

## Celebrating 30 Years of Education for Compassionate Care (1988-2018)

Nearly 90 years ago, a religious woman of great courage and vision believed that elders entrusted in her care should live in a homelike environment. She believed that they should be treated as unique, individual human beings; she acted on her beliefs and founded a Congregation that would teach others by its example. The Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm incorporated the Avila Institute of Gerontology (AIG) in 1988 as a response to the growing complexity of geriatric health care. As the educational arm of the Congregation, the Institute disseminates information on philosophy, values, and innovations in care of elders to the larger community of caregivers. Seminars sponsored by the Avila Institute cover topics such as ethics, regulations, and modalities of caring, including dementia, behavioral concerns, palliative care, and many more. These seminars feature expert speakers from throughout the country. For the past 30 years, Council members, a very active Board of Directors, and the staff at AIG have worked devotedly and tirelessly to develop programs that address the challenges facing Catholic long-term care.

AIG has always offered a multitude of educational programs, and throughout its 30 years, its faculty has taught at more than 100 locations in 33 U.S. states and Ireland. It has awarded more than 72,160 CEUs to more than 25,000 partici-

pants. AIG also provides in-person education for our core staff training programs on dementia, behavior management, and palliative care, often going on-site to the facility to train staff directly. AIG has expanded its program base by offering webinars and will be streaming its first conference with live video this fall. In 2015, AIG developed an online in-service library subscription program and continues to add valuable topics for staff development to teach direct care staff.

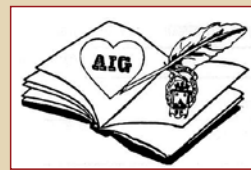
Over the last five years, AIG has been working extensively with the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm to educate and train staff in palliative care. The training program, developed in 2013, was based on ELNEC's palliative care training. AIG worked with pilot nursing home facilities to train and track the effectiveness of palliative care, which lead to the development of an implementation program for palliative care. In 2013, AIG Director Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria, O.Carm., was recognized by ELNEC with an award for her efforts in palliative care education. AIG also helped to direct and launch a video about palliative care for the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. This 13-minute video tells viewers about the success of palliative care and shares the stories of residents, families, and staff. The film's excellence was recognized with a nomination for a 2017 Suncoast Emmy Award under the

category "Societal Concerns." In addition to the homes served, co-sponsored, or sponsored by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm, the Avila Institute of Gerontology assists religious communities with implementing person-centered care, placing a focus on the unique environment and needs that are inherent in religious life. This initiative includes providing quality educational programs to both Religious and staff, as well as strengthening operational supports to facilitate effective implementation of person-centered care.

As AIG moves forward, we are just as excited about our future as our past. We are currently working on new leadership and training programs to help long-term care facilities with resident care and staff retention. We recently filmed and edited staff interviews for the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm to help with staff recruitment. We are working with new technologies and new research to continue the enrichment of education for our staff and the care of our elderly. We are grateful for our work to provide education and guidance for the caregiver and look forward to sharing this with all caregivers in the years that come.

## Highlights from the last 30 years

**1988** — Avila Institute of Gerontology becomes officially incorporated.



— The annual October "Avila Institute" event kicks off with "Issues in Long term Care" held October 4-6, with 144 registrants!

**1989** — Approval is granted to provide Nursing Home Administrator credits.

**1990** — The first Avila Institute Newsletter is published, which included reviews of professional articles, a review of the October Avila Institute, and a letter from the AIG president.



**1991** — The first Flos Carmeli Award is presented, (originally the Mother Angeline Award).



**1992** — AIG is approved to issue credits to Social Workers.

**1993** — AIG purchases its first computer and printer.

**1994** — The October seminar "Changing Times: Creating a Vision for the Future" has 200 participants and provides more than 1700 CEUs.



**1997** — Sr. M. Peter Lillian Di Maria O.Carm is assigned as the first full time Director.



**1998** — The first annual CNA conference is held at St. Teresa's Motherhouse with over 100 attendees.

**1999** — The first Geriatric Spiritual Care workshop is held.

— AIG hires its first part-time employee.

— The first regional seminar on Palliative Care is presented in 12 locations throughout the U.S. and Ireland, with more than 600 participants and 2,400 CEUs awarded.

**2000** — AIG hires its first full-time employee.



**2001** — The pilot Geriatric Spiritual Care Certificate Program launches.

— AIG expands CEUs, issuing credits for Recreational Therapists, Dietitians, Housekeeping and Nurses.

