

Lopata Leads Awards

Dennis Lopata, executive director of Life Care Center of Wilbraham, Mass., was named winner of the Chairman's Award during the 2012 annual management meeting in Cleveland, Tenn., Monday evening.



It is the highest honor bestowed on an associate by Life Care Centers of America, presented by Forrest L. Preston, chairman and founder, during an evening honoring excellence in performance.

Lopata was lauded for his ability to address each associate and resident by name and for leading by example – never asking his associates to do anything he is not willing to do. In particular, he was praised for going “above and beyond” when the area around his building was ravaged by tornadoes, spending the night at the facility, taking admissions by flashlight and reassuring associates and residents alike.

Facility of the Year honors went to Life Care Center of Waynesville, Mo., Amy Zell, executive director, in the Central Division; Life Care Center of Greeneville, Tenn., Misty Key, executive director, in the Eastern Division; Westview Health Care Center in Sheridan, Wyo., Tonya Murner, executive director, in the Mountain States Division; Life Care Center of Nashoba Valley in Littleton, Mass., Ellen Levinson, senior executive director; in the Northeast Division; Cottessmore of Life Care in Gig Harbor, Wash., Johnathan Ashley, executive director, in the Northwest Division; Darcy Hall of Life Care in West Palm Beach, Fla., Kris Berntsen, senior executive director, in the Southeast Division; and Life Care Center of Escondido, Calif., Sadie Harness, executive director, in the Southwest Division.

The Division Support Award was won by Jim Spinelli, Northwest Division director of reimbursement.

Presidents Awards (two from each division) were presented to Laurie Stevens, regional field controller, Plains Region, and Michelle Yosick, regional vice president, Plains Region, Central Division; Travis Hillis, senior executive director, Life Care Center of Tullahoma, Tenn., and Robert Hubbart, executive director, Life Care Center of Athens, Tenn., Eastern Division; Kelley Hamm, division director of clinical services, and Bryan Merrell, executive director, Life Care Center of Cheyenne, Wyo., Mountain States Division; David Currier, Alzheimer's program director, The Highlands in Fitchburg, Mass., and Patricia Woolum, nurse liaison, Rivergate Health Care Center in Riverview, Mich., Northeast Division; Matt Preston, senior executive director, Cascade Park Care Center in Vancouver, Wash., and Dieu Dinh, regional rehab director, Northwest Division; Viviana Portieles, division workers' compensation coordinator, and Darla Smith, division director of accounts receivable, Southeast Division; and Matthew Ham, regional vice president, and Kathleen Connolly, executive director, Life Care Center of North Glendale, Ariz., Southwest Division.

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Superior Performance Awards (to a facility receiving a deficiency-free survey within the past year) went to Life Care Center of Carrollton, Mo.; Life Care Center of Elyria, Ohio; Life Care Center of Wilbraham, Mass.; Life Care Center of Acton, Mass.; Life Care Center of West Bridgewater, Mass.; Life Care Center of Nashoba Valley in Littleton, Mass.; Wooldridge Place Nursing Center in Corpus Christi, Texas; and Life Care Center of Plano, Texas.

Matthew Cummings, executive director of Life Care Center of Old Hickory Village in Old Hickory, Tenn., was honored for achieving Fellow status in the American College of Health Care Administrators, which is the highest level of membership in the College. Recognized for achieving certification by the College were Hollie Coates-Hensley, executive director, Life Care Center of Morristown, Tenn.; Doyle Love, executive director, Life Care Center of East Ridge, Tenn.; Carla Youngberg, executive director, Life Care Center of Collegedale, Tenn.; Stan Murdoch, executive director, Life Care Center of Pueblo, Colo.; Ed Spitzlberger, executive director, Life Care Center of Littleton, Colo.; Raymond Thompson, regional vice president of Mariner Region; and Jennifer Lindley, executive director, Life Care Center of Pensacola, Fla.

Life Care Center of Crossville, Tenn., was honored for achieving initial accreditation by the Joint Commission.

Winning American Health Care Association National Quality Awards, and recognized for that achievement Monday evening, were bronze recipients Garden Terrace Alzheimer's Center of Excellence in Federal Way, Wash.; Hallmark Manor in Federal Way, Wash.; Life Care Center of Port Orchard, Wash.; Lakeside Health Center in West Palm Beach, Fla.; Wooldridge Place Nursing Center in Corpus Christi, Texas; Garden Terrace Alzheimer's Center of Excellence in Salt Lake City, Utah; Las Fuentes Care Center in Prescott, Ariz.; Life Care Center of Paradise Valley in Las Vegas, Nev.; Life Care Center of Reno, Nev.; Mi Casa Nursing Center in Mesa, Ariz.; North Walk Villa Convalescent Hospital in Norwalk, Calif.; and Scottsdale Heritage Court in Scottsdale, Ariz. Obtaining the silver award was Life Care Center of Escondido, Calif.

The highest honor Life Care bestows was won by Lee Biava of Life Care Center of Punta Gorda, Fla., who received the Carl W. Campbell Wind Beneath My Wings Award, which goes to the Company-Wide Volunteer of the Year. Campbell, the man for whom the award is named, was unable to attend but sent a videotaped message of congratulations. The Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Overland Park, Kansas, received the Volunteer Group of the Year, and Kayla Carter of Life Care Center of Hixson, Tenn., was chosen the company-Wide Youth Volunteer of the Year.

Congratulations to all of our award winners for their outstanding contributions to the well-being and happiness of our residents.

– Beecher Hunter