



# HOME

A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
VISITING NURSE  
ASSOCIATION OF  
NORTHERN NEW JERSEY, INC.

# Caring

Sussex

Growing with VNA

*~ 120 years of Caring ~*

Warren

Morris

Hunterdon



Now Also Serving Sussex & Warren Counties

WINTER 2018



# Getting Better with Age... 2018 Marks VNA's 120th Anniversary

Faith F. Scott, MPH, MBA  
President & Chief Executive Officer

The Visiting Nurse Association of Northern NJ (VNA) is celebrating a significant achievement this year – 120 years of caring.

While numerous industries that once flourished have become obsolete and countless businesses that once enjoyed success have closed their doors since 1898, our organization has withstood the test of time. In fact, the personalized care we provide has never been more relevant or in greater demand. Our VNA is growing and recently expanded its geographic reach to include residents of more than 110 municipalities across Morris, Hunterdon, Sussex and Warren counties.

Delivering high quality home care is becoming increasingly complex every year but we're remaining focused on adapting to changing times without abandoning the core values that have been the bedrock of our success. As a result, we're making a meaningful difference each day: reducing the length of inpatient hospital and rehabilitation stays for patients of all ages and improving the quality of life of the aged and their loved ones with elder care and caregiver solutions.

Community support has been integral to our vitality throughout our history and, with the continued encouragement and support of our clients, staff, volunteers, donors and the community-at-large, our VNA can keep pace with escalating local home care needs, embrace care innovations and uphold its distinguished tradition of caring for years to come.

Thank you for being a part of our VNA team and our mission of caring.

Faith F. Scott, MPH, MBA

PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

*Front cover: Our new, expanded service area and some of our clients, staff and volunteers.*

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# A Swift, Successful Start in Sussex & Warren

Seamless transitions, high patient volume and Hospice among VNA's early achievements

The expansion of the Visiting Nurse Association of Northern NJ (VNA) into Sussex and Warren Counties in the Fall of 2017 was a milestone in the history of the organization and a turning point for residents of that region.

In fact, from the moment a letter of intent was signed last summer to acquire the home care business Prime Healthcare had been operating as VNA of Saint Clare's, ensuring continuity for existing clients and making home care more accessible was a priority.

"Our organization has a history of pioneering and excelling in home care and we're excited to extend our mission of caring and geographic reach," said Faith F. Scott, MPH, MBA, Chief Executive Officer, in announcing the transaction. "We're committed to providing the finest quality home care to residents of our expanded service area that will encompass more than 110 municipalities across Morris, Hunterdon, Sussex and Warren counties, along with some neighboring communities."

## A Team Effort

As the acquisition's anticipated September closing date approached, many at VNA's Morristown headquarters worked diligently to facilitate a seamless integration. The pivotal task of ensuring continuity for existing Saint Clare's clients was spearheaded by Faith F. Scott, MPH, MBA, President and Chief Executive Officer; Lisa Salamone, MPA, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer; Ginger Gavin, RN, BSN, Director of Quality and Referral Services; and Chelsea Choma, RN, BSN, MSN, CPHN, Associate Director of Clinical Services.

## New Doctors' Orders Required

"Home care services paid by Medicare, Medicaid or a third-party insurance company require a doctor's authorization and those orders are non-transferrable," explained Choma. "All but a few private pay clients had to be discharged and readmitted."

"Although we were ultimately able to readmit everyone on day one, we'd examined and prioritized all of the cases to be transitioned by acuity. New orders for those with the most serious health concerns were secured first so they were never at risk of missing any visits," she said.

Continued on page 4



## Nursing & Rehab Career Opportunities

VNA employees enjoy a stimulating environment, great benefits and a tremendous opportunity for growth. You will have the opportunity to develop your career while impacting the lives of others. Currently, VNA is looking to fill the following positions:

- Registered Nurse (Full-Time) – Morris, Hunterdon, Sussex & Warren counties
- Admissions Staff Nurse (Full-Time) – Morris, Hunterdon, Sussex & Warren counties
- Hospice Staff Nurse (Per Diem) – Hunterdon County
- Physical Therapist (Full-Time, Per Diem, Weekends) – Morris, Hunterdon, Sussex & Warren counties
- Occupational Therapist (Full-Time, Per Diem) – Warren County

For more information, visit the Careers page at [vnannj.org](http://vnannj.org)



## A Swift Successful Start *(continued from page 3)*

Once new orders were obtained, each of the transitioning clients was entered into VNA's state-of-the-art electronic records system.

"Since our VNA is new to Sussex and Warren, in most instances we were working with doctors for the first time, building the relationships needed to coordinate patient care," added Lisa Nicholson, RN, BSN, an experienced visiting nurse who handled many transfers. "No shortcuts were taken in the changeover. Once a new doctor's authorization was obtained, each of the patients being transitioned received an admissions visit and assessment."

