



Sunflower Foundation
HEALTH CARE FOR KANSANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2010

For more information, contact Billie Hall, President and CEO, Sunflower Foundation, (785) 232-3000 or (866) 232-3020

KANSAN LEADS CHANGE IN ELDERCARE

LAWRENCE, KS – Steve Shields is on a mission to change the way we take care of our parents and grandparents. Shields, an international expert on nursing homes, is president and CEO of Meadowlark Hills in Manhattan, one of the nation’s most innovative retirement communities.

“Our approach really is pretty simple. It’s to get residents involved in making their own decisions – to take control of their own lives,” Shields said.

Shields is the final speaker in this year’s Sunflower Foundation Advocacy in Health Speaker Series. He will speak at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 5, at the Oread Hotel in Lawrence. The event is free and open to the public.

Shields will emphasize the importance of nonprofits working together to help change systems of care. “In this time of increasingly scarce resources, we can’t lose our passion and our imagination for creating change,” Shields said. “Now, more than ever, we need to be strong advocates for the people we serve, and we need to help them become more effective advocates for themselves.”

“Steve was selected to present as part of our Advocacy in Health Speaker Series because of his success in changing long-held beliefs and improving lives,” said Billie Hall, president and CEO of the Sunflower Foundation.

“Sometimes ‘advocacy’ is seen as only happening through direct contact with legislators and local officials, and that’s important. But sometimes advocacy involves pushing for regulatory change – and just getting people to work together in different ways,” she said. “Steve is an excellent example of someone who helped bring about needed change by advocating within a system.”

As a pioneer in eldercare reform, Shields has helped transform traditional nursing homes and retirement facilities into the “Household” model in more than 40 states and 10 countries. He co-authored *In Pursuit of the Sunbeam: A Practical Guide to Transformation from Institution to Household* and *The Household Model Business Case*. He is also a faculty member at the Kansas State University Center on Aging, where he teaches leadership in long term care.

This is the Sunflower Foundation’s second year to feature nationally known speakers as part of its advocacy initiative, which is designed to provide education and training opportunities for nonprofit leaders in Kansas who want to become more involved in public policy.

This event and the reception following are free and open to the public, but require advance reservations by calling (785) 232-3000 or visiting www.sunflowerfoundation.org.

###