

2009 Bayada Nurses National Heroes

Kimberly Baucom, HHA *Salisbury, North Carolina*

HHA Kimberly Baucom has worked for various offices since her start last October. When paired with one seven-year-old little boy from the Salisbury, NC Pediatrics (SP) office, she found a place to take root.

Through her persistence, says Client Services Manager Megan O'Shields, Kim's client "has really begun to open up." Megan attributes Kim's success to her creativity and the fact that she "shows up not only physically but emotionally for her client and the family every day." Kim adds to her client's progress by brainstorming and contributing ideas to help his condition, which results in marked improvements. Her comments to the client's physician even prompted him to try new medication to help the client's condition.

Kim's client finds it a struggle to socialize with other children and hates to explain about his feeding tube. Kim finds clever ways to involve him in play groups and to desensitize him about discussing his feeding tube. Kim also attends her client's therapy sessions and takes notes in order to incorporate the counselor's suggestions into his daily routine. She also introduces craft projects to aid her client's motor skills and keep him engaged. The client's mother remembers a Mother's Day surprise in particular. "Kim had my son make me a really nice foam book: *10 Reasons I Love You*." Knowing all of the writing, counting, hole punching, and assembling that went into it, the mother shares, "It was the best gift I ever received." Clinical Manager Renee Lambert thinks Kim's work has helped the client "bloom with independent thinking, the ability to stay on track, and social skills." Megan adds that both she and the client's mom have also "grown through Kim's example."

Sherill Costanza, LPN *Freehold, New Jersey*

In her efforts to describe LPN Sherill Costanza of the Freehold, NJ (FRE) office with the perfect definition of the word "Hero", Client Services Manager Kimberly Anders expressed this: an everyday person who can change the world. Kimberly explains, "Sherill's presence has definitely impacted the worlds of her three clients and their families and ultimately changed them for the better."

One 21-year-old male client with cerebral palsy, severe cognitive deficits, and scoliosis that compromises his breathing, needed daily nursing care at school to help with his increasingly fragile condition. Because his mother single-handedly cared for him during his first 19 years of life, gaining her trust called for a delicate transition. Kimberly shares, "Sherill's compassionate nature and unwavering warmth and kindness made mom feel at ease right away." The client soon attended his high school graduation with Sherill by his side. Another of Sherill's clients is an eight-year-old girl with cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder, who receives care during the school day. Kimberly says, "Sherill's enthusiasm motivates this client to do new things."

Sherill's high-tech pediatric skills made her the natural choice for a baby boy born at 24 weeks gestation and weighing barely a pound. At six months, complications required him to be trached and vented. "Besides meticulous medical intervention," explains Kimberly, "Sherill also provided what may have been needed most by this family—comfort and compassion."

Timothy Dusing, PT *Newark, Delaware*

About a year and a half ago when PT Timothy Dusing joined the Newark, DE (NEW) team, Director Carla Young knew she had found someone who was always willing to lend a hand. Carla says, "As a full-time, salaried employee, he is conscientious about keeping his productivity high. He willingly helps with extra projects, from in-servicing other therapists to providing falls risk evaluations at health fairs. If Tim says he will do something, we know it will get done."

When NEW office staff experienced the death of a coworker, Tim not only shared their grief, he also immediately offered to help, scheduling summer vacation coverage for therapists and handling all of the communication and coordination that entailed. Additionally, Tim's flexibility has been more than apparent, as he has willingly changed territories at least three times.

Surveyors from the Nursing (NUR) office and clients alike have been impressed with Tim's kind and reassuring manner and his clinical excellence in delivering care. Clinical Manager June Harper observed that Tim's plans of care are unique for each individual client. One penned, "I have never had a physical therapist who analyzed every movement I made and taught me to take control when I felt I might fall. All the people who came were courteous, but Tim was the very best!"

Another client's husband offers, "At times, my wife is not the easiest person to work with, but Tim and she got along famously from the start. The exercises he taught her help immensely."

Carla concludes, "Tim is a highly skilled physical therapist who achieves good results with his clients."

Valerie Fulton, RN

Burlington County, New Jersey

RN Valerie Fulton's influence is felt by her entire team. That's because she mentors and instructs other staff at her Burlington County, NJ Visit (BCV) office. Director Sonja Morrow shares, "She is able to teach others about home health, regulations, and requirements while she is demonstrating *The Bayada Way* and incorporates it into her teachings."

