Mission Statement: NCAL’s mission is to lead the assisted living profession through public policy advocacy, knowledge, education and professional development.

Vision Statement: NCAL is dedicated to promoting high quality, principle-driven assisted living care and services with a steadfast commitment to excellence, innovation and the advancement of person-centered care.

The National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) is the assisted living voice of the American Health Care Association (AHCA). NCAL is dedicated to serving the needs of the assisted living community through national advocacy, education, networking, professional development, and quality initiatives. NCAL’s proactive, national focus on assisted living legislation and regulation is backed by the strongest and most influential long term care advocacy team in the country. NCAL members know that their voices will be heard by the national policy makers and regulators who continually seek to influence the future of assisted living.

In addition to national advocacy, NCAL supports state-specific advocacy efforts through its national federation of state affiliates. NCAL state affiliates work to create local education, advocate on behalf of assisted living providers, and provide the direct, ongoing support their assisted living members need to improve quality, serve their residents and grow their businesses.
NCAL Board of Directors 2009-2010

Bottom Row: Steve Ackerson, Michael Shepard, Patricia Giorgio, Nicolette Merino, Ned Pruitt, Jr., Howie Groff  Middle Row: David Kyllo, NCAL Executive Director, Kristin West, Dean Solden, Ashley Blankenship, Marcia Dooner, Jan Thayer, Cindy Luxem  Top Row: Jeff Hyatt, Joe Perkin, Jim Birchem, Brett Waters, Christian Mason, Brad Klitsch  Not Pictured: Deb Choma, Vickie Cox, Edie Gerelli, Marj Shell, Bob Van Dyk

Nicolette Merino- Oregon  Chair, NCAL Board of Directors
Michael Shepard- Arkansas  Vice Chair, NCAL Board of Directors  Chair, Finance and Policy Committee
Patricia Giorgio- Iowa  Secretary/Treasurer, NCAL Board of Directors  Chair, Quality Committee
Howie Groff- Minnesota  Immediate Past Chair, NCAL Board of Directors
Robert Van Dyk- New Jersey  Chair, AHCA Board of Governors
Neill Pruitt, Jr.- Georgia  Vice Chair-AHCA Board of Governors
Steve Ackerson- Iowa  ASHCAE Vice President
Jim Birchem- Minnesota
Ashley Blankenship- Arkansas
Deb Choma- Vermont
Vickie Cox- Delaware
Marcia Dooner- Minnesota
Edie Gerelli- New Jersey
Jeffrey Hyatt- Washington
Brad Klitsch- Wisconsin  ABM Representative
Cindy Luxem- Kansas  ASHCAE Representative
Christian Mason- Oregon
Joe Perkin- Kansas  Chair, Business Development Committee
Marj Shell- Indiana
Dean Solden- Michigan
Jan Thayer- Nebraska
Brett Waters- Idaho  Chair, Customer Relations Committee
Kristin West- Ohio
Letter from NCAL’s Chair

Dear NCAL Members:

As your chair, I am proud to present NCAL’s 2010 Annual Report, “Your Assisted Living Voice: Achieving Results.”

Your voice helped NCAL achieve a huge legislative victory this year. The landmark health care reform law contains a provision that eliminates Medicare Part D co-payments to most low-income beneficiaries in assisted living and other non-institutional settings.

NCAL has championed this issue for four years. We sent a powerful message to Congress by sending 18,000 letters to representatives through our online Legislative Action Center. This is an example of the power that is generated when you participate in our member advocacy programs, which encourages interactions with members of Congress. The programs are highlighted in the report.

In 2010, members hosted legislators on tours of their communities, participated in fundraisers and the AHCA/NCAL Political Action Committee, attended Congressional Briefing or NCAL State Leader program, and participated in NCAL’s online Legislative Advocacy Center. Others went to rallies when the AHCA/NCAL Driving for Quality RV tour made a stop nearby.

You also helped strengthen our advocacy efforts by participating in NCAL’s Performance Measurement Initiative. This ground-breaking initiative produced national reports that show consumers, policy makers and regulators alike that performance excellence is important to you and ultimately your residents. It also established a benchmark for future analysis.

In November, the country will hold mid-term elections. Congressional seats will change. Our challenge remains to educate members of Congress about assisted living and our commitment to quality. NCAL gives us the tools and resources to help us make sure that Congress continues to listen.

