



Lois Nelson named director of Cortland Foundation

Cortland Acres has hired its first executive director for the Cortland Foundation, and the board didn't have to go very far to find the perfect person.

Lois Nelson of Thomas started in her new post in September. She brings a wealth of management and non-profit experience to the position, as well as strong knowledge of the local community, region and state.

"Everyone has been very nice and offered to help with anything I need," Nelson said. "I'm still learning, but I've talked with Bobbi Grinnan and we will work together on outreach efforts."

Nelson will work with the Cortland Foundation Board, Cortland Acres staff, and the board's Planning Committee to identify specific projects and fund-raising goals over the coming months. The Cortland Foundation's mission is to "Secure the resources necessary to enhance the health and well-being of the Cortland community."

"My goal is to help make the organizations – Cortland Acres and the Cortland Foundation – successful with whatever projects they undertake," she said. "People are more likely to give to a cause and to something they feel a connection with. We will identify those kinds of projects while we also build an endowment. How we go about doing all of that will be a work in progress."

Dewey Rice, president of the Cortland Foundation Board of Directors, said members are excited about having Nelson help move the organization forward.

"I've known Lois for many years, and she's an exceptionally bright and hardworking person," Rice said. "I'm confident that with all of us working together, we can accomplish great things for Cortland and the entire community."

At the same time as Nelson starts as the Foundation's first executive director, the Planning Committee will be identifying goals for the short- and long-term future at

Cortland, as well as ways to fund those priorities.

“There are lots of ideas out there already, and we will be working on a process for more input and feedback,” Nelson said. “It’s an incredibly exciting time for all of us.”

Nelson is a graduate of West Virginia University with a Master’s in Business and a B.S. in Family Resources. Most recently she served as the executive director for the Ohio-West Virginia YMCA, where she managed a two-state YMCA youth program including HI-Y, Youth in Government, Model United Nations and Camp Horseshoe.

Building relationships, coordinating programs and events, securing resources and finding solutions were all a part of her work. As part of her earlier career, she worked as a program director and a service learning project coordinator for the YMCA. Previously Nelson was the executive director of Canaan Valley Institute (CVI) where she found funding for sustainability, oversaw operations, managed personnel and coordinated all aspects of the non-profit.

Nelson has been a part-time emergency medical technician (EMT) and an EMT Instructor in Tucker, Preston and Randolph counties for more than 15 years. She also has served on the boards of Alpine Heritage, Tucker Community Foundation, Tucker County Development Authority and North Central Regional and State EMS.

She continues her service to the community through Rotary, her church and as the local group leader for Weight Watchers.

For more information about the Cortland Foundation or to reach Nelson, call 304-463-4181.