

CONNECTIONS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008

THE FIRST WORD

A New Look for the New Year

You're probably noticing a few changes with this issue of *Connections*. The new look and feel is part of our effort to update and enhance all of our communications tools for 2008 and beyond.

Why the change? We know that you are all very busy, with tremendous responsibility in operating your organizations. Therefore, our hope is that, through enhanced visuals, a little more open space, and a new approach to content, you'll be able to gather beneficial information more quickly and effectively.

Watch for new features, like *Success Stories*, which will update you on ways that active MHS Alliance members have benefited from membership. *The Latest Trends* will offer current facts of interest to the industries we serve. *Coming Attractions* will still appear in each issue as well, to keep you all apprised of events and activities you may wish to attend.

To share your comments about our new look — or to offer story ideas for upcoming newsletters — please contact us at info@mhsonline.org. Let us know what you'd like to read about in the future!

Mim Shirk
Vice President



SUCCESS STORY: MOVING FROM "FUNDRAISING" TO "FUND DEVELOPMENT"

The Challenge When the team at Mennowood Retirement Community in Newport News, Virginia decided to take a new, more strategic approach to raising funds, they found themselves questioning precisely how to do it.

As Marion Shackford, Executive Director at Mennowood, said, "Our goal was to move fundraising from a once-a-year effort to an ongoing function of our organization. The problem was that the board had no experience in viewing fund development this way."



The Solution Since the team lacked specific expertise in ongoing development efforts, Marion turned to her MHS Alliance colleagues for help.

Keith Stuckey, Vice President of the MHS Alliance, worked closely with Marion to coordinate a peer consultation with other MHS Alliance members. The two spent considerable time planning for the event, making sure that issues and learning objectives were clearly defined.

Keith then worked at finding precisely the right people to lead and be involved in the consultation.

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SUCCESS STORY

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Marion noted, “We both felt it was important to use individuals who were truly peers; that is, people who not only had experience in what we were trying to achieve, but who also represented organizations similar to ours.” With that in mind, Jim Shenk, Director of Development at Philhaven in Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania, was tapped to lead and coordinate the peer consultation team. Jim and Keith then selected the other two participants.

The peer consultation team met in Newport News, where Marion and Mennowood’s Board of Directors had the opportunity to meet with the team. The full-day session was structured as a retreat, and the chosen consultants brought plenty of advice, helpful handouts and strategic ideas.

“The peer consultation experience was a great success ...”

The Results “The peer consultation experience was a great success,” Marion said. “We were educated on how to set fundraising goals, how to measure success, and on fundraising vehicles and major gift solicitation strategies. By the end of the day, we had developed vision statements for fundraising, specific fundraising goals — including projects and amounts — and a beginning action plan.”

Since the peer consultation, Marion reports that her team has been hard at work, putting their new strategies to good use. As a result of their learning, a new corporation, The Mennowood Foundation, has been established. New software, specifically designed for fundraising efforts, has also been installed and implemented.

Best of all, Marion is pleased to report successes affecting Mennowood’s bottom line. “We conducted our first Donor Appreciation event, which was very successful,” she notes happily.

“We’ve even embarked on our first campaign, for a new van.

Our goal is to raise \$65,000 by March 2008, and we’ve begun receiving contributions!”

Would you like to set up your own peer consultation?

If you’re struggling with a specific issue related to any aspect of operating your organization, we invite you to give us a call.

Peer consultations with other MHS Alliance members can help you gain invaluable, objective perspectives from those who have been through the same situation and achieved positive results.

For details, call Keith Stuckey at 717.560.4296.

MHS ALLIANCE MEDICAL EXPENSE PLAN ADDS NEW MEMBERS

Latest Medical Expense Plan Additions

We’re pleased to announce that CEO Ron Litwiller of Mennonite Village in Albany, Oregon and CEO Jay Shetler of Glencroft in Glendale, Arizona have recently added their organizations to our Medical Expense Plan (MEP) roster. We welcome them to the program, and anticipate that they and their employees will enjoy the benefits offered by the MEP.

What is the MHS Alliance Medical Expense Plan?

While not defined as insurance, our MEP operates as a self-funded pool, allowing members to predict costs each year based on past history, then determine the funding they will require to cover those costs. Monthly rates are then based on that need.

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) provides third-party administration, while Highmark BlueShield handles claims. From the employee perspective, the plan operates just like any other insurance plan.

MEP Benefits

Hilda Shirk, Program Administrator, notes several benefits for MEP members, including:

- **Reassurance that you’re sharing your risk with**



a **known community** made up of MHS Alliance members, rather than an anonymous group of corporations.

- **Greater control over your plan**, because you’re part of the decision-making process when it comes to coverage, plan guidelines, and more.
- **Greater cost stability**. “There’s not as much up-and-down with this plan,” says Hilda. In fact, the average aggregate rate increase since 1993 has been just 8%!
- **Reduced administration time**, because you won’t need to re-negotiate with a commercial provider each year.

