

The Blossom Bulletin

September & October 2021

The Biggest Change

A Conversation with Al Gauvin

In case you haven't noticed, CCOR | Companion Care of Rochester has undergone a major change. We have rebranded and are now Blossom: Modern Home Care Solution of Western New York.

In light of this recent change, we sat down with founder Al Gauvin for a candid conversation.

Here's what was said:

 **Blossom:** Thanks for stopping by today, Al. So, the company has undergone a major change, brand-wise...

Al Gauvin: It's the biggest change, period! Since the inception of the company!

 Definitely. The biggest change since the inception of the company. We agree. So, how do you feel about saying goodbye to the name "Companion Care of Rochester?"

AG: I would be lying if I said I didn't have mixed emotions about losing the heritage, the name, the brand. But I'm also bright enough to understand that "Companion Care of Rochester" worked for a number of years, but over the course of the last 5-10 years, we've added so many more services for people, we've gone to so many more locations outside of



Rochester that it probably lost its allure somewhere along the way. But that being said, it's like sending your first kid off to kindergarten.

 How do you feel about the change, the rebrand we just went through?

AG: It's all progression. It's like everything else in the world. People grow up. People change. People move on. Certainly, the ideas of a seventy-year-old are far different than what is in today's marketplace. The market that we currently reside in is drastically different than what it was in 1997 and even in the early 2000s.

 How would you say the market is different now than it was then?

AG: Well, first of all, we're now taking care of children. We're taking care of the homeless. We're taking care of a lot more mental illness than we did historically. The way that the state treats people in general, in terms of the services, has changed. Luckily, we've been able to anticipate most of those changes, and we've changed with them.

The reality is that although there is sense of pride and

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Blossom Bulletin Board

Welcome to Blossom!

Josh Blancke, CDPAP Coordinator
Margie Sepulveda, CDPAP Enrollment Coordinator
Rachel Daugherty, Children's Health Homes Care Manager
Tatiana Suarez, Clinical Coordinator
Michael Rapp, Accounts Receivable Specialist

Holiday Closures

Blossom offices will be closed:



Monday, September 6 for Labor Day.

Congratulations on your New Position!

Kayla McCrickard, Health Homes Care Manager Supervisor
Santali Vazquez, Clinical Director

2021 2nd Quarter State of the Company

By Chris Gauvin, CEO

So far, 2021 has been a test of our strength and focus. The ongoing complications of COVID-19 combined with the stresses of running a home care business in today's marketplace have been a challenge. Through it all, our team continues to solve the problem.

Q2 Highlights:

New LHCSA Advisory Board: We established an advisory board to get feedback from our staff out in the field. This board will help us stay connected to the needs and challenges of the staff as they navigate their unique work environments.

New Brand: This past quarter, we launched a new name and logo. This was a change that was a long time in the making. When I first came to CCOR, the first thing I did was revamp our brand. I worked with two associates, one I paid off in beer and the other one was \$75. That was 11 years ago and to think it lasted this long is impressive. I always thought that project could have come out better, and now it finally is. The new updated look and feel is exactly what we need to grow and become the best agency in Western New York. The process of developing something new is incredibly challenging, especially when it affects so many people, and I couldn't be happier with the results. Defining ourselves as Blossom is going to establish us as the company that we truly are, now and into the future. We're already seeing positive benefits from it on the recruiting side and on some of our engagements with outside companies. All of the vendors that I've spoken to

love the brand and are engaged with it. I want to thank the marketing team for all their hard work, and for everyone who was able to participate and give input. I could not be more pleased. Everything I've seen of the brand is fresh and appealing, and I'm excited to see where it takes us.

Core Value Champions:

- 1. Extending the Family:** Kayla McCrickard 
- 2. Get It Done:** Marie Candelora 
- 3. Lead with Heart:** Mary Vacchetto-King 
- 4. Solve the Problem:** Angela Gioia 
- 5. Little Funnies:** Selina Caraballo 

Looking forward:

Communication: Due to feedback from clients, we are improving our communication methods in order to be more reachable and available to our clients.

Private Pay: We are expanding our private pay services, which will provide even more stability to the company and help us to offer better pay to our staff.

Evaluating Benefits: We are going to make sure the benefits we offer our staff are the most advantageous and valuable they can be.

