Bridge work
A new chamber exec seeks stronger ties between businesses, young professionals.
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Kara Luzik Canale is the new vice president of chamber operations with the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and Capital Region Economic Development Corp.

Kara Luzik Canale

By Jennifer Wentz
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You get out of bed, and the lights turn on. The temperature is already exactly how you want it. The blinds come up without you lifting a finger.

As you grow older, your children receive a message on their phones that let them know you’ve gotten up and opened the fridge to eat. The retirement community where you live can keep track of your vital signs through a device you wear a few hours every day. An app-based portal on your iPad, smart phone or computer lets you keep track of the activities you can join and keep in touch with your family through a single portal.
And you can live independently well into old age.
Senior-living provider Masonic Villages is teaming up with a North Carolina-based technology company called K4Connect to make this Jetsons-esque future a reality for any of its residents who want it. Residents are currently testing a community portal made by K4, while a prototype “smart cot-

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Retirement campus tests smart-home tools

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tage" is set to be completed at Masonic Villages' Elizabethtown campus in November. Masonic Villages offers a range of retirement living services, from cottages to personal care facilities, for more than 1,800 residents across Pennsylvania. In addition to the 1,400-acre Elizabethtown campus, it has locations in the Dallas, Lafayette Hill, Sewickley, and Warminster areas.

The company's senior technology division, Masonic Villages, offers a range of services to make residents' lives more comfortable and enjoyable. To that end, it offers a range of services, from personal care to home automation. Masonic Villages' senior technology division is one of the largest in the country, and it offers a range of services to make residents' lives more comfortable and enjoyable.

If everything goes as planned, residents will have convenient access to resources and potentially live independently longer. Masonic Villages' senior technology division will help you make more efficient use of its staff, something its leaders see as increasingly important in the ever-changing health care industry.

From Touch ID to smart homes

K4Connect founder and CEO Scott Moody vowed to anyone who would listen that he was going to retire after Apple bought his company five years ago.

He broke that vow quickly. Moody was the founder and CEO of AuthenTec, the company that developed the technology behind the Touch ID fingerprint reader on iPhones. When Apple bought AuthenTec for $356 million in 2012, Moody looked forward to an early retirement.

A mission trip to Rwanda in 2013 changed his plans, he said. There, he met a woman who not only helped local orphans but also ran businesses that employed battered women.

Moody, who was not yet 60 at the time, realized he could do more with his life. He co-founded K4Connect later that year at the age of 57, naming the new venture after his wife, Katherine, and their three daughters, Kelsey, Kristin, and Kourtney.

The company initially worked on technology designed to create smart devices — the Internet-connected home gadgets that make up the so-called Internet of Things — into a single system that could give users easy access to all its devices. Then he had coffee with a man who had multiple sclerosis. The man told Moody he was familiar with about 1,000 steps he could take each day before his body gave out. Technology like K4s, the man said, could help him make sure he put each step to good use.

Moody found the perfect melding of market demand and social impact, K4 shifted its focus to smart technologies that could help older and disabled adults get around better.

"For us, it's a novelty," Moody said of smart technology. "For them, it's a necessity."

The K4 platform acts as a kind of central brain for many of the smart-home technologies that can also create dashboards for individual clients that offer features like customized photo-sharing, event scheduling and video chat in a single app.

Versions of the K4 technology now serve retirement communities representing more than 100,000 residents in the U.S., Moody said. The company has hopes of growing that number and eventually expanding into Canada and parts of Asia.

Moody doesn't see himself retiring again any time soon.

Bringing K4 to the midstate

K4Connect came to Masonic Villages about two years ago when a resident at the retirement community's Elizabethtown campus mentioned to Masonic's staff that his grandson worked for the company.

Since then, K4 has piloted technology in some of the Elizabethtown campus apartments. It is also piloting a resident portal, called K4Community, that lets residents use their tablets, smartphones or computers to check out campus activity calendars, see daily menus at the campus's six restaurants and view a campus directory, among other activities. The same portal will eventually include a section for smart technologies, as well as tools that let residents communicate with their families and campus staff.

One of the 72 new cottages under construction at the Elizabethtown campus will be a prototype "smart cottage." It will include about 40 gadgets connected to a K4 modem tucked into the house's laundry room. The modem will collect data from the various technologies — like refrigerator and bed sensors, or even vital-sign monitors to Masonic's staff. It could also eventually send information to residents' families if they choose.

The cottage will serve as a kind of laboratory where Masonic Villages can test whether the Internet of Things can let people age in their own homes, said Patrick Sampsel, Masonic Villages' chief environmental and facilities officer. One of the campus's older couples volunteered to act as Guinea pigs in the prototype cottage and help Masonic figure out which features could eventually be offered to other residents.

The beauty of K4, Sampsel said, is that it can interact with off-the-shelf smart home technologies. That capability essentially makes it "future-proof," he said, letting residents test new technologies as they become available.

"Things are so uncertain or moving so fast in the health care arena that it's difficult to keep up, but now we have an actual laboratory where if we have an idea, we can actually go out and test it," Sampsel said.

And the technology is relatively inexpensive. Someone could probably equip an entire home with basic features like programmable light switches, a thermostat and motion sensors for $500 to $600, said Masonic Villages COO Raymond Tierney, and add additional devices as needed for $30 to $75 a piece.

