



The Culture Chronicles

...of the Franklin Companies

January 2017

Something to Consider...

At the State of the Company address in December, we spent a good deal of time reviewing and celebrating our 2016 accomplishments – and there were many to highlight! We also caught a glimpse of what lies ahead for Franklin Companies in 2017 – and there will be plenty of challenges and excitement in store for all of us. Importantly, we discussed our new Operating Mantra: **TRUE**.

True is a small, but power-packed word that holds much significance in its four letters. A simple review of its definition reveals words including *accurate*, *exact*, *loyal*, *faithful*, and *honest*. Measurements and calculations can be *true*. Friends can certainly be *true*, and honest men and women are known to speak with conviction in a trustworthy and *true* manner.

There is an even more compelling use of the word *true* that can easily be applied to individuals and corporations alike; that is, the concept of being *true* to oneself. For an individual, this could be seen when someone stands up for a closely held belief. For a corporation, being true to itself can include upholding its core values in such a way that it is clearly set apart from its competition. At Franklin Companies, our competitive advantage is our unique culture, and we strive every day to uphold our core values. In 2017, we will use **TRUE** as our reminder that there is nothing more important than being true to our culture. We will be:

Timely – The key to any success we have when dealing with residents and family members is to respond in a timely basis.

Responsive – You cannot be timely if you are not responsive, and you cannot be responsive if you are not timely.

Unconditional – We cannot place conditions on our customer service or our culture. Either we are all in, or we get out.

Enthusiastic – This is the final test of providing outstanding customer service. If we are not enthusiastic about what we do, we will never have passion. Without passion, we will never come across as truly caring.

We are excited to begin our fourth year of *The Culture Chronicles of the Franklin Companies*, and look forward to our monthly stories. We cannot wait to see how we remain **TRUE** to ourselves this year!

A Very Special Christmas

This past Christmas season, **Victor Zuniga** and **Fernando Velasquez**, Resident Service Coordinators at Sutton Oaks and The Park at Sutton Oaks, came together with our community partners to create a “Christmas Wish List” program. Residents of all ages in the communities were able to participate. All they had to do was to fill out a list of what they wanted, or what they needed, and also what book they might like to read. The program was a huge success and all of the Christmas wishes were granted. However, the story of one resident and her wishes stood out among them all.

Mrs. Evelyn King, an 85-year-old resident who had lived at Sutton Oaks since it opened, was happy to participate in the program. She shared with the team that she had never owned a washing machine, and that was at the top of her wish list. The washing machine was closely followed by a wish for a dressy sweater to wear to church. Mrs. King’s presence in the community was a welcome one as she always attended community events, including housing authority meetings. Given her importance to Sutton Oaks, the team was especially eager to find a way to grant her requests. Through the gifts of some generous donations, Victor was able to call Mrs. King a few days before Christmas to tell her that she would indeed be receiving a washing machine!

Of course, Mrs. King was happy and grateful for the news. However, she had some news of her own to share with the team; she had just been diagnosed with Stage Four cancer. Victor and the entire team were heartbroken, but they were glad to know that they were going to be able to respond to her wish for Christmas. Victor delivered the washing machine and was able to visit with Mrs. King just before Christmas. Sadly, Mrs. King passed away on Christmas Day. On the day of her funeral, the team was able to give Mrs. King’s family two wrapped boxes containing her dressy sweater and book. While Mrs. King’s passing was sudden, the staff knew that in her last days, Mrs. King understood the true spirit of Christmas and that was actually a gift for them from her.

*Victor and Fernando, thank you for your energy and **Enthusiasm** during the Christmas season. Your ability to muster the resources of our community partners in support of our residents is truly inspirational. Thank you for your **Unconditional** approach to serving our precious residents, particularly Mrs. King. You made a difference for her and for so many others in the Sutton Oaks and The Park at Sutton Oaks communities!*

Just in the Nick of Time

Tim Flores, Maintenance Technician at Sutton Oaks, was doing his grounds work one morning when he was approached by an elderly resident asking if he had seen her beloved dog, Precious. Unfortunately, Precious had run out of the resident's apartment when the door was opened early in the morning, and the resident's cataracts prevented her from seeing long distances to follow the dog. Tim told the resident that he would keep an eye open for Precious.