During the past year and a half, everyone across the globe has been faced with similar problems and challenges. The fact that we have done so well is a testament to all of you. It gives me confidence that no matter what comes, we will stay focused and overcome.



Jennifer Gottschall

keeping people safely in their home by providing them with an aide who meets their needs.” This is accomplished by considering schedules, personalities, and the clients’ level of need. Coordinating all of this takes a special kind of

MAKING THE MOMENT

2020 delivered more challenges

than most people have ever seen before. A disastrous combination of illness, shutdowns, family emergencies, and fear kept many people from working, making 2020 a staffing nightmare. At Blossom, we weren’t the only home care agency to experience setbacks, but luckily, we were the only agency to have superstar staffing coordinator Jennifer Gottschall, our Making the Moment 2020 Award winner. With her unwavering dedication to the safety of our staff and clients, along with the hard work of the entire staffing team, we pulled through and overcame seemingly unbeatable obstacles.

“Basically, I worked from the minute I woke up to the minute I went to bed all of last year,” Jenn says. “It was probably one of the hardest years of my life, trying to make sure that we were doing the very best by our clients and our aides and making sure everybody was safe. It made me feel really good that it was recognized that we were working as hard as we did this past year.”

In addition to the normal tasks of scheduling, matching clients with aides, replacing call offs, supporting aide staff, and getting to know new clients and staff, all of which were more difficult due to COVID-19, staffing coordinators also had to conduct COVID-19 check-ins. “We had to call every aide before they go to work every day,” Jenn says. “And sometimes we’re talking about 150 aides in a day, in addition to your regular job seven days a week.” During that time, the department was also short one staffing member. Cynthia Fernandez was out on maternity leave from March 11 to July 19, making the workload that much more strenuous for each staffing coordinator.

The job of a staffing coordinator can be challenging at the best of times. “The main thing that I do,” Jenn says, “is

brain. “It’s a giant puzzle every single day, shifting people around. It’s lots of moving pieces every day.”

But no matter how challenging the puzzle may be, Jenn is ready to do whatever it takes to do the best job she possibly can. “I just don’t want to let anyone down,” she says. “I don’t want to be the one who makes life more challenging for anybody. I think that’s what drives me, trying to keep everyone safe and happy, whether that be aide staff, clients, or family members.”

Jenn’s tenacity is where she shines. “I would never dream of checking out at 4:30 because it’s the end of the work-day, if my work is not as perfect as I can make it for everyone.” Sometimes, to make it perfect, Jenn has to think outside the box. For example, she convinced a Batavia aide to take on a Rochester client knowing it would be a perfect fit. It was, and the client is happier than ever and blossoming under the aide’s care.

Jenn’s inspiration comes from her own family. Her grandmother suffered from severe rheumatoid arthritis, and her grandfather was her devoted caregiver. The day finally came that an aide was brought in to help. “When he got that help,” she explains, “he was a different human than I had ever known. He was happy and able to get out and do things but also know that my grandmother was safe and sound.” Jenn has seen firsthand how life-changing home care can be for those who need it as well as their support systems.

Jenn “made the moment” for every client she was able to supply with an aide, for every aide who needed her help, and for every family member who was able to have peace of mind knowing their loved one was safe, even during a pandemic. Jenn’s examples of making the moment range from emotionally supporting an aide whose son had died to driving an aide home from work for a month and half. Her loving heart has been a comfort to the many aides who leaned on her for support. Her gratitude and team spirit has been an inspiration to the entire Blossom family. Jenn’s dedication is a perfect example of what we mean by

MAKING THE MOMENT.

ownership in the company, I also recognize that there are close to 1000 people depending on the company succeeding for their livelihood and their wellbeing. It's not about Al Gauvin and what he wants. Or even the Gauvin family.

There has been a change now in leadership, just recently, which is the first time in a long time that somebody else has run the operations rather than a Gauvin.

 Yes, Marie Candelora was recently promoted to the Chief Operating Officer.

AG: I've known Marie a number of years. I hired her! She's been here a long time, and she reported to me, and obviously it's in all of our best interest that she succeed. And Chris is more of visionary than he is an operator. So, he's in a role that suits him, his personality. And if it suits him, then it probably suits the best interest of the company.

 What are your thoughts about the name Blossom?

