

What's Cooking: Magnolias of Chambersburg Cuisineur Brings Decade of Experience to Senior Living Community

IntegraCare team member's journey included wedding in Africa

CHAMBERSBURG, PA, UNITED STATES, December 1, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Whether it's one of her popular casserole dishes or a tasty bowl of soup, Phillis Sanni has served the residents at Magnolias of Chambersburg for more than a decade.

“

I like to see the smiles on the residents' faces. I like to make the plate look 'pretty.' I want everything to look like it's supposed to whenever you're going to a high-class restaurant.”

Phillis Sanni, Cuisineur

A Cuisineur at the senior living community, Sanni feels as if the residents and team at Magnolias of Chambersburg are part of her extended family.

“We interact like a family,” Sanni said. “We're not just co-workers. We're friends. It makes it better.”

Family is a common theme for Sanni, who learned many of her recipes from a pretty special role model.

“My mom was a cook. I'm always around my mom and she's always cooking,” said Sanni, 42. “I'm a worker. I want to try something different.”

Magnolias of Chambersburg Executive Operations Officer Kristine Wenrick said Sanni's upbeat approach and her willingness to adapt to any situation have made her a valuable asset to the senior living community.

Sanni previously held roles as a resident care aide, resident wellness associate and medication associate before taking her skills to the kitchen and dining area. She is a recent graduate of IntegraCare's Motivational Advancement Program (MAP), which promotes career growth opportunities for team members.

“Phillis is an exceptional employee and dedicated part of our Magnolias family,” Wenrick said. “Her spirit and genuine concern for her residents and fellow team members is evident on a daily basis.”

"She has an uplifting and often comical approach to making frowns turn upside down," Wenrick added. "I am thankful for her commitment and longevity to Magnolias. It's consistency and devotion like hers that make our residents' home so wonderful."

Her interaction with the residents is a highlight of Sanni's daily routine. Those relationships enable her to fill the menu with entrees that satisfy the residents.

"We have a cookbook, but I pretty much know what to put in the meals without looking at the book because I've been in the kitchen so long," said Sanni, who is ServSafe certified. "I try to make it interesting for the residents so they're not seeing the same meal all the time."

"I try to go above and beyond for the residents," she said. "I try to accommodate everyone."

So, what are Sanni's favorite recipes?

"I like to make soups. I love to make casserole dishes," Sanni said. "I like making salads. I like to decorate cakes."

"Most important, I like to see the smiles on the residents' faces. I like to make the plate look 'pretty.' I want everything to look like it's supposed to whenever you're going to a high-class restaurant," added Sanni, who credited her team for helping her accomplish that goal.

Magnolias of Chambersburg LifeStages Coordinator Melissa Buksa said Sanni's dedication to the residents and her team are evident on a daily basis.

"I have worked with Phillis for over 10 years. I now, of course, consider her family," Buksa said. "Phillis first worked as a resident assistant, and I remember her always keeping the residents busy with crafts on her down time."

"One time she created a rock garden in our Memory Care," Buksa said. "When we have a special event or activity, she is the first to help. She is always cheerful and helpful and I love the way she interacts with the residents."



Magnolias of Chambersburg Cuisineur Phillis Sanni received the bronze level certification in IntegraCare's Motivational Advancement Program (MAP). She is joined by team members Stacie Sweger (middle), Medication Associate, and Linda Geer, Cuisineur.

"She supports her team members by encouraging them and appreciating them. She is truly an asset to our community and everyone she touches."

This year, Sanni's family grew. She married her husband Kehinde "Kenny" Sanni, a native of Africa. The couple's wedding was held in Lagos, the largest city in Nigeria, Africa.

"It was a really nice experience," Phillis Sanni said. "It was a real good experience to meet his family and to see a whole different culture. It was just enjoyable to be able to do that."

Phillis and Kenny returned to Chambersburg, where she continues to satisfy the residents during the breakfast, lunch or dinner times.

"The residents do like the pizza pasta casserole," Sanni said. "I feel like I make a really good stuffed pepper soup and a baked potato soup. Most of the times they love a lot the casserole dishes. They love grilled cheese sandwiches and hot dogs, the simple stuff."

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