

Ceca Foundation Announces Annual Caregiver Award Honorees
Nursing and Hospital Caregivers Recognized with the Ceca Award

WASHINGTON, DC, February 25, 2021 -- In a year like no other, when healthcare workers across the country made truly heroic personal sacrifices to contain Covid-19, Ceca Foundation is especially pleased to honor the following extraordinary health caregivers with its 2020 Annual Ceca Awards:

- **Melissa Amburn** is a Receptionist at Providence Place in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, a senior living facility offering independent living, personal and memory care. Melissa was recognized for her kindness, positivity, and her bright, engaging demeanor. One standout act of care was the surprise going away breakfast she organized for a resident. On her own time, she created invitations, organized the meal, and bought a memory book for all the resident's friends to write in. She then offered to help the resident shovel snow and run errands after she returned home. A family member of the same resident told stories about how Melissa was always running to help her mother – to find the off button when her music is too loud, remove wrappers from a package, or help find her phone when it was buried. The resident calls Melissa “Happy Feet” for always taking the time to run to the rescue and help out.
- **Margo Buda** is the Clinical Director at Knollwood Life Plan Community in Washington, DC, a community serving military officers and government officials and their families. Margo was honored for her exceptional leadership, initiative, judgment and determination to protect residents during the Covid pandemic. Margo's focus on Covid testing led her to establish the timely Knollwood Abbott Rapid-Now Covid Testing Laboratory. As laboratory manager, Margo established procedures for completing on-site rapid Covid testing. She oversaw 7,000 tests and served tirelessly to educate and inform staff and residents on how to protect themselves from contracting the virus. While Covid infection rates in the D.C. region were skyrocketing, her effective leadership and discipline resulted in more than 150 days in mid-2020 with zero occurrences of new Covid cases in the entire community, a truly magnificent performance.

Each of the Annual Ceca Award Honorees receives a monetary award of \$2,500 and a commemorative trophy, and all are celebrated by their fellow staff members, patients, families, and the Ceca team at their respective care communities.

Ceca Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, partners with healthcare communities to recognize their outstanding caregivers and improve quality of care. Ceca uses proven recognition techniques and innovative technology to celebrate high-touch acts of care – providing the propriety software and managing its partners' recognition program, while underwriting monetary awards for caregivers.

To build teamwork, all staff are considered caregivers, both clinical and non-clinical, and nominations across departments is common. Caregivers are nominated by their peers, patients, residents and families throughout the year, who cite the nominee's exemplary caregiver values demonstrated and the exceptional acts of care. Selections are made monthly or quarterly by an independent selection panel, and caregivers are honored publicly. To date, Ceca has recognized over 25,000 acts of care since the program launched in 2014, of which nearly 800 caregivers were selected as Ceca Award recipients.

Additionally, each year the Foundation seeks to recognize the “best of the best” with its highest award. Annual Ceca Award Honorees and Finalists are selected by Ceca’s Board from the pool of Award winners over the prior year from throughout Ceca’s network of healthcare partners.

Last year, 2,500 caregivers were nominated and 225 were selected for the Ceca Award in their facilities. From this elite group, the above mentioned honorees received the Annual Ceca Award, and nine additional finalists were also honored:

- **Derek Campbell**, Executive Chef at Goodwin House in Alexandria, VA
- **Emelia Jocelin-Sainvil**, CNA at ManorCare West Reading in PA
- **Jacqueline Ndiaye**, CNA at Genesis Perring Parkway in Parkville, MD
- **Amanda Partlow**, Nurse Manager at Birmingham Green in Manassas, VA
- **Suann Stevens**, Dietary Department at Laurel Lakes Rehab and Wellness in Chambersburg, PA
- **Rebecca Surface**, Home Health Aide at West Virginia Caring in Morgantown, WV
- **Carol Wade**, RN at Doctors Community Rehab and Patient Care Center in Lanham, MD
- **Angela Wheeler**, Nurse at Luminus Health Doctors Community Medical Center in Lanham, MD
- **Michelle Yanniello**, Clinical Coordinator at Psychiatric Institute of Washington in DC

“Each of these individuals is a shining example of the spirit of caring that takes place in our nation’s healthcare communities every day,” said Nate Hamme, President of Ceca Foundation. “Some caregiver acts have been truly heroic, particularly during this pandemic, but the simple act of connecting with patients, residents, and their families has become even more meaningful during this time. If there was ever a time to show our appreciation to caregivers, it is now.”

About Ceca Foundation

[Ceca Foundation](#) (derived from “*Celebrating caregivers*”) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit based in Washington, DC, which partners with hospitals, skilled nursing, aging care and other healthcare communities to recognize their exceptional caregivers and ultimately seeks to improve the patient experience. Founded by Matthew and Rosemary Lawlor, Ceca provides a highly affordable, turnkey recognition solution tailored to healthcare providers, using its innovative software, support services, network and cash awards. Since its launch in 2014, Ceca has publicly recognized over 25,000 acts of care and nearly 800 caregivers have received monetary Ceca Awards. For more information, watch a brief [introductory video](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#). To schedule an interview with one of our award recipients, contact Michelle Stewart.

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