AG: I have two opinions, and I have them jointly. One of which is from a memory of a failed business here in Rochester that took advantage of a lot of people. It's been gone ten years, but I'm old, so I remember these things. That was the thought that struck me when I first heard it. I certainly expressed that to my son, and he went through the thought process of "Why Blossom?" Certainly, Blossom's been near and dear to us. We've had three offices on Blossom Road. We had a small one, then we expanded, then we expanded that. There's a long history of Blossom, so it is historically correct. And certainly, the new "blossoming" of the company, a new image, a new era. That certainly is true, too. So it's mixed emotions. Of course, like with most things I have mixed emotions.

 So, when you first heard the name "Blossom," you remembered that previous business?

AG: Absolutely.

 That's probably true for other people, too.

AG: Correct. The old people! [laughs]

 People with a long memory. What would you say to them, if you could speak to them directly?

AG: I would say just that, that sometimes having a long memory is not fortuitous. You sometimes need to put the past in the past and move on. And it gives us an opportunity to rebrand Blossom for even those people who have that long memory, that hopefully they'll say, "That was in past, but this new Blossom is quality, it's caring, it's serving people. It's not about making a buck." That was the old Blossom, and they paid for it.

 What would you want people to know about this change, not just the name Blossom but the rebrand in general?

AG: They need to embrace it. It's part of reality. The baby boomers are now our clients. There's a new sheriff in town, if you will. And it needs to be new, it needs to address them. It needs to not live on its glorious past. And we've had a glorious past, we really have. But, so what? That's in the history books. It really doesn't matter. Tomorrow morning, when your mom is sick and you need help, you could really care less what the company has done. You'd like it if they have a track history, but it really doesn't mean anything until they take care of your mom.

We have to earn our name, whether it's Companion Care or Blossom or whatever. You have to earn your name every day. Over and over and over again. That's the one hard part about dealing with consumers. Everyone's a new consumer, and it's their family and their precious commodity. It's no longer somebody else's. I have lots of sayings, but one of them is, it's like the difference between major and minor surgery. It's minor surgery if it's someone else's—it's major surgery if it's yours! And that is the case in terms of service, you know? If you give good service to someone else, that's great, but it really depends on whether you give great service to me, the way I judge you.

 What is the balance, then, in your opinion between branding and brand equity? [Branding is the look and feel of our brand, how it is shaped, designed, and perceived, while brand equity is the value and quality of the services we offer.]

AG: I will give you a classic example from my past. When I was younger, I worked for a company called Heublein, and we marketed a product called Grey Poupon Mustard. And we were charging considerably more than any other mustard on the shelf. And French's, which is also a Rochester company, came out with a Dijon mustard and priced it 15¢ lower than Grey Poupon. And I remember the marketing person said, "We're going to take a price increase, making their product 30¢ less a jar on the shelf. And the reason we're doing that is because nothing can compare to Grey Poupon. Everything else is just a cheap knockoff." And because of that they did that commercial with the Rolls Royce.

 Yes, that was a memorable commercial!

AG: That in my mind is the sum and substance of brand equity. You either have it or you don't. You can't invent brand equity. You have to build it over time, and it has to prove itself over and over and over again. The reality is "Grey Poupon" had a great name and a nice allure and all that good stuff, but every time you put it on a sandwich, it delivered. And that's what branding is all about. You can say everything you want, but at the end of the day, it's still got to deliver. And that's where marketing and operations have to go hand in hand.

 If you still had the reins on the company, how would the change have gone?

AG: That's a difficult question to answer. I don't know how it went. The first time I was presented with the name was after months and possibly years of development. I'd be speculating, to say the least. I can tell you there have been some changes, since I wasn't running the business, that I have said, "No way" to, but there are others that I said, "Okay, great." I do know it was time for a change. Would Blossom have been my first choice? Probably not, but that doesn't mean I would have dismissed it either. You know, as I said to Chris, I still am the majority stockholder in this company, so I could have said, "No way" to it as well, but I didn't. Because, hopefully, it was well thought out and well-designed. I like the logo. I think the logo is great.

It's new. It's bright. It says a lot. And I like the tag line.

 What is your role in all of this? You mentioned you're the primary stockholder.

AG: I'm the guy that can say no. But I didn't. Because when I retired, I basically told Chris, "It's in your hands. This is your company. I have enough confidence in you that you can run this company and do a good job." I think this is my eighth time in this office in three and half years. That's not to say I don't talk to Chris on an ongoing basis, but it's his company, and he's done well. His leadership has done well, especially during this last 18 months of COVID. Now, can I say no? I rarely do. It's his company, and he's earned the right to make decisions.

