

Murphy Monitor

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Murphy resident lends helping hand

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Everyone needs a helping hand occasionally, especially new moms, the elderly or those recovering from surgery. Enter Home Helpers, a franchise business opened by Murphy resident Gerard Odulio, along with his parents.

"I'm very passionate about being able to provide affordable, dependable in-home care to seniors throughout Murphy, Wylie, Sachse and the surrounding cities," Odulio said. "The more I work with our customers and get to know the challenges they face every day, the more I want to help."

Home Helpers provides non-medical home health care. Based out of central Ohio, the company now has franchises nationwide. Odulio opened his Home Helpers business in

September, 2008. His parents had recently retired and wanted to start a business that provided help to people. Together, they and Odulio started checking out various franchises.

"We knew we wanted to provide a service and help others," Odulio said. "With the aging baby boomer population, senior and elder care will be a growing trend. We looked at different franchises and Home Helpers stood out as being the best."

Following a long process of state licensing and training, Odulio leased office space in east Plano, on Alma Road by Collin Creek Mall.

"Our number goal is to help people," Odulio said. "Our staff will cook light meals, do light housekeeping, provide transportation to stores or doctors' appointments, help with light physical therapy or exercise, whatever our client needs."

Odulio said one-on-one care is a big



Photo by Jamie Engle

Gerard Odulio and his mom, Lourdes Odulio, have opened Home Helpers in Murphy.

plus. "At a hospital, it might be one caregiver for every four patients. We give one-on-one care and can pay special attention to the patient's needs. Or, we can give a needed break to a full-

time caregiver."

Services extend to watching children, which is especially helpful to

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moms who just gave birth or those recovering from surgery.

"A mom might have twins and need help with the twins or with her older children," Odulio said. "A person recovering from surgery may need help with some light housekeeping. We take care of seniors but also anyone who needs our assistance, like those with disabilities, a long-term illness or Alzheimer's. We have a client whose spouse works during the day, so we check in on them while their spouse is at work. We strive to give our clients independence at home, make sure they know they are not helpless and not alone."

Odulio saw firsthand what senior home care is like when his 94-year-old grandfather came to live with his parents. Since then, he's found it very interesting to study and learn about senior care and home health care.

"You end up with a totally

new perspective," he said. "You may think about it from time to time, but until you experience it personally, it's hard to imagine how different the needs are. I have a different level of awareness now and my appreciation for the senior population has really grown. They took care of us, now we need to take care of them."

Odulio is studying to become a Certified Senior Adviser through the Society of Certified Senior Advisers. The course focuses on senior health, financial and social issues.

Having grown up in Richardson, Odulio went to Plano East Senior High School, at one time lived in Sachse and now resides in Murphy. "I'm very familiar with the area where our clients live, which is a big benefit," he said. "I know where the stores are, where the doctors are, and it just makes it easier all the way around."

For more information about Home Helpers, call 972-881-4350.