"I would expect five years from now as you walk into each different cottage, each resident is going to be using that at a different level," he said.

The biggest barrier to bringing these features to everyone will likely be residents' willingness to adapt, Tierney said. But if portal pilot is any indication, that shouldn't be a problem.

"The response was actually overwhelming," Tierney said. "They were very responsive, the people who didn't have it were asking when they could get it."

Bryan Hill, a 71-year-old retired prison warden and current president of Masonic's Retirement Living Residents' Association, is among the residents testing the portal. He uses it most often for looking at restaurant menus, as well as for looking up other residents in the village directory.

He has become a sort of unoffical trainer and cheerleader for the Community as well, showing residents who approach him with questions about things like snow-removal policies and dress codes and how they can find the answers on their own using the handbook in the K4 app.

He believes K4 has served as a catalyst for more residents to start using technology like iPads, as well as a catalyst for Masonic to upgrade its own broadband infrastructure to support it. K4, Tierney and Sampsel said, is being rolled out alongside broader campus-wide improvements like increased internet access.

Hill and his wife are still relatively young and active. But Hill recognizes that in the coming years, they may need some of the smart home technologies that Masonic plans to plug into the K4 system. He has no problem with his family or doctors eventually having access to things like motion detectors in his home, he said, because he knows it will give his family peace of mind.

"As we grow older, and we all do, we're looking forward to something like that," he

Raymond Tierney, left, COO at Masonic Village at Elizabethtown, and Patrick Sampsel, chief environmental and facilities officer, are introducing technology designed to help residents of the retirement community live independently longer. PHOTO BY JONALDINER
Designer strives to empower poor women

By Nicole Chynoweth
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As she browsed through fabric at a market in India, Timbre Adidala was approached by a complete stranger who asked her if she needed help sewing.

The woman was from the Banjari community, a nomadic group in India with its own customs, languages and style of dress. Adidala, 30, of Lebanon, recognized her entrepreneurial spirit and desire to make her own money. She respected that.

Soon the woman would become the first employee of Lush Bazaar, Adidala’s fashion line offering handmade clothing, accessories and home décor. With a passion for design and determination to help women in her native country, Adidala started the business as a way to create job opportunities for underprivileged women.

“I’ve always wanted to make a difference,” she said. “There are people who are doctors, missionaries and pastors. … but for me, fashion is a way that people express themselves. I believe that with Lush Bazaar, this line is a way people are expressing that they believe in other women and they also believe in doing good, even while they dress.”

“When you wear Lush Bazaar, there is a story behind that,” she said. “There is a person on the other side of the world while you’re sleeping who is making this piece of clothing, coming to work happy that they’re there because they’re actually able to provide for themselves and their family.”

Empowering her employees

Adidala sat down with the Business Journal in early July, just a few weeks after her office space in India was burglarized. The business took a financial hit and she had to lay off several employees, but Adidala is bouncing back, preparing a fall line that will feature bold, hand-dyed items and woven pieces.

Lush Bazaar is just a couple years old, but through her employees, Adidala, who came to the U.S. when she was three months old, has already learned a lot about what living in India is like for women.

“Though India is growing economically, it still holds onto its traditions and cultures that aren’t helping women,” she said.

There’s a saying that cows are more sacred than women in India, she said, “a really scary, goosebump” idea.

The lower-class aren’t given a choice, and that goes on throughout their life,” she said. “They’re not given a choice as to whether they want to have kids or not. They don’t understand what’s it’s like to be respected. They don’t understand what it’s like to have someone ask them a question and want to know their answer.”

“A lot of times it is hard for me to understand them,” she said. “I just think it comes easy for a woman to explain themselves or tell me, ‘I’m not feeling well. I’m not coming to work.’ They just won’t show up because they don’t want to have the confrontation.”

Adidala encourages them to speak up, to share their ideas and opinions with her. In a way, she said working for Lush Bazaar is akin to therapy for the employees, as they previously didn’t feel they had a voice. It’s a safe space where what they have to say is valued.

Her first employee is one example of how her staff members have opened up over time. After working with her for a while, the woman shared her back story: She was married at 14, and her husband committed suicide. With children to support, she started working. In addition to the tasks she had to do for her in-laws.

It made Adidala realize “this is probably just one story of so many other women and girls that probably go through this.” She knows she can’t help them all, but maybe helping a few could change that cycle, she said.

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Lush Bazaar merchandise can be purchased online or at That Shau Girl in Lancaster. Eventually, Adidala hopes to open a fashion truck in Central Pennsylvania and employ single mothers, specifically my home country,” she said. “I grew up here all my life, and I want to help people here who need it as well. As much as I say I want to help India, I want to help America as well because it gave me everything I have today.”

Her ultimate goal is to put Lush Bazaar’s fashion on a major runway, all the while improving the lives of women.

The importance of the business venture for Adidala can be traced back to her childhood.

“I’ve always respected women in my life for what they’ve gone through,” she said. “Like my mother, when she came to this country, she knew nobody and she was like 21 years old. I was her first child. She spoke English and she was educated, but she left her family and everything to start this new life, to give her kids a better life. She grew as a woman and she was so strong through it all.”

“My grandmother was a principal, and my other grandmother was a pastor and an activist,” she said. “All of these women molded me to be a strong woman, and my mission is to help other women become...