



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **UMRC Foundation Receives Grant from Michigan Health Endowment Fund**

### ***Funds Expand Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training at Two Local Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)***

**Ypsilanti/Jackson, MI, Jun. 7, 2021-** The United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC) Foundation was recently awarded a grant of \$38,937 from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund (Health Fund) through its Community Health Impact initiative. This grant to the UMRC Foundation will support diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training efforts at two of UMRC & Porter Hills' PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) sites – Huron Valley PACE in Ypsilanti and Thome PACE in Jackson, Michigan. Together, these PACE centers serve more than 400 older adults and their families in eight counties across the state.

PACE serves the psycho-social, medical, and supportive needs of low-income, nursing home-eligible adults, aged 55 and up, who are able to live independently in their own homes and communities, thanks to PACE services.

“We are delighted to receive this generous grant that will support DEI training, including racial sensitivity and bias training, for our team members at Huron Valley PACE and Thome PACE,” said Wendy Brightman, President of the UMRC & Porter Hills Foundations. “This grant will help us expand our vital work to tackle systemic racism, particularly as it affects the low-income older adults and families of color in the communities we serve.”

UMRC & Porter Hills will partner with a local DEI consultant to provide a four-phased approach to DEI training, according to Thome PACE Executive Director Susan Decker. “Throughout this process, our purpose is to benefit the older adults and families of color in the communities and regions we serve,” said Decker.

Sonja Love Felton, Executive Director for Huron Valley PACE, agreed. “As part of UMRC & Porter Hills' overall racial equity journey, our goal is to reinforce DEI into our organization's

culture to create lasting change, including a more diverse workforce and a place where people of color see themselves represented throughout the organization – from PACE participants to team members and leadership,” Felton said.

Both Decker and Felton are members of the PACE Association of Michigan Board of Directors; Felton also serves on the National PACE Association Board.

Brightman added: “This grant from the Health Fund will help to strengthen our efforts to provide a more welcoming and equitable environment for both team members and older adults of color, in keeping with our mission: ‘Welcoming all, partnering together, enriching lives.’ We are thrilled to partner with the Health Fund on this journey!”

PACE’s interdisciplinary team of professionals provides participants with a “one-stop” shop model for all their healthcare needs, including comprehensive medical care, 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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*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*

*The **Michigan Health Endowment Fund** works to improve the health and wellness of Michigan residents and reduce the cost of healthcare, with a special focus on children and seniors. You can find more information about the Health Fund at [mihealthfund.org](http://mihealthfund.org).*

*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)*

*The mission of **Thome PACE** is to promote the wellness, dignity, and independence of older adults by providing high quality, innovative, and supportive services. The primary goal of Thome PACE is to provide members of the community the care and medical treatment they need in order to help them live in their homes for as long as possible. We achieve this by offering a comprehensive package of services delivered by a team of specialized and caring healthcare professionals. [Thomepace.org/517.768.9791](http://Thomepace.org/517.768.9791)*