



News-Mail 2021 Annual Meeting Highlights

November 4, 2021

Hello WACCRA Members!

Our Annual Meeting this year was an in-person event, and we estimate that 280 members were in attendance! For those who were able to attend, it was so rewarding to be able to mingle with friends once again. Thanks to all who made this meeting a success, particularly our host CCRC, Emerald Heights.

The content of this News-Mail will highlight some of the themes that emerged from comments by President Donna Kristaponis and by our speaker, Professor Katherine Pearson. In the coming weeks, keep your eye on our website www.waccra.org for the posting of a video of the meeting. It is important to us that all WACCRA members have the opportunity to listen to the Annual Meeting speakers.

WACCRA accomplishments, 2021

Donna Kristaponis listed several ways that WACCRA members have been true to our stated Mission over the past year: to educate, collaborate and advocate for all seniors and WACCRA Members.

Education: Completed the 3rd Edition of the *Consumer Guide to Continuing Care in WA*; Created the *Introduction to Continuing Care in Washington* document; Updated/expanded our website, www.waccra.org, which is where you can find these two documents and much more.

Collaboration: Increased participation in the Presidents' Roundtable; Helped CCRC residents implement the agreements in the *Commitment to CCRC Practices* document.

Advocacy: Lobbied for legislation that supports seniors in WA State; Rallied seniors to protest proposed reimbursement cutbacks of Medicare/Medicaid services.

WACCRA is active and strong! Our membership has grown over the past 3 years from 571 to 970 members. We continue to focus on membership growth and we thank you, our members, for your continued support of WACCRA's mission.

While WACCRA did not sponsor legislation this year, our part-time lobbyist, Donna Christensen, continued to work on behalf of seniors and WACCRA members in Olympia. Unfortunately, Donna C. could not attend the Annual Meeting, so Donna Kristaponis outlined her work, including on HB 1218, HB 1120, and efforts to permit use of generic drugs at lower prices in healthcare settings.

Featured speaker, Professor Katherine Pearson, Penn State University, began her remarks by reiterating the **Key Resident Rights** that she talked about 7 years ago when she last addressed CCRC residents in WA State at Emerald Heights:

- Right to organize
- Rights to have regular, accurate and understandable information about matters that affect their financial obligations as residents
- The right – perhaps even the obligation – to have an effective voice in interactions, including negotiations with the provider
- A reasonable process for resolution of disputes
- An expectation of affordable stability
- The right/means of enforcing core rights

Professor Pearson's remarks on Resident's Rights back then, in 2014, became a catalyst for the formation of WACCRA.

Professor Pearson said that now, especially in light of lessons learned in the time of Covid-19, she has identified additional specific challenges facing CCRCs:

- Concerns about the essential nature of "nonprofit" CCRCs. One example: whether both the CCRC provider and the residents share an understanding of the charitable mission and how it is being supported by the operation.
- The ever-growing importance of the CCRC Resident's Contract.
- When the US economy faltered, some CCRCs brought in managers with strong financial skills, but who lacked people skills. Boards of Directors must insure that top management staff have both sound financial skills and must be good at interacting with residents. Both skills are equally valuable and must be present to insure a strong community.
- The challenge of leadership in a fraught time; the leadership challenge exists at all levels – for the managers of the CCRCs, the residents seeking resolutions to problems, as well as the larger communities of state and national leaders. Residents should stay involved for the long haul when times get rough.
- The continued need for residents to seek transparency.

Professor Pearson's remarks were very well received and led to a spirited Q & A session.

Before the close of the meeting, Donna Kristaponis introduced the WACCRA Board, the CCRC Coordinators, and the WACCRA Committee chairs. Donna gave a special thanks to two retiring Board Members, Natalie Siegel (Mirabella) and Orin Brustad (At-Large). Natalie and Orin have both been very active and valued contributors to WACCRA for a number of years. While their presence on the Board will be missed, both have expressed the desire to support WACCRA behind the scenes in any way possible going forward. We are lucky for that! Thank you both for your always insightful words and work.

That will do it for this brief roundup of Annual Meeting Highlights.

Remember to check www.waccra.org in the coming weeks for the video of the meeting.

As Always, thank you all for your continued support of WACCRA!

Monica Clement
WACCRA Communications Chair