**2002** — AIG begins a two-year study "Promoting Positive Behaviors," which is funded through a grant from the New York Department of Health.



**2002, cont.** — Launches a program to help transition Philippine Nurses into the diverse Health Care system.

**2003** — AIG teams up with Alfred Norwood of Behavior Science, Inc., and begins working on behavior concepts for elders with dementia.

**2004** — The first annual Leadership Conference is held in March.

— Working with Carole Stathis, BSN, RN, MSN, AIG develops the first Dementia Care Training Program.

— AIG awards nearly 5,400 CEU's to more than 770 participants throughout the year.

**2005** — The Avila Institute joins the World Wide Web with the launching of its website.

— AIG, the Carmelite Sisters and the College of St. Rose develop a 2-day workshop for the students in their social work program (still held annually).

— AIG begins working with Sr. Annette Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., CSJ, to develop cultural diversity programs.

— AIG now has one part-time and two full-time employees.



**2006** — AIG rebrands itself with a new logo.

— AIG helps to develop and train assessors for the Alzheimer's Foundation of America's Excellence in Care program.

**2008** — AIG begins offering programs and assistance to other religious communities.

**2009** — The Retirement Research Foundation provides a grant to research person-centered care using the It's Never 2 Late (IN2L) program.



Mother Angeline  
MINISTRIES OF CARE

**2010** — Over 90 participants attend the first virtual learning experience "Palliative Care: Compassionate Care for the Whole Person" held as an in-person workshop and a live webinar.

**2011** — AIG relocates (and grows) to four offices and an additional copy/work room.

— AIG collaborates with National Religious Retirement Office to provide educational webinars to members of the religious community.

— AIG offers its first webinar series.

— AIG launches the *Roots of Caring* formation program to sustain the Carmelite Mission by educating lay staff in key leadership positions in facilities served by the Carmelite Sisters. Our fourth group will graduate in 2018.

— AIG begins offering client services to long-term care facilities and religious communities.

**2012** — AIG creates a DVD education kit for the Mother Angeline Ministries of Care ministry program.

— Over 2,100 people attend seminars and webinars throughout the year.

**2013** — Sr. Peter Lillian Di Maria is one of the 2013 ELNEC award winners.

— AIG launches the on-line Path to Leadership Graduate Certificate program with Saint Joseph's College of Maine.



— Over 150 friends celebrate the 25th Jubilee Anniversary.

**2014** — Expands, working with more religious communities and long-term care organizations.

**2015** — AIG finishes the Palliative Care pilot program and begins teaching its Palliative Care Implementation program.

— AIG launches new website and in-service subscription program.

— Calvary Hospital in Bronx, NY works with AIG to offer a palliative care program taught by the doctors of their Palliative Care Institute.



— Sister M. Peter Lillian Di Maria receives the Father Lawrence Dunklee Excellence in Ethics Award at the Excellence in Ethics Symposium.

**2016** — AIG purchases new technology to stream and record conferences and virtual classrooms.

— AIG offers its first staff development conference for staff development directors and educators staffed by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm.

**2016, cont.** — AIG works with the Maryknoll China Education Project to offer an intensive geriatric education program for six Sisters from China.

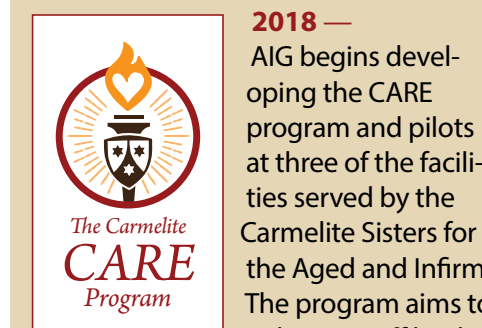
— AIG launches its Care Transitions Tool to help to help religious communities of all sizes to identify current and future issues related to care and transition.

— AIG adds a new Assistant Director position and now has three full-time positions and four part-time employees.



**2017** — AIG staff helps the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm to film a video and develop a website for palliative care. The video was nominated for the Suncoast Emmy Award under the category "Societal Concerns."

— AIG hires a full-time and part-time educator.



**2018** — AIG begins developing the CARE program and pilots at three of the facilities served by the Carmelite Sisters for the Aged and Infirm. The program aims to enhance staff leadership skills and help staff retention.

— AIG staff films and produces its first three interview videos for the Teresian House to use for marketing and recruitment.

— AIG hires an IT administrator to help further our efforts with technology and virtual training.

— For the first time ever, AIG streams the October conference as a webinar series, offering CEUs.