Best regards,

Nicolette Merino
NCAL Chair
2009-2010
**Finance & Policy**

NCAL’s Finance and Policy committee directs the development of policy and advocacy efforts. NCAL actively worked to monitor congressional as well as regulatory activity. In many instances, NCAL, along with AHCA, lobbied on issues affecting both assisted living and nursing facilities.

**Medicare Part D Co-Pay – A Victory for Assisted Living Residents!**

The landmark health care reform law—the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)—contains Section 3309 that eliminates Medicare Part D co-pays for about 60 percent of the low-income seniors receiving assisted living services under Medicaid waivers. Passage of the Medicare Part D co-pay provision culminated a four-year effort spearheaded by NCAL that included the creation of a coalition of 40 national stakeholder organizations. The law eliminated Part D cost sharing for dual eligibles—individuals eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid—covered under Medicaid or Sec. 1115 waivers, Medicaid managed care plans, and the Sec. 1915 (i) state plan amendment.

However as written, Section 3309 states that the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) can eliminate the Part D co-payments no earlier than Jan. 1, 2012, but does not specify a deadline for implementation. During the 2010 Congressional Briefing and NCAL’s State Leader Conference, NCAL members asked members of Congress to urge HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to implement Section 3309 by the earliest date possible—Jan. 1, 2012.

NCAL continued its efforts to get co-pay relief for the 40 percent of the dual eligibles not covered under Sec. 3309. Working with its coalition partners, NCAL developed language for legislation that will be introduced to eliminate Medicare Part D cost sharing for states not covered by PPACA.

**Extension of Federal Medical Assistance – Another Victory for Residents!**

When House Speaker Nancy Pelosi interrupted members’ recess in early August for a special session to vote on a legislative package that included $16 billion in enhanced federal Medicaid payments, NCAL and AHCA had been working for months to secure additional Medicaid funds for long term care. The legislation passed by the House and immediately signed into law by President Obama contained the six-month Federal Medical Assistance Percentage extension that states had to apply for by Sept. 24, 2010.

Beginning in May, NCAL and AHCA vigorously lobbied members of Congress to extend the enhanced Medicaid payments. The funds were originally passed as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 but were set to expire Dec. 31, 2010. Forty-five states have assisted living programs for individuals needing Medicaid serving more than 130,000 individuals.

A massive grassroots effort was undertaken that enlisted members help at the 2010 AHCA/NCAL Congressional Briefing and through a 60-city, 40-state cross country RV tour called Driving for Quality Care. Central to the tour was a petition asking congress, governors and state legislatures to adequately fund Medicaid in order to preserve long term care services.

AHCA/NCAL members sent 83,000 letters asking for the additional Medicaid funds through the online Legislative Action Center. The RV tour generated thousands of signatures on the petition and hundreds of media reports.

**Health Care Reform**

While many of the details of this landmark 2,200-page law are still to be determined, various federal agencies issued guidance implementing the new law. To keep up with developments, AHCA/NCAL created the
FINANCE & POLICY CONTINUED...

Health Care Reform Web Resource Center, which appears on NCAL’s home page. The site provides analysis, issue-based materials, and a timeline of relevant effective dates. It is updated when AHCA/NCAL staff complete new reports.

A major concern to providers is the health care reform law’s employer insurance mandates. Although the provisions do not take effect until 2014, NCAL Senior Policy Director Karl Polzer led the AHCA/NCAL work group that analyzed the potential financial impacts of the health care coverage expansion on assisted living and nursing facilities. A significant finding of the analysis is that when the law takes effect in 2014, there may be financial impacts for providers, especially providers relying on government reimbursement. To read the entire paper, visit the NCAL.org and click on Health Care Reform Resource icon.

Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act (CLASS Act)

PPACA also established the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act (CLASS Act). The CLASS Act develops a new federal government program that offers a cash benefit for long term care services and support to participants. Employee participation is voluntary. Premiums would be paid through voluntary payroll deductions and workers would be vested after five years of contributing.

Both NCAL and AHCA supported inclusion of the CLASS Act in the health reform package. NCAL staff coordinated an educational meeting with Connie Garner, a Congressional staff member who was a principal architect of the CLASS Act, to begin addressing implementation issues.

