



CARE Connection

A publication for clients of BAYADA Home Health Care | Celebrating 42 years of compassion, excellence, and reliability

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bayada.com

Recognize Your BAYADA Caregivers!

The BAYADA 2017 Contest for Caregivers is underway

We believe that our employees are our greatest asset because they are the heart of home care. They have compassion, strive for excellence, provide reliable service, and most importantly, they show love. As such, the BAYADA 2017 Contest for Caregivers has been designed to honor those field employees who love what they do.

Many of you have asked how you can recognize your BAYADA caregivers. Here's your chance!

We encourage you and your family members to submit contest tickets (enclosed in this publication) on behalf of your BAYADA caregivers when they *show love* in the work they do. Your submission will give your BAYADA caregivers a chance to win weekly runner-up and grand prizes—ranging from BAYADA apparel to thousands of dollars in Visa gift cards!

How to participate

To recognize your BAYADA caregivers, simply choose one of the following methods:

- Fill out and mail the enclosed, postage-paid contest tickets
- Call your BAYADA office to make a verbal entry
- Fill out the enclosed tickets and return them to your BAYADA office
- Submit a digital ticket online by visiting bayada.com/contest

We look forward to your participation! ■

BAYADA Employees Are Led by Their Hearts to Home Care

No one ever expects themselves or a loved one to need medical care, personal assistance, or hospice care at home. But when you do, you can count on BAYADA to ensure you receive the highest quality home health care services available.

This November, BAYADA celebrated **National Home Care and Hospice Month** by raising awareness for the growing need for home health care services and showing appreciation for our dedicated employees who are committed to serving you with *compassion, excellence, and reliability*.

Our caregivers could pursue a career in any number of settings, but they are led by their hearts to BAYADA because they share our core belief that everyone deserves *a safe home life with comfort, independence, and dignity*.



BAYADA 2017 Contest for Caregivers

Important dates:

- Contest begins December 11, 2017
- Contest ends February 18, 2018
- The drawings for the runner-up and grand-prize winners will be held on March 8, 2018



BAYADA Employees are Led by Their Hearts to Home Care

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We invite you to read the wonderful stories of four BAYADA employees—**Rebecca, Tyke, Merari, and Mat**—who chose a meaningful career in home health care: bayada.com/HCH17. Their individual journeys have been different, but they all led to a career in home health care for the joy of making a difference in people's lives. That shared passion is why *we love what we do*.

We know that you have many heartwarming stories—past

and present—of your BAYADA caregiver providing the care and support you need to get through each day, and we want to share them.

If you want to recognize your BAYADA caregiver, send your personal story to CAREconnection@bayada.com.

Thank you for the trust you place in us every time you welcome us into your home. ■

Why Client Advocacy Matters | Champions Among Us

The importance of legislator education

In 2002, **Kathy P.**, an active and healthy woman, received devastating news that would change the course of her life—she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Unfortunately, the cancer treatment to shrink the tumor caused two strokes that left her with a traumatic brain injury and paralysis. Today, Kathy, 65, is wheelchair bound and requires help with her personal care needs such as bathing, dressing, and eating. Working as a team with her husband **Mike**, Kathy's home health aides (HHAs) provide for her care needs.

Mike credits BAYADA, along with the government-funded programs Medicaid and Medicare, for allowing Kathy to remain at home, where she wants to be. But, he acknowledges that these government programs don't come without their challenges. Many BAYADA clients, from infants to seniors, rely on Medicaid or Medicare for their home health care nursing, therapy, or home health aide services. Decisions regarding these programs, such as care and safety regulations and reimbursement rates, are made by state and federal legislators.

A husband, a caregiver, an advocate for change

While Mike is grateful for Kathy's care, he worries about the future. He has seen exceptional caregivers who love what they do leave the profession because of low pay. They have left a career in caregiving that they love, not because they wanted to, but because they could make more money working in retail than caring for a person.

"When home care agencies receive better reimbursement rates and are able to offer better pay and benefits, more capable and caring people will choose caregiving as a career," said Mike, who could not sit idly by and risk losing the care that he and Kathy have relied upon for years. He devotes his spare time to advocacy groups dedicated to giving home care a brighter tomorrow, has met with elected officials, and has authored a book about advocacy titled *From Death's Door to Disney World*.

"Our elected officials are in the best position for solving these challenges, but they can't help if they don't know what we, as caregivers, are dealing with every day," said Mike. "I encourage clients and their family members to reach out to educate their elected officials. It has been my experience that they are eager to help."

The need for pediatric home care nurses

Angela O. couldn't agree more. Her daughter **Ayla**, 4, has a rare genetic disorder called Townes-Brocks syndrome, which causes malformations in many parts of the body.

