



Spotlight on our Employees. Christian Nienaber

Who is Christian Nienaber? Most of us know him as “Chris, the Painter.” Whether he is touching up paint on campus or repainting a common area or your unit, Chris is the “go to” guy when it comes to paint. Chris is a Canterbury Woods employee everyone seems to know, but do we really?

Chris came to the United States in 1971 from Korea, when he was nine years old and was adopted by a family in Minnesota. En route to the USA, he remembers landing in Japan with other children adoptees and experiencing culture shock, moving sidewalks and electric hand dryers in the rest rooms! Fortunately, all Korean boys learn taekwondo. Chris took lessons six days a week in Korea and was a junior black belt. This can come in handy in middle America, particularly if you are a young boy and look differently from your classmates. He couldn't speak English when he arrived in the USA. However, now he regrets that he can no longer speak Korean. One of his fondest childhood memories was spending two months, each summer at Camp Jackpine, in Minong, Wisconsin, a Jewish summer camp, even though his adoptive family was Protestant. When Chris was a teenager, his parents retired and moved to California.

In high school, Chris played ice hockey and today he remains a big fan of professional hockey. He is currently a San Jose Sharks fan. He also likes to read nonfiction books on military history, airplanes, wars and cooking.

Chris recently turned fifty and his fiancé took him to Las Vegas for a few days. They have been a couple for nine years and Chris is very involved with the lives of her children, who are thirteen and fifteen. He goes to all her son's baseball games and has coached his team.

Chris began working in the maintenance field at Park Lane Senior Living Community in Monterey, followed by working for an independent painting contractor. He joined Canterbury Woods in 1989. His supervisor at the time was Dick Williams, whom he describes as a father figure and mentor from whom he learned a great deal about building maintenance. It comes as no surprise, due to his outgoing personality, that his favorite part of his job is interacting with residents, whom he considers his extended family. Since his job at Canterbury Woods is not full time, he supplements his income with outside projects and is appreciative of any referrals.

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