ANTI-ARBITRATION BILLS

NCAL continued its opposition to legislation that would ban the use of pre-dispute arbitration agreements between consumers and assisted living communities.

The House Judiciary Committee placed the Fairness in Nursing Home Arbitration Act (H.R. 1237) and the Arbitration Fairness Act (HR 1020) on their scheduled mark-up agenda on June 23, 2010. Although time did not permit the Committee to mark up this legislation, NCAL, along with AHCA, sent a letter to every member of the House Judiciary Committee expressing opposition to both arbitration bills. The Fairness in Nursing Home Arbitration Act would prohibit the use and enforcement of pre-dispute arbitration agreements in all long term care settings, including nursing facilities and assisted living communities.

AHCA/NCAL strongly supports the use of arbitration as a reasonable option for residents and providers seeking timely and appropriate resolution of legal disputes.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT RULES

NCAL contributed to testimony for a U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging listening session on “The War on Drugs vs. The War on Pain: Nursing Home Patients Caught in the Crossfire.” The Senate session is part of an ongoing drive to change current Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) rules that inhibit long term care residents’ timely access to needed pain medications. At the core of this issue is the DEA’s failure to recognize long term care nurses as “agents of the prescriber.” NCAL spoke with a number of assisted living clinicians and many said timely access to Class II narcotics was a problem for their residents.

Advocacy – The Key to Being Heard

NCAL members are the most effective “grassroots lobbyists” because they provide the Senators and Representatives with local insight and personal expertise about assisted living issues. In the eyes of a Member of Congress, the NCAL member is a constituent and a catalyst for an elected official to care about an issue.

NCAL State Leader Program

In July, NCAL State Leaders from 18 states conducted 45 meetings with Senators, Representatives, or their staff asking them to pass an extension of additional FMAP funds and to send a letter to the HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to implement the Medicare Part D Copayment provision (Sect. 3309 of PPACA) on Jan. 1, 2012.

This is the second year of the two-day program, which is now an annual event in Washington, D.C. State Leaders were energized by a jam-packed agenda filled with information sessions on NCAL’s advocacy and quality programs, leadership training, and networking. NCAL State Leaders set professional goals for themselves, their work with their NCAL state affiliate, and NCAL. Association staff educated leaders on the do’s and don’ts of lobbying, how to conduct meetings with representatives, and how to express the legislative asks.

Some leaders were able to enjoy a tour of the Library of Congress in between their meetings with Congressional representatives. State Leader feedback was overwhelming positive, as was feedback from the Senators, Representatives and Hill staff members that met with them.

AHCA/NCAL’s Congressional Briefing

In June, the AHCA/NCAL 2010 Congressional Briefing was attended by more than 400 people. NCAL held an assisted living specific briefing for members so that attendees were armed with the messages they needed to deliver on Capitol Hill. During the NCAL Briefing, staff described NCAL’s initiative to get HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to implement a provision of the health care reform law that eliminates copayments of dual eligibles in non-institutional setting on Jan 1, 2012, the earliest date possible under the law.

Political Action Committee

NCAL’s Board of Directors continues to be the first national association governing board to reach 100 percent participation in the AHCA/NCAL Political Action Committee (PAC). PAC participation provides NCAL members with greater access to key policymakers in Washington, D.C.
COMMUNITY TOURS

NCAL’s ongoing advocacy program supports members as they work through the process of inviting and hosting Members of Congress on tours of their assisted living communities. Here are some examples of tours.

In South Burlington, Vt., Deborah Lemery, administrator for Pillsbury Manor at Allenwood, hosted Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.). Welch’s visit occurred on the day after health care reform was passed. He helped residents understand how the law would impact them.

In Edina, Minn., Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Minn.) visited the Parkinson’s Specialty Care Residence, an assisted living community for people with Parkinson’s disease. The congressman toured the residence guided by Operations Director Sandee Horton. Rep. Paulsen was urged by Pattie Cullen, president and chief executive officer of Care Providers of Minnesota to extend the enhanced federal Medicaid payments to states among other long term care issues.

WEBSITE ADVOCACY

NCAL makes it easy for members to participate in online advocacy through its Legislative Action Center. The Legislative Action Center provides the latest information about legislation and policy pertaining to long term care. Visitors to the site simply enter their home zip code and the Legislative Action Center matches the Representatives and Senators to the zip code with a prewritten letter that is sent to members of Congress via email. This year, NCAL members sent more than 18,000 letters asking their federal representatives to support passage of Medicaid Part D Co-payment legislation. Visit NCAL.org and click on “Advocacy.”

