

For Immediate Release  
March 27, 2024



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## Michigan's Long-term Care Sector Celebrates Careers in Aging Month

LANSING, MI – Throughout March, the Health Care Association of Michigan (HCAM) is celebrating Careers in Aging Month — an awareness campaign launched by the Gerontological Society of America to highlight caregivers and raise awareness about the many diverse and fulfilling careers in long-term care.

“HCAM asked its skilled nursing and assisted living members to tell us about team members who have made long-term care their calling,” said HCAM President and CEO Melissa Samuel. “The response was awe-inspiring — 50 employees from over 30 skilled nursing and assisted living settings were submitted. It’s been exciting to shine a spotlight on these dedicated, passionate individuals and share their stories with Michigan legislators, on our social media sites, in our newsletters and member updates, on our website and at our recent Spring Leadership Conference.”

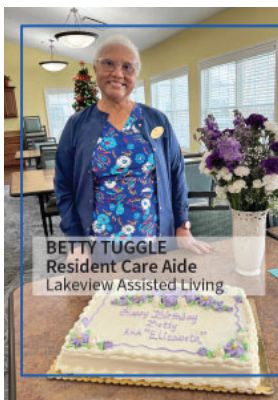
From chef to certified nurse aide to activities director to administrator, the featured caregivers represent over 20 different career paths in long-term care. “Careers in Aging Month is a great opportunity to highlight these career options and honor those who currently care for our seniors,” said Samuel. “We hope their passion will draw others to Michigan’s assisted living and skilled nursing facilities to help lessen the current workforce crisis.”

The shortage of direct care workers in long-term care is well documented. “We have made slow but steady progress since the height of the pandemic, but the sector still needs 130,000 workers nationwide and more than 5,000 in Michigan alone,” said Samuel. “Beyond that, with the aging of America, the demand for professionals with expertise in long-term care is growing rapidly.”

The federal government estimates that nearly 27 million people will need some kind of long-term care by 2050. And Michigan is aging faster than the country as a whole. U.S. Census Bureau data shows that Michigan now has the 13th oldest population in the country, up from having the 29th oldest in 2000.

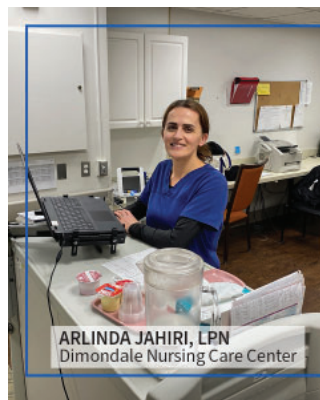
“Celebrating Careers in Aging Month can help spread the word about the many careers available and, in turn, strengthen the sector,” added Samuel. “To that end, the association has also launched a registered apprenticeship program through a grant from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity. And, we are working with the state and community colleges to ensure that Michigan’s new medication aide law will provide a practical career ladder for certified nurse aides to advance their careers in the long-term care sector.”

Here are just a few of the amazing long-term care workers we have spotlighted as part of the Careers in Aging Month celebration.



Careers  
IN AGING  
—Month—  
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With 18 years in long-term care, Betty celebrated her 80th birthday this year, and her heart for service is stronger than ever. She became a Resident Care Aide because she wanted to help people and feel like she's actually making a difference in the lives of others. “Betty's resilience and positive attitude have set an example for all of us here at Lakeview,” shares Christi Losinski, Lakeview Assisted Living Marketing Director.



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“Arlinda always knows what her resident needs are — that’s just how she thinks. She anticipates the next step and advocates for them. She is the best team player in successful care for residents,” says Senior Executive Director Adam Patrick. “Beyond that, staff members see her as a leader and a resource. She is always approachable.”





**TAMMY BATES, Life Enrichment Director**  
West Oaks Senior Care & Rehab Center

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With 17 years' experience, there are countless reasons Tammy cherishes her LTC career: She feels she can profoundly influence lives by orchestrating activities that elevate quality of life. She forges meaningful, rewarding connections with residents, families and colleagues. "She keeps everyone engaged in our celebrations such as popcorn day and national wear orange day," shares Kimberly Haggins, Human Resources Director at NexCare Health Systems. "She makes it fun — and everyone especially looks forward to trivia with Tammy at West Oaks!"



**LINDSAY DOOLIN**  
Health Aide Supervisor  
Michigan House Senior Living

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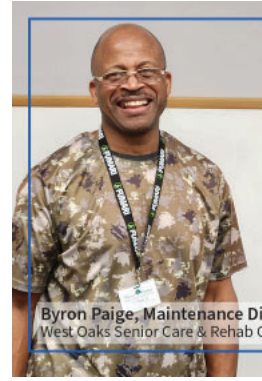
With 20 years in long-term care, Lindsay (on the left) loves her residents and always put them first. "She has a way of connecting with every resident that makes them bond in such a unique way," says Michigan House Executive Director Gabriela Birkner. "Lindsay is always committed to providing top-notch care to every resident and ensuring her team members do the same. She's a valuable team member who is always willing to help!"



