

Schlegel Villages response – Rankandfile.ca

To: Zaid Noorsumar, labour relations journalist, Rankandfile.ca

From: Matt Drown, director of community connections, Schlegel Villages

At Schlegel Villages we are committed to providing environments which support pursuing the highest quality of life possible for our residents. This commitment extends to creating a work environment and culture which respects the value of all the team roles, while providing ongoing learning and nurturing growth of future leaders. We make great efforts to create health and wellness hubs that attract and serve whole communities and believe in creating vibrant spaces that enhance the quality of experience for each community in which we live and work.

With this goal in mind, we often seek out and participate in activities that will further our commitment to our team members and the entire sector. We are committed to creating an environment that sets our team members up for success, and we are actively engaged in programs within the community and academic arenas to encourage and recruit new applicants to Schlegel.

Schlegel's position as an industry leader and our commitment to solving industry challenges is the reason that James Schlegel, President and CEO, was asked to join Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Study Advisory Group. His leadership, experience and expertise position him well to provide sound strategic advice and make meaningful contributions to the group, alongside some of the province's most prominent industry leaders. In accepting this responsibility and investing his time, James Schlegel is living the commitment the Schlegel family has made to support this the sector – advocating for, and improving the quality of life of, seniors and their care providers.

Another important facet of our community engagement is involvement in the political process. Schlegel has always maintained positive relationships with the various governing parties and strongly believes in supporting good candidates – regardless of their party affiliations. For this reason, and in the spirit of bipartisanship, the Schlegel family has made contributions across parties; the donation to Christine Elliott, MPP, is just one example of this. We want to support and encourage good people to run for public office.

We consider our team members and residents family, and as a family, we want our community to feel appreciated and valued. As part of this, Schlegel Villages presented a compensation offer to the union which is fair and equitable. The proposal made by Schlegel Villages to Unifor is in line with industry standards, and proposes an annual wage increase that has been agreed to by Unifor at other long-term care residences in recent months.

With regards to the rewards program, the way it has been presented by Unifor is misleading. Schlegel Villages has, like many employers, an employee rewards program which rewards team members for various achievements – length of service, going the extra mile for a colleague or resident, or completing education. The points earned can be used for branded items, sure, but employees can also redeem their points for cash if they choose.

We remain dedicated to working as a team, including working with union representatives, to bring the current labour negotiations to a timely resolution.