

The Perfect Blend of Care

HONORING THE MATILDA GODDARD SCHOLARS

Goddard House recently honored 16 employees, recipients of the Matilda Goddard Scholarship for career advancement, in a ceremony with JudyAnn Bigby, MD, Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services. This issue of *In Touch* is dedicated to them – their accomplishments and their commitment to caring for our elders. Here are several inspiring stories from Matilda Goddard scholars in their own words:

OBINNA

A journey of a lifetime begins with a single step. Last year I was seated in the Great Hall at the Massachusetts State House – excited and proud to be the recipient of a scholarship from the Massachusetts Long Term Care Foundation. Having received both a Foundation scholarship and Matilda Goddard scholarships, I know what an honor this is and I congratulate all the Matilda Goddard Scholars on their achievements.

I am on a journey to build my career in long term care – a journey with many steps along the way. It began five years ago after my family moved to the United States from Nigeria. I was always interested in caring for others so I decided to enroll at Blue Hills Regional Technical School to become a Licensed Practical Nurse. With the support of my family, I completed the program and was hired into my first position as a nurse at Goddard House Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain.

In less than a year, I took another step and enrolled at Roxbury Community College in the



*Obinna Ogundu, LPN and
Kathryn Phillips, RN*

KATHRYN

My journey to Goddard House in Brookline Assisted Living began when I was a child. Each day my mother would take me to visit my grandfather, who lived alone, to provide his personal care, meals, and social entertainment. As the youngest of three children, I was constantly surrounded by older people, including elderly neighbors, who lived alone. When I was in junior high school, I began to help a few of the neighborhood elders with housekeeping and shopping. Then in high school, I began volunteering in the activities department of a nursing home. These experiences revealed the greatness of older adults. I enjoyed their wisdom and advice, and respected what they had lived through to get where they were. Their stories exposed the resiliency required to reach old age.

After a stint in the Information Technology department of Daimler Chrysler in Germany, I felt a calling to work with the elderly. I returned to the United States and began to study counseling at Lesley University. While attending school, I searched for jobs that would allow me to

Obinna Ogundu, LPN

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Associate's degree RN program. I was promoted twice to become the Nurse Manager on the sub-acute and Alzheimer's units at Goddard House. It has been challenging and very fulfilling for me to supervise the care of residents and oversee the staff in a job that I love.

I anticipate becoming an RN this December and will further my nursing career by enrolling into the University of Massachusetts RN to MSN Master's degree program.

I have faith in tomorrow. It is not easy to go to school and work full time. I know for most of us the road may seem narrow and can be tough. But I wake up with faith, knowing fully well that the challenges of yesterday and the hard work of today will someday and somehow see us through. As I look down towards the end of the tunnel, I can see the light.

Remember, our caring makes life meaningful to people. I believe that one of the best ways of caring for people is by working in long term care. This is a sector of nursing where you don't just administer care, but you deeply touch the lives of people. That is the source of faith as I make my way on this journey.

Gifts to the Goddard House 2008 Annual Appeal can be directed to:

Community Partnership Office
Goddard House
201 South Huntington Avenue
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Call us at 617-522-3080 ext. 315

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

What an honor it was to recently celebrate the academic accomplishments of our Matilda Goddard scholars with JudyAnn Bigby, M.D., Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health & Human Services. These Goddard House employees reflect the standard that guides the quality of care and life at both of our communities – Goddard in Jamaica Plain and Goddard House in Brookline. We congratulate each one of them – they represent every level of staff at Goddard House and our rich diversity. They exceed the requirements of their jobs as they strive with commitment and vision to better themselves, in turn bettering the lives of our elderly residents.

Dr. Bigby noted in her address that it is the small things we accomplish at work every day that add up to much bigger things. We couldn't agree more. Every one of us is part of the mix when it comes to making Goddard House a great place to live and work. Every detail is important in providing finest care and services. This year we completed major projects at both of our communities: the new slate roof and exterior restoration of our historic Jamaica Plain building and the renovation of Olmsted Place, the newly named memory impairment program in Brookline. I ask you to respond to the 2008 Goddard House Annual Appeal - The Perfect Blend of Care when it arrives. The Appeal is crucial to the support these endeavors as well as our day-to-day operations. Directed gifts to the Annual Appeal fund the Matilda Goddard scholarships. We count on you. Together, every gift we make adds up to the very best in eldercare – the blend of tradition, innovation, caring, education, and community that is Goddard House. We thank you for your generosity and wish you and your families the best this holiday season.

Julia D. Cox
Board President

WORKING TOWARDS A DREAM

I am currently a sociology student at UMASS Boston. Receiving the Matilda Goddard Scholarship has helped me build my confidence to pursue a career as a medical social worker, not only to better myself but to create a better life for my daughter as well. Three years ago at age 16, I started working in the dining room at Goddard House in Brookline. Within a year, I transferred to the front desk where I work as a receptionist. My mother has also worked at Goddard House as a Personal Care Attendant for ten years strong. Goddard House isn't only a place where I'm employed but a place that is filled with happiness and family. I want to thank Goddard House for the opportunity to help me accomplish my dreams.



