



**Celebrating
December**

BINGO Month

Safe Toys and Gifts Month

Hanukkah

December 6-14

Christmas

December 25

Kwanzaa

December 26-January 1

New Year's Eve

December 31

Linda Cho

Executive Director

Barbara Moore

Business Director

Annelie Damasco

Assisted Living Director

Susan O'Shaughnessy

Marketing Director

Rachel Robinson

Activities Director

Chris Cho

Building & Maintenance Director

Chris Moore

*Culinary Services &
Laundry Director*

“My Life As I See It”

Dimple Santos

I made a commitment. When I was first asked to write for the chronicle I made a deal with myself that I would honor the statement, “My Life as I See it.” What this means to me is that no matter where a person is in their life journey I would respect their perspective in the moments we spend together. Facts may be lost, names might fade into the distance, and self-awareness may come and go but I believe that pure communication happens at a deeper level - transcendent of any cognitive limitations. Words may fail us but that doesn't mean we stop communicating...

Dimple Santos doesn't slow down. I met with her right after lunch and she was immediately up on her feet for a few laps around the third floor. When I said, “I think you have more energy than me.” She playfully replied, “I don't believe that.”

Dimple was soft spoken and wasn't too interested in any of my questions. Her eyes were bright, her smile was illuminating and instead of a traditional interview I felt her inviting me into a different perspective. I joined her, and what I found was a world of creative expression.

I followed Dimple up and down the hallway, listening and taking notes as she quietly shared her thoughts. I knew she wanted to say something and felt it was up to me to figure out what she wanted to say. Trusting my intuition I stepped back and just listened.

Dimple's thoughts were lyrical and rich in poetry. Each phrase a burst of beauty while at the same time a piece to a bigger puzzle. That's when I decided that the best way to honor her perspective in the moments we were together was by arranging all of her thoughts into an untitled poem. Hopefully by doing this I have honored Dimple's thoughts and her feelings.

Continued inside...

Miscellaneous Announcements

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** A reminder to families, we have a policy of no tips or gifts for individual staff members who work here at Stellar Care. We do however have an employee fund. Donations are collected throughout the year and distributed to all staff during the holiday season. **If you would like to make a contribution to the employee fund, you can contact Barbara in the business office.**

** Flu season is here! For your well-being and that of our residents, please make sure you are not sick when you are visiting Stellar Care.

** Because we want to ensure proper nutrition, please be mindful of the amount of sweets (including unhealthy amounts of treats being sent and left in residents' rooms. Abundance of candies and sweets discourages participating in regular dining (proper nutrition). Thank you for your assistance and understanding.

** If you would like to see your loved one featured in an upcoming newsletter, forward their story to Brandon Cho.

December Birthdays

In astrology, those born between December 1st and 21st are Archers of Sagittarius. Archers are exciting and independent. Their positive attitude, great sense of humor, and kind heart makes them excellent friends. But get ready for an earful. Archers often also speak their mind.

Those born between December 22nd and 31st are Goats of Capricorn. Goats are the most stable and sure-footed of astrological signs. Reliable, economical, practical, and organized, they make good multi-taskers and politicians.

Jeanne C.	Dec. 1 st
Bernice K.	Dec. 6 th
Mary S.	Dec. 12 th
Virginia G.	Dec. 14 th
Aynne S.	Dec. 27 th
Kathleen M.	Dec. 28 th
Lois S.	Dec. 29 th



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We sit together, watching the hummingbirds as they flutter about so quickly, occasionally sitting on a branch for a quick rest. Then off they go, onto the next adventure.

Joe and I, we go way back...we've been together in this building since I started here. He is still very happy to see me, and waves each and every time I pass by. He always asks about my family and enquires about my husband and my son. Joe is especially appreciative of the changes made to the building over the years.

"He sure does a fine job" Joe says, nodding his approval, "and your son..."

Joe looks around to see if he can find Brandon.

"He's a good guy" he concludes, as he reaches out to hold my hand.

We talk about his health (not so good, Joe tells me), and the activities program (Joe's not liking the game that's being played in the Santa Barbara room) and the food (some good, some not so much...)

But he quickly smiles and points to the hummingbird that's come back for another sip of the nectar. We sip our coffee, (his with one cream; mine, black) as we enjoy the sunshine and each other's company. It's a good day.

As we wind down toward the end of the year and gear up for the holidays, I hope you'll remember to string together your series of good days with your loved ones for your memory garland.

I will be stringing together my garland of mementos with snapshots of my residents and our moments together. Each year forms a new branch for my memory tree, grown fuller and heavier with each picture. And although the details of my tree are seen only in my mind, when shared with others, our branches come together to form a revivifying body of memories that preserves the essence of our loved ones at Stellar Care, even when their own trees lose some leaves in the winter.

This holiday season, I'm starting with a hummingbird for my tree.

I hope you will have a safe and blessed holiday.



Linda Cho, Executive Director

High Tea at *The Aubrey Rose Tea Room...*



...and in our courtyard



...Santos Cont.

Please take a moment and hear what Dimple has to say...

"It knows where it is going,
I don't think it's all that bad.
It knows what it's doing,
at the tail end of the hall.

It was the Summer and she was just a little baby We waited around until she started running.

It knows where it's going.
Big brother.
Big brother.

They would play a long time ago.
They would fix it up and make it look nice.
I save my time.
Most people stop.
I know better.

Big brother."

Every resident on the third floor has a small personalized display case on the outside of their apartment; shadowboxes full of pictures and mementos from their lives. A quick glance at the whole person instead of a focus on the current challenges they face. Occasionally Dimple and I would stop walking and I would watch as she attempted to pry one of these shadowboxes off of the wall.

At first glance you might think that Dimple doesn't know what she's doing, but on a deeper, perhaps a poetic level... she may have been trying to unlock those boxes and help set everyone's memories free.

We are all communicating. Just step back and listen.



Interviewed and Written by Bryan Finnigan

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Amelia Fowler

Amelia has been a receptionist at Stellar Care since June. She has excelled at coordinating visiting families and events on the weekends, and for good reason.

Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Amelia grew up playing a variety of sports. She was pretty shy at first, and said that team sports gave her an outlet to open up. Amelia went the traditional route after high school and entered college, but after trying out a few different universities, she was unable to make a focused decision on a field of study. Instead of getting stuck with indecision, Amelia decided to be useful instead and joined the Marine Corp in 2010. Fortunately for her, her work as a Marine led her to being stationed at Miramar Base here in San Diego, and after finishing her service in 2014, she decided to stay. Fortunately for us, she found Stellar Care a few months after her discharge, and her experience from working as an administrative specialist in the Marines was a nice bonus.

With her specialty, Amelia dealt with personnel payroll issues, travel vouchers, personal correspondences, and had to keep track of everyone coming in and out of the base. Her skillset has proved most relevant within the Stellar Community, to say the least.

Amelia has found her calling, and is currently going to school to study social work and become a licensed clinical social worker. When she isn't busy studying, working, or volunteering at Father Joe's Village, Amelia enjoys the outdoors, and has already taken camping trips to Sequoia and Yosemite National Park. She also managed to squeeze a wedding into her busy schedule, and got married in August!

We are thrilled to have her, and are excited to watch her continue to excel in her career.