



Staff Spotlight:

Compassionate Care in Oakland Senior Living

After 15 years as a caregiver, this nursing assistant found her skills were ageless.

SHARE: In 2006, [Mercy Retirement & Care Center](#)



nursing assistant Gilda Soriano and her husband Crisanto decided to relocate their family from their home in Toronto to a more temperate climate.



After moving to the Golden State, Soriano—who had been working for a decade as a nanny for two families and had previously spent

Visit a Community



We'd love to tell you more about our mission and communities at Elder Care Alliance. Click here to schedule a visit to one of our four California assisted living communities.

[Schedule a Visit](#)

five years in Singapore caring for two children—earned her nursing certificate. Shortly after, she was hired at Mercy, an Oakland assisted living community.

Although her work at Mercy has been her first opportunity to care for seniors, Soriano says her experience at the Oakland retirement community has proved surprisingly similar to her previous caregiver experiences.

“You get attached to the family and the children you’re caring for,” she says. “Here, it’s the same thing; working with residents four days a week, you also get attached—[you become] family, or something like it.”

Soriano works at the Care Center in Mercy, which offers [24-hour skilled care and rehabilitation services](#). Each day, she stops by residents’ rooms to check in on them, take their vital signs and make sure they’re feeling well. Sometimes, she brings them breakfast or aids with grooming tasks, like shaving. “I assist them with whatever needs help,” she says.

The residents’ schedule generally determines Soriano’s agenda. “If I ask, ‘Mrs. Jones, are you ready to shower today?’ and she says no, I say, ‘OK, when you’re ready, I’ll come back,’” Soriano says. “I don’t force them; sometimes they just need a little time.”

Being familiar with residents’ schedules has

Get News from Elder Care Alliance

[Sign Up for the
E Newsletter](#)



Relate Conte



[Mercy Retirement & Care Center Plans for Its Second Century](#)

The Oakland assisted living community is kicking off a project to engage with the neighborhood and reconfirm its commitment to local seniors.

also helped Soriano identify who might need additional assistance. One resident, Soriano has noticed, tends to have coffee in the hallway when she's feeling well. When she isn't, she stays in her room.

"You see signs when you've been working with clients every day," she says. "So I'll stop by and chat and ask them how they feel."

During the sometimes-long road to recovery, residents aren't always upbeat. Many seniors Soriano works with live in Mercy's [assisted living community](#), but had to transition to the Care Center after a health event. She tries to be a comforting presence and provide emotional support during the healing process.

"Sometimes you see them frustrated because they fell, or something is wrong [and they're recovering] and want more independence," she says. "Just talking to them sometimes helps."

Soriano often gently reminds residents who are on the mend that, while they may be anxious to go home, the [Care Center can provide the treatment and assistance](#) they currently need.

"If I have a new resident whose goal is to go



Quality of Care



A Closer Look at Assisted Living

A breakdown of demographics and trends related to assisted living

[View Library](#)

back to her own apartment, I have a goal that she can do it,” Soriano says. “I say, ‘You’ll be in your home alone, cooking your own food,’ and they say, ‘Yes, you’re right.’”

Until residents are ready to return home, Soriano is close by to take them outside for a walk, stop by the community’s country store, at the resident’s request—or just talk about how their days are going.

“I love that I get to listen,” she says. “I really like what I’m doing right now—everything is great when you are happy in your job.”

Tags: Skilled Nursing, staff, Mercy Retirement and Care Center

ORIGINAL PUBLICATION DATE: October 14, 2015

[Schedule a Visit](#)

[Sign Up for the E-Newsletter](#)



1301 Marina Village Parkway, Suite

210

Alameda, CA 94501



Phone: 510.769.2700

Fax: 510.769.2735



learnmore@eldercarealliance.org



Communities

[AlmaVia of Camarillo](#)

[AlmaVia of San Francisco](#)

[AlmaVia of San Rafael](#)

[Mercy Retirement & Care Center](#)

