



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jenner's Pond and University of Delaware Partner to Empower Seniors Through Interactive Healthcare Theatre Program

West Grove, PA – February 18, 2025 – Jenner's Pond, a vibrant Simpson senior living community on an 88-acre campus in West Grove, has forged a unique and impactful partnership with the University of Delaware's highly-regarded Healthcare Theatre Program to bring engaging and informative communications and healthcare education to its residents.

Launched in July 2024, this collaboration delivers critical health insights to residents through interactive theatre performances on-site. Held in Jenner's Pond's state-of-the-art auditorium, the program tackles essential health topics important to seniors, such as considerations for moving to a continuing care community, how to more effectively find resources to age in place, caregiver burnout, and resources to prevent it, as well as hearing loss and its impact on cognition and socialization. The performances are designed to be participative and engaging for the attendees.

The University of Delaware's Healthcare Theatre program has existed for 15 years and is the only one of its kind in the country. The collaboration with Jenner's Pond is successful because of its highly interactive nature and the residents' willingness to participate. One benefit of this program is that it fosters innovation beyond the auditorium.

Mark Bendett, a resident of Jenner's Pond and an Entrepreneur in Residence at the University of Delaware, saw a Healthcare Theatre performance and recommended bringing it to the community. He is integral to coordinating the performance and topics at Jenner's Pond. The program is highly interactive and employs a "freeze frame" style of performance, which allows the audience to actively participate in the production by sharing their viewpoints and suggestions for improvement by pausing the interaction at any moment in the performance.

"It's a novel way of providing information to people in an entertaining and engaging manner," Bendett said. "This initiative empowers residents by giving them tools and information on how to ask for help and find resources, especially for those in independent living who may hesitate to reach out."

Brandon Logsdon, Acting Executive Director at Jenner's Pond, highlighted the program's value. "It feels like a game changer as we present medical information to the residents. A lot of times, our residents may be hesitant to ask for help and may regress as a result. This program helps us address those challenges early and provide actionable resources."

Jenner's Pond resident Ellie Paynter has attended the first two Healthcare Theatre events at Jenner's Pond. These events occur quarterly and are complemented by a monthly University of Delaware speaker series. Paynter shared, "Getting older is a new experience, and the presentations are another aid in coping and learning what is available to ease the process."

Allan Carlsen, Co-Founder and Director of Healthcare Theatre and Assistant Professor of Theatre at the University of Delaware, says, "Partnering with Jenner's Pond allows us to bring healthcare education to life in a way that resonates with seniors." He adds, "Our interactive approach not only supports residents but also helps us better train the next generation of healthcare professionals. We are proud to be one of the leading simulation programs in the country."

According to the *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, theatrical performance can be an effective educational tool for understanding medication experiences from the patient's perspective. Additionally, presenting medical information in an entertaining and interactive format, as Healthcare Theatre does, can illuminate barriers in an engaging and non-threatening way that patients face and can, in turn, open up conversations and ultimately lead to better understanding.

For more information about the Healthcare Theatre program at Jenner's Pond or upcoming presentations, visit <https://www.simpsonsenior.org/events/> or <https://sites.udel.edu/healthcaretheatre/>.

About UD's Healthcare Theatre

Healthcare Theatre is a unique interdisciplinary education program at the University of Delaware that develops the communication skills necessary for current and future professionals through interactive scenarios presented by Healthcare Theatre students. With this transformative approach to education, students are trained to portray patients and family members so that health sciences students can practice both technical and interpersonal skills in a safe environment without compromising quality of care.

About Jenner's Pond

Jenner's Pond, located in West Grove, PA, is a vibrant senior living community offering a range of services and living options for older adults. Focusing on engagement, wellness, and community, Jenner's Pond provides residents with the support and resources they need to live fulfilling lives at every stage of aging.

About Simpson

Since 1865, Simpson has built communities and provided services for older adults to thrive. Simpson has met the changing needs and desires of Philadelphia area seniors from diverse backgrounds as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit family of services consisting of three Life Plan Communities (also known as Continuing Care Retirement Communities, or CCRCs): Simpson House, Simpson Meadows, and Jenner's Pond; three affordable senior living communities: Simpson Gardens I, Simpson Gardens II, and Simpson Midtown, as well as Simpson HomeCare

and Simpson Rehabilitation. They are dedicated to offering the highest level of lifestyle and care available in beautiful, dignified, and spiritual settings.

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Media Contact:

Shonne Fegan-Ehrhardt, PR Director, 3rd3rd Marketing, shonne@3rd3rd.com, (847) 962-9879