



“My Life As I See It”

Morton “Morty” Pertiz

“I’m a very calm person...low key...I connect well with people.”

Morty Pertiz is a New Yorker through and through. But don't let his thick accent fool you. Behind the distinct intonation and rhythm of a speech developed while growing up in the mean streets of New York lies a gentle soul. A soft spoken intellectual who remembers a life full of good times and great opportunities.

“ I grew up in Jamaica, Queens. My father owned a newspaper stand on the street corner. He sold newspapers, candy....whatever you wanted. The weekends were always busy. People would go out to the theatre, pick up the papers and just hang out. It was a social thing back then. This was just before television became popular...I would sometimes help my father sell papers and hope none of the girls I knew from school would catch me working.”

Morty graduated from Jamaica High School and decided to further his education; eventually earning a degree in accounting by way of City College and Queens College. Morty enjoyed his life and career as a professional CPA and has no regrets about the career path he chose.

The life of a CPA for Morty started by working his way up through small firms to finally partnering with a major firm based in Manhattan. But no matter how big or small the account Morty always remained the same personable and charming person - ready to close the deal.

“I had a few staff members who were Indian. So when we would try and get clients from India I would order out from the local Indian restaurant and prepare a large meal for them while they were in town. At that time I had a secretary who was an amateur belly dancer and we would arrange the tables and chairs in the conference room so she could have a stage....and she would dance while the clients ate. I was always able to ingratiate myself to the client....Being a CPA was a good life. I got to travel. My wife (Susan) and I went to Russia, Italy...she kept me company. I had it very good.”

Susan was Morty's second wife and the two traveled the world together and raised 3 children between them.

Continued inside...

Celebrating March

Iditarod Begins
March 5

Daylight Saving Time Begins
March 13

St. Patrick’s Day
March 17

Easter
March 27

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

Miscellaneous Announcements

** Family Support Group meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month. Families are invited to join us in the Library on the first floor. your next visit.

We are Grateful...

for San Diego Facility Maintenance who is our partner in the Housekeeping department.

While we have the services of the dedicated staff who are here working every day to keep us looking and smelling great, David LaRoche and Kevin Maxwell are owners of SDFM who help to make it all happen in a smooth way. We value their services and are grateful for the partnership.

Thank you Dave and Kevin!

March Birthdays

In astrology, those born between March 1st and 20th are Pisces. These Fish are spiritual types who feel comfortable in their introspective natures. As passionate, romantic, creative dreamers, they are charitable helpers who “go with the flow.” Those born between March 21st and 31st are Rams of Aries. As the first sign of the zodiac, Arians charge out of the gate with energy, confidence, power, and zeal. As pioneers, Arians are unafraid of the unknown. For these eternal optimists, no odds are ever considered insurmountable.

- Florence C..... Mar. 2nd
- Sylvia R..... Mar. 3rd
- Neoma H..... Mar. 5th
- Teresa O..... Mar. 5th
- Edwin J..... Mar. 10th
- Jyoung Suk C..... Mar. 12th
- Edward B..... Mar. 13th
- Martha R..... Mar. 22nd
- Barbara D..... Mar. 24th



Congratulations, Stellar Care! March 1st, is the 8th Anniversary of our wonderful assisted living. During this time we have grown to be a successful and highly regarded business in San Diego. But for those of you who have found your way to 4518 54th Street, you know Stellar Care is much more than a successful company. We are “home” where “family” resides. And what a family we are! The Stellar Care family is made up of residents, residents’ family members, and staff. Interestingly, there are twelve employees, representing every department, who have been part of this community since the beginning. Here are some of their thoughts as they celebrate and reflect on eight years of memories and personal growth.



Lore Flores, Chef, is happy to work at Stellar Care. She smiles and shakes her head in amazement at how things have changed over the years. She recalls only having a kitchen crew of two, presently she manages over twenty five. The kitchen staff now serves each meal in four different settings, three times a day, paying close attention to special dietary needs. The meals are carefully prepared for food variety and proper nutrition. “But,” Lore points out laughing, “the residents are happiest when we occasionally serve hamburgers and hot dogs!”



“Working in the Activities Department, I have been blessed with the privilege of helping the men and women enjoy their lives at Stellar Care through daily participation and use of the facilities,” Luis Jackson shares. Luis continues, “For the last eight years, Linda Cho, through her dynamic leadership, has contributed immensely to the increased sophistication of our program by introducing age sensitive and cognition appropriate activities.”



“I feel the work I do every day makes a difference to the people we care for,” begins Annelie Damasco, Assisted Living Director. “I know, when I go home that I truly did something meaningful and important. The owners encourage me to grow and welcome my feedback and ideas. I am treated as an important member of the team and I feel I have a voice within the company. I am empowered to make decisions for the continued wellbeing of our residents and staff.” Annelie continues with emotion in her voice, “I am blessed to have such an amazing staff. Our caregivers are the most loving and compassionate people I know. They dedicate their time to caring for others and because of them, a difference is made in someone’s life, every day.”



