



News

UNE in the News

Press Herald and Scarborough Leader feature COM's Learning by Living nursing home immersion program

The [Portland Press Herald](#) and the [Scarborough Leader](#) on Sept. 22, 2011 featured stories on the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine's Learning by Living nursing home immersion program, designed by Marilyn Gugliucci, Ph.D., director of geriatric research. The Press Herald story was also picked up by the Kennebec Journal (Augusta).

Although most participants in the program are medical students or other health professionals, the Press Herald and Leader stories focused on Evan Carroll, a 29-year-old Portland architect.

Carroll left his job at a Portland firm in to start Bild Architecture with his wife, Sasha Salzberg. Recognizing the aging population of Maine, the couple decided they wanted to gear their business toward the housing needs of senior citizens. Watching their own grandparents become increasingly dependent also has influenced them. "It's something we could get excited about because it's personal for us," Carroll told the Press Herald.



To get better insights into nursing home residents' life and needs, Carroll was admitted to the Maine Veterans Home with the diagnosis of congestive heart failure and left-sided weakness after suffering a stroke.

From an architectural standpoint, Carroll told the Leader that one of the first improvements he would make is to incorporate a setting with a kitchen as a center to keep residents more in touch with their senses and surroundings.

The Learning by Living program seeks to give students and others a first-hand experience of living as an older adult with a health condition, Gugliucci explains. "Until you live there and maneuver through in a wheelchair or walker, you have no idea what it's really like," Gugliucci said.

The program has been placing students in nursing homes since 2005 and has seen 28 students complete the program thus far. Gugliucci said the experience allows students to see what the lives of geriatric patients are like on a day-to-day basis and also allows participating nursing homes to review patient care practices ranging from medical to food service to supplies such as toiletries.

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