

# GENERATIONS

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## HEALTH CARE, A FAMILY AFFAIR

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At 27 years old I started working with older Americans in a nursing home owned by my parents. My mother, step-father, sister and I spent our careers caring for and about the welfare of our elderly population. I found that working with seniors was my passion, and spent a career in multiple areas of geriatric care.

Throughout the last 30 plus years in this field, there have been many improvements in senior care. Multiple living choices are available, from needing little assistance, to utilizing the programs that hospice services offer. Where once there was very little support to the aging and their families, now there is a multitude of agencies offering guidance and living choices, as well as senior communities, ancillary services and programs to provide everything from rehabilitation, nutritional, case management, skilled care, respite care, legal services, and more; all were developed as the need was realized. Today, one service flows into another as a person's needs change.

The constant is that working with seniors is a passion for many people, and many pass that on to the next generation. For the next two editions we will be introducing you to some of these wonderful people.

*Taken from the many wonderful answers we received when asked, Why work with seniors? "...they are rich in culture, wisdom & knowledge...they teach me as much as I can teach them...each one has something wonderful to share...I have enough love for all of my residents...to give to seniors back what they have given us..."*



Meet the Platts: (L to R) are Kevin (age 15) Server, Lauren (age 15) Server, With mother Pat, Employee Relations Director & Courtney (age 15) Server. Yes, triplets & proud members of the Pines Village Retirement Community in Valparaiso. First jobs for the triplets, and they love it. They think of the residents as grandparents.



Shown above: (L to R) are sisters, Sara Rittel, Dining Services Director & Terri Rittel, Dining Services Server at Pines Village Retirement Community in Valparaiso. Terri stated, "My sister told me it was a great place to work....I love hearing the stories that they (residents) tell about the past."

Below: Deborah (Housekeeper) & Mark Wade (Cook) from Pines Village, Valparaiso



Right: (L to R) Amanda Christy, Home Health Aide & Ivy Tech nursing student, with grandmother, Marylee Pollaro, R.N. (59 years of nursing) and Marylee's daughter JoAnn Souders, R.N., C.C.M. All members of the Pines Village Retirement Community in Valparaiso.



Right: (L to R) are brothers, Joel & Joshua Fabugais, they started as volunteers and now work for Pine Village Retirement Communities, Valparaiso: in Food Services.



We will pass through many phases during the aging process, in our own homes and beyond, yet all along the way there are these wondrous people helping. Who are they and why do they choose health care as a profession, or become volunteers? It is a commitment to caring that is often passed along from husband to wife, or one generation to the next. The people shown in this photo essay are some who have passed or received this zeal for caring.

It is so powerful, that daughters have gotten moms to go back to school to become nurses, people have talked others out of retirement, to start new careers in geriatric care, who later thought it was the best choice they ever made; and moms have shared their love of caring for others with their children—who now experience that special connection with our elder generation.

There are so many caring families that we will be highlighting them in our Feb/Mar 2011 Edition; and none whom we have already met will be forgotten.

This is *Generations Magazine's* way of thanking all who care!