Client Services Manager Kim Vyzaniaris adds, "Val supports her staff without hesitation. She doesn't want her coworkers to ever feel frustrated and encourages the team with her clinical knowledge. She provides each nurse with the tools to adjust and become comfortable in the home." Case Manager Kathy Giovanetti agrees, adding, "Val is always professional and has an extremely large knowledge base. She does this while having a great sense of humor and being down to earth. Because of Val, I have not only learned so much about home care and Bayada, but also what it means to be a compassionate nurse!"

Val demonstrates Bayada's core values by doing little things to brighten her clients' days. Sonja explains, "Whether it is the newspaper or a sweet tea for the client who is not drinking enough—she does it without fanfare or accolades from her management team." A client's daughter similarly expressed gratitude for Val's "exceptionally kind" service and "helpful information." As her aging mother's condition worsened with a diagnosis of fluid on the brain, Val discussed care options to control incontinence and obtained service through the Visiting Physicians Association.

To meet the needs of her community more extensively, Val—already a nurse practitioner—furthered her education by becoming wound care certified and receiving her master's degree in nursing.

Kathy Hampson, RN

Willow Grove, Pennsylvania

Over the past nine and a half years that Kathy Hampson has worked as an RN for the Willow Grove, PA (WG) office, she has clearly demonstrated competence with a broad range of clients. Those young or old, with differing diagnoses, all express a sense of safety and well-being while in Kathy's hands.

Clinical Manager Patricia Pagano admires Kathy's professionalism. "I always find the charts well-organized and clearly and concisely documented. When I discuss ideas with Kathy, she is receptive and offers good insights about her clients to promote the best care."

When emergency situations arose with two clients with high-tech needs, Kathy knew just how to respond. Once, a generator fire broke out in the garage of a client with a trach during Kathy's shift. She swiftly and successfully responded to the challenge—evacuating the premises with her client, the needed equipment, and all the necessary supplies to ensure safety until the parents returned home. In another instance—shortly after Kathy arrived to care for a client with a trach and vent, the ventilator "just up and quit," recalls the family. Without hesitation and before the client even missed a breath, Kathy managed to pull off the dead circuit and attach the oxygen bag. Client Services Manager Sheila Drummond says Kathy is "respectful of others and always willing to go the extra mile." Sheila adds, "Kathy is one of our nurses who I hope will always stay with us. I applaud her hard work."

By always showing up on time, being cheerful, and even letting the family dog get a few licks in, Kathy is said to be this little girl's "special friend."

Beatrice Hena, HHA

Media, Pennsylvania

HHA Beatrice Hena has been with the Media, PA (MED) office for four years. Her compassion, persistence, and dedication to one client in particular helped transform the family's very difficult situation. Client Services Manager Mary Lehmann explains that the client and her husband were "both suffering—the client because of her physical condition, and the husband due to his anxiety and mental strain over the wife's predicament."

A fall down a flight of stairs in 2006 left the client with a brain injury, bedridden, unable to walk or talk, and requiring a feeding tube. Beatrice worked tirelessly with her client 12 hours a day, every day, ensuring she attended doctor's appointments and therapy sessions, and that physician's orders were followed.

The client's husband came to praise Beatrice's "extremely responsible, dedicated, loving, and supportive" care of his wife. He attests, "Beatrice helped me deal with the stress of my wife's injury and the daily agony of seeing the mental and physical change in her. Without the help of Beatrice, I would have not been able to continue to teach in the public school or be the father I want to be to my children."

Heather Huneycutt, CNA
Albemarle, North Carolina

Heather Huneycutt has worked as a CNA at the Albemarle, NC (ALB) office for the past three years. When she began, she took on the challenge of caring for a man with quadriplegia resulting from an accident. The client was returning home for the first time since the ordeal eight months earlier.

Client Services Manager Terri Stallings says that the physical and emotional support Heather offers means the world to this man. "Heather's smile, witty personality, and words of encouragement have made a great impact on the mental status of the client." Moreover, Heather is credited for initiating phone calls to arrange for doctor visits, equipment repairs, ordering supplies, and keeping ALB office staff abreast of her client's changing condition and needs.

