roles different staff members play, so there's a real team feeling."

The extra care and team effort Craig describes might be social workers providing nutritional drinks for patients, CNAs (Certified Nurse Assistants) helping with household chores or running an errand and nurses returning to visit families, along with the chaplains and volunteers, for bereavement visits. The chaplains themselves often attend memorial services, even officiating at some. And, it isn't unusual for them—and other staff members—to stay with patients through the night, at the request of the family, to offer much-needed comfort when death is imminent.

For Chaplain Fred LaCuesta, musical ability provides another unique way to comfort patients. Fred plays the guitar and sings, and when appropriate, offers his music to patients and their families, in addition to his pastoral care.

"I play anything from folk music to Broadway tunes to hymns," Fred explained.

"Of course, I always ask permission, first. Patients and family are often surprised

*"The Omega and Sunflower Health Care teams are able to touch people in a non-judgmental fashion, with compassion."*

at the offer, but they enjoy it. It's a unique way of providing comfort."

A native of the Philippines, Fred started playing the guitar at age 10. He moved to the United States in 1979, at-

tended seminary and received his clinical pastoral education. He then worked in a retirement community in Ohio for 22 years before moving to Kansas City and joining Omega and Sunflower as a chaplain.

Fred says his other unique gift results from his childhood in the Philippines.

"Death and dying are difficult to deal with, especially in America's youth-oriented culture," Fred said. "Filipinos, on the other hand, are raised to have great respect for the elderly. It's part of our culture. The older you get, the more respect



Chaplains Martin Bush, Craig Scheidecker, Fred LaCuesta, Ed Farris and Wade Rogers agree that getting to know patients and hearing their unique life stories is one of the most rewarding aspects of their work with Omega and Sunflower Health Care.

you get. I think that respect for the elderly helps me provide better care for patients."

Martin, Craig and Fred were recently joined by Chaplains Ed Farris and Wade Rogers. In addition to their previous chaplaincy work in health care settings, Ed and Wade were both church pastors for more than 20 years, Ed as a missionary in Brazil and Wade in churches in Florida and Southeast Missouri. All Omega and Sunflower's chaplains are ecumenical in their approach, respecting the patient's faith and beliefs and providing pastoral care, according to each patient's wishes and needs.

And, while the nature of these chaplains' work can be emotionally challenging, they agree that their interactions with patients provide significant, often intangible rewards that make it all worthwhile.

"Lots of patients will amaze you with their life experiences, what they've done and where they've been," Craig said.

"Allowing them to share this with me is therapeutic for them and meaningful for me, too.

Martin agrees.

"Patients constantly amaze me with their attitudes," he added. "They don't bemoan their situations. They have positive attitudes about life and want to enjoy the time that remains." ■

## We speak your language

In our increasingly diverse nation, communication can have its challenges...especially at critical times in our lives, such as when a loved one needs hospice care. At such times, there are many issues to discuss and services to provide, so communicating effectively with patients and their families is paramount.



That's why Omega and Sunflower Health Care employs staff members who can provide information and answer questions in English and Spanish. In addition, we have translators who assist us with 250 other languages; so, communication should never be a barrier.

To find out more about our translation services, call toll-free **877-275-7086**. For further information about all the ways Omega and Sunflower Health Care can give your patients the care they need and the comfort they deserve, contact your local Omega or Sunflower office at a location listed on the address panel. ■

## Our Clients are saying...

To the staff of Sunflower,

Thank you for the beautiful plant. At this time of our lives, it was and is reassuring to know we have the comfort and support of the friends you have become.

The care, compassion and understanding of your whole staff...Bob, Kathy, Jill, Debbie, Chaplain Fred and others behind the scenes—but most especially Ginny—have made the past several weeks much easier to bear. Ginny's care, comfort, compassion and sympathy should be held up as a goal for all caregivers.

You would all be welcome additions to our circle of friends at any time of our lives.

Thank you again,  
Gene A. and family



Read more about what our clients are saying at [www.omega-healthcare.com](http://www.omega-healthcare.com)