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UPLIFT Florida Network

December 2022

UPLIFT Florida Network's mission is to improve the well-being of individuals and communities via a network of villages and organizations supporting them. For more information or to get involved, contact us at info@upliftflorida.org.

UPLIFT Florida Network Engages Existing and Developing Villages in Meaningful Conversations By Cathy Lieblich



[UPLIFT Florida Network](#) has several active committees supporting its mission and vision, including its Village Formation and Integration committee, which actively engages both existing and developing villages. The four existing villages in Florida are [Neighbor to Neighbor in the Nenes](#), [LIV-UP of Upper Pinellas](#), [Wellington Cares](#), and [Neighbors Network](#). The two developing villages: [Pueblos en la Comunidad](#) which would be the first Hispanic village in the country, and Neighbors Network of Six Mile Cypress.

Monthly meetings led by board members [Cathy Lieblich](#) and [Pam Mahoney](#) facilitate conversations with these villages. These

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Creating Our Future — Together By Cynthia Kemp

UPLIFT's listening tour of Florida villages has begun! While Zoom has allowed us to meet virtually, our first face-to-face meeting with [Neighbors Network](#) challenged and inspired us. Pam Mahoney and Cynthia Kemp joined fellow [UPLIFT board member](#) Cathy Lieblich (who also serves as Board President of Neighbors Network) at the village's monthly board meeting in Winter Park. The first stop on our listening tour brought a deeper understanding of the village's work to meet the growing needs of a diverse older adult population in the Winter Park, Maitland, and Eatonville areas and explored how UPLIFT can support these efforts so that, together, we can achieve greater impact. Continue reading to learn how UPLIFT is creating the future together with the current and future villages across Florida.

conversations offer a unique opportunity for the villages in formation to discuss their challenges and receive expert guidance and advice from the existing villages. Continue reading to learn how UPLIFT is committed to supporting existing villages and villages in Florida.

Continue Reading

The National Virtual Village Gathering: Celebrating 20 years of the Village Movement

By Cathy Lieblich



Cathy Lieblich, [Neighbors Network's](#) board president and [UPLIFT board member](#), shares session highlights from the [Village to Village Network](#) (VtV)'s [National Virtual Village Gathering](#). VtV Network's Gathering provides expert guidance, resources, and support to help communities establish and maintain thriving Villages.

Continue to Highlights

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UPLIFT Welcomes Two New Board Members: Roger Blanken and Diana Shoemaker



UPLIFT welcomes Roger Blanken and Diana Shoemaker to its Board of Directors to help develop our capacity to serve as a hub providing operational and management services to its [network of villages](#).

Roger has four decades of experience working in multi-national companies across multiple functions. Working closely with senior leaders, he has developed and executed strategic plans and financial models. For the past year, he has volunteered with UPLIFT, focusing on the 3-5 year financial plan and value proposition. Diana has over 20 years of experience working in Manatee County with non-profits tackling issues like housing and homelessness. She served as the CEO of the [Manatee County Habitat for Humanity](#) and now serves as the Executive Director for the [Elders Action Network](#). She will be an integral part of building our organizational structures.

Over the past year, a high priority has been establishing a strong leadership team for UPLIFT. The addition of Roger and Diana expands the talent and experience base of the Board and strengthens UPLIFT going forward as it strives to achieve its [vision and mission](#).



We'd like to give a special thanks to Pamela Pucetas, one of our UPLIFT volunteers who has contributed immensely to moving our mission forward. An eager learner, excellent notetaker, and reliable individual who always gets the job done, Pam willingly provided her time, resources, and expertise to support UPLIFT, especially on our Village Formation and Integration committee or as special projects arose. She's made valuable contributions that we appreciate, and we will miss her as she steps down from her volunteer work with UPLIFT to focus on her family.

Developing Village Spotlight: [Pueblos en la Comunidad](#)

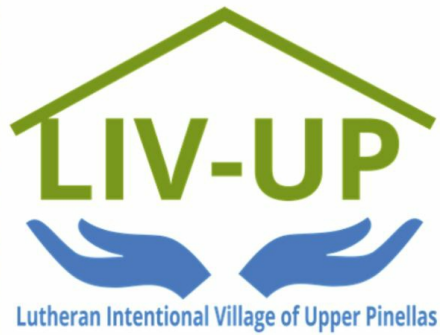


Each village has a unique starting point. But for Pueblos en la Comunidad, there were three: a closet full of healthcare supplies, help with household tasks, and a Google search. For village founder Ana Velez, a resident of Winter Springs near Orlando, the search led her to [Neighbors Network](#) and later to [Village to Village Network](#) and [UPLIFT](#).