During a routine doctor's visit, Heather's client learned that his authorization for 24-hour day care was going to be reduced to 14 hours. Knowing that her client could not be left alone for safety reasons and that he wanted to remain at home, Heather contacted ALB staff. She obtained the necessary information, and assisted in making follow-up calls to ensure he would not lose the coverage he desperately needed.

Heather's contributions to this client's quality of life are many. Terri shares, "Heather's willingness to come up with creative activities is a huge help in keeping the client's mood positive and upbeat." She encourages him to continue his passion for gardening. Heather helps choose plants and enjoys sitting outdoors and watching the birds and squirrels in the garden, whenever weather permits. Heather even provides the competition necessary for the client to utilize the Wii play station he received for his birthday because she knows it helps him perform his obligatory range of motion exercises.

The client's mother says she admires Heather's honesty and energy the most. She adds that her son doesn't often like to talk, and she feels he cannot be convinced of anything. Somehow, though, Heather manages to engage him, because he trusts her 100%.

Maureen Jubity, CNA
Wilmington, Delaware

CNA Maureen Jubity is a vital member of the Wilmington, DE Private Duty (WPD) team. After only three and a half years of service with the company, Maureen established herself as the go-to girl for training new staff. Recruiting Manager Jennifer Smith finds, "Any new employee that works with Maureen always comes back talking about how she is so nice, helpful, and encouraging." Maureen maintains this spirit in her client interactions, as well.

Director Jean Mullin says that Maureen loves people. "She lifts their spirits and they look forward to her arrival. Clients and staff know that Maureen will not just be going through the motions of personal care but that she will deliver that care with personal flair." That's why Client Services Manager Tara Robinson can't wait to make follow-up calls to clients when Maureen is assigned to them. "I can always count on Maureen to knock their socks off!"

Clinical Manager Kelly Marcus adds, "I know my clients are well cared for, not only for their physical needs, but also for the companionship." One of Maureen's long-term clients eventually passed away recently and the husband called in appreciation of Maureen's care. He shared that he would not have been able to keep his wife home without her help. Clients and family members alike are assured that all will be well when Maureen is present. Kelly says, "The fact that she is always punctual, professionally dressed, professional in her care, respectful, let alone always smiling—does not go unnoticed."

Jean says, "Maureen is a natural goodwill ambassador. She lives *The Bayada Way* effortlessly and naturally. We love her!"

Shelly Martinkus, PT
Denver, Colorado

PT Shelley Martinkus has been providing therapy to clients at the Denver, CO Visits (DV) office for nearly four years. During that time, Director Carol Bartley witnessed Shelley's "great empathy and care for all of our clients, in spite of many challenging environments."

Shelley works tirelessly to maintain her technical skills and even recently completed her doctorate in physical therapy. Satisfied clients continually fatten Shelley's personnel file with comments about the rapport she developed with them and the results she obtained. One client shared, "Shelley went beyond the call of duty to see that I made progress at every session we had. I couldn't have asked for anyone so devoted to bringing me back to my old self." Another client's wife says her husband "flourished" under Shelley's care. She adds that Shelley is "extremely competent, knowledgeable, thorough, and client-oriented," and her clients' remarkable outcomes make it clear to everyone that she is a true Hero.

Nancy McGuire, PT

Media, Pennsylvania

PT Nancy McGuire has been an integral part of the Delaware County Visits (DCV) office in Media, PA for the past five and a half years, and has worked for various other Bayada Nurses offices for the past 11.

More than two of those were spent caring for a male client in his fifties with a spinal cord injury. Director Kathleen McFadden shares, "Nancy knew her client was her priority and stayed focused and got the job done." Currently, Nancy is working as an effective team member in assisted living facilities, coordinating care with other staff, and offers her help in covering areas that are short on therapists as well. Client Services Manager Dustin Gettel says, "These facilities have come to rely on Nancy for her expertise and quality care."

QA Nurse Ann Fossum remarks that she has been impressed with Nancy's excellent assessments and visit notes. "Oftentimes, when a good example of documentation is needed, Nancy's charts are pulled to use for teaching and orienting new Bayada staff." Nancy equally takes initiative to update client education materials and assist with peer-to-peer chart reviews. Ann finds that Nancy's wealth of information from years of service combined with her excellent communication skills allows clients to be receptive to her care. Kathleen adds that Nancy is "creative, flexible, and determined to get the job done."

