Law Enforcement and First Responders Appreciation Event
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External Relationships Project

INTRODUCTION

Anytime there is an emergency or any sort of problem, our law enforcement and first responders are there to help us. Because of all they do for our community, we wanted to have an event to thank the Oshkosh Police Department, Oshkosh Fire Department, and the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Department. We wanted to come together in a positive environment and allow our elders and the law enforcement and first responders to be able to connect and visit with one another.

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

One main way we have developed a relationship with the Oshkosh Police Department is through our Cycling Without Age Program. The OPD has volunteered to pilot the rickshaws in the past and has helped us in a variety of ways with the Cycling Without Age Program. We wanted to increase the relationship we already had with the Oshkosh Police Department and expand it to the Fire Department and Sheriff’s Department. In order to reach more law enforcement and first responders, we decided to have a breakfast in the morning and an ice cream social in the afternoon, so that two different shifts could attend our event.

GOALS

• Bring members from the Oshkosh Community into Miravida Living communities
• Create a positive and fun environment in which the elders, law enforcement, and first responders can interact
• Make our various facilities more known to our law enforcement and first responders

METHODS

Step 1
Talked with Lt. Wilson to discuss dates and times of the event

Step 2
Set up a meeting with dietary staff, activities staff, and managers of our different homes

Step 3
Created posters for the facilities and invitations for the elders to inform people of the event

Step 4
December 9th – had a breakfast in the morning and an ice cream social in the afternoon

Step 5
Sent out surveys to the OPD, OFD, and Sheriff’s Department for feedback on the event

RESULTS

As a result of our Law Enforcement and First Responders Appreciation Event, many of the law enforcement officers and first responders were able to become more familiar with our Miravida Living Communities. The event was held at four of our six communities, and elders from all six facilities were invited. The four places that held the event were Eden Meadows, Bethel Home, Gabriel’s Villa, and Carmel Residence. Eden Meadows and Bethel Home are our skilled nursing facilities, Gabriel’s Villa is our assisted living, and Carmel Residence is our independent senior housing.

There was a 25% increase in the amount of law enforcement officers and first responders attending the event compared to our previous events. There was also a 25% decrease in the amount of law enforcement officers and first responders who did not attend the event.

The responses to the statement, “I enjoyed socializing with the resident,” resulted in 74% of those surveyed strongly agreeing with the statement, 22% agreeing, 4% somewhat agreeing, and 0% disagreeing with the statement.

Based on the reactions of the elders and the responses to the survey by our Law Enforcement and First Responders, it is apparent that the majority of those in attendance had a great time with one another.

CONCLUSIONS

This event ended up being successful because of the great turnout of the Police Department, Fire Department, and Sheriff’s Department. Between the breakfast and ice cream social at all four locations we got to welcome and show our appreciation for nearly 60 law enforcement officers and first responders.

Because everyone seemed to have a great time interacting with each other, three months after the event we decided to bring a group of elders to the Oshkosh Police Department, Oshkosh Fire Department, and Winnebago Sheriff’s Department. We wanted to present each department with a plaque expressing our appreciation for them. Each plaque was signed by elders and staff. Some elders even wrote individual messages to the departments.

While at the Fire Department we received a tour of the building, and the elders received badges. At the Police Station, the elders got to sit in the conference room and talk with the officers. The elders had a great time visiting all three stations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• I recommend having the appreciation event two times a year, or at least having the event annually. Many of the law enforcement officers and first responders seemed to appreciate being invited and would enjoy continuing the relationship with the elders.
• A way that the attendees could become more familiar with our communities is if we gave them a tour of the facility.
• Something that could improve the event would be encouraging the law enforcement officers and first responders to switch tables every ten minutes so that they could meet and talk with more elders.