

Helping Hands

BY GINA GALLUCCI-WHITE
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-POST

Many healthcare organizations want to highlight exceptional employees through engagement and recognition. Yet some do not have a mechanism in place or the resources to do so.

Founded in 2013, The Ceca Foundation aims to celebrate caregivers and support staff at participating facilities. In May, the Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit announced its first Maryland-based partnership—one of which is the Genesis Glade Valley Center in Walkersville.

“We were fortunate to be able to meet some folks from the Genesis regional team in Maryland at a conference,” said Nate Hamme, foundation president. “It seemed like a great fit. They were very interested in workforce issues. They know they have some of the hardest working people in the business and finding a better way to publicly recognize and honor these exceptional people and the things they do was a high priority for them.”

The foundation provides a web-based platform for nominations that is accessible anywhere and to anyone who comes to the facility—staff, patients or family members. Nominators type in a name of a staff member and tell a story of how that individual made a difference in a patient’s life.

“No matter how you touch this facility, you have an opportunity to have your voice heard in a positive way and give somebody the limelight they deserve for going above and beyond with their job,” Hamme said.

Nominations are reviewed quarterly by a three-person panel made up



Cathy Warfield

of the healthcare administrator, a Ceca representative and a patient advocate. Hamme said they want to avoid a structure where the person with the most votes wins, but rather focus on identifying a positive behavior in the nominees that is truly inspiring.

In mid-July, Cathy Warfield was recognized as Genesis Glade Valley Center’s first Ceca Foundation honoree. She was acknowledged for multiple contributions, including picking up shifts when others were unavailable, her infectious sense of humor and a willingness to dance with residents to brighten their days.

“That is the type of thing that we are really looking to highlight,” Hamme said. “It is not part of her job description to be a good dancer or a dancer at all, but it is the type of thing that makes you smile. Competency is expected, but that little extra touch of the human experience is so important ... Cathy is an incredibly special person.”

Each foundation award winner receives a \$250 honorarium, a certificate and a gold pin with the Ceca emblem.

The foundation was created by Matthew and Rosemary Lawlor as a way to thank health care professionals. Matthew Lawlor’s mother lived in a military retirement community for a decade and the family was inspired by the level of care she received up until her passing.

Starting with 10 facilities in Washington, D.C., the recognition program has expanded to 35 facilities in six states with the goal of expanding to between 50 and 75 by the end of this year.



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