



## The Caregiver Issue: Caregiver Appreciation Day 2019

At Companions & Homemakers, we believe that every day is Caregiver Appreciation Day.



However, we set aside a special day each spring to celebrate our amazing caregivers and the work they do each and every day to support our mission of *Preserving Dignity Through Independence at Home*. We had record attendance for what has become one of our biggest events of the year.

We were honored to welcome over 400 of the men and women who dedicate their lives and careers to serving the needs of our elderly clients to the eleven gatherings on Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. Joining the caregivers were over 100 of our clients who wanted to share in the celebration of our caregivers and their achievements.

Attendees were treated to some amazing food and beverages, giveaways, raffle contests and prizes, an essay contest for the caregivers, the presentation of our 22 Caregivers of the Year, and the opportunity to “pay it forward” through charitable donations. Read all about our wonderful day together below.

### Caregiver Essay Contest Winner

Caregivers who attended one of the receptions were able to submit a short essay for the chance to win an iPad mini and \$250. We asked caregivers to “Describe a great day or activity you and your client had together.” The winning entry was submitted by caregiver Travis E. of Meriden, who attended the Farmington celebration:



*“I took my client John to Wallingford where he grew up and hadn’t seen in over 50 years! I brought him to see the house he grew up in and the school he went to. It was a trip down memory lane for him. He even teared up, bringing back all those memories he had cherished. He was amazed to see how things changed. We went to the new library where we sat and read on the town’s history. We finished the day at Hubbard Park and atop of Castle Craig. It felt good bringing another person joy. This isn’t a job, it’s a gift!”*

### 2019 Caregivers of the Year

Each of our branch offices nominated two Caregivers of the Year – one hourly caregiver and one live-in caregiver. Pictured below are the 22 amazing winners for 2019. Averaging over 8 years of service to the company each, these dedicated men and women have a combined total of 181 years of service caring for our clients. The winners received a bouquet of flowers, a C&H tote bag, a personalized YETI tumbler, a framed certificate and a check... along with our undying thanks for their empathy and respect for the elderly, and for their tenacity to serve others with such distinction.



Debra V. Zola N. Brenda M. Penny W. Marsha M.



Mary A. Dionne B. Susan M. Hazel E.



Laura R. Deborah A. Annmarie D. Phamsheta C.



Deborah W. Marvet M. Kandy D. Joan F.



Lulu A. Vashiti G. Kim P. Reneita W. Damaris O.

## Raffle Prizes

Caregivers who attended Caregiver Appreciation Day had the opportunity to win an incredible array of raffle prizes and drawings, including:



- Yankees, Red Sox and Yard Goats Baseball Tickets
- Tickets to see Bill Maher, the WWE "Money in the Bank" show, "The Music Man", Chris Young in Concert and "Waitress"
- Seasons Passes to Lake Compounce
- A Bose SoundTouch 20 Series II Wireless Music System
- Multiple Pad Minis and Kindly Paperwhite E-Readers
- Multiple Sets of Beats EP Headphones and 3-Quart InstantPots
- Public Radio Gift Package of NPR CDs and Books
- Gift Cards for Massage Envy, TJ Maxx-Marshalls-HomeGoods, Darden Restaurants, North House Restaurant, Carbone's Ristorante, The Gathering Place, Viso Bello by the Shore, and the Adam Broderick Salon and Spa.

Over 100 individual caregivers won a prize! We extend a **very special thank you to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Media** and our media partners for their incredible generosity: Fox 61, CT Public Broadcasting, WZBG Radio, iHeart Radio, WTIC and WRCH Radio, WSHU, WTNH-TV 8, Altice Media, WFSB TV, the Hartford Courant, NBC WVIT-TV, Comcast Spotlight and Cox Media Cable TV. With full hearts, we thank you.



## PAY IT forward Charitable Donations

Each year as part of the celebration, Companions & Homemakers makes charitable donations in honor of our caregivers. This year, each caregiver was given the opportunity to direct a donation of \$50 to one of four charities we are

supporting this year.

We're very proud to share that 309 caregivers designated a total of \$15,500 in donations to our four designated charities - the Wounded Warrior Project, The American Cancer Society's Connecticut Chapter, the Connecticut Alzheimer's Association, and the Lucky Pup Dog Rescue.



## Caregiver Appreciation Day Video



We have created a wonderful recap video featuring many of the photos and video taken at our 11 celebrations. Visit our Facebook page and click the link to this year's Caregiver Appreciation Day recap video.

[www.facebook.com/companionsandhomemakers](http://www.facebook.com/companionsandhomemakers)

## More Caregiver Essays

We received so many great stories from our caregivers about their clients that we wanted to share a few more of their essay contest entries.



*"The most special day I most recently had was when I took my client Ruth to visit her husband Earle, who was a patient at Ingraham Manor in Bristol. It was a beautiful fall*

*day and we went outside into the atrium where we sat, smelled the late-blooming roses, and just enjoyed the quiet. Earle had just had back surgery but was in good spirits since Ruth was there holding his hand. The look in their eyes after sixty years of marriage was irreplaceable and brought tears to my eyes! I hope I can make it to sixty years some day too! (Susan P. - Bristol)*

*My name is Margie and my client is Melinda. Not only do I help her but she does the same. We love going to the gym to keep in shape. We have cooking lessons - she is doing great. We work*



*together on this. I try to make us think. We will pick a word and see how many words we can find. She loves this, and helps with the mind. Of course we love shopping. She enjoys nature and this makes me stop and enjoy this. She is not a client she is a friend. To me this is not a job but something I enjoy every day. (Margaret K. - Jewett City)*



*My client John and I spend many days at the gym walking on the track or riding the exercise bikes. I enjoy all our days together but one day in particular stands out in my mind. On this particular day, John was feeling extra spry and the music play list was extra hoppin'. When a song by the Black Eyed Peas came on (Dirty Bit), John and I just broke out in dance in the gym having the time of our life with huge smiles on our faces. One of my all-time favorite memories. (Rebekah V. - Cromwell)*

*One winter night I brought my client who is 101 years old to see the "Lights of Fantasia." As we drove through it slowly, I loved hearing her "ooh" and "aah" about how pretty all the lights were. She enjoyed it so much and we spoke about it for weeks! (Britt B. - Bristol)*



**In Our Next Issue:** Annual Caregiver Scholarship Winners, Summer Happenings, Client Letters, and So Much More!