



News Release

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Kathy Olson, Executive Director of Three Link's Millstream Commons, is named recipient of prestigious Kal Michel's Outstanding Leadership Award

Kathy is recognized at Leading Age Minnesota's Institute

NORTHFIELD, MN (February 7, 2019) –

Kathy Olson, Executive Director of Millstream Commons Assisted Living in downtown Northfield, was named as the recipient of the Kal Michel's Outstanding Leadership Award by Leading Age Minnesota on Wednesday, February 6, 2019. The prestigious award honors a leader whose impact is demonstrated through vision, servanthood, mentoring others and commitment to older adults.

Kathy Olson began at Three Links Care Center in February of 2000 as Co-Director of Staff Development. In 2005, she became the Executive Director of Millstream Commons. Over the years, Kathy has been very active with LeadingAge Minnesota, an association dedicated to transforming and enhancing the experience of aging.

Her impactful vision and classy touch is felt far beyond the walls of Millstream Commons. She has left her mark at Three Links as a whole where she began in staff development, at Leading Age's Leadership Academy and throughout the community—all in the theme of educating and encouraging those who surround her in caring for older adults.

Her visionary approach has allowed her to implement new, innovative programs to her assisted living setting including certified personal trainer led fitness classes, chaplaincy program, gourmet food offerings, and many more social, cultural and educational life enrichment programs catered to the individual's needs. She consistently goes above and beyond to maintain the reputation she has helped to create for Millstream Commons—a place of class, comfort and home.

Kathy's can-do attitude and high expectations she sets for herself and for others has been visible in each role she takes on from building designer to decorator, from short order cook to carpet cleaner, from personal aid to activity director and from marketer to elevator engineer.

Kathy considers mentoring new employees her personal responsibility to ensure new staff feel like they are a part of the team, a part of the Millstream Commons family. She checks in with employees often—not just to hear about their work, but to connect with them personally. Her door is open for staff to share concerns they may have. She has mentored interns, allowing them to shadow her throughout her full day of meetings, connecting with tenants and staff, phone calls, tours and more. She continually looks for ways to help people succeed in what they want to accomplish—often requiring her to go above and beyond to make it happen. For example, she supports staff who want to further their education by finding ways to create more flexible work schedules. She introduced Millstream Commons to the Health Support Specialist program, a career development program transforming the way we serve older adults and supporting ongoing training and certification of nursing assistants.

Kathy mentors in her personal time as well. She is the current president of WINGS—Women in Northfield Giving Support—a group that educates and expands the number of women in philanthropy, builds and strengthens community through pooled investments, and improves the lives of women and youth in the Northfield area through focused giving. Kathy was and continues to be instrumental in helping to be involved in Northfield's very successful annual Career Exploration Day which encourages and exposes middle and high school students to trades such as a health care for a career choice. She is tirelessly invested in finding ways to create a better future for staff, older adults and community members.

About Kal Michels

This award is named for the late Kal Michels, former administrator of St. Francis Home in Breckenridge and Chair-Elect of LeadingAge Minnesota (then MHHA). He brought a deep commitment to his community, his organization and the people who lived and worked there. His commitment was displayed through the many leadership positions he filled in his community and his unfailing advocacy for quality care and services.

About Three Links

Three Links is dedicated to creating peace of mind for the older adults it serves in Northfield and the surrounding region. As a non-profit community of living options, Three Links cares for people through its [assisted living facilities](#), [independent senior living](#), [skilled nursing care](#), [transitional care](#), [memory care](#), [home care](#), [end-of-life care suites](#) and [adult day services](#). Learn more at threelinks.org and join us on [Facebook](#).

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