 So, if you had to give a report card on this change, what would be your assessment?

AG: I think he has done extremely well. I think it has been handled well. But again, I'm kind of on the sidelines.

 You may be on the sidelines, but a lot of people still want to know your opinion.

AG: You know, someday, the company is going to change anyways. It's no longer my baby. I didn't start this company to make a name for Al Gauvin. It doesn't matter to me as much what's on the letterhead as it does what happens in each and every person's home. That matters more to me. At the end of the day, that is what it's all about.

 One more question: How do you feel about how we're doing? Not just the name change, but the company in general?

AG: I could not be prouder. This company is my fourth child, and you guys have done a great job of growing it. And we're serving so many different kinds of people now. Do we have challenges? Absolutely. Every day. It's a people business and because of that you're gonna have problems because people aren't predictable. Many times Chris came to me and said, "Dad, why didn't you get into building desks or something like that instead of taking care of people?" In some ways building desks is a lot easier!

I'm super-pleased, and the results have been good. But that doesn't mean a pile of beans. It's what you do tomorrow that really matters.



July 2021
ROBERT WEISER
**LOVING
LIFE**



ELEVEN
years ago, our
JULY AIDE OF THE
MONTH,

Robert Weiser, heard about a great job. One of his friends mentioned there was a need for male home care aides and told him that the job could consist of anything from helping with laundry to taking the client fishing. A job like that sounded good to Robert, who immediately applied to and was hired by Blossom (then known as CCOR). Eleven years later, he still agrees, helping people live their best lives is a great job.

Robert has a friendly, trustworthy nature, which makes him an excellent home care aide. "I try to pay attention when I'm in their homes. Everybody has their way of wanting things done. We all do. So, I pay attention to that kind of thing. I try to do everything the way that they would like it to be done." His caring nature even gets noticed by strangers. One day, after helping his client check out at Wegmans, the woman who was behind them in line walked across the snow-filled parking lot to give Robert a compliment. "Excuse me," she said. "I just want to say, you are so amazing with him! I can't believe how patient you are."

What sets Robert apart is his desire to help his clients thrive. Working with people who have suffered traumatic brain injuries has taught Robert that home care is more than completing daily tasks but helping people live a

fulfilling life. "A traumatic brain injury could happen to anybody, from out of nowhere...bike accident, car accident. You're going about your life and suddenly, now you've got to relearn everything. I would imagine it's hard to start all over again, to relearn talking, movements, just doing everyday things." Robert endeavors to help his clients improve and loves to see them overcome their challenges.

Robert's love of outdoor activities has become an important way he helps his clients to live life to the fullest. "They give me the active ones that like to get outdoors," he says, with a smile. Robert has gone kayaking, hiking, and geocaching with his clients. Robert will do whatever it takes to keep his clients happy,

including sledding on cold winter's day. "I try to do what they enjoy doing."

When he's not working, Robert enjoys golf, movies, and travel. He has explored Ireland, Scotland, Hawaii, New Orleans, and the Pacific Coast, with Alaska as his next destination. Robert firmly believes in getting the most out of life. His philosophy is, "Live every day like you're not going to have tomorrow."

Robert has an infectious love of life that uplifts his clients every day. Eleven years of assisting, nurturing, and encouraging his clients has not only benefitted the clients but Robert as well. Helping people live their best lives has become a fulfilling part of his own. ■

**"I TRY TO DO EVERYTHING
THE WAY THAT THEY WOULD
like it done."**



August 2021
MAGALY PEREZ-RODRIGUEZ

FINDING HOME

Three years ago, OUR AUGUST AIDE OF THE MONTH

Magaly Perez-Rodriguez, took a courageous step. She moved from her home of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic to the United States. At the request of her mother, a U.S. citizen, Magaly left all that was familiar to make a new home in a new country. Her goal is to eventually bring the rest of her family to the United States.

Though many might not realize it, the process of immigrating to the United States is costly and difficult. Even after moving here, it may take years to be able to bring a family member over. Leaving behind her husband of 15 years, two adult children, and her successful hair styling business took incredible strength. Making a life for herself in a new country was even more difficult. At first, she lived in New York City but then opted to move to Rochester where her cousin lives. Two years ago, at the recommendation of a friend, she found Blossom and a place where she could flourish.

