

My name is Donald Bell and I am the 400th member of Lincoln Park Village. I like that distinction. As a native-born Chicago Southsider I arrived in that strange uncharted cultural region called the Northside almost 2 years ago.

I truly was a man whose life was in transition. I had just lost my mother for whom I served as caregiver for the last 18 years of her life. I left behind two adult sons and six grandchildren. I had just turned 65, yet I hoped to resume my professional career. As a gay man, I was looking forward to being part of the first generation of out LGBT seniors.

What I found at The Village was just what I needed. I found contemporaries not only working to age in place, but to live active and purposeful lives. I found commitment to expanding awareness through the LGBT Task Force and new approaches to re imagining my aging experience through Life 3.0. It didn't matter that I was African-American. It didn't matter that I was from the Southside. And thanks to Member Plus, it didn't matter that I had limited financial resources. I found welcome.