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www.stlouiscenter.org



PR Director Joe Yekulis Retires from St. Louis Center

July 27, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chelsea, MI

St. Louis Center is announcing the retirement of Public Relations Director Joseph Yekulis, effective Friday July 30, 2021. Yekulis has held this position since September 1, 2005, and prior to that had been a member of the SLC Community Advisory Council from 1994-2004. During his time at the Center, he has seen many changes take place to improve the facilities for the residents who reside there with intellectual and developmental disabilities. “An incredible transformation took place when we began the ‘Legacy’ capital campaign following the 50th Anniversary in 2010,” said Yekulis. “We began by creating a new Welcome and Orientation Center in 2011, then came the Special Needs Playground in 2013, the Assisted Living program in Fr. Guanella Hall in 2014, and the Children’s Homes in St. Louis Guanella Village in 2018. With the closing of the Children’s Program this year, those homes are now being converted into Adult Foster Care Homes. Five more buildings were added to the Village at the end of 2020, and eventually just about all of the residents living on campus will have his/her own room.”

Additional highlights of Yekulis’ career at SLC included two back-to-back trips to Italy in 2010 and 2011. “The first trip was a family trip that enabled us to see all of the historical places in the life of the founder of the Servants of Charity, St. Louis Guanella, from Rome to Como to Fraciscio, Italy in the Alps where he was born,” said Yekulis. “Then in 2011 Fr. Enzo Addari organized a trip for 50 people from the United States to attend the Canonization of St. Louis Guanella in Vatican Square on October 23rd. I was given the privilege of being a part of the pre-canonization ceremonies to recite a piece in English in front of the papal altar to about 30,000 people. Then during the recessional, Pope Benedict came within 50 ft. of me as he made his way back into the Vatican. Vatican City and Rome are two of the greatest places in the world to visit.”

Prior to his work at St. Louis Center, Yekulis was a Washtenaw County Commissioner for ten years representing Western Washtenaw County, and became President of the Michigan Association of Counties in 2001. He was also a member of the Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Department for 17 years, and worked throughout the county as a Road Patrol Deputy and a Sergeant. As a deputy, he was a paramedic and traffic crash Reconstructionist, and as a sergeant, he became the first Central Dispatch Director in 1990 and helped to implement the new 9-1-1 system countywide.

St. Louis Center is a caring, residential, family living and learning environment providing for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of children and adults with developmental disabilities.



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Reflecting on his time at St. Louis Center, Yekulis said, “There are many wonderful people who care about people with developmental disabilities, and it’s been a privilege to get to know everyone who has been a part of the St. Louis Center family for the past 27 years. I want to thank all of the people from the community who have helped St. Louis Center along the way, especially the folks who have supported our golf outings, fundraising dinners and the special events that I’ve been privileged to MC and write about. St. Louis Center has a regional following that includes the Catholic Diocese of Lansing, the Italian American Community in Oakland and Macomb Counties and the Knights of Columbus throughout Michigan. They’ve all become special friends on a personal level, and being here has been a special part of my life.”

Joe and his wife Denise have two dogs Stella and Betsy Ross, and are residents of Chelsea, where they have lived for the past 41 years. Joe will continue his work in the Knights of Columbus as the head of the 4th Degree in the Lansing and Kalamazoo Dioceses.

St. Louis Center is located in Chelsea, MI, and has been caring for people with I/DD for the past 61 years. For more information, please visit www.stlouiscenter.org, or call 734-475-8430.

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Photo by Kelly Flaherty:
Photo #1 – Staff File Photo
#2239 – Joe MC’ing an event

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