



For Immediate Release

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Wichita State University and Larksfeld Place Formalize Alliance and Announce New Collaboration Channels

WICHITA, Kan., April 7, 2010 – Wichita State University and Larksfeld Place today announced the formalization and expansion of their long-standing partnership. Donald Beggs, WSU president, and Valerie McGhee, Larksfeld Place Retirement Communities Inc. president, gave details on the future of their organizations' 20-year partnership at today's signing ceremony held at Larksfeld Place.

This continuing alliance will provide new research opportunities for WSU faculty and students as well as additional resources for Larksfeld Place community members. A formal agreement between a university and a continuing care retirement community or other long-term care organization is a relatively new but rapidly emerging set of arrangements in the United States, according to Beggs.

“People 65 and better in Kansas—and across the country—have benefited from these past joint research and demonstration projects, such as enhancing the functional fitness and driving abilities of older adults,” said McGhee, whose organization has received two national awards for past efforts. “Wichita State faculty and Larksfeld Place staff have shared that knowledge at universities such as Harvard and as far away as Australia.”

Positive examples of the long-running partnership include the hundreds of graduates from the WSU physical therapy and nursing programs who have done part of their clinical training at Larksfeld Place and took with them the vision of what positive aging can be. These graduates are now putting that knowledge into practice and doing an even better job of caring for their older clients because of their WSU/Larksfeld Place training.

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Central to the future plans of this alliance is the WSU Regional Institute on Aging. Teresa Radebaugh, WSU Regional Institute on Aging director and a member of the Larksfield Place board, said, "This collaboration and cooperation benefits Wichita State and Larksfield Place in the advancement of research and programs designed to enhance the lives of older Kansans."

Through this relationship, the parties hope to develop further opportunities for greater cooperation including:

- Increasing communication for LP residents on activities and events at WSU;
- Sponsoring joint events for LP residents and employees and WSU faculty, students and staff;
- Publicizing and highlighting the relationship between LP and WSU;
- Continuing cooperation in clinical training opportunities and preceptorships for WSU students and developing research programs for WSU faculty at LP; and
- Planning workshops and conferences on issues important to older Kansans.

The Alliance: A History of Excellence

WSU and Larksfield Place have worked together since the inception of Larksfield Place in 1988. During that time, Larksfield Place has received national recognition as a leader in senior housing and as an innovator in programs and services designed to enhance the lives of older Kansans. Many of the awards have been for joint ventures with the university.

McGhee concluded, "We see a lot of black and gold here – about one-third of our current or former Larksfield Place community members and employees are WSU alumni, employees, faculty or supporters."

About Larksfield Place – Wichita's Premier Not-for-Profit, Full-Service Retirement Community

Located just off of Rock Road on 29th Street, the lakes and open vistas of the Larksfield Place 60-acre campus capture the spirit of the open plains in an urban environment. For more information, log onto www.larksfieldplace.org.

About WSU

As Kansas' only urban-serving research state university, Wichita State University can offer things the others can't. By combining a traditional college atmosphere with the endless possibilities of the state's biggest city, Wichita State is the only school in Kansas that can provide an educational experience that goes beyond the limits of a typical college town. For more information, go to www.wichita.edu.