Katherine Sarrette and her daughter, S'Naii

MEET OUR SCHOLARS

The Matilda Goddard Scholarship has only been awarded for the past two years but great progress is already coming from it. This fall, a very special event was held for our Matilda Goddard Scholars to celebrate the steps they have taken in advancing their careers with financial support from Goddard House. JudyAnn Bigby, MD, Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, addressed the honorees, Goddard House board members, and community leaders. We discovered that it was not the Secretary's first time at Goddard House. She visited the skilled nursing center early in her medical career to care for one of her patients who was residing here. As a current Jamaica Plain resident and a former, long-time Brookline resident, Secretary Bigby has many ties to the communities where Goddard House is located. She voiced strong support for career development:



JudyAnn Bigby, MD

"The best organizations attract strong, qualified people. I am glad that Goddard House has a program like the Matilda Goddard Scholarship because it shows you value your staff. Organizations need to provide careers ladders to support their employees."

Along with the Secretary, Goddard House in Jamaica Plain and Goddard House in Brookline congratulate all of our Matilda Goddard Scholars:



Matilda Goddard Scholars, 2008

Pictured left to right, 2nd row: Maudeline Dalexis, CNA, English language studies, Nadette Paul, CNA, nursing, Obinna Ogundu, LPN, nursing, Mery Davis, Housekeeping Supervisor, English language studies, Marie Louise Robillard, CNA, English language studies, Farah Bernard, LPN, nursing, Kathryn Phillips, RN, nursing.

Seated: Rose Mushi, LPN, nursing, Ntouma Kaba, CNA, medical billing and coding, Danielle O'Brien, Activities Assistant, psychotherapy and mindfulness studies, Katherine Sarrette, Receptionist, math, English and sociology.

Not Pictured: Yva Ermilus, CNA, English language and computer studies, Mahdia Farah, Housekeeping, English language studies, Suleka Farah, Housekeeping, English language and computer studies, Nancy Green, Housekeeping, English language studies, Claudia Walker, Unit Manager, medical billing and coding.

Kathryn Phillips, RN

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work directly with elders and chose Goddard House in Brookline because of its history and the staff's genuine concern for residents.

As time went on, I began looking for ways to advance my career beyond the Program Director position while still having an impact on elder's lives. Nursing became a wonderful option as it offered me the opportunity to practice holistic care. The gift of nursing is that practitioners are able to help patients find ways to integrate their diagnosis into the fabric of their everyday lives. This is especially important in geriatrics, where many conditions are chronic. Nurses are able to assist elders in defining and maintaining health as they see it, as opposed to curative care, which is often not possible. One resident I work with described it perfectly when he called nurses *the navigators*, helping to guide patients as they travel down the road of life together.

Working towards a rewarding and challenging career, I have already completed my RN and am two years away from finishing my Master's, when I will be able to take the licensing boards to become a Nurse Practitioner. Recently I became Resident Care Manager at Goddard House in Brookline. My hope is to continue to provide exemplary, evidence-based, patient-centered care while advocating for health care change on a systemic level. I am grateful for the Matilda Goddard Scholarship to help me further my career.

TRIBUTE TO A FATHER AND A CARING STAFF

Goddard House thanks Susan Flier, Donald Fisher and David Fisher for their recent generous gift to honor the memory of their late father, Jim Fisher. The gift will provide special programs for the residents of Olmsted Place at Goddard House in Brookline, where Mr. Fisher lived. Susan is enthusiastic about the difference Goddard House made for their whole family: "My dad's days were filled with structure, support, activities, and above all, the most kind and caring staff. I can't say enough about how having my dad live at Goddard House eased my life by eliminating my worry for his safety and well-being."



SKILLED NURSING CENTER
201 South Huntington Avenue
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
Denise Riley Okun, Exec. Dir.

ASSISTED LIVING
165 Chestnut Street
Brookline, MA 02445
Nancy Shapiro, Exec. Dir.

In Touch

Contact Information
617-522-3080 x312

Photography:
Barry Okun, Emily Okun

Newsletter Contributors:
Bridie Johnson, Ginny Mazur,
Obinna Ogundu, Kathryn
Phillips, Katherine Sarrette,
Betsy Van Dorn

MATILDA GODDARD



The Matilda Goddard Scholarship is named for founding Board Member, Matilda Goddard. In addition to overseeing resident care and many of the day-to-day operations, Goddard served on the Board for 51 years, from 1850 to 1901 and as the Home's first female vice president.



EMANUELE SEGRE IN CONCERT At Both Goddard House Communities

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday afternoon, January 16th, 2009

2:00pm at Goddard House Skilled Nursing
& Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain

3:00pm at Goddard House in Brookline
Assisted Living

Pro Musicis Award Winner, Italian classical
guitarist, Emanuele Segre

"Everything he plays, believe it nor not, becomes a masterpiece."
Classical Guitar (Great Britain).

For on-line tours, visit us at www.goddardhouse.org

201 South Huntington Avenue
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Address correction requested