NCAL IN THE NEWS

NCAL works with national and trade media organizations throughout the year to support its policy goals. During the past year, NCAL has worked with the Miami Herald, the Des Moines Register, the New York Times “New Old Age” blog, Knoxville News, McKnight’s Long Term Care, Long Term Living, Inside CMS, and others.

Advocacy – The Key to Being Heard continued...

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POLICY RESEARCH

NCAL’S ASSISTED LIVING STATE REGULATORY REVIEW
NCAL released the 2010 edition of its Assisted Living State Regulatory Review and an analysis of state assisted living regulatory and policy trends in March. It is the only annual national report that provides comprehensive summaries of assisted living regulations in 50 states and the District of Columbia across 21 categories. The report is utilized by policymakers, consumers, providers, researchers, stakeholder groups, and media. The report and analysis are available at NCAL.org.

MEDICAID STATE RATE STUDY
NCAL released its national study of state assisted living Medicaid rates, payment methodologies, and related issues in October 2009. The report, conducted by nationally recognized policy researcher Robert Mollica, received praise from many quarters and provided essential data for NCAL’s advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill and with federal regulatory agencies. Major findings included growth in the number of Medicaid recipients living in assisted living communities nationally and that state payments for room and board are typically far below provider costs. NCAL staff presented the findings at the AHCA/NCAL 60th Annual Convention and Exposition, the Center for Excellence in Assisted Living’s Advisory Group, the Gerontological Society of America’s convention, NCAL state affiliate meetings, and several national policy discussion groups.

NCAL used this report to respond to an issue brief released by the National Senior Citizens Law Center, a consumer advocacy group, which called for greater federal regulation of assisted living and a ban on family supplementation for Medicaid room and board payments. The report is available at NCAL.org.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

THE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN ASSISTED LIVING
NCAL was actively involved in the development of the Center for Excellence in Assisted Living (CEAL) research paper titled, “Person Centered Care in Assisted Living: An Informational Guide,” available at TheCEAL.org.

At its fifth anniversary event, CEAL recognized NCAL member Gateway Senior Living, Lincoln, Neb. with a Promoting Excellence in Assisted Living Award for its innovative workforce campaign. Gateway Senior Living designed a comprehensive campaign called “Mission Retention” to improve its employee satisfaction and retention levels.

LIFE SAFETY ISSUES
NCAL life safety consultant Thomas Jaeger continued work with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to update standards applying to existing large assisted living facilities. If finalized, the recommended changes will help existing large communities subject to the Life Safety Code stay within standards when the evacuation capacity of their residents decreases. Jaeger also worked on recommendations for the International Building Code for new construction to address concerns about decreased resident ability and to harmonize the two major building codes impacting life safety standards in assisted living communities.

LONG TERM QUALITY ALLIANCE (LTQA)
Dave Kyllo, NCAL’s executive director, was appointed to the Quality Performance Indicator Task Force of LTQA. The LTQA mission is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of care and the quality of life of people receiving long term services and supports by fostering person- and family-centered quality measurement through the advancement of innovative best practices.

LONG TERM CARE DISCUSSION GROUP
The Long Term Care Discussion Group named NCAL Senior Policy Director Karl Polzer its newest co-chair. The group holds a meeting once a month on a research or policy topic. The group is organized solely for the purpose of educating the policy community in Washington, DC about all facets of long term care.
WORK WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES

National Survey of Residential Care Facilities
NCAL worked with the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) on the National Survey of Residential Care Facilities. NCHS collected data in order to develop a national picture of assisted living and residential care communities, the characteristics of the people who live in these communities, and the range of services provided to the residents.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
NCAL is actively involved in Phase II of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality’s Assisted Living Disclosure Collaborative. Many NCAL members have participated in the review of the provider survey. NCAL is grateful for their willingness to participate and thanks these members for their contributions.

U.S. Census Bureau
NCAL worked with the U.S. Census Bureau to educate members about procedures for counting individuals in assisted living for the 2010 Census. These census procedures were published in NCAL’s publications, NCAL Connections and NCAL FOCUS as well as on its website NCAL.org.

