

# Resident Assistance Fund Brings One Man Home



From the time he was a child, Lino Charpentier knew he wanted to serve his country in the military. “My father was raised near the naval base in Bath, Maine,” says his daughter, Catherine. “His entire family worked at Bath Iron Works building naval ships, and growing up he was devoted to the Navy.” After college, Lino became a Captain in the Army – like his father had been – and served in Germany. There, he met his wife, a German translator, started their family, and settled into a military career abroad.

Then health issues intervened to change his path, as they did several times in his life. Lino and his family moved back to the States in 1967 to help his ailing mother. “My grandmother had had one of the first open-heart surgeries in the U.S,” Catherine explains. “She needed help, so we moved to Florida to live with my grandparents, and my Dad took a job as an accountant.”

Years later, medical disaster struck again. “My father became ill with kidney disease in 1996 – he had only about 15 percent kidney function. So he moved to Nashville to be near the VA Hospital, and was put on the kidney transplant list,” Catherine recalls. By 2012, he was no longer able to work. He continued to wait, but the kidney never came and eventually he aged out of the transplant list. It was time for Lino, now divorced, to move closer to his daughter in McLean, Virginia.

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“My Dad really wanted to be in a place with like-minded residents, people he could talk to. He was so devoted to the military, he lived and breathed it,” she says. Vinson Hall Retirement Community was a natural fit. Lino moved into his apartment in Vinson Hall at the height of COVID in 2020, when residents were largely on lockdown, but his winning smile and affable demeanor won him friends easily. “He was so proud to be here, and so grateful. It was a godsend for us.”

Then in the summer of 2022, Lino ended up in the hospital for a month with heart problems and an infection, both exacerbated by his renal issues. It was no longer an option to return to live independently in his apartment. He needed the level of care he could receive at VHRC’s Arleigh Burke Pavilion – but the extra expense was beyond his limited means.

The Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation stepped in to offer help through the Resident Assistance Fund, so that Lino could move back to VHRC to a suite at Arleigh Burke. Catherine visited her father daily, and he was able to remain in the community he had come to love until his passing in January 2023. “I don’t know what we would have done without the Fund’s help,” says Catherine. “This was the perfect place at the perfect time for my Dad. I’m forever grateful.”

