



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Recognizes Contributions of Asian Americans in Its History**

### *Huron Valley PACE Marks Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May*

**Ypsilanti, MI, May 7, 2021** – Huron Valley PACE, or Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly, recognizes Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May by honoring the contributions of Asian Americans who helped create the PACE model a half-century ago.

A program of United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) & Porter Hills, Huron Valley PACE serves the psycho-social, medical, and supportive needs of low-income, nursing home-eligible adults, aged 55 and up. Its service area extends throughout Washtenaw, Monroe, and parts of Oakland, Wayne, and Livingston counties.

The concept for PACE has its roots in the Chinatown-North Beach community of San Francisco which saw the need for long-term care services among families whose elders had immigrated from Italy, China, and the Philippines, according to Huron Valley PACE Executive Director, Sonja Love Felton, LMSW, MPA, who also serves on both the PACE Association of Michigan and the National PACE Association Board of Directors.

“PACE programs across the country owe a debt of gratitude to the Asian community in San Francisco for its ingenuity in caring for elders,” Felton said. “In 1971, these community leaders formed the nonprofit On Lok (Cantonese for “peaceful, happy abode”) Senior Health Services to create a community-based system of care. PACE is here today, helping nursing-home eligible older adults to live independently in their homes and communities, because of the innovation and perseverance of Asian Americans in bringing their vision to life.”

This model has led to 138 PACE programs nationwide, serving more than 55,000 older adults of culturally diverse communities and backgrounds.

As nationwide violence has escalated against the Asian community, particularly in recent months, PACE stands with Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color.

“PACE celebrates all aspects of human diversity,” said Felton. “The surge in violence toward Asian American and Pacific Islander communities causes us outrage and deep sadness. There is no room for violence, injustice, or racism at PACE. We invite all those connected to PACE to use their voices to decry acts of hate toward Asian and Pacific Islander communities, and to use their work to bring equity and inclusion to PACE participants and fellow team members.”

UMRC & Porter Hills is one of Michigan’s leading providers of PACE services with five sites statewide, serving approximately 1,000 older adults annually across 15 Michigan counties.

PACE’s interdisciplinary team of professionals provides participants with a “one-stop” shop model for all their healthcare needs, including comprehensive medical, occupational and physical therapy, pharmacy needs, nutrition and meals, health education, social and recreational activities, and door-to-door transportation. Most participants are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid and pay no additional fees for PACE services.

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*The mission of **Huron Valley PACE** is to enhance the lives and independence of our participants by providing state-of-the-art geriatric health and community-based services. Its vision is to serve as a local, regional and national resource in the provision of state-of-the-art geriatric health and community-based services that recognize the dignity, independence and quality of life for older adults wishing to remain in their homes. [huronvalleypace.org/734.572.577](http://huronvalleypace.org/734.572.577)*

*Building on a foundation of 165 years of combined service to older adults, **United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) & Porter Hills** is a faith-based, nonprofit organization whose mission is: Welcoming all, partnering together, enriching lives. Its vision is: A world in which all are empowered to age well. Together, UMRC & Porter Hills represents the second largest nonprofit senior living organization in Michigan. With a tradition of exceptional quality and a commitment to cutting-edge care, UMRC & Porter Hills and its affiliates combine to serve over 7,000 older adults each year, from 24 locations and service lines, across 22 counties in Michigan’s lower peninsula. UMRC & Porter Hills is one of the state’s leading providers of PACE services with five sites statewide, serving approximately 1,000 older adults annually across 15 Michigan counties. [umrcph.com/734.433.1000](http://umrcph.com/734.433.1000) and 616.949.4975*