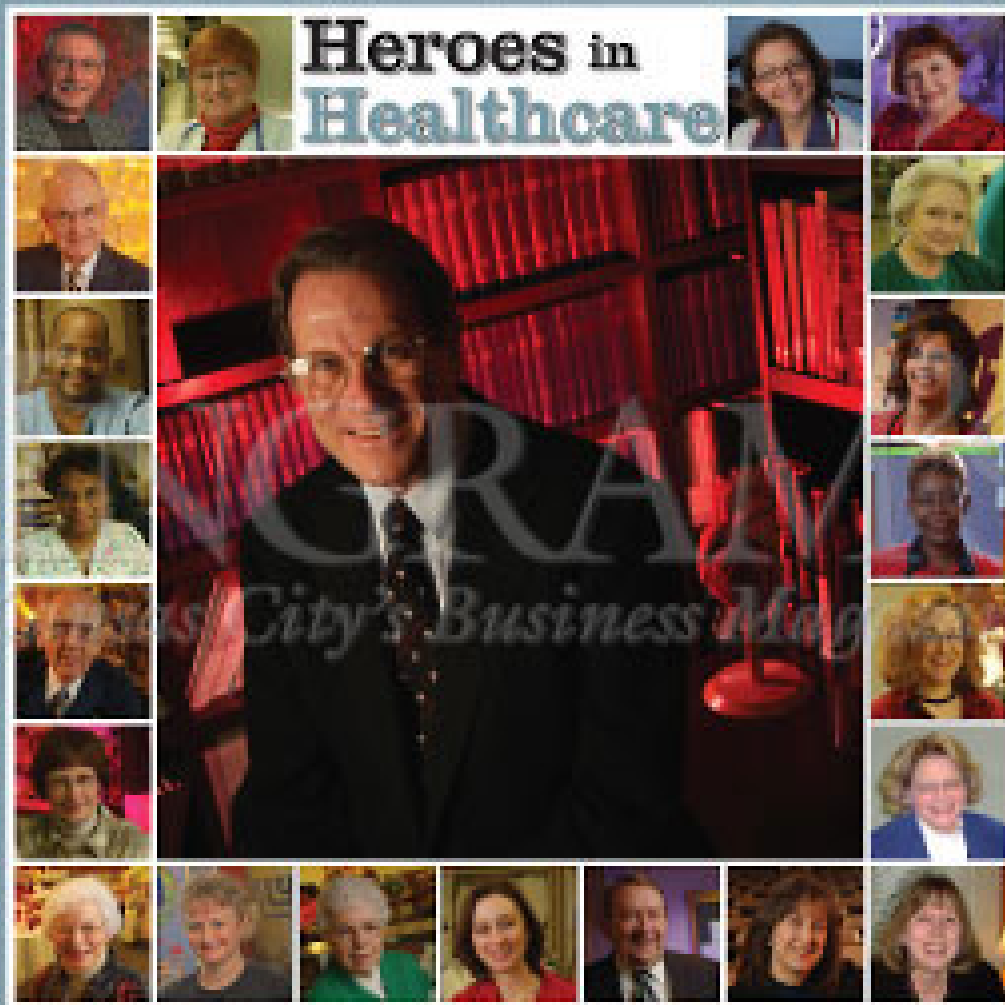


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Heroes in Healthcare Professional Services

K.J. Langlais & Penny Shaffer GERTI



When K.J. Langlais and Penny Shaffer met several years ago at an aging conference, they recognized a shared concern for the practice and education of long-term care for the elderly. A year later, they opened the Geriatric Education, Research & Training Institute, (GERTI). Since October 2003, more than 300 students have gone through the program, and Langlais and Shaffer have recently expanded classes to Manhattan, Hays and other parts of Kansas.

Housed in the Johnson County Nursing Center (JCNC), GERTI was established to improve skill levels and better educate nurses, nursing home administrators and others about long-term care and healthcare services for elders with dementia. In her 23 years as a nursing home administrator and consultant, JCNC and GERTI Executive Director and Administrator Langlais detected “not only a hunger for communication and education, but a system struggling. My passion is trying to right a wrong in the healthcare industry.”

With more than 20 years' experience as a nurse and instructor of geriatric psychiatry, Shaffer came to the same conclusions. As GERTI's director of education, she assesses each new group of students and teaches 90 percent of the courses. The 40-hour comprehensive education program teaches, among other things, Resident Assessment & Care and Understanding Dementia, Depression & Delirium.