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NCCDP names memory care CNA of the Year

By Pamela Tabar, Editor-in-Chief

Lisa Ford, a 19-year caregiver at The Watermark at East Hill (<http://easthill.watermarkcommunities.com/>), Southbury, Connecticut, has been named the Certified Nursing Assistant of the Year by the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners (NCCDP).

The national award recognizes certified nursing assistants, home health aides and personal care assistants that go above and beyond in their leadership, work ethic and commitment to patients, residents or customers. Ford was nominated by her fellow associates at The Watermark at East Hill and was chosen from hundreds of applications.

Ford became Lead Naya (a Sanskrit word meaning a connection guide) at the site's 14-residence memory care center in 2012. As a Naya, Ford is responsible for the well-being of Villa residents, often cooking and cleaning with them or engaging in their hobbies and interests. Ford is an integral part of creating and implementing memory care programs for her community, overseeing memory care initiatives and orchestrating extraordinary excursions for these residents, which have included an overnight campout and trips to New York City and Washington, D.C. She also serves as the key trainer for leaders and new caregivers across Watermark's 40 communities nationwide.

Nayas are trained to become Certified Dementia Practitioners and work side-by-side with their residents throughout the day. The certification provides Nayas with a deeper, more personal commitment to the quality of care for residents.

"Lisa's genuine interest and concern for our residents is unmatched, coming up with creative solutions to reach each person in a unique way," said Christine Woodman, Director of Human Resources at The Watermark at East Hill, who was among those to nominate Ford. "Lisa has devoted nearly half of her life to the long-term care profession, and specifically to our community. The Watermark at East Hill is a much better place as a direct result of her work ethic, professionalism and compassion."



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