Anita Solano, Reception, comments, “Has it been eight years already? My, how time flies when you love what you do every day. Families entrust us to make a positive difference in a loved one’s life, and to do this, is a blessing for me. Over the years, I’ve had the privilege to meet so many wonderful people, on a personal level, in our residents. They inspire me; everyone is special in their own way. Here they are not just residents, they are family. I’m honored to be able to work at a company that cares about the quality of life, not just of the residents and their families, but of the staff as well.”



Viviana Gonzalez, A.M. Caregiver replies, “For me, this is all about the residents. My time is most fulfilled when a lady is a little down and by assisting her, listening to her and being with her, I can make her feel beautiful and loved; this makes my day! And this is why I do what I do, for as long as I have.”



Maggie Castaneda, Caregiver Supervisor, and Lourdes Castaneda, Caregiver, are not only sisters but they married a set of brothers. Lourdes shares, “I love all the owners. They helped me, personally, through the most difficult period in my life. I was able to apply the skills I learned at Stellar Care, when it was time for me to care for my husband.”



Arturo Contreras, Maintenance Supervisor, acknowledges how quickly time passes while looking to the future with Stellar Care. Reflecting, he realizes how this success happens. “I am thankful to the Cho and Moore families for always being professional in their duties and having me be part of their team. Thank you for the support to all my coworkers and me. Congratulations, and I wish you continued prosperity for years to come.”

We come to Stellar Care for different reasons and have different roles but the experience is the same. We each find; pride in knowing that what you do makes a difference in someone’s life, joy in being part of a team, where each member has the same commitment and sense of purpose, and respect for and from the employers who have taken on this remarkable community called Stellar Care. Happy Anniversary, Linda, Chris, Barbara and Chris.

Susan O’Shaughnessy



...Continued from front page

“The kids are very smart.” Morty boasts. “They are all very even tempered.”

Not only did Susan and Morty have three children to raise, eventually they would share custody of a building.

“We bought a 5 story building near Central Park. The building was unique in that it had a small yard with a high fence, so nobody could see in...We would have barbeques and parties out there. One time we rented the yard to a private party who wanted to use it to host an event. I was standing in the kitchen and I look at out at the party and notice about 30 naked women walking around. They picked our yard because of the high walls. I didn't mind.”

When Morty wasn't traveling with Susan or “looking in” on his property he always made time for his other love, sports.

“During the Yankee's Spring training I would get seats next to the dugout and get to know the players. One time I was trying to get Joe DiMaggio's autograph and my wife turns to me and says, 'Are you infantile? Why do you want his autograph?' She didn't know who he was.” Morty shared with a smile. “I went in with some guys at work on season tickets to Madison Square Garden. One time we were at a game and I turned around in my seat and saw Donald Trump sitting a few rows back. I turned back around and thought to myself, *wow!, I have better seats than Donald Trump...We had a good life.*”

From selling newspapers on the street corner with his father to landing a partnership with a major CPA firm in Manhattan, Morty kept reassuring me that he has lived and continues to live a great life surrounded by positive memories, great friends, and family.

When I asked Morty if he, as an accountant, was ever put in a position in which he had to “work a little magic” for a client to hide some expenses, without hesitation he shared with me.

“If you came to me with a \$30,000 yacht you needed me to take care of...I could make it go away.”

Morty may be soft spoken, but underneath it all he's still a true New Yorker.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Karen Salileng

Once in a while, at Stellar Care, the directors have to pinch themselves to make sure they’re not dreaming to have such outstanding staff to work with. One great example of caregiving excellence comes from our nighttime (NOC shift) supervisor, Karen Salileng. Karen joined Stellar Care nearly a year and a half ago, shortly after immigrating to the US.

Born in the Philippines as the oldest of four, Karen was a natural born leader and very independent. She played basketball for her high school and college teams, and was also a bit of a bookworm. In 2002, her entire family moved to San Diego, but she chose to stick with her career in the Philippines, and for good reason. From 2000 until 2014 when she came to San Diego, Karen worked as a registered nurse. She was the charge nurse for a small hospital and worked in the operating room during the 1-2 weekly surgeries. Because of the hospital’s size, Karen took on whichever job needed doing, from delivering babies (more than she can count), to full surgeries.

Now that she is at Stellar Care, Karen says that she enjoys how similar the normal duties are to what she did in the Philippines, but does miss giving full medical care to patients. She is currently studying to become a Licensed Vocational Nurse, and then study some more to become a Registered Nurse (since her RN license cannot transfer over internationally).

On her free time, Karen likes to hike with her two daughters or facetime with her husband who is still in the Philippines. If all goes well, he will join her at the end of this year. After finishing her studies and schooling, Karen hopes to get back to traveling the world with her family (she is particularly fond of Korea), and in the meantime we are lucky and grateful to have her watching over our residents.

BINGO Fundraiser to support Alzheimer’s San Diego

Tuesday, March 29th at 6:30 p.m.
in the Conference Room
Join the fun as we raise funds for
Alzheimer’s San Diego

\$2/card * Play for Prizes * Last Game 50 / 50
For more information call Susan or Rachel