

## NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Ceca Foundation Announces a Third Round of Special Award Honorees** *Celebrating the Extraordinary Service of Healthcare Workers During the Time of COVID*

**WASHINGTON, DC, July 1, 2020**—Ceca Foundation is pleased to honor twelve additional health caregivers with the Special Award Ceca introduced in April, at the height of the pandemic. The Special Awards were designed specifically to recognize exceptional acts of care by healthcare workers on the frontlines and behind the scenes, who are working tirelessly every day to protect our most vulnerable populations from COVID-19. Ceca previously recognized [11 caregivers in April and 17 in May](#). This round of Special Awards brings the total to 40 extraordinary healthcare workers honored through Ceca’s unique initiative.

“Every employee throughout our network of hospitals, skilled nursing, and integrated care communities has stepped-up in meaningful ways to support those they care for,” said Nate Hamme, President of Ceca Foundation. “These individuals represent hundreds of dedicated and compassionate healthcare workers at each of their communities. Each person we honor today has been nominated by a peer, manager, leadership team member or a patient, resident, or family member. Their stories illustrate what exceptional caregiving looks like.”

The following caregivers are being honored with Ceca’s third round of Special Awards:

#### **Washington, DC**

- **Sulaiman Bangura**, RN Case Manager, Capital Caring Health, Washington, DC, for returning to a family’s home after hours upon hearing his patient had passed away. He sensed the family needed a trusted and familiar face and wanted to be there to support them in their grieving.
- **Steve Roy McLean**, Porter, Army Distaff Center at Knollwood, Washington, DC, for working double shifts during the most intense period of the pandemic, when so many workers were calling-out from sickness or fear. Steve worked tirelessly and with great humor to support residents and staff, cleaning and disinfecting areas to ensure they had a clean, safe environment, assisting the engineering team and leading the EVS prayer circle after the loss of a teammate.

#### **Maryland**

- **Towanda Evans**, Activities Director, Doctors Community Rehabilitation and Patient Care Center, Lanham, MD, for her heartfelt interactions with residents and staff, and for conducting the kinds of activities that make patients and their families happy.

- **Augustina Jarrett**, Clinical Supervisor, Doctors Community Hospital, Lanham, MD, for being steadfast and reassuring laboratory staff who were processing significant quantities of samples each day. She provided up-to-date information on evolving pandemic procedures and the latest requirements so samples could be processed and tested efficiently.

## Pennsylvania

- **Mary Donna Chevovich**, Connections Activities Associate, Providence Place Senior Living of Drums, PA, for her exceptional humor and caring. She recently wore a funny costume to lift everyone's spirits and always takes time to say a prayer or do something special with anyone who needs it. She makes everyone, residents and coworkers alike, feel like family.
- **Emily Lang**, Receptionist, Providence Place Senior Living of Chambersburg, PA, for creating a photo booth to take pictures of residents with their Mother's Day flowers and gifts to share with their families. She created a wonderful memory for many during this difficult time of separation from their loved ones.
- **Virginia Mill**, Resident Life III/Medical Technician, Providence Place Senior Living of Pottsville, PA, for making Mother's Day special for residents by taking professional photos of all the ladies for a Mother's Day craft project and made them all feel like movie stars. She has brought sunshine to the community during this dark time.
- **Anthony Patterson**, Resident Life Associate II, Providence Place Senior Living of Pottsville, PA, for the personal care he gave to a patient and her family. The daughter of an ailing resident nearing her end was upset when it was time to go home and was kneeling by her mom's bed. Anthony knelt down next to her, consoled her and told her not to worry because he would look after her mother's needs after she left. The daughter needed a friend just then and was so thankful for Anthony's presence and comforting words.
- **Sue Thompson**, Housekeeping Resident Life Associate, Providence Place Senior Living of Chambersburg, PA, for finding a great way for residents and family to connect. She created a distanced "hug" for a resident by using ribbon to measure his arm width and then attached the ribbon to two paper hands, on which she wrote inspirational messages. She gave this to his wife so she could wrap the ribbon around herself and have a "hug" from her husband, which made them both feel closer during necessary distancing practices.
- **Kelly Elkins**, Evening Nurse Supervisor at Genesis Gettysburg Center, Gettysburg, PA, who placed big, bold room numbers on each resident's window, so family members could more easily locate their loved one for an outside window visit. Her empathy for families who have been so removed from their loved ones has made a big impact and uplifted the residents during a difficult period of isolation.

## Virginia

- **Henrietta Acquah-Akoto**, Nurse Supervisor, Goodwin House, Alexandria, VA, for her diligence, professionalism, collaborative skills, and accountability on a number of occasions. She checked temperatures in the lobby to expedite caregiver entry and worked through Omnicare policy restrictions to make sure a patient, whose fever had spiked, got a full prescription of antibiotics filled over a weekend. Additionally, she made sure a patient's lab test was sent out properly and timely, despite restrictions on lab pickup during the COVID crisis. She was able to work through changing regulations put in place during the pandemic in order to provide the great care patients deserve, despite any obstacles.
- **Julia Ojo-Adebayo**, Receptionist, Birmingham Green, Manassas, VA, for her teamwork, flexibility, and commitment to the mission at Birmingham Green through actions like working two double shifts in a row over Memorial Day weekend, sacrificing personal time in order to help her fellow caregivers and ensure patients' needs were being met.

Each of these Honorees are celebrated by their fellow staff members, patients, families, and the Ceca team at their respective healthcare communities, in addition to receiving a monetary award of \$250.

Matthew Lawlor, Founder and Executive Chair, further stated, "We are proud to highlight another amazing group of caregivers, who have embraced our current challenges and are doing more than ever to keep their communities safe and engaged."

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.

Added Hamme, "We share our partner communities' passion for providing exceptional care and hope that these additional awards shine a light on the sacrifices healthcare workers make each and every day caring for our loved ones. We owe them all a debt of gratitude."

### About Ceca Foundation

Ceca Foundation (derived from "Celebrating caregivers") 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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**Media Contacts:**

Michelle Sims

Director of Marketing

202-719-8042

[msims@cecafoundation.org](mailto:msims@cecafoundation.org)

Lori Stewart

Senior Advisor

202-258-8793

[lstewart@cecafoundation.org](mailto:lstewart@cecafoundation.org)

**Operating Contact:**

Nathan Hamme

President

202-719-8042

[nhamme@cecafoundation.org](mailto:nhamme@cecafoundation.org)