



The Life Enrichment Center AT OYSTER BAY

A New Beginning and Fond Farewell
By Silvana LaFerlita Gullo, Executive Director

This month both the Center and I will enter a new phase. On August 31st I will leave the Center as its Director. I have come to understand the many challenges faced by older adults as they struggle to gracefully age in their communities. And I've experienced first-hand just how important a resource like the Center is to families who care for their loved ones. These past three years have truly been a life changing experience for me both personally and professionally.

The Center's Services: An organization that focuses 100% on the well-being of older adults should not simply be viewed as a "charity" but a vital resource to benefit the entire community. The social services the Center offers prove to be a most critical piece to navigating the puzzle called life after 60. Every step along the way presents new burdens that are eased by a visit to the Social Services Department and subsequently being connected to a friend of the Center that can help. The monthly visit from Family and Children's Services may seem like an inconsequential activity on the Center's calendar until one finds oneself faced with a crisis only an attorney or a government funded program can help. Direct connection with the services needed is key to ensuring the best outcome when faced with decisions which will affect your future. I will continue to advocate for government officials, municipalities, individuals and entire communities to support these resources for their older adults.

A Calendar of Activities and Fun: I have never had more opportunities to have fun in my entire career. Monthly special activities have added a new meaning to enjoying my work, and memories like special dances with Members and my weekly game of backgammon will forever bring a smile to my face. I learned a great deal about facing life's challenges with courage and staying positive from our Members, and I will never be the same.

Life Changing Experience: The guidance of our Social Work Department and our friends at Family and Children's Services gave my family the best outcome we could hope for and I will continue to consider the Center my primary resource for support. What I learned while leading the Center inspires me to dedicate my future to developing direct access to services like the Center's in every community.

Whenever I hear a particular song, or smell a familiar perfume, I will remember the lovely, strong and wonderful Members I have come to know. I hope to be remembered fondly and I will not say good-bye... just stay well, be happy, and God bless you all till we meet again.

Silvana LaFerlita Gullo, Executive Director

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