Department of Labor
AHCA/NCAL contributed to the development of the U.S. Department of Labor-Employment Training Administration competency model initiative which will establish models for a wide array of functions including communicating the profession’s workforce knowledge and skill requirements more articulately; workforce planning and labor analysis; apprenticeships; human resources services; curriculum evaluation, planning, and development; certification, licensure, and assessment development; and others.

Environmental Protection Agency
Working with the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) ENERGY STAR® program and other long term care associations, NCAL educated and promoted member participation in the Senior Care Communities energy benchmarking survey, which was completed in January. The data gathered by the EPA will help communities determine their energy efficiency and save money.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
NCAL continued working to protect the ability of assisting living providers to participate in the Medicaid program as Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is considering defining what may qualify as a Medicaid home- and community-based setting for the first time. NCAL believes it is critical to maintain assisted living settings as a choice under Medicaid waiver services.

Veterans Administration
NCAL contacted the Veterans Administration (VA) to discuss expanding ways that assisted living communities can meet the needs of veterans and their family members. Meetings with VA officials in January and March included discussion of a VA program to organize care for veterans in group homes, the VA’s pilot program to provide assisted living services for veterans with traumatic brain injuries, and ways to provide services to veterans with low and modest incomes.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
During 2010, NCAL, along with AHCA, submitted comments on the following topics: Hazard Communication Standard, Musculoskeletal Disorders column on OSHA 300 Log, Injury and Illness Data collection, Infectious Disease Prevention, and Bloodborne Pathogens Standard.
Leading the Profession in Performance Measurement

In February 2010, NCAL launched its Performance Measurement Initiative, under its Advocating Care Excellence banner. The Performance Measurement Initiative consists of evaluation tools that assisted living providers can use to provide meaningful data to consumers and state and federal policy makers.

This initiative demonstrates the profession’s commitment to delivering high quality person-centered care to residents.

During 2010, the Performance Measurement Initiative contained two different surveys. The first survey was the NCAL Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover (VRT) survey. The second survey was the Performance Measures survey. The NCAL Workforce Committee developed the VRT survey and the NCAL Quality committee developed the Performance Measures survey. (For details about the VRT survey, see the Workforce section of this report on page 13.)

Performance Measures Survey

The Performance Measures survey asked survey respondents’ questions about how they evaluate the quality of their operations on nine different performance measures.

The nine areas are:

- Resident satisfaction and family satisfaction;
- Employee satisfaction;
- Resident census or occupancy rate;
- Use of Resident Councils;
- Use of Family Councils;
- Use of mission and vision statements;
- Implementation of safety programs;
- Criminal background checks for all staff;
- Level of nurse availability; and
- Measurement of staff retention. (This tenth measure: staff retention was addressed by the employee vacancy and retention survey directed by NCAL’s Workforce Committee. See Workforce section of this report on page 13.)

NCAL analyzed the results and produced a report that was made available at the 61st AHCA/NCAL Annual Conference & Expo in Long Beach, Calif. In addition, NCAL’s Quality Committee began work on the development of a second tier of performance measures this year.

Joint Quality Initiative

NCAL continued its strategic quality partnership with My InnerView (MIV). NCAL encouraged member participation to build a precedent-setting national database that can show resident, family member, and employee satisfaction levels in assisted living. Nearly 800 NCAL members participated in measuring their performance through MIV in 2010.

MIV and NCAL hosted several complimentary webinars that explained how to use satisfaction data. Webinars were held throughout 2010 on the following topics: “Best Practices for Using Satisfaction Survey Results,” “Where Do We Begin?” “Encouraging Employee Commitment,” and “How to Use Satisfaction Stories To Improve Residents Lives.”
Quality Initiatives

The NCAL Quality Committee is committed to promoting quality and performance excellence in the assisted living profession. NCAL is leading the profession by developing groundbreaking tools that raise the bar for resident satisfaction, quality of life and improved operations. In 2010, the Committee produced tools for members that were added to NCAL’s extensive library of quality information and resources.

Guiding Principles on Dementia Care

NCAL released the fifth in its series of Guiding Principles titled, “Guiding Principles for Dementia Care in Assisted Living.” This new set of guiding principles helps assisted living providers develop care processes that incorporate the complexities involved in caring for residents with Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia. It explores aspects of care including evaluating residents, detecting depression, conducting pain evaluation and management, developing new staff education programs and expanding those programs, designing person-centered care approaches, creating life enrichment programming, and enhancing the environmental design of an assisted living community. All five sets of Guiding Principles are available on NCAL.org.

