

GLOW

NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE:

CAREGIVING
WITH A SMILE

PAT'S STORY

HOW WE HIRE



BEHIND THE SCENES: IS YOUR CAREGIVER SMILING TODAY?

David Kolleh's smile is as infectious as his winning attitude. A lead home health aide with Lifesprk on the Parkshore Senior campus, David says his job makes him feel good about himself because he has the ability to make others happy. A very simple yet profound statement that sums up what Lifesprk looks for in people as we hire caregivers both on campus and in the community. And this philosophy of hiring the right people makes all the difference in the care you receive.

Gladys Aryee, a Lifesprk home health aide and midwife from Africa, joined Lifesprk over four years ago, because she loves working directly with people and caring for them. She calls it her 'life's passion.' "I want people to feel life again," says Gladys. "When we changed our name to Lifesprk I was impressed at how we give people the best shot and make them laugh again. I love what I'm doing."

As the demand for top workforce talent increases, Lifesprk has become more creative in how we identify, attract and retain the best talent to serve as our caregivers and professional staff.

"We work hard to create an environment where our people feel empowered to be creative, see their potential and feel valued," explains Sara Aschenbrener, General Manager. She believes the workplace culture is a key differentiator that matters to the people we hire – we can't spark our client's lives until we spark our team's first.

And the attitude and efforts of the people we hire help create the Lifesprk workplace culture. That's where David and Gladys are really making a difference. They are not only self-motivated to provide highly compassionate and thoughtful care to the clients they serve, but they also have taken it upon themselves to inspire and

motivate their colleagues – other home health aides – to bring their best attitude and caring approach to their daily work.

David and Gladys are an inspiring duo who are so sparked by the values and support they get at Lifesprk that they are on a mission to impart that feeling into

every single home health aide who works at Lifesprk.

Why did they decide to invest effort in motivating and supporting their colleagues? The spark starts behind the scenes, with our people, so Lifesprk has what it takes to ignite yours.

As David says, 'we are people helping people.' This perspective is creating momentum among their colleagues who are inspired to do better for themselves and for their clients. Building a strong workplace culture for David and Gladys starts with embracing the personal cultures and backgrounds of each other, taking

a step back, and realizing our clients are people who need our support and presence. "Sharing our personal stories with our clients helps us start the conversation," added David. "It makes our job personal and fulfilling knowing we have a direct impact in changing someone's life."

According to Sara, since Lifesprk's inception 11 years ago, sparking lives always started with focusing on attracting and keeping the right people because without a strong workplace culture, employees aren't inspired to be held accountable for creating the experience that clients want. Motivated staff who are passionate about their work exude a different attitude – one that is contagious and uplifting. "I feel like I come to a place where I'm among friends," said Gladys. For David, "It makes me feel good knowing I can help people feel alive again." **Smile on!**

Lifesprk's lead home health aide, David Kolleh, with Gladys Aryee and Patty Amano.





HOW WE HIRE

Sparking Lives Starts with Hiring the Right People

For your peace of mind, we put a lot of energy into continually seeking ways to provide our caregivers with greater efficiency, reliability and flexibility to give you more value and a greater experience. More than that though, we spend a lot of time and effort nurturing our people so that before they spark your life, we are sparking theirs.

Here's what we require of each candidate:

- *Successfully complete Lifesprk's written exams*
- *Competency testing by a Registered Nurse*
- *Thorough background, DMV and reference checks*
- *Pre-interview screening with a 45-question survey that describes their caregiving skills before they are invited to join a 2-day orientation training program*
- *Post-hire orientation: caregivers must complete a 16-hour online program called EduCare. This program is a series of educational modules and knowledge assessments which demonstrate skill and proves competency.*
- *Attend a 4-hour class orientation done with a Lead Caregiver in a mentorship role. Topics include customer service, Lifesprk's mission and values, Life Plan process, and traditional policies and procedures.*
- *Complete a 6 hour competency testing and training session with a Registered Nurse. This hands-on orientation is done with small class sizes which allows for one-on-one instruction.*

Before they get to this step though, there are a set of values we look for in each candidate during the interview process. Are they sociable and have great communication skills? What's their 'why' – why do they want this job? Did they care for a grandparent or sick relative, are they looking to give back, are they excited to work with the aging population, are they motivated by making others happy? These are the things we look for before they can move onto passing the needed requirements. Our goal in doing this is making sure they first fit into our culture of sparking lives. We can't spark yours if we don't hire the right people.

