

For Immediate Release

CONTACT:

Kirsten Lance

617-482-0042

443-285-2706

klance@denterlein.com

**RESIDENT AT AVITA OF NEWBURYPORT WINS 2018 EXCELLENCE AWARD FROM MASSACHUSETTS ASSISTED LIVING ASSOCIATION**

**June 6, 2018** – Tom Pendergast, a resident at Avita of Newburyport, was named a recipient of the Resident Spirit Excellence Award by the Massachusetts Assisted Living Association (Mass-ALA) at the organization’s annual Excellence Awards Dinner on May 23, 2018. The awards are presented each year to individuals at every level of assisted living who have demonstrated their desire to make a positive difference in the lives of residents and who, in the view of their peers, stand out as role models in the industry.

Pendergast is described by members of his community as someone with a “heart of gold,” who “made a great impact on their community almost the moment he arrived.” He has been a community builder at Avita of Newburyport, serving as a role model for all residents and staff. He is always one of the first residents to get involved in activities, and he encourages the other residents to join him. He regularly visits with all the residents at Avita of Newburyport, creating a true sense of community and companionship for all.

“With a growing senior population in Massachusetts, it is more important than ever that the assisted living community is supported by dedicated and compassionate employees and volunteers,” said Chris Cullen, chair of the Mass-ALA Board of Directors. “Our 2018 award winners truly exemplify this dedication and compassion, going above and beyond every day to touch the lives of all those in their communities.”

The Resident Spirit Excellence Award recognizes a resident at a Mass-ALA provider member organization who exemplifies the heart and soul of their assisted living community, and whose individual leadership, interaction with other residents and community spirit makes the community a home.

**About Mass-ALA**

The Massachusetts Assisted Living Association (Mass-ALA, formerly Mass-ALFA) is a non-profit association dedicated to professionally operated assisted living residences in Massachusetts that provide housing and services for individuals with varied needs and income levels. Established in 1990 as a state affiliate of the Argentum (formerly ALFA), Mass-ALA has grown to hundreds of members including assisted living providers and associated professionals. Mass-ALA serves as the voice of assisted living in Massachusetts, providing information and education, and advocating on behalf of our members and the seniors they serve. Mass-ALA promotes a model of care which treats all residents with dignity, provides privacy and encourages independence and freedom of choice.

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