



BROTHER OFFERS FINANCIAL EXPERTISE TO THOSE IN NEED



With more than 40 years of experience as a financial consultant, Brother John E. Stanojev has a wealth of knowledge to share. Through the Masonic Outreach Program, he helps people in need of financial advice who may have nowhere else to turn.

Pennsylvania Freemasons and their families seeking information, direction and education can find the assistance they need through the pro-bono Outreach Program, which provides a panel of attorneys, home assistance, referrals and a finance panel, among other services.

John, owner of Capital Insurance & Investment Planning, Inc. in New Britain, PA, serves on the program's finance panel. The 15-member all-volunteer panel assists those in need of developing or improving budgeting and other skills. All panel members have a professional background in the financial field.

"We have resources that we can share after all these years of business, so that members get the best attention we can give them," John said. "The majority of the people we help are in the stages of retirement where they may have made a few bad decisions, and we're trying to help them straighten it out."

John assists clients with estate planning, investment needs, post-retirement needs, etc. For clients looking to enter a Masonic

Village, John will review their finances to see if they qualify for financial assistance or have the income to sustain themselves there.

"A lot of times, my job is just answering questions and pointing people in the right direction," John said. "For those who want to stay living independently, I introduce them to county services that they may not have realized were available, like waiver programs, where someone will come in and clean your house, cook meals for you, make sure someone does the grocery shopping and keep you from going into a nursing facility prematurely."

John has served on the panel since 2016 and has helped more than 14 people.

"We find out who lives close enough to the client to get there if a visit needs to be done in person," John said. "We do our very best for them, either by giving them the answers they were looking for or connecting them with the right resources for themselves or their families."

John recalls a client who was overwhelmed with taking care of his ailing wife. John helped to get him into the county waiver program, where a visiting nurse assisted him with caretaking. John also introduced him to the veterans' benefit program, which provided monies to pay for additional medical expenses.

"His wife ultimately passed away, but he called me to thank me and said he wouldn't have been able to care for his wife without me," John said. "It was a really good feeling."

When he's not volunteering his time, John is an adjunct professor at the Community College of Philadelphia, where he teaches professional education to certified public accountants. He's also a member of Lodge No. 245, Doylestown, since 1981.

"I come from a long line of Masons," he said. "My father and grandfathers and all of my uncles were Masons. If you believe in being a Mason, what we do is help each other, and that's what it's all about. Doing this is my way of giving back and contributing."

Brother Nicolas K. Mahler, director of outreach for Masonic Villages, facilitates the outreach program. John has been a wonderful addition to the finance panel, he said.

"John is engaged and he seeks to be involved and contribute to supporting the fraternity," he said. "That's what we want in somebody who is going to help someone else."