



## Helping seniors age safely in their own homes is a major growth trend in elder care nationally and is one of McGregor's top priorities.



Helping seniors age safely in their own homes is a major growth trend in elder care nationally and is also one of McGregor's top priorities. In a recent study by the Center for Community Solutions, a stunning 97% of participants reported being satisfied with the PACE program.

"We are really proud of that number," adds Conn. "We work hard to keep it there."

The study found that participants in PACE enjoy improved health outcomes, including fewer emergency room visits, fewer days in the hospital and delays in nursing home admissions — all while remaining in their own homes. Seniors can also go to one of three health centers for social activities, meals and medical services.

PACE provides a variety of non-medical services, including home-delivered meals and transportation.

McGregor is currently the only provider of the national PACE program in Ohio serving 49 cities in Cuyahoga County. But, it is working to change that. Its team is currently part of a

coalition working with the Ohio Legislature to secure \$50 million in federal funds to expand PACE to other high-need populations throughout the state.

A robust workforce is crucial for providing all of these services and building the pipeline of health care workers is another priority for Conn and her team. A challenging task under normal circumstances, she says that health care worker recruitment was especially difficult during COVID-19. So, McGregor established an Earn and Learn training program in concert with other home care providers.

"Our entire industry has a shortage of caregivers," explains Conn. "This is a good way to remove a barrier and get folks interested in serving older adults, and hopefully help them in their career paths."

Advancing workforce development in health care is also one of the priorities of the McGregor Foundation. Established in 2002, the foundation has made 639 grants to 138 organizations, contributing a total of \$16.6 million — or nearly \$1 million annually — back into the community.

Susan Althans, director of philanthropy and secretary to the board, says that the board established the foundation in 2002 to extend McGregor's impact out into the community. She emphasizes

that the need for this funding is great because McGregor is one of the few foundations in Greater Cleveland that funds senior-serving organizations.

"The pie is only so large," she says. "All are worthy causes, but we are only one of three funders in Cleveland making grants in support of older adults."

In addition to workforce development, the foundation's priorities include affordable housing and enhancing the quality of life for seniors with things like art and recreation.

To that end, some innovative projects have been funded. One recent grant is helping to tackle the digital divide among seniors by providing internet devices to local senior centers. This Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association program brings a welcome distraction from the isolation that was especially pronounced during the pandemic.

The foundation also supports community development organizations with grants to help seniors with repairs in their homes, which enable them to remain there safely.

"Something as simple as installing a grab bar in the tub, making repairs to the front steps or replacing locks on doors really can improve day-to-day life," adds Althans. ■



Left to right: Susan Althans, Ann Conn and Lee Ann O'Brien