With her background working in the Spanish-speaking business world, Ana wanted to bring the village concept to underserved people nearby. She conducted informal surveys at local Hispanic stores to determine need and interest, and Word-of-mouth brought in participants, volunteers, and board members.

The board's focus for 2023 is growth. Plans include a mass mailing followed by a Zoom meeting about the village concept, a pilot project with a local church, and a meal program with culturally familiar foods. Ana's overall goal, and one she encourages for all villages, is to learn and adapt to the culture of underserved communities so that villages can be more diversified and inclusive.

For more information about this groundbreaking village, contact Ana at pueblos2021@icloud.com.



Meet LIV-UP's New Executive Director

Lutheran Intentional Village: Upper Pinellas ([LIV-UP](#)), a village in Florida established in 2019, is excited to have engaged Anne Corti as their first paid part-time director. Anne's experience with inter-generational ministry and her passion for helping older adults navigate the challenges of aging in their own homes will help further grow the LIV-UP organization. Previously, the village was led by volunteers with only a part-time office manager.

Anne assumed the director's role in June and has since been actively engaging and energizing committee members, volunteers, partner organizations, and funders. She also guides the marketing and communications of LIV-UP, provides community outreach, and develops programming.

One of the first conferences Anne attended was the [Village to Village Conference](#) in October. She looks forward to implementing the many ideas and strategies she learned. Among her objectives for 2023, Anne plans on growing the volunteer and member base by strengthening community and religious connections. Specifically, LIV-UP will collaborate with the [Pinellas Area Agency on Aging](#) and establish relationships with pastors in the area whose parishioners could benefit from membership in LIV-UP. Anne and the dedicated LIV-UP Council will also plan several social functions open to the community throughout the year!

Anne graduated from Iowa State University with a bachelor's degree in children and family services with an emphasis on policy and advocacy and has worked in social services and youth ministry nationally. She lives with her husband and young son in Oldsmar, FL. Anne also works part-time as Director of Youth and Family Ministry at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Seminole, FL.

LIV-UP recently again received funding from the Pinellas Community Faith Mission grant program and is excited for new opportunities to serve our older adult community in 2023.

**Tallahassee's Largest Village Grows with New Leadership by Carrie Gaudio,
Executive Director of Neighbor to Neighbor in the Nenes**



Through the determination and perseverance of a network of committed volunteers, Neighbor to Neighbor in the Nenes (N3) is now a robust village serving elders in Tallahassee's Indianhead/Lehigh area. Started in 2018 by the efforts of Betsy Tabac and many others, N3 provides services at no charge. N3 focuses on building strong and individualized relationships within the service area to meet the needs of our community's elders. Friendly companion services, rides and errands, and yard work are some of our most utilized services. I joined the N3 Board of Directors at the beginning of 2022. During my time as a volunteer, we enhanced our programs and secured a grant from the NextFifty Initiative, which has now allowed me to become the organization's first paid executive director.

I have focused my career on leadership through policy and progress, including many years at the [Agency for Health Care Administration](#) as the Policy Coordinator for Health Information Technology overseeing statewide initiatives. I developed an interest in our society's aging systems while working for the State of Florida and, even more acutely, in my role as a family caregiver for over a decade.

Being a caregiver for elders creates keen awareness of the value of elder-inclusive communities; working for many years within State policy heightens awareness of the deep gaps in the systems to support elders with aging in their homes and within their communities. That is why villages like N3 are so vital.

It is exciting to be part of this next phase of N3's story. We are already rooted in our community and have developed some of the foundational building blocks necessary for success: we have a committed base of volunteers, localized financial support, consistent and documented policies and procedures, and strong organizational and individual relationships.

As with any nonprofit, there is plenty of opportunity for growth and a strong need for long-term sustainability. Moving into the next chapter, identifying and engaging our most vulnerable elders is our number one priority. We will flex our existing local presence to build deeper relationships with some of our local elder care organizations so that our referral network is more structured and easily accessible. To support our programs, we will finely tune our documentation to increase flexibility for future stages of the organization. We will work with our community to strengthen the range of our volunteers to include more administrative and technical volunteers. Expanding our base of expertise will allow us to leverage technology more fully for operations, fundraising, and communications. To maintain our free-of-charge infrastructure, we will pursue consistent operations funding from foundations and associations.

The future for N3 in Tallahassee is bright, and we are poised to be an organizing force for other local communities interested in the Village Movement. I am honored to be a part of

the team of people working to bring our goals into reality, and I look forward to all we will accomplish together in the coming year.

To learn more about Neighbor to Neighbor in the Nenes, visit www.aginginneneland.org
Carrie Gaudio: agingwithcommunity@outlook.com

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