

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

17 Healthcare Workers Honored by Ceca Foundation

Recognizing the Extraordinary Service of Frontline Caregivers Fighting Coronavirus

WASHINGTON, DC, May 29, 2020—Ceca Foundation is pleased to honor 17 exceptional healthcare workers with a Special Award introduced last month by the organization. The ongoing series of Special Awards are designed to recognize acts of care on the frontlines and behind the scenes during the COVID-19 pandemic. These 17 individuals join the other caregivers that were previously honored, bringing the total to 28 awards.

“Every employee throughout our network of hospitals, skilled nursing, and integrated care communities has stepped-up in meaningful ways to protect patients, senior residents, and one another from the devastating effects of coronavirus,” said Nate Hamme, President of Ceca Foundation. “These essential workers are jeopardizing their own health and personal lives on a daily basis—and while all of these employees deserve our thanks, we are pleased to highlight these 17 in particular with our Special Award.”

The following caregivers are being honored with the second round of Special Awards:

Washington, D.C.

- **Cheryl Lucas**, Assistant Director of Nursing, Army Distaff Center at Knollwood, Washington, DC, for perseverance in serving as the front-line infection control nurse, testing hundreds of residents, providing updated information, comforting family members, and communicating hope during this pandemic.
- **Arlette Kesseng A Mbassa**, Director of Nursing, Army Distaff Center at Knollwood, Washington, DC, for her dedication, sacrifice, commitment, and leadership providing front-line nursing care during this pandemic. There are no self-distancing, work-from-home, or telehealth options for nurses, and Arlette comforts the fearful, swabs for samples, guards the PPE, responds to daily DOH requests, and constantly educates and advocates for her team.
- **Portia Richardson**, Medical Records Director, Stoddard Baptist Global Care, Washington, DC, for her attention to detail in working with regulatory bodies, for organizing and promoting facility events that bring peace to the community, and for her warmth in managing relationships with physicians and funeral homes.

- **Steven Skobel**, Nurse Practitioner, Capital Caring, Washington, DC, for serving as liaison between the medical team attending to a father, who was intubated for 30 days, and his family, while communicating with skill, dedication, and compassion.
- **Georgiana Walker**, LPN at Inspire Rehabilitation and Health Center, Washington, DC, who was recognized by a family member for demonstrating patience, respect, efficiency, timeliness and, above all, love in caring for their mother. Her calm and compassionate professionalism make resident stays peaceful and joyful.

Maryland

- **Noely Diaz de Leon**, Clerk at Genesis Healthcare Franklin Woods, Baltimore, MD, for diligently maintaining scheduled appointments, coordinating transportation, and championing TeleHealth visits with kindness, patience, and respect for both residents and family members.
- **Everly Osborne**, Critical Care Technician, Doctors Community Hospital, Lanham, MD, for her work above and beyond her job responsibilities in the ICU intubating, prone ventilating, and caring for additional patients, even mopping and cleaning floors to ensure safety and security in critical COVID care rooms.

Pennsylvania

- **Kayla Ramsey**, Resident Life Associate, Providence Place Senior Living, Chambersburg, PA, for leaving artistic, creative, though-provoking and informative messages on a whiteboard sign residents and staff use to interact with one another, providing joy and an uplifting way to start the day.
- **Ralph Chatman**, Floor Care Technician, Old Orchard Health Care Center, Easton, PA, for his extraordinary efforts during required moves to accommodate affected patients entering the facility. His efficiency in cleaning, moving belongings, and ensuring the safety of resident environments during an unsettling time made a tremendous difference.
- **Kendra Dixon**, Resident Life Associate, Connections Unit, Providence Place Senior Living, Pottsville, PA, for helping a patient on Hospice care FaceTime his wife so she could share some special moments during a particularly good day he was having. This became a special memory for the wife as her husband passed away shortly after, but she was able to “be by his side” in his last days.
- **Emelia Jocelin-Sainvil**, Nurse Aide, ManorCare Health Services, West Reading, PA, for taking time to provide language interpretation services, and for preparing and delivering cultural foods to residents that brought warmth and comfort to them during uncertain times.

- **Aubrey Marrow**, Resident Life Associate, Providence Place Senior Living, Drums, PA, for his enthusiasm and fun-loving spirit, sharing his passion for dance and his extraordinary devotion to COVID residents, as evidenced by his prepping a COVID survivor for her 101st birthday.
- **Michael Tourangeau**, Dietary Manager, Laurel Lakes Rehabilitation and Wellness Center, Chambersburg, PA, for initiating and implementing an employee meal plan during this crisis, which allowed all staff to be nourished and to ensure safety by minimizing contact with potential infection vectors.
- **Patricia Weaver**, RN Unit Manager, Transitions Healthcare, Gettysburg, PA, for her dedication and efficiency as infection preventionist during the COVID pandemic by distributing masks to all employees, keeping staff updated with current information, lending a listening ear to anxieties and concerns, and ensuring all proper precautions are followed.
- **Amy Ziulko-Yencho**, Night Shift Supervisor at Providence Place Senior Living, Drums, PA, for the manner in which she calms residents with voice or touch, the way she listens to residents and anticipates their needs (even those of their pets), and the way she makes everyone feel like family with her homemade meals.

Virginia

- **Edna Burantuo**, Nurse, Goodwin House, Bailey's Crossroads, VA, for providing moments of joy to residents and their families during this pandemic, such as helping a resident set up video conferencing accounts on his new device and teaching him how to set up virtual visits with his family.

West Virginia

- **Carrie Buzzo**, Clinical Supervisor at West Virginia Caring, Arthurdale, WV, for her calm demeanor in empathizing with patients and families, ensuring supplies and medications are stocked and ready, and for spending extra time educating staff and residents on the signs, symptoms, and precautions necessary during the pandemic.

Each of these Honorees receives a monetary award of \$250, and all are celebrated by their fellow staff members, patients, families, and the Ceca team at their respective healthcare communities during a public and virtual Award presentation over video conference.

Matthew Lawlor, Founder and Executive Chair, further stated, “If there was ever a time to show our appreciation to caregivers, it is now. These are very extraordinary people, and these are extraordinary times.”

Ceca, established in 2013 to celebrate caregiver excellence and promote quality patient care, introduced these Special Awards specifically to honor frontline workers and support staff – all defined as caregivers – in the fight against COVID-19 within healthcare communities. The Lawlor family increased its funding and invited outside donors to help underwrite the Special Awards.

About Ceca Foundation

[Ceca Foundation](#) (derived from “*C*elebrating *ca*regivers”) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit based in Washington, DC, which partners with hospitals, nursing, aging care and other healthcare communities to recognize their exceptional caregivers. Founded by Matthew and Rosemary Lawlor, Ceca seeks to improve the patient experience by publicly recognizing caregivers through its innovative technology platforms (including its software and CecaTV network), support services, and monetary awards—totaling more than \$250,000 to date. For more information, watch a brief [introductory video](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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