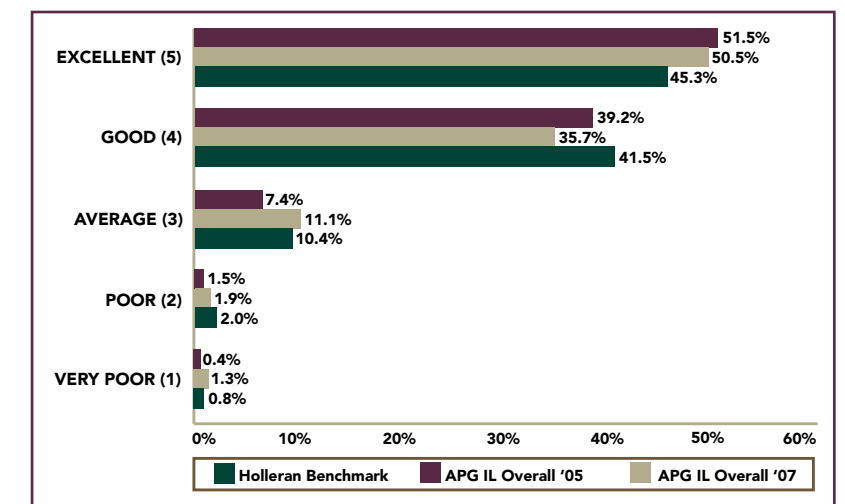
The Medical Expense Plan (MEP) is open to MHS Alliance members with more than 50 participating employees. To learn more, contact Hilda Shirk at 717.572.8268.

THE LATEST TRENDS

Great News for MHS Alliance Members Providing Services for the Aging

In the biennial Anabaptist Providers Group (APG) Resident Satisfaction Survey, taken in the fall of 2007, MHS Alliance aging services providers ranked higher, overall, than those in the national database, according to Holleran Consulting. We are pleased to report that in addition, many areas showed improved satisfaction compared to an earlier survey.

The graph shows overall resident satisfaction related to independent living. Detailed reports are available to each participating organization. To learn more about this survey or the corresponding 2008 Employee Satisfaction Survey, please contact Moniqua Acosta at 717.735.1629.



MEMBER NEWS

AuSable Valley Community Receives Assisted Living Conversion Grant AuSable Valley Community, a ministry of Community Caring based in Fairview, Michigan, has been awarded an Assisted Living Conversion Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD.) Only eight awards were presented to housing communities across the nation. This \$1.9 million grant will be used to convert ten existing independent units to include a living area, dining area, kitchen, laundry room, office/storage space, fully accessible bathrooms, and monitoring stations.

A warm welcome to Connie Shea, who joins our family as the new Executive Director at Upward Call. To contact Connie, call 717.355.2117.

CORRECTION

In our recently published *Registration Book*, there is an error in the description of our Workshop S21: Generations in the Workplace. The description should read:

Participants will learn how generational differences affect employee attitudes toward work and careers. Employers will learn how adapting to these differences can create a more satisfied and stable workforce.

STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to Programs and Member Services Manager, Moniqua Acosta and her husband, Dionicio, who welcomed a son Dionisio, born November 27 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Indiana-Michigan Chaplains Jan.16, Goshen, IN

Anabaptist Providers Group CEO Retreat
Jan. 17-18, Cape May, NJ

Plains HR Network Feb. 13, Moundridge, KS

Values-Based Leadership Program, Session 2
Feb. 26-28, Laurelville, PA

MHS Alliance Annual Members Meeting

Don't miss this chance to get to know Alliance staff, as well as other members! We'll offer a sneak peek at some exciting, new initiatives for members, give you the opportunity to elect new board members, and more.
March 27, 3:30 - 5:30, St. Louis, MO

Midwest Development Network
April 1, Bluffton, OH

Values-Based Leadership Program, 2009 Class Sept. 23-25, 2008 and Feb. 24-26, 2009
Laurelville, PA



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THE LAST WORD

This issue of *Connections* contains some great news about the benefits of active membership in the MHS Alliance.

From the successful peer consultation experienced by Marion Shackford's team at Mennowood Retirement Community, to the continuing growth of our Medical Expense Plan group, it's exciting to see just what the MHS Alliance is doing for our members.

Now that the new year is underway, we hope you'll rediscover the many benefits of being actively involved in the Alliance. One great opportunity for involvement is coming up quickly: in March, we'll hold our Members Meeting.

The annual gathering is an exciting time for members to learn more about the many programs offered through the Alliance. This year, attendees will also hear about new initiatives that are now in the works. Plus, you'll have the chance to elect new board members. All this — in addition to the input, worship and networking offered at Mennonite Health Assembly, which begins later that day.

We look forward to seeing you in St. Louis, and encourage you to make 2008 a year of active membership with the Alliance.



As always, our goal is to provide you with beneficial services based on shared faith values and sound business principles, to help you effectively serve others each day. So we hope you'll take advantage of the many opportunities we have to offer — and, if you have any questions about how we can help, just give us a call!

Rick Stiffney President/CEO