"Until someone is invited into our world, caring for a child with complex medical needs is an invisible reality to most. It's imperative for us parents to move outside of our comfort zones and connect with our legislators frequently, in hopes of opening



New Jersey Senator Dawn Marie Addiego visited the home of Kathy and Mike to learn more about the benefits of home care. Pictured standing (from l to r) are CM Mary Adekanye, BAYADA Senior Communications Associate Linda Hughes, Senator Addiego, Rick Hynick, BAYADA Home Health Aide Lucy Villalona, and Director Ed Callahan; sitting (from l to r), Kathy and Mike.

their hearts and minds to the issues that matter most to us and the daily struggles we face," said Angela, founder of the Massachusetts Pediatric Home Nurse Care Campaign, which is fueled by parents who are struggling to find and keep skilled home care nurses for their children with complex medical needs. "With more awareness and education come informed policymakers who can effectively advocate for and better protect this vulnerable population. We must always, now more than ever, be a steady voice for our medically fragile children to safeguard their care in all settings. The real impact and power lie within sharing your lived experience."

Education plays a critical role

Legislator education will play a critical role in many states where government reimbursement rates for home care are

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Angela is pictured with her daughter, Ayla.

lower than the rates for hospitals. In many cases the rates have not been increased in years, making it difficult to offer a more competitive salary and impacting BAYADA's ability to attract more staff to care for our clients.

As the Baby Boomer generation continues to age, the demand for home care services will increase, to allow people to

live in the comfort of home instead of a facility. Yet, projections indicate that the nation will continue to experience a shortage of home health care professionals, due in part to low wages caused by low reimbursement rates. We also have seen a trend toward nurses choosing employment in other health care environments that are able to pay more competitive wages.

Now is the time to get involved

Our representatives who are elected at the state and federal level make and control these decisions based on limited knowledge of the health care system. With each new election comes the risk of sweeping health care policy changes that can result in drastic cuts to government-funded programs.

In November, our nation went to the polls and elected new representatives at the local and state level. Now is the perfect time to reach out to these newly elected representatives to educate them about the importance of home care. Hearing directly from clients who have first-hand knowledge of how the Medicaid and Medicare programs are working and what can be done to improve them will help educate our representatives so that they can make the best decisions for their constituents, and for you.

Please email BAYADA Director of Government Affairs, Client and Family Advocacy **Rick Hynick** at rhynick@bayada.com to learn more about how you can participate in client and family advocacy at BAYADA, and start fighting for change. ■

BAYADA Habilitation Technician Lisa Carroll is 2017 Special Olympics NC Coordinator of the Year

When BAYADA Caregiver **Lisa Carroll** attended the 2017 Special Olympics North Carolina Leadership Conference, she was completely surprised to be called up to the front of the room and awarded Coordinator of the Year, and was shocked to see her family and friends in the audience, cheering her on.

"I had no idea they were there!" Lisa remembers about her recognition that day. "Now that the word has spread, I'm just amazed. People are calling me to become part of our program."

From rags to riches

Lisa took volunteer leadership of Catawba County Special Olympics when it was on the brink of folding in 2015. She was committed to saving the program that had given her daughter Sabrina so many important, life-changing opportunities to build self-esteem and confidence through sports like swimming, bowling, and cheerleading since she was eight years old.

In an amazing two-year turnaround, Lisa recruited and led a group of dedicated volunteers and coaches to build Catawba County Special Olympics into a strong, effective, and growing program that now enjoys the sponsorship of many local businesses, community organizations, and private donors.

In fact, the president of Special Olympics North Carolina calls Catawba their 'rags to riches' county.

"Everything's really coming together. We're adding more sports programs that operate year-round. We have better records, a newsletter that is sent to 300 people, and a fundraising plan that enables us to do things like get new, good-looking softball uniforms," Lisa says. "These things are so important to our athletes. It gives them a sense of pride."

Today, Catawba County Special Olympics offers softball, swimming, bowling, and cheerleading in the spring; basketball, tennis, and soccer in the fall; and a brand new equestrian program.

"Every year, BAYADA sponsors one of our Special Olympians to compete at the state level, and they are very supportive of our activities all year long," Lisa says.

Co-chair Irene Gomez has been instrumental in working with Lisa to reach out to Hispanic residents of Catawba County and to recruit more Hispanic athletes into their Special Olympics program. She also created their new Spanish language Facebook page.

"We're on Facebook, Instagram, and



Hab tech Lisa Carroll with her daughter Sabrina

Twitter," Lisa says. "Without Irene's help and the hard work of all our volunteers and coaches, I would not have been able to do it all."

"At the end of the season, we hold a Sports Banquet, and that's where you really get to see how much it means to these kids to be part of a sports league," Lisa says. "They're able to go home and display their athlete photo, or their trophy or plaque, just like their sister or brother has. It makes them feel like a whole individual, just like everybody else. It makes them so proud!"

Her inspiration, Sabrina

It's easy to see what a committed mother Lisa is by looking at how her 19-year-old daughter Sabrina is thriving, and how far she has come.

Sabrina contracted pneumococcal meningitis when she was two years old, which left her with significant developmental disabilities and chronic epilepsy. "Sabrina's medical issues were pretty severe when she was younger, but we've

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Man Regains Mobility—Far Beyond Rehab’s Expectations

The remarkable story of BAYADA client Dwayne F.