LIFESPRK CORE VALUES:

Seeks the Spark

Honesty & Good Intention

Invested Entrepreneurs

Nothing is Impossible...
"Scrappy"

Exceed Expectations
with Results

LIFESPRK HELPS THE HUNGRY

As part of our commitment to strengthen our Lifesprk culture, each month, our team is committed to volunteering at various opportunities throughout the Twin Cities to spark the lives of people in the communities where we work and live. Featured in this photo, our Lifesprk team volunteering for 'Feed My Starving Children' where they packed a total of 159 boxes equaling 34,000 meals that fed 94 children for one year. **Spark On!**

DID YOU KNOW. . . According to a 2012 study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, both social isolation and loneliness are associated with a higher risk of mortality in adults aged 52 and older and as important a risk factor for poor health outcomes, re-hospitalization and death as many medical risk factors for seniors.

PAT STEFFER – REAL PEOPLE. REAL RESULTS.

She didn't realize she had some talent left in her. Imagine that. To look at her work, you can see nothing but the talent that lies there – soft strokes, vibrant colors that have their watery essence yet detailed and strong. At 87, Pat Steffer remains an artist whether she realizes it or not. Her son knows it. At Christmas while she was visiting him in Denver he asked her to paint his Christmas tree. Pat said, "I did it and you know what he said? 'Mom, you've still got it.'"

Standing at an easel is her preference when painting but with her back pain that isn't easy anymore. And so the paintbrushes



"Get out of your chair. It's easy to get lazy. Whatever your spark – go get it!"

.....
were put aside. The paintings are there though to remind her of her passion – they're everywhere

actually – hanging on her apartment walls beckoning people to ask about them. That's exactly what Kristin Cramer, RN, Pat's Lifesprk Life Care Manager (LCM) did. And learned Pat's story — a woman with painter's blood whose grandfather was also an accomplished portrait painter. A woman who considered herself a 'dabbler' interested in water colors, acrylic, wood block prints, even sculpting. Art had been her life.

"She's absolutely gifted," said Kristin. "I had to find a way for her to paint again." Village Shores where Pat lives had a 6-week art course in their activities center. Kristin encouraged Pat to attend and added that Lifesprk would cover the cost. "She couldn't refuse knowing it was a gift so I signed her up," said Kristin.

Pat enjoyed that course, adding "It felt really good to paint again. I discovered something about myself during that course, I'm a social painter. Perhaps that's what was missing – I like people around me to get the busy, creative energies flowing."

With this course, Pat found out she didn't need an easel, all she needed was a table and chair to paint and her art flowed freely. She's hoping to sign-up for another art course.

"I'm thankful Kristin encouraged me to take this class," added Pat.



Bouquet of flowers: water color painting by Pat Steffer, age 87.

Pat's advice to others: "Get out of your chair – if you're thinking about doing it – do it. It's easy to get lazy about it. Whatever your spark – go get it!"

As Robert Bresson said, "make visible what, without you, might perhaps never have been seen."

Kristin, like so many Lifesprk LCMs, was able to do that for Pat. Her visible reminder is a beautiful watercolor – a gift from Pat – of a spring bouquet that shouts 'let your passion bloom, otherwise, no one will ever be able to see your gift.'





Sparking LIVES

Darlene and James Dommel's wish was to go to Orchestra Hall. Lifesprk decided to spark them both by giving them tickets to go – just so happens, the date of the concert was also their 54th wedding anniversary. How's that for a spark?

Love On!



Selfie FUN

Thank you to everyone who participated in our SparkedSelfie holiday campaign. Just because the holidays have ended, doesn't mean the sparks need to – please keep on sharing what sparks you! #SparkedSelfie (or share your photo with your Life Care Manager).