The most common initial client questions and concerns were related to staffing and scheduling changes, particularly for certified home health aide (CHHA) services. Most were relieved to learn they would be assigned the same aide with similar hours. In fact, all former VNA of Saint Clare's CHHAs and physical therapists, its occupational therapist and a visiting nurse were retained following the acquisition.

## Introducing VNA's Bachelor of Science Nursing Program

VNA offers registered nurses who've graduated from junior colleges and hospital-based nursing schools an opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree while also earning a salary and benefits.

This timely program is ideal for qualified RNs who want to pursue employment in the field of home care, one of the fastest growing sectors of the health care industry, and simultaneously complete a BSN, an emerging educational standard required for career advancement in the nursing profession.

Here's how the program works:

- Candidates who are currently registered nurses in New Jersey may apply.
- BSN curriculum tuition reimbursement, up to an established limit, is provided to those who receive and accept an offer of employment.
- A minimum employment commitment of two years upon hire is required, along with an additional two-year commitment after completing a BSN degree.
- Candidates must complete a BSN degree within five years of their date of hire.

For more information, contact Courtney Cheshire, Human Resources Team Leader at **973-451-4111** or **ccheshire@vnannj.org**.

To learn more about all of our career opportunities, please visit our Careers Page at **www.vnannj.org**.

"Supplies were an important part of the transition, too, because many patients have needs such as catheters and wound care that require materials provided by VNA. We had to order in time to avoid shortages," Nicholson said.

## Specialized Hospice Care

With years of successful experience operating a dedicated Hospice program in Morris and Hunterdon to draw upon, VNA was also able to quickly add that service which hadn't previously been offered. Within a matter of days, patients with life-limiting conditions were admitted and VNA's comprehensive Hospice resources, encompassing everything from palliative care and pain management to bereavement counseling, were available to them and their families.

## An Influx of New Clients

While members of VNA's clinical team focused on continuity, others responsible for physician and provider relations, community relations and marketing focused on spreading the word about VNA's Sussex and Warren expansion among healthcare professionals and the public.

"We couldn't predict how quickly VNA would be accepted or at what pace patient volume would grow. Fortunately, many on our team were willing to pitch in when a high volume of patients came on board rapidly," Choma said. Staff members who had been visiting clients in Morris, Hunterdon and neighboring communities have taken on some responsibilities in Sussex and Warren and the recruitment of more home care professionals is underway.

In VNA's first few months of operation in Sussex and Warren, patient volume in that new region has experienced an increase. "These new clients have the same diverse cross-section of conditions that VNA has handled for many years, everything from joint replacement to chronic heart failure to inability to thrive independently due to advanced age," Choma said. "We're ready to serve them."

"It's been interesting and exciting to be part of this acquisition integration and geographic expansion," she said. "We're writing a new chapter in VNA history."

## Keeping Pace with Changing Times

"In today's rapidly evolving health care industry, maintaining the status quo is not an option. Prudent strategic decisions such as this acquisition will help our organization grow and achieve efficiencies of scale without sacrificing the quality of the care we provide," said CEO Scott. "Our VNA is well-positioned for a second century of service."

# Holiday Celebration at VNA



Celebration of Life 2017 featured a Garden of Lights outside VNA's downtown Morristown headquarters.

On Thursday, November 16, nearly 100 friends of VNA kicked-off the holiday season at the annual Celebration of Life holiday fundraiser. The festive ceremony began with a heartwarming program, followed by a special tribute to the Morristown Police Department and a musical performance by the Parsippany High School Choir. The ceremony concluded with the lighting of VNA's new Garden of Lights.

Following the free public event, some guests elected to attend a fundraiser inside, which raised nearly \$23,000 for VNA programs and services. The event featured:

- Live entertainment provided by Kevin Gray and the 78 West Jazz Ensemble
- Premium selection of wine from The Wine Library
- Sumptuous hors d'oeuvres
- Silent Auction featuring unique, hand-decorated wreaths
- Cork Pull
- See's Candies® Table

Plans for the 2018 event are already underway! Mark your calendar for Thursday, November 15 and visit [vnannj.org](http://vnannj.org) for event updates and to view photos from last year's event.



Guests at the event enjoyed a premium wine selection from The Wine Library.



## Save the Date: Lighting the Way 2018

Planning is underway for the 21st annual benefit gala. Mark your calendars for Friday, May 11, 2018 – you won't want to miss the remarkable evening featuring:

- Live entertainment
- Delicious hors d'oeuvres and dinner
- A robust silent auction, now featuring online bidding from OneCause, the creators of BidPal
- Cork Pull
- A special program celebrating VNA's 120th anniversary
- Presentation of the Caroline J. Cauldwell Corporate Founder's award to Robert Melchionne from The Provident Bank
- Presentation of the Anna B. Hillock Community Honoree to Dale Calvert from Monclairity
- And much more!

