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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Pennsylvania Direct Care Workers Celebrated for Outstanding Service, Exceptional Care**

*PHA's 2024 Direct Care Worker of the Year Awards Recognize Statewide, Regional Winners*

Harrisburg, Pa. (June 12, 2024) – Today, the Pennsylvania Homecare Association (PHA), with the support of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, announced the recipients of the 2024 Direct Care Worker of the Year Awards. This year, 120 direct care workers across the Commonwealth were nominated for their outstanding service and exceptional care.

Louise Julason, BAYADA Home Health Care, was recognized as this year's overall statewide winner and recipient of the "Vicki Hoak Direct Care Worker of the Year" award. Nicole Mezzanotte, Director at BAYADA Home Health Care, nominated Louise for her dedicated service and kind spirit.

"Louise's unwavering dedication and compassion over her 32 years as a Home Health Aide with BAYADA are unparalleled," says Nicole. "She often steps in at the last minute, ensuring that clients receive the care they need, even if it means sacrificing her own time. Louise's deep empathy drives her to treat each client as if they were her own family, and her exceptional reliability, particularly during challenging conditions, highlights her remarkable work ethic. Her expertise, especially with dementia patients, her eagerness to continually learn, and her role as a mentor to new aides make her a shining example of extraordinary care. Louise's heartfelt commitment truly exceeds expectations!"

In addition to the overall statewide award, PHA and the Department of Aging recognized three regional winners.

Dawn Mosesman, Redstone@Home Hospice, Western Region (Westmoreland County); Raquel Torres, St. Luke's Hospice, Eastern Region (Lehigh County); and Catherine (Cathy) Hertzog, Family Home Medical Support Services, Central Region (Northumberland County) were recognized as this year's regional winners.

For nearly two decades, PHA has used this awards program to recognize excellence in home-based care and raise awareness for the invaluable roles that direct care workers play in their communities.

"Today, we proudly recognize the dedication and compassion of our direct care workers, who are the backbone of homecare services across our Commonwealth," says Mia Haney, CEO of the Pennsylvania Homecare Association. "Because of this workforce, countless Pennsylvanians can maintain their independence and experience their best quality of life – in the place everyone wants to be - home. The 2024 Direct Care Worker of the Year Awards is just one way we acknowledge the vital role of this workforce in our communities. We celebrate their outstanding service, high standards, and exceptional care and acknowledge the challenges they face, including caregiver burnout. As Pennsylvania lawmakers and the Administration work to finalize this year's budget, we encourage them to join us in celebrating this workforce by making meaningful investments that allow for higher wages to deliver quality care that patients need and deserve."

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**About PHA:** The Pennsylvania Homecare Association is a statewide membership organization of more than 700 homecare, home health, and hospice providers. PHA members provide quality care and serve as advocates for their patients and clients on a variety of healthcare-related issues. PHA and its members work to improve professional standards and ensure access to quality home care throughout the Commonwealth. For more information about PHA and its initiatives, visit <http://www.pahomecare.org>.

**Media Contact:**

Pennsylvania Homecare Association  
[media@pahomecare.org](mailto:media@pahomecare.org)