Dwayne’s spinal cord injury

Dwayne F., 59, of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, sustained an incomplete spinal cord injury (SCI) in a tragic car accident on his way to work, leaving him with quadriplegia. While he was in acute care, he needed a tracheostomy and ventilator for breathing assistance. After a week, Dwayne no longer needed the ventilator to breathe and he was transferred to an inpatient rehabilitation facility, where he continued his recovery and therapy for seven and a half months. He got to the point where he could wiggle his fingers and toes with effort, but the day came when Dwayne’s clinicians told him that his progress in the rehab center had plateaued. The facility discharged Dwayne to live at home with the goal of “maintenance only”—meaning they believed Dwayne had reached the limit of what was physically possible for him.

Perseverance to beat the odds

Not willing to give up, Dwayne and his wife **Chrisse** began working with BAYADAbility Rehab Solutions—the first and only specialized home health care service of its kind for people with serious illness, injury, or disease—to safely transition Dwayne back into his family home. Overseen by a certified rehabilitation registered nurse (CRRN), the BAYADAbility team immediately began to work daily with Dwayne to improve his function and mobility. Now no longer dependent on a tracheostomy to breathe, Dwayne spends about four hours every morning working on physical therapy with his BAYADA Nurses and Aides, and he continues to make incredible progress with their focused, one-on-one attention. “With an incomplete spinal cord injury, you never know for sure what kind of recovery is possible,” says BAYADA Clinical Manager **Tracy Tillger**, RN, CRRN.

Amazing outcomes, still in progress!

Now three years later, defying all expectations by the rehab facility, Dwayne is still making remarkable strides. Barely able to move his hands or feet when he arrived home, Dwayne now can raise his arms and legs, sit upright on his own, and roll over on an exercise mat. At first, he had great difficulty standing straight for three or four minutes in a stander, but now, with increased leg and core strength, he stands for an hour each morning. As Dwayne reaches additional milestones, he and his care team work on moving to the next level of progress. Chrisse is thrilled, and Dwayne is determined that he will walk and get back to work again.

Improved quality of life with proactive and preventive care

Beyond their rehabilitation goals, Dwayne’s care team focuses daily on SCI-specific prevention and early detection of a serious secondary condition, which can mean the difference between staying healthy at home or having a lengthy hospitalization. They ensure Dwayne’s catheter is clean and unkinked, which helps prevent a urinary tract infection (UTI); check his skin daily for pressure sores from limited mobility; and keep a watchful eye on his body temperature to prevent him from getting autonomic dysreflexia.

This vigilance and expertise have enabled Dwayne to have a high



BAYADA client Dwayne F. and his wife Chrisse treasure their time at home together.

quality of life with his family, in the comfort of their own home—especially when you consider that 30 percent of SCI patients are hospitalized at least once a year for UTIs, with an average stay of 22 days. In the past three years, Dwayne has never been hospitalized for a UTI or autonomic dysreflexia.

“The care Dwayne receives from BAYADA is the reason he’s this healthy. I’m convinced of that,” says Chrisse. Success stories like Dwayne’s are the reason *why we love what we do!*

Watch Dwayne’s story here:
bit.ly/2xWu2KX

Join us in
coloring your *holidays* with cheer!

We invite you or a loved one to **color the graphic below** and share a message of cheer.*



Your message here.

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Or post a photo of your art on social media using **#BreMarkable**.

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managed her health very well and she has been seizure-free for the last 10 years," Lisa tells us.

"I'm so proud of everything Sabrina's accomplished. She's living a great life doing regular teenage things," Lisa says. "Because of the opportunity she had through Special Olympics to participate in special needs cheerleading for seven years, Sabrina became her high school's first varsity cheerleader with a disability. And she was nominated prom queen this year!"

Today, Sabrina helps to lead special needs sports programs as an advisory member of the Catawba County Special Olympics Committee.

A real-life Wonder Woman

Director of the BAYADA Habilitation Hickory, NC office **Nicholas Bellomo** says, "Lisa wears so many hats, she's so dependable and knowledgeable, it's just amazing. She's always advocating for her daughter and is so active in the community. The sheer quality of everything she does is what's most impressive to me."

For over 20 years, Lisa has had a full-time job in telecom R&D. She cares for her aging father. She is a part-time BAYADA Habilitation Technician (Hab Tech) caring for Sabrina, she directs the county Special

Olympics program, and she is a volunteer lobbyist for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and the state Medicaid waiver program that pays for Sabrina's Hab Tech services.

When asked how she possibly finds enough time in the day for all this, Lisa humbly answers, "I have a very patient boyfriend."

What are habilitation services?

As a BAYADA Hab Tech, Lisa helps Sabrina become more independent and self-reliant by working on a list of community living goals such as improving her motor skills and learning how to shop, communicate with cashiers, spend and manage money, care for her pets, make the bed, and do other chores.

The BAYADA Habilitation Hickory, NC office employs about 140 hab techs to provide personal care support services for clients of any age diagnosed with an intellectual or developmental disability throughout 13 counties in North Carolina.

Habilitation services are supported by federal and state government to help people with IDD live in the homes of their choice, pursue employment, engage in a purposeful day, and achieve their life goals in their community, and not in an institution or facility. ■