From day one at Blossom, Magaly felt accepted by the many loving staff members who helped her along the way. She never once felt discriminated against because of her inability to speak fluent English. In her training, educator Wanda Trojanoski sat down with her and explained the words in her tests that she couldn't understand. She encountered nothing but support from the staff and has a special place in her heart for Edna Justice and Aixa

Gonzalez, who have helped her through challenging times.

Magaly's passion for working with the elderly and her love of psychology make her an excellent home care aide. She has a talent for making her clients feel comfortable. She talks with them, encourages them, and does whatever it takes to make them happy. Their smiles are her reward. One client, she says,

often falls asleep on the couch while Magaly is making the morning coffee. When Magaly approaches, she gently taps the spoon against the side of the mug. The client then wakes and gives Magaly a smile so big that it melts her heart.

Magaly works hard for clients, her family, and herself. She is deeply proud of the fact that after only three years in the United States, she's been able to buy a lovely home in a nice

neighborhood. She works relentlessly towards her goal of bringing her family to the United States and has already submitted the paperwork for her son. All that she has accomplished, she attributes to staying focused. "Hoy estoy donde estoy gracias al trabajo duro y la dedicación. (I am where I am today due to hard work and dedication.)"

Magaly is dedicated to keeping people safe in their homes, is proud of her own home, and is focused on helping her family make a new home in the United States. Accomplishing all of this takes a "Get it Done" attitude and a tremendous amount of heart. We are proud that Magaly has found a home here at Blossom. ■

“HOY ESTOY DONDE ESTOY
GRACIAS AL TRABAJO DURO Y
la dedicación.”

La version en español la puedes encontrar en:
<https://www.blossomhcs.com/post/august-2021-aide-of-the-month-magaly-perez-rodriguez>





How to Spot an Internet Scam

By Zak Wallace

Scams are everywhere these days, and it's important to pay attention before providing anyone personal information or even your passwords directly!

You may notice posts on Facebook asking you what your favorite food is or what your grandmother's name is, in disguise. For instance, "Your Grandmother's name + the last thing you ate = your Movie Star name!" These seem fun to interact with, but in reality, this could be a fake Facebook page pretending to be a radio station, for example, trying to harvest information to try to guess a password you might use. These are more fun with made up info, anyway!

Another scam you may fall victim to on Facebook is a game or quiz which may make you think you have to sign into facebook again. You complete the fun quiz and share it with your friends, but the scammers just got your password and can lock you out, or log on, steal all of your information and create a fake account using your name and likeness!

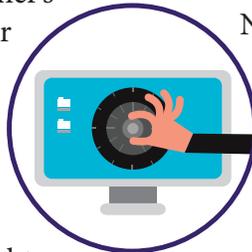
These are just a new form of "phishing," which still happens today. An example of phishing is when you get

an email pretending to be a service you might actually pay for, asking to reset your password. These emails are only legitimate when you've asked to have the email sent to you. Otherwise, it's important to be careful and review the information of the person who sent it. It might **look** like

Netflix sent you a password reset, but when you look at the email it says something like Netflix@thistallyisntascam.com (or perhaps even jumbled letters in the email). This is a good way to verify if the email is legitimate or not.

A classic scam is someone emailing you to offer a large sum of cash to you, sometimes making you think you've won a sweepstakes. They'll then say they need to verify your bank information by asking you to deposit a smaller amount than they're offering, like \$50-100 dollars into an account they provide you. Only, they'll never send you the large sum of cash and have just taken money from you. This more recently is being done in a similar way, offering gift cards, or pretending to be debt collectors who want to consolidate a few of your loans.

When in doubt, check it out!



Donate for Denim

Donate for Denim Recap:

In July, we raised \$120 for the children and families of **Camp Good Days**.

In August, we raised \$100 to assist **Senior Wishes**, centered in Western NY.

Denim Down the Line:

In September, we'll be donating to **The Living Well Mission**, helping needy families in the Penn Yan area.

In October, we'll be giving to a charity that is close to our hearts, the **Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester**.

Hey! Did you hear about the **Employee Referral Bonus Program?**

YEAH! We could get **\$500** for ourselves **and** the referred employee!!!

HIPAA violations & fraud must be reported.

Our Compliance Officer is Molly Dillon:
844.546.1600 x1143

Anonymous Hotline: 585.546.1219