Better Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Population

NCAL’s Quality Committee published the training tool titled, “Better Serving the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Populations in Assisted Living Communities.” The education tool conveys the basic principles of person centered caring, respect and the need for cultural understanding for the LGBT population. Treatment of LGBT residents in health care settings garnered increased attention from various national consumer groups. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services established a national resource center to help older LGBT individuals. The PowerPoint is posted on NCAL’s website as a “members-only” training tool.

Caregiver Guides

Shelley Sabo, NCAL’s Director of Workforce and Quality Improvement, represented NCAL’s Quality Committee in the development of two American Medical Directors Association publications. One guide explained the guidelines on diabetes management and care. The second publication contained protocols for caregivers to follow regarding a resident’s change in condition.

The 2010 Quality Award Winners

The AHCA/NCAL National Quality Awards program recognized a total of 501 long term and post acute care providers with a 2010 National Quality Award. Twenty-two NCAL members earned a Bronze or Silver recognition. The National Quality Awards Program was established in 1996 and is based on the core values and criteria of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program. It provides a pathway for providers of long term care to follow for performance excellence. The winners were recognized at the National Quality Award Recipient Reception at the 61st AHCA/NCAL Annual Convention & Expo in Long Beach, Calif.
STRENGTHENING THE WORKFORCE

NCAL’s Workforce Committee is committed to identifying, developing or providing tools and resources to NCAL members that improve and assist with workforce retention and recruitment. Some of the committee’s accomplishments this year include:

VACANCY, RETENTION, AND TURNOVER SURVEY
NCAL launched the first profession-wide survey on employee vacancy, retention and turnover, rates in assisted living as part of its Performance Measurement Initiative. In order to produce profession-wide benchmarks that were statistically reliable, NCAL obtained the participation of three other national assisted living organizations in the survey. As a result, AHCA/NCAL’s research staff analyzed the collected data and produced a report that was released at the 2010 NCAL Day and the 61st AHCA/NCAL Annual Convention & Expo in Long Beach, Calif.

NCAL AWARDS
NCAL’s national awards program recognizes the exemplary work of members’ employees in four categories. In 2010, NCAL added a new award category—the Assisted Living Nurse of the Year Award. The other awards include, the Noble Caregiver in Assisted Living of the Year, Administrator of the Year Award, and the National Assisted Living Week Programming Award. This 2010 award winners are:

Administrator of the Year
Sue Brown, director/operator,
Vintage Park at Baldwin City, Skilled Healthcare,
Baldwin, Kan.

Noble Caregiver in Assisted Living
Benjamin Sheard, Jr., building services director,
The Chelsea at Tinton Falls, Chelsea Senior Living
Tinton Falls, N.J.

Assisted Living Nurse of the Year
Mary Sondergaard, resident care director,
Heritage at Clara Barton, Genesis HealthCare,
Edison, N.J.

National Assisted Living Week Programming Award
For 2009 Theme, Traditions of the Heart,
Park Place Estates, Le Mars, Iowa,
Activity Director, Michelle Ten Napel

Residents in Avamere at Hillsboro, Ore., community playing bingo.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH CARE ASSISTANTS
The Workforce Committee identified the National Association of Health Care Assistants (NAHCA), Joplin, Mo., as a leading resource for members interested in offering employees benefits that increase staff retention and workforce satisfaction. NAHCA membership offers frontline caregivers online educational development and certification, affordable insurance plans, and social assistance with family issues. In late 2009, NCAL established a collaborative with NAHCA and promoted the collaboration through its state affiliates. Enrollment is on a community basis and covers every caregiver in an assisted living community. This year, NAHCA launched its online course of study for certified nurse assistants meant to inspire while educating.