**SHEILA ROBERTS, LPN & UNIT MANAGER**  
West Oaks Senior Care & Rehab Center

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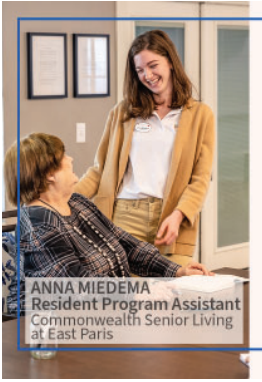
With a LTC career spanning 27 years, Sheila shares that she loves her residents and has never found anything more satisfying than working with seniors. "We really appreciate Sheila because she has such a strong work ethic. Anything asked of her is always done thoroughly," says Kimberly Haggins, Human Resources Director at NexCare Health Systems. "We can always count on her to solve a problem, and she's there for us when we need scheduling help. Sheila is a great preceptor, and we're thrilled to have her on our team."



**Byron Paige, Maintenance Director**  
West Oaks Senior Care & Rehab Center

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With over 27 years in LTC, Byron's legacy of hard work and dedication stems from his love of tinkering and fixing things paired with his love of people, especially seniors. "Byron never refuses to help, no matter what department needs it or if it is a big job or something small," says Kimberly Haggins, Human Resources Director at NexCare Health Systems. "He brings his smile and sometimes a joke along with his willingness to jump in. Byron's kind heart is one of the things that make him special to us."



**ANNA MIEDEMA**  
Resident Program Assistant  
Commonwealth Senior Living  
at East Paris

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"A great caregiver might be kind or compassionate or generous. Anna is all three and much more," shares Executive Director Mackenzie Ferguson. "She gives selflessly each day in every interaction with residents, their families and her peers. Her always-smiling face brings light to everyone. Even outside of the day-to-day activities, she finds one-on-one time to spend with each resident."



**MISTY PEMBERTON, LNHA**  
Nursing Home Administrator  
SKLD Livonia

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With 17 years' experience, Misty leads with grace, wisdom, calmness, knowledge and peace. "She creates a wonderful atmosphere at our facility," says MDS Coordinator Dionne Isadore. "It can get busy or chaotic, but somehow it feels calm because Misty is calm."

"Misty's caring, compassionate behavior shows in her interactions with residents, families and staff," adds Illuminate-HC Transitional Care Liaison Rita Daywalt. "She is rarely in her office, preferring to be on the floor with patients, rounding new admissions, welcoming families and answering questions. She always displays the traits of an outstanding leader."



**LEVANDER HILL**  
Housekeeping Staff  
Hoyt Nursing & Rehab Centre

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With 44 years of long-term care experience, Levander is well loved by residents and staff alike. "Mr. Lee's dedication to providing our residents with a safe and clean environment is truly exceptional," says Executive Director Annikka Reeser. "His interactions with our resident express nothing but compassion. We are immensely appreciative of everything he does for our residents and his team. He brings us nothing but pure joy!"



**AMANDA BROOKS**  
Cook  
Commonwealth Senior Living  
at East Paris

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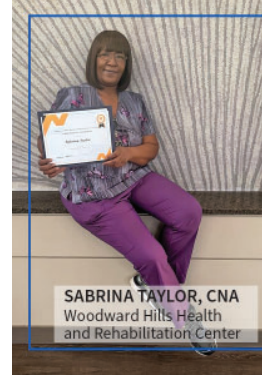
"You can tell when someone has a true passion by the way they do their work each day. It's obvious that Amanda is passionate about our Dining Services team," says Executive Director Mackenzie Ferguson. "She takes such pride in each ingredient and plate served to our residents. And, she looks after our Babylon micro-farm each day, using fresh ingredients to create the best flavors in everything she makes."



**CESARINA GRULLON**  
Environmental Services  
Supervisor  
Corewell Health Rehabilitation &  
Nursing Center - Kentridge

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"Cesarina is the most genuine, caring, hardworking and humble individual," says Administrator Michelle Boss. "Despite her quiet voice and gentle soul, she exhibits exemplary leadership strength and is an integral part of our team. She understands the crucial role her team plays in our facility and in our residents' lives. Cesarina excels in getting to know, guiding and motivating her EVS team. She thoroughly understands and appreciates our resident population and is always looking to improve facility processes or lead initiatives."



**SABRINA TAYLOR, CNA**  
Woodward Hills Health  
and Rehabilitation Center

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A strong advocate for residents, Sabrina's worked at Woodward Hills for 27 years — primarily in the LTC unit. A few of the many ways she's remarkable: If her patient is transferred to the hospital, she visits to ensure they are well cared for. She comes into work on her day off to visit her residents. If another department needs assistance, she works to get them caught up. "Sabrina is a pleasure to work with, and we are lucky to have her on our team," says Woodward Hills Administrator Jeanne Smith.

