



*In Honor of*  
**JOHN A. DIFFEY**  
*President and CEO*  
The Kendal Corporation

John Diffey was born in Rhode Island in 1948 and lived in a total of five states before finishing high school. He graduated from the Kinkaid School in Houston in 1966 where he was honored in History, served as student body President, and co-captained baseball and basketball teams.

John graduated from Duke University with a BA in History in 1970. He remains a loyal Blue Devil, playing on Duke's Alumni Golf Team and serving on the Duke Performances Advisory Board.

Following graduation, he helped friends with their family farm and then, in first experiences with several non-profit health-related organizations, found his future life's work.



**EMORY**  
UNIVERSITY

Inspired by those early experiences and knowing he needed additional training, John enrolled in the MBA program at Emory University. While there, he interned as a Financial Analyst at the Securities and Exchange Commission. At graduation in 1976, John was honored by the Emory MBA faculty as the Most Outstanding Graduate in Management. After graduating, he later became the volunteer Treasurer and a board member of the Emory University Federal Credit Union.

It was John's good fortune to be recruited, right out of graduate school, to be the Administrator of Budd Terrace at Wesley Woods, by rising star and exceptional mentor, Larry Minnix. After a formative six years there, leading the staff of a HUD-financed 270-bed intermediate care facility, John was invited to become the CEO of Carol Woods Retirement Community in Chapel Hill, North Carolina in 1982. John and his Carol Woods team master-planned, refinanced, and expanded Carol Woods.



Martha caught his eye shortly after he moved to Chapel Hill. They were married in 1983 and have 2 children, Matthew and Louisa.

John was one of four co-drafters of North Carolina's CCRC disclosure and regulatory statutes and served on advisory boards and committees of the North Carolina Legislature appointed by Democratic Lt. Governor Bob Jordan, the Duke University Center for Aging and Human Development, and UNC School of Social Work.

John served the field nationally—chairing LeadingAge's (then AAHSA's) CCRC Committee, and serving as a two-term Commissioner, Financial Advisory Panel-Chair, Evaluator, and Vice-Chair of the Continuing Care Accreditation Commission, of which he was the first publicly elected member.



In 1992, John became The Kendal Corporation's second President, following founding CEO and iconic CCRC-pioneer Lloyd Lewis. John and his new colleagues significantly expanded Kendal, developed an innovative governance model, built a more diverse and inclusive culture in keeping with Kendal's values, modeled and promoted outcomes-measurement to improve quality

and inform public policy, and successfully revived several previously unaffiliated and struggling CCRCs. Beyond Kendal, John was appointed to the Pennsylvania's Intergovernmental Council on Long-Term Care by former Republican Governor Tom Ridge.

He served on LeadingAge's Board, and as founding Co-Chair of its leadership academy. John was an at-large Delegate to the White House Conference on Aging in 2005, and he received LeadingAge's Award of Honor in 2006.

John stepped down as CEO at the end of 2015 and retired completely in mid-2016, after twenty-four years with Kendal and a forty-year career with non-profit organizations serving older adults. He hasn't slowed down though—ask him what he's doing now.



*“Everybody mattered in John’s eyes. John wasn’t just talking to folks to clear the air, he was talking because he cared. John lives an actual belief that there is indeed a light, a goodness and something precious in every single one of us.”*

– Sean Kelly, CEO, The Kendal Corporation