AMERICAN ASSISTED LIVING NURSES ASSOCIATION
NCAL also promotes membership in the American Assisted Living Nurses Association (AALNA), and participation in AALNA programs and its annual convention. Visit ALNursing.org
MEMBERSHIP SERVICES & EDUCATION

NCAL DAY
NCAL develops a day-long education program focused solely on assisted living providers. NCAL Day began in 2007 and has now become a must-attend event for providers around the country. In October 2009, more than 180 people participated in the third annual NCAL Day held at McCormick Place in Chicago. The event kicked off with keynote speaker Ken Schmidt, a branding consultant that formerly worked for Harley Davidson. Schmidt inspired the audience with his anecdotes about how the famed American motorcycle company made a come back from the brink of bankruptcy by paying attention to the customer and making them feel important. First impressions and driving census through effective management were also featured topics of presentations at NCAL Day.

In January 2010, NCAL’s Professional Development workgroup developed a two-track curriculum for the 2010 NCAL Day and the assisted living track for the 61st Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention. Attendees at 2010 NCAL Day chose from sessions focused on Operations or Workforce topics.

NATIONAL ASSISTED LIVING WEEK®
As the founding organization of National Assisted Living Week (NALW), NCAL each year develops a theme, a logo and creates a planning guide/product catalog.

For 2010, NCAL unveiled the theme of “Living Life” along with a vibrant logo, a modernized flower in blues and greens. More than 9,000, 2010 National Assisted Living Week Planning Guide and Product Catalogs were mailed to communities interested in celebrating the week. NCAL also established a presence on the Facebook for the first time in 2010. The site promotes the exchange of ideas and also promotes the posting of photographs that portray assisted living residents in a positive light.

NCAL.ORG ENHANCEMENTS
NCAL’s redesigned Web site is the go-to resource for assisted living provider around the country. The information is easy to find, easy to understand, and comprehensive. The redesign, however, was just the beginning. As the only place to get nearly all of NCAL’s resources, the site will continually be improved in 2010 and beyond. New content, better organization of tools, resources, and news, and esthetic improvements are in the works so NCAL encourages members to visit often and discover all that NCAL has to offer.

NCAL CONNECTIONS
In April, NCAL introduced a redesigned NCAL Connections that permitted members using handheld devices to read a mobile version of the e-newsletter. Simultaneously, NCAL began issuing the newsletter on a weekly basis to make sure members received the most up-to-date information. The redesign, which includes NCAL’s branding, is easier to read and navigate.

NCAL PUBLICATIONS WIN AGAIN!
NCAL earned two 2010 National Mature Media Awards. NCAL’s 2009 National Assisted Living Week’s “Traditions of the Heart” Planning Guide and Product Catalog received a Bronze Award in the Special Event Marketing Communications category. The organization also recognized NCAL’s brochure, “Practices in Excellence: Preparing Residents to Move Out of Assisted Living Residences,” with a Merit award. The National Mature Media Awards program is administered by the Mature Market Research Center, a clearinghouse that recognizes the nation’s best in advertising, marketing, and educational materials designed for seniors.
Reaching Out to Customers

NCAL’s Customer Relations Committee develops and promotes tools that support positive consumer experiences and perceptions of assisted living. The following are tools and resources released in 2010.

Training Staff About Preparing Residents for Moving Out
NCAL Customer Relations Committee developed a fully-scripted PowerPoint training tool titled, “Preparing Residents to Move Out: Employee Training.” The tool is based on the NCAL brochure, “Practices in Excellence: Preparing Residents to Move Out of Assisted Living Residences.” Since major life changes can have negative consequences for a resident, training that educates staff can minimize the effects of a move from an assisted living community to another setting.

Reducing Legal Risks of Social Media & Technology Webinar
NCAL hosted a Webinar in April titled, “Minimizing the Legal Risks of Social Technology in Assisted Living.” Brian Purtell, Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living’s executive director, and an attorney, explained the legal risks of not implementing an employee policy that guides employees’ use of social media and technology during and after work hours. Participants were provided sample templates of policies and tips on how to protect the privacy of residents and fellow employees. This Webinar is available for replay through NCAL.org.

Media Guide for Assisted Living Communities
NCAL developed a media guide to help assisted living communities interact with media and earn positive media exposure, maintain good relationships with local media outlets, and explain how to respond to media during a crisis. One chapter is devoted to interviews, which includes sections explaining what questions to expect, how to develop answers, different types of reporter encounters, and what to wear on camera. The final chapter is dedicated to the newest form of public relations—social media.
NCAL is dedicated to promoting high quality, principle-driven assisted living care and services with a steadfast commitment to excellence, innovation and the advancement of person-centered care.