Visit [vnannj.org](http://vnannj.org) to see photos from last year's event and stay tuned for more details about next year's gala!

# Educational Scholarship Winner

Katerina Kiefer, a senior at High Point High School in Wantage, was the recipient of the fourth annual Faith F. Scott Scholarship in 2017, a \$1,000 scholarship awarded annually to the child of a VNA employee.

Katerina is a high honor roll student, varsity softball catcher, member of the field hockey and ski teams and works part-time at an assisted living facility. Katerina will graduate in the spring and plans to attend college in the fall, where she will study nursing.

Katerina's mother, Laurie, is a Registered Dietician at VNA who joined the team in August to support Sussex County, following the acquisition of VNA of Saint Clare's.

Applicants were asked to write an essay about lessons we take from obstacles we encounter that can be fundamental to later success. They were asked to describe an impactful circumstance in their lives through a challenge or setback, how they were affected and what they learned through the experience. While each applicant had impressive stories to tell, Katerina had a compelling challenge which demonstrated inspiring resilience that stood out to the Scholarship Selection Committee.

"My whole life, people often felt sorry for me that I had to go through such a rough childhood. To the contrary, I am rather grateful for it. If it were not for the obstacles of frequent speech therapy, doctor appointments and multiple surgeries, I would not be the person I am today... This entire experience led me to fall in love with the world of healthcare... My message is to never let life's circumstances slow you down or prevent you from reaching your goals."

Katerina Kiefer has demonstrated outstanding motivation in overcoming obstacles. Everyone at VNA wishes Katerina well in her pursuit of nursing.

William Gannon, VNA Board Chair, and Faith F. Scott, President and CEO, pictured here with the Faith F. Scott Educational Scholarship winner, Katerina Kiefer, and her family.



## About the Faith F. Scott Educational Scholarship

The Visiting Nurse Association of Northern New Jersey (VNANNJ) is pleased to offer the Faith F. Scott Educational Scholarship. The scholarship is open to VNA employees' children only in their junior or senior year of high school, or currently enrolled as an undergraduate/graduate college student. A \$1,000.00 scholarship is awarded to the winner that is selected by the Scholarship Selection Committee. Essays must be between 500 and 650 words and address the selected topic.



# Juniors Helping Seniors Volunteer of the Year



Juniors Helping Seniors Volunteer of the Year Award Winner, Jenna Salamone, pictured here with Faith F. Scott, MPH, MBA, President and CEO, and William Gannon, VNA Board Chair.

Since VNA's founding, volunteers have been integral to the success and vitality of the organization. Over the past few years, VNA has seen an increase in students joining the Volunteer Team – some as young as middle school age volunteers. In response, VNA established a new annual award in 2017 that acknowledges a high school volunteer who has gone above and beyond in service to their community and more specifically, to the VNA.

The first annual Juniors Helping Seniors Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Jenna Salamone. Jenna, 17, is a senior at West Morris Central High School in Long Valley and began volunteering for VNA's House Calls for Groceries program when she was 14.



Jenna Salamone, pictured with Gannon, Scott and the Salamone family.

Through her experience as a House Calls for Groceries volunteer, Jenna realized that there were probably other seniors in the community who would benefit from and enjoy a friendly visitor. So, Jenna created the Juniors Helping Seniors volunteer program, in partnership with VNA. The Juniors Helping Seniors volunteer program provides high school students with a rewarding volunteer opportunity and senior citizens with a break from the social isolation that often comes from living alone or being homebound. Juniors Helping Seniors bridges generational gaps by fostering meaningful and lasting relationships that will positively impact the youth and elderly in the community.

Since its creation, Juniors Helping Seniors has touched the lives of 75 senior citizens and provided more than 2,500 hours of service.

"I've had the great pleasure of working with Jenna throughout the development of this program. The initiative she took to establish Juniors Helping Seniors and the commitment she's given the program since its inception is impressive. Today's teens will be stewards of our society's elder care programs in the future and Jenna demonstrated that they have the compassion and determination needed to assume that pivotal role," said Faith F. Scott, MPH, MBA, VNA's President and CEO.

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## 120th Anniversary Logo

In 2018, VNA celebrates 120 years of caring. As the oldest home care agency in New Jersey, we're excited to commemorate this remarkable achievement. Planning is already underway to celebrate this milestone throughout the year. Watch for more information!



## Tell us your story...

Are you very pleased with your nurse, home health aide, therapist or any other member of your home care team? If you'd like to share that experience, contact Kaitlyn Casamento at **973-451-4148** or **kcasamento@vnannj.org** and your story could be featured in the next edition of *HomeCaring*. You can also share your story on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/vnannj/](http://www.facebook.com/vnannj/)



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