After he finished his rounds, Tim did notice a dog that was walking toward I-35 from the property. He whistled and called to Precious, and was able to prevent the dog from running out into the street, but that was not all that happened. Precious did not immediately run over to Tim and he was unable to get a hand on the dog's collar through the property fence. As Precious again started to move away toward the road, Tim was able to quickly get to the pedestrian gate and grab Precious' collar—just as a car came rounding the corner and very close to the dog. Tim was then able to return Precious to the grateful resident, who could not have been more happy to see her beloved dog!

*Tim, thank you for being **Timely** and **Responsive** to this resident's request for help. There is no way she would have been able to find and retrieve her dog without you. Your actions demonstrated **TRUE** customer service as you pulled Precious out of harm's way! Thank you!*

A Special Commission at Sonterra

Anthony Burks, Dining Services Director at Franklin Park Sonterra, has always had a vision of building several display units to be used in the dining area for events as well as possibly displaying food and desserts. In the past, temporary display units had been used at various events and the response was positive. As the ideas continued to percolate in Anthony's mind, he noticed that one Sonterra resident, Mr. Stevens, spent quite a bit of time doing woodworking in the on-site workshop.

Anthony asked Mr. Stevens if he would be willing to help him with building a display unit to be used in the Dining Room. Mr. Stevens agreed without hesitation! The first project on the list was a portable rack that could hold table skirting when it was not being used for displays. The two men worked together on the design and plans, and went together to procure the needed materials. In two weeks' time, the rack was finished! The next project was another display stand that Mr. Stevens quickly built. All that was left to do was paint it.

Mr. Stevens refused to accept payment for his time and efforts in constructing the display racks. However, Anthony would not be deterred from finding some way to compensate his master builder. When Christmas time came, Anthony noticed that Mr. Stevens had made a reservation for his family to enjoy the Christmas buffet at the community, and Anthony saw an opportunity. Anthony approached **Jim Duggins**, Executive Director, with the idea of complimenting

Mr. Stevens and his family for their entire meal as a gesture of gratitude for Mr. Stevens' efforts. Jim thought that was a great idea!

After the family was seated, Anthony approached their table and introduced himself. He then shared how grateful he was for Mr. Stevens' help with the construction of the display units. Then Anthony had the pleasure of announcing that the entire family's meal would be "on the house". The family was visibly overwhelmed and shared that the generosity was not necessary. Anthony insisted, and the complimenting of the meal was graciously accepted. Anthony then told Mr. Stevens, "I have more drawings in my head and more things for you to build, so you won't get off the hook that easy!"

*Anthony, thank you for being **Enthusiastic** and for your **Unconditional** dedication to seeing ideas through to their completion. Your concepts for the Dining Room are innovative and help create an atmosphere that our residents love. Your willingness to engage with a resident in such a remarkable way is very special. Thank you for 'building' this special relationship with Mr. Stevens!*

Taking the Time Needed

At the beginning of the winter season, **Mark Lopez**, Executive Director at Artisan at Willow Springs, received a call from an elderly resident couple at the community. This couple was having difficulty programming and operating their thermostat and had been unable to figure out how to activate their heat. It was already cold that day, and the residents had expressed that they were chilly in their own home! Instead of submitting a routine maintenance request, Mark immediately walked over to their apartment to help them.

Not only did Mark get their heat turned on, he also took the time to program their thermostat so their heat would run efficiently throughout the winter at the temperature they desired. He also sat down with the residents and reviewed the instructions with them personally. They were both very grateful for Mark's efforts and felt more confident with their thermostat heading into the winter months.

*Mark, your willingness to personally assist these residents in such a **Timely**, **Responsive** and **Enthusiastic** manner, as opposed to waiting for a maintenance request to be submitted, made a tremendous difference that day for this couple. You showed that you deeply care for the residents, and you also let them know that they are valued members of the Willow Springs community! Thank you!*

Always Willing to Help

JT Mancilla, Maintenance Assistant at Willow Springs, is always ready to help our residents when they need it. One day, some residents were having car trouble right outside the leasing office. Without hesitation, JT jumped right up and ran over to lend a hand, and the residents were very thankful!

*JT, thank you for your willingness to **Respond** to situations as soon as they appear! Your **Timely** response that day made a difference. We are glad you are part of the Franklin team!*