

CASE STUDY

Otterbein Portage Valley

One Team, One Mission

The staff and residents of Otterbein Portage Valley were beaming with pride when it was announced that their community earned the Employer of Choice gold designation from LeadingAge Ohio for their leadership in employee engagement.

“It is such an honor for us,” said Angela Powell, Otterbein Portage Valley executive director. “LeadingAge Ohio conducted a very comprehensive, holistic review of our organization, and I believe this recognition sets us apart for the exceptional care we provide our staff partners and residents.”

Otterbein’s behaviors encourage teamwork and empowerment among partners and include:

- Appreciating and acknowledging the contributions of others
- Helping and supporting others within and across departments, locations and services
- Identifying opportunities for improvement and taking action



According to Powell, the Employer of Choice criteria was in close alignment with Otterbein’s mission and approach to employee engagement, called the Otterbein Experience, which is a philosophy and mindset practiced by everyone throughout the senior living community.

The Otterbein Experience ensures that leaders and employees, who are referred to as partners, live the Otterbein mission every day. The Experience defines 21 behaviors, which were identified by leadership and partners, needed to help the community fulfill its mission and provide excellent care to residents.

“Our mantra is one team with one mission,” says Powell. “No matter your role, you are expected to live these 21 behaviors.”

The behaviors are also integrated into the recruitment process to ensure new hires have the qualities and qualifications that reflect the Otterbein Experience.

To position new partners on the path to success, Portage Valley provides a robust onboarding process, which includes a preview day for candidates to experience their work environment and duties for a day. There are also follow-up meetings with new hires at 30, 60 and 90 days. These meetings are an opportunity for the partner and leadership to discuss how things are going and seek input.

In addition to employee engagement, Portage Valley exceeded or met Employer of Choice criteria in resident satisfaction, benefits, retention, leadership continuity, community engagement, financial stability, innovation and culture.

Powell credits an engaged leadership, teamwork, mutual respect and open, transparent communications for Portage Valley’s success as an Employer of Choice.

“When our partners are happy, it translates to happy residents.”

— ANGELA POWELL

About Employer of Choice

Established in 2017, the Employer of Choice (EOC) program recognizes LeadingAge Ohio members who demonstrate leadership in employee development and engagement. The EOC program, which is evaluated annually, has established standards for strengthening employee engagement and workforce practices for individual locations and communities. Visit www.leadingageohio.org for more information.