LIFESPRK Q&A

QUESTION: What's the difference between a Lifesprk nurse and a Medicare-certified home health nurse? Why do I need both?

ANSWER: According to Shannon Podewils, RN, one of Lifesprk's Home Health Clinical Managers and a Medicare-certified nurse for almost 10 years, the biggest difference between the two is that Life Care Managers (LCM) provide long-term nursing while Medicare nurses only provide short-term. But she points out that there are important benefits to having both on your team when needed to ultimately keep you out of the hospital and living healthier, more independent lives.

With a Medicare-certified nurse, services are covered by Medicare but you must be considered homebound, have doctor orders and a skilled need. Homecare orders are given in 60 day episodes and Medicare is intermittent care. Visits are usually 45 mins to an hour. Typically you would use this benefit for short-term issues or when an immediate healthcare episode has occurred such as a fall, infection or illness. With an LCM, you get help with anything for any amount of time needed with the goal of planning long-term to keep you healthy and in control. And pick up where the Medicare-nurse services ended to keep you healthier, longer.

Another difference involves home health aides (HHAs). Medicare-certified HHAs are allowed to provide care relevant to the physician-ordered task. Lifesprk private duty HHAs can do more tasks - they can drive you to doctor appointments, go shopping with you, eat with you, play cards, whatever is needed to spark lives. "They can do the things Medicare regulations don't allow," said Shannon. "Which opens up great opportunities to build strong relationships between the client and care provider."

Why blend the two? It's a powerful combination– home health for the short-term issue with a Lifesprk LCM for the long-term. "As needs change, the two teams work cohesively together," adds Shannon. "Our experienced Medicare-home health clinicians and Life Care Managers working together are one step ahead of other providers because we know our clients' history and we work side by side as a team – one company to facilitate communication to best meet the client's needs" And both incorporate all 7 elements of wellbeing.

Bottom-line: There may come a time when you need one or both but the ultimate goal with either is to optimize your health and keep you on a path towards living a sparked life.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS? Email us at ShineOn@lifesprk.com



Whole Person Senior Care

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Lifesprk CEO Named Finalist – LEADERS IN HEALTH CARE AWARD



Joel Theisen, RN, CEO/ Founder of Lifesprk, was named a finalist for the 2015 Leaders in Health Care Awards from the *Minnesota Business* magazine. Joel was one

of three selected for this exemplary award that honors Minnesota-based individuals who are making outstanding contributions to the health care industry.

“I’m humbled to be recognized among other pioneers in the industry for their work on improving health care. We know a shift is happening in how people approach health care, especially for seniors who are demanding a whole person solution that looks at all 7 elements of wellbeing to help them in their goals to live longer, healthier, more independent lives.”

Lifesprk’s Whole Person Senior Care Model FEATURED IN MN HEALTH CARE NEWS

Life Care Management Approach Significantly Improves Results. *Minnesota Health Care News* featured Lifesprk in its November issue showcasing the difference our Life Care Management approach makes in the experience, but most importantly the outcomes, for seniors and their families. A baseline study conducted by Lifesprk found that our Life Care Management model reduced ER visits by 52% and hospitalizations by 73%. Those results translate into a very different experience – fewer calls in the middle of the night, less stress, and lower total costs. Most importantly, by preventing crises, seniors and their families are able to refocus their energy into activities that feed their purpose and passion. Life Care Managers, as the article points out, are at the heart of the Lifesprk model and integral to achieving industry leading outcomes.

To read the full article, visit our *Seek On* blog at Lifesprk.com/seek-on-blog

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Keep your life on track so you can focus on what’s most important to you.

Lifesprk is changing the experience for people in the second half of life. What does that mean for you?
It means a better experience, with more opportunities to shine the way you want.

We’ll help you discover your priorities and help you achieve your goals. More than shining, you’ll GLOW.

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Noble Caregiver
of the Year Recipient



Excellence in the Workplace Award Winner