



## Chesterbrook Residences Spreads Cheer

Last Wednesday, there was a good deal of excitement on VHRC's campus. Several cars, with horns honking and balloons streaming, swung through the community.

This excitement was generated by staff from Chesterbrook Residences, an assisted living community just a few miles away on Westmoreland Street in McLean. The staff were participating in a CAREavan – a mash up of care and caravan – challenge. The goal of this "challenge" was to visit a retirement community or assisted living community to say thank you to the staff for the hard work they have done over the past several months.

"Chesterbrook Residences had a great time celebrating YOU. Thank you for all you do!" posted Chesterbrook's Marketing Director Kelly Halteh on VHRC's Facebook page.

"The message I really liked about this event is that we are all in this together," said Human Resources Director Winoka Clements. "We – the greater community – are in this together."



*Staff from Chesterbrook Residences swung through VHRC's campus last week to celebrate our staff.*

Several members of Chesterbrook's staff participated in the event, including their marketing director, activities coordinator, and their chef. In addition to sharing some goodwill and quite a few smiles, they gave staff in each building a box of goodies, including granola bars, candies, powdered juice mixes, and bags of chips.

Winoka said that VHRC is planning on reciprocating soon because "we could all use some extra thank yous and good wishes."

## A Mother's Gift

If you're looking for Silvia Fenton, you are likely to find her at her mother's sewing machine. "My mother taught me to sew when I was very young in Puerto Rico," she says. "She was a seamstress who sewed shirts, and she taught me how to sew buttons – that's how she got me started." After relocating to Brooklyn, New York, at age 10, Silvia and her family lived in a lot of homes. "I got used to moving, you just pick up and go. You don't get attached to furniture." The one thing that always went with them, though, was the sewing machine.

These days, Silvia sews masks for Vinson Hall – and quillows. What's a quillow? "It's a quilted blanket that folds into a pillow," she explains. "It's got a pocket and you can put your feet in there when you're watching TV." A friend at Binghamton State University, where Silvia worked in administration for 18 years, taught her how to make them, and after retiring she has sewn about 100 quillows. "It's very relaxing, because you're just sewing a straight line." She has done three during the pandemic and given them to friends and family, though by now "my own grandkids have had enough of these!"

Just three years ago, Silvia lost her mother at age 100. But her mother's approach to life still resonates with Silvia. "One of my mother's things was to look at the positive in every experience – it's there if you look hard enough." That attitude has enabled her find the positive even during the pandemic. "I've slowed down. I've had



*Silvia Fenton has been keeping busy during quarantine sewing masks and quillows.*

time to meet people. But most of all, to appreciate nature," says Silvia. "There's a variety of flowers on campus that I had never noticed before. And that Willow Oak is a highlight. I walk by every day and it's just a thrill."

### *The Campus Voice*

This publication is created for Vinson Hall Retirement Community in an effort to inform and delight. This publication is produced by the Office of Philanthropy and Engagement, but attempts to reflect the work and efforts of all VHRC residents and staff.

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