

## Resident Samantha Lee

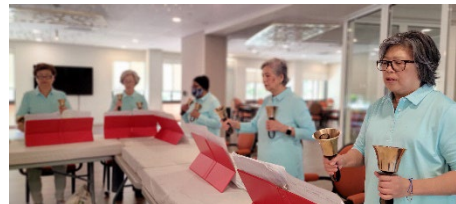
### Aging Unbound



Samantha Lee has been a resident at Hunters Woods Fellowship House for about two years. She was born in Vietnam, but her family background is Chinese due to her grandfather moving from China to North Vietnam many years ago. While growing up in Vietnam, Samantha studied English in high school. Her family eventually immigrated to the U.S. where they settled in Virginia.

Ms. Lee retired from her job early when she was only 62 because her mother was sick. But she still felt young at the time and did not feel like she was over 60. When her mother passed away in 2020, she felt very empty and sad. She was living in her sister's basement and had been on the Hunters Woods waitlist for several years. Eventually, she was able to become a resident of Hunters Woods, which improved her perspective on life.

May is Older Americans Month, and the theme is older adults unbound, and Ms. Lee certainly personifies this. She is very energetic in community events like dancing, exercising, and wellness. She has even joined the handbell class and learned how to make music. These activities have provided her with many opportunities to make friends with other Hunters Woods residents. Based on the community's monthly event calendar, she takes time to plan out activities she would like to participate in. This has allowed her to fill her day with enjoyable activities that keep her very busy and feeling young. Her daily routine includes a walk in the park when the weather permits, as well as reading and listening to music. She pays close attention to the House Bus schedule so she can plan for various outings to stay engaged with other residents on local trips. She also attends worship services every Sunday and participates in Friday evening Bible study. All these things make her feel wanted and youthful.



*Samantha Lee at Handbell class practice*

Regarding what it means to successfully age, Ms. Lee tells us that she is a person of quick motion where life was very hurried before she retired. But after getting a bit older, she realized that she needed to slow down a little and enjoy her life more. So, to keep herself successful in her aging, she exercises more and eats healthily. She also tells us that it is important not only to focus on physical needs but also mental ones, and this is where Hunters Woods programs nourish a positive state of mind and body for her.

Engaging with others in the community daily really benefits Samantha with the aging process.



*Samantha Lee (right) with best friend and resident of Hunters Woods, Ms. Ly*

These interactions make her feel that she is an important part of the community. This helps her combat the aging process and, even though time is passing, she doesn't feel she is getting any older. Each year she still feels the same even though her physical state may be changing little by little.

As far as some advice for the younger generation goes, Samantha says no one understands what getting older means until they get there. Seniors have a lot of experiences and memories to share, and one day everyone will be old. So, try to help seniors and treat them respectfully as you would like to be treated. Try your best to understand seniors and know that we appreciate young people as well. And remember, positively interacting with the younger generation makes us seniors feel happy and young too.



*Samantha Lee at bible study*

**About Older Americans Month:** Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM). The 2023 theme is Aging Unbound, which offers an opportunity to explore diverse aging experiences and discuss how communities can combat stereotypes. To learn more OAM, visit: <https://acl.gov/oam/2023/older-americans-month-2023>