Angela Mullett, LPN

Conover, North Carolina

LPN Angela Mullett has worked at the Conover, NC (CON) office for the past two years. She provides care to one unique client, as Client Services Manager Jennifer Doble explains. "She is the type of person that has a list of things to complete each day and always adds more things before you can complete just a few of the tasks." How does Angela manage to curb her frustration, and meet the client's needs? She simply gives the client a choice, asking which task should be completed first.

Angela is sympathetic to her client's requests and tries to understand her as a person. The client is completely paralyzed, except for slight movement of one finger, and requires trach and vent care. When training other nurses on her care, Angela is quick to remind them of the client's own frustrations for being totally dependent on them. Combined with Angela's insightfulness is her meticulous manner of sanitizing and cleaning the client's area to keep it free from germs.

Jennifer shares, "She understands the client's delicate condition and how serious it can be if she comes into contact with a virus or sickness." Clinical Manager Michelle Yancey adds, "Angela is clinically a great nurse. She is very knowledgeable about her client's care and works very well with the doctor and his staff to make sure any new problems or issues are resolved."

Angela's client says, "I can trust Angela to do everything from cleaning my equipment to curling my hair. I can depend on Angela for everything." Those who have met Angela know she is someone who simply loves her job and being a nurse.

Randy Reeves, RN

Newark, Delaware

RN Randy Reeves is the full-time evening and weekend on-call nurse for the Newark, DE (NEW) office. Randy has been with the office since January, 2008. On-call Manager Darlene Bacon says all of NEW's clients love Randy's "lively sense of humor." Director Carla Young thinks it's his "rare combination of perseverance and dedication to his clients' well-being, which allows him to work with NEW's "most challenging clients very effectively."

For example, one client was brought home from a nursing home by her children, who then left town. Randy found her living under very unsafe conditions. "Randy worked with the office to contact the Division of Aging, the out-of-town daughter, and the nursing home from which she had been released." The client eventually agreed to return to the nursing home, as long as Randy drove, because she refused to take the ambulance.

Randy's ability to speak with clients in any situation makes a real difference. When one client called for help in troubleshooting a problem with an oxygen concentrator, he tactfully determined the cause in a way that felt respectful to the client. "Not everyone can ask if tubing is connected and machines are plugged in without making the client feel bad," comments Carla. Randy found the right words to say in yet another instance when a client said he could not shower regularly to treat a skin disease causing wounds to his legs and groin. Randy simply said, "If you can get on your motorcycle, you can get in the shower." And he did.

Clinical Manager June Harper says, "Randy relates well to our diverse population and their caregivers, providing instruction at their level of understanding. He is always willing to take on a new challenge with a smile."

Sherri, Winstead, LPN

Monroe, North Carolina

Eleven-year veteran Sherri Winstead, LPN, is a client advocate in every sense of the word. Her commitment to four Monroe, NC (MON) clients has resulted in her working overtime for years. When state Medicaid cuts forced her office to limit nurses to 40 hours per week, Clinical Manager Kelly Mincey recalls, “Sherri made the most selfless, compassionate decision possible. She opted to keep all of her shifts with all of her clients and have her pay adjusted so it did not negatively impact the bottom line.”

Sherri proves time and again that she will be there for her clients. Alongside Kelly, Sherri met with the director of the NC Private Duty Nursing program to support continued services for one of her clients. Additionally, when one of her clients won an award from the NC Vocational Rehabilitation group, Sherri was present to offer her support.

Kelly shares, “She does everything possible to ease the stress on her clients’ families.” Whether it’s a change in schedule, bad weather, or a holiday, it’s not a problem for Sherri to accommodate. Despite juggling a family of her own, Sherri has helped to get one client’s Christmas morning off on the right foot every year for the past ten years. Similarly, “Sherri has voluntarily traveled on several trips to Disney with her clients to give them the opportunity to enjoy life outside their homes,” offers Client Services Manager Jeanine Jones. One mother explains, “Sherri knows how to balance work and fun in a way like no other; her care was exceptional, yet she felt like another member of the family rather than an employee.”

Jeanine says that Sherri brings a “bubbly, fun-loving personality” to her work, while instilling peace of mind for her clients. Her client proclaims, “The least amount of stress for me and knowing that I am in good hands is what makes Sherri a Hero in my eyes.”
