



Kubiak created elder services success in challenging times

BY ISABEL TEHAN
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Lisa Kubiak always knew she wanted to work in health care, and while she was not sure where that desire would take her, she was always personally and professionally ambitious, with a desire to ascend the ranks.

Now, as president and CEO of Mary Ann Morse Healthcare, she has done just that, reaching the top leadership position at the Framingham-based aging services provider. Kubiak became executive director at the Framingham nursing home facility in 2007 before being promoted to her current role in 2018.

“She more than stepped up and exceeded expectations across the board,” said John Calcio, chairman of the board of directors for Mary Ann Morse.

Calcio has been affiliated with the organization’s board for 10+ years, but he came to know Mary Ann Morse and Kubiak when she was executive director of the nursing home, while his father and father’s sister were residents there.

The first years of Kubiak’s tenure as president and CEO were challenging, on an industry level, but more so in Kubiak’s personal life. Not long after she stepped into the role, Kubiak lost her daughter in a motorcycle accident.

“You can go one of two directions: You can build on your strength and get through it to

make your family proud, or you can buckle,” said Kubiak.

Throughout her career, she always wanted to be a role model to her children, and she used that desire to make her family proud to get herself through a deeply difficult time.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to intense pressure on elder service providers everywhere. Nursing homes across the country struggled, with some permanently shuttering operations, Kubiak said. Despite this, Kubiak facilitated growth at the company, adding additional revenue streams through new service lines, including certified home care.

“Her leadership allowed it to succeed,” said Calcio.

Those added service lines have allowed the organization to grow its employee numbers, now totaling approximately 360, while it hovered around 300 before the pandemic.

Part of Kubiak’s strength comes from her vision about ways to diversify the options available from Mary Ann Morse. When she began in leadership, the strategic plan was to move beyond the brick-and-mortar offerings and look at what could be done, said Calcio.

“Nursing homes are hard to run, and Lisa has brought on two service lines from scratch,” he said.

People enter the aging services field with a passion for helping people, and it is a rewarding career, said Kubiak.

Still, said Calcio, it’s a balance between good intentions and good business.

“We are in a business that people enter for

Lisa Kubiak

President & CEO, Mary Ann Morse Healthcare Corp., in Natick and Framingham

Residence: Dudley

Education: Bachelor’s degree in health information administration from The Ohio State University; master’s degree in organizational leadership from Nichols College

Who’s career would you most like to emulate? If I had to choose, I would probably say my mom. While she was not a businesswoman, she was a strong, independent woman who I have always admired for her work ethic and dedication to her nursing career and her family.

What are the main obstacles women face to success in the workplace? Work-life balance can be a struggle for women in the workforce, specifically for those women who would like to have a family and a career. There are still stereotypes out there as to the role and strengths of women in business.

What advice would you give to a woman just entering the workforce? You will work with some great people, and you will work with some not so great people. As long as you stick to your core beliefs and values and maintain your true north, you will succeed. Don’t let the negative noise put you down, surround yourself with the positive. Finally, don’t ever doubt yourself even when others cannot see your vision.

altruistic reasons because they want to help. But it’s still a business, and it’s a hard business to run,” he said.

Kubiak finds a balance between those two aspects, he said. While her professional competence and accountability to the board sets her apart, her empathy and care in interpersonal interactions are crucial too, he said.

Early on in her time in the workforce, Kubiak had her three children close in age. She started consulting on medical compliance to balance work and family, but was soon a sought-after opinion for facilities nationwide. The flexibility of consulting was valuable to her, and she tries to offer as much flexibility as she can to her employees, particularly those who are parents, so they can succeed in the workplace and the rest of their lives.

Developing the workforce in the industry is important to Kubiak, but so is promoting work-life balance for her employees, as well as helping staff ascend the career ladder by promoting from within. Aging services is a passion, and she wants more people to know how rewarding it can be as a career. “I want to see people succeed,” Kubiak said. **W**