

NEWS RELEASE



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PILLARS: Buddy's Place Announces New Director ***Pillars' child bereavement program enters its tenth year under new leadership***

LAGRANGE PARK, IL – On the cusp of entering its tenth year, Buddy's Place welcomes new director Kelly Huggins. Buddy's Place, a Pillars' program, said goodbye to the program's founder and director Linda Moran when the veteran advocate retired on September 30, 2009. Moran has been working with Huggins over the last three months to transition her responsibilities.

"Linda has created an inspiring, impactful program that has touched over 280 families and 460 children..." says Huggins. "I feel honored to be chosen to carry on the mission of Buddy's Place as it continues to grow and support the community."

Pillars' Buddy's Place is a family based bereavement support program for children ages 4 – 18 who have experienced the death of a parent or significant caregiver. Buddy's Place was founded in January 2000, supported by a generous grant from the Community Memorial Foundation and has been sustained by ongoing support from other significant benefactors.

"If Kelly's efforts and leadership thus far are any indication, I am more than confident that the traditions of Buddy's Place are in safe hands." said John Shustitzky, President and Chief Executive Officer of Pillars.

"Due to the nature of the services they provide, Buddy's Place requires a certain type of person at the helm, and Kelly is the perfect fit." said Ann Schreiner, Senior Vice President of Programs at Pillars. "As Kelly has already begun to take the reins, her passion and commitment are clear. We couldn't be happier to have her on board."

Huggins, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, with a masters degree from Aurora University, joins Buddy's Place with over a decade's worth of experience working with children and their families. Prior to accepting the Director position of Buddy's Place of Pillars, Kelly coordinated and directed the Bereavement Department for Heartland Hospice in Frankfort, Illinois. While at Heartland Hospice, she created several therapeutic expressive arts grief support programs and co-directed the Caring Hearts Camp with the Cancer Support Center.

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Pillars Community Services and Community Care Options merged in 2006 to form Pillars, one of Chicago area's most notable nonprofit social service organizations. Pillars serves 36 communities in the west and southwest suburbs, Chicago's Midway Airport neighborhood and Chicago's west side. A few of the programs and services that Pillars offers to our communities are: Head Start and early childhood programming, behavioral health care including substance abuse/addiction, mental health care, LaGrange Area Transitional Housing, domestic violence services, and bereavement support. To find out more about a specific service or any additional services, please visit the Pillars website at www.pillarscommunity.org.