

# Mark Jeffries is New Eunice Smith Home Administrator

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ALTON, IL – Mark Jeffries, the new administrator of Eunice Smith Nursing Home, knows a good long-term care facility when he sees one. ESNH fits that description and he intends to keep it that way.

But Jeffries knows that other facilities don't always provide everything a resident and their families would desire. It was just such an experience that led him into his occupation.

“When I earned my master’s degree in Health Care Administration from Saint Louis University in 2005, hospital administration was my goal,” said Jeffries, 46. “But our

family had an experience where my grandmother was in a bad nursing home. My family took care of her for the last three years of my life. She lived at my mother's house and died in 1999.

"I want to make sure that no one has to go through that. Eunice Smith Home has a great staff and an excellent tradition of care. I just want to enhance that and take it even farther."

Jeffries, who began at Eunice Smith Home on Oct. 8, is originally from the St. Louis area and lives in Chesterfield, Mo. He earned a bachelor's degree in Theology from SLU in 1999 before continuing toward his master's degree. His first job in long-term care was in Evansville, Ind., then he spent the last three years as the executive director of Granite Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Granite City.

"I really admire the history of Alton Memorial Hospital, the tradition at Eunice Smith Home and the affiliation with BJC," Jeffries said.

While in Granite City, Jeffries applied to have half-scale traveling model of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial come to the area over the 2011 Labor Day weekend. For him, there's a personal connection: he had a family member die in Vietnam.

"My cousin's name, Ronnie Dean Davis, is on the wall. He was killed in 1968," Jeffries said. "So I've always been very interested in the Vietnam Memorial."

Jeffries had a chance to see the traveling wall several years ago in Montgomery City, Mo.

"I walked up and touched the area where my cousin's name was," he said. "I never even knew my cousin, but my aunt hurt. I remember her tears."

**Mark Jeffries in front of the sign at Eunice Smith Home on the Alton Memorial Hospital campus.**