



CARELINK

PRESIDENT'S AWARDS



2025

THE 2025
CARELINK COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENTS

Anthony Abson
Supervisory

Patrina Newman
Supervisory

Anisatu Tunis
Direct Care

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENTS

Daniel Darden

Doris Kandeh

Terri Neely

John Fausnaught

Jeff LaFontant

Sean Wallace

ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The President's Award honors CareLink employees who encourage, empower, and support individuals living with mental illness. Nominees promote CareLink's mission of assisting individuals to achieve wellness, recovery, and self-determination; have an extensive knowledge of psychosocial rehabilitation principles; demonstrate strong leadership skills; show professional initiative; demonstrate a good work ethic; and project a positive attitude and image to participants, peers, family members, and the community.

Separate awards are typically presented in two categories: one for an individual working in a Direct Care role and one for an individual working in a Supervisory role.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENT

Anthony Abson – Supervisory

Since joining Friendship Manor in 2008, Anthony Abson has advanced from Weekend Shift Supervisor to Program Coordinator and now Program Manager. Friendship Manor, a nine-bed program housed in a historic building with a complex layout, serves residents with diverse needs, many of whom remain long-term. Anthony has been central to creating a structured, supportive environment tailored to each person's strengths and challenges.

Under his leadership, the site improved from struggling with documentation and cleanliness to consistently earning top audit scores. Anthony has built a strong team of frontline supervisors and effectively balances staff perspectives with agency priorities, earning respect from colleagues, county partners, and leadership alike. His long-term work with many of the same staff members demonstrates his professionalism and ability to foster collaboration.

Recent audit scores at Friendship Manor—100% in medication, 97.67% in records, and 91% in site/facility standards—reflect Anthony's commitment to quality. He pushes participants to pursue goals, encourages community involvement, and supports family engagement, even with individuals who may be reluctant. Anthony also maintains exceptionally low staff turnover by advocating for his team and ensuring they feel supported.

We have had the pleasure of supervising Anthony in three different roles at three different points in time and he never fails to exceed expectations. —*Becki Levan & Rebecca McKeown*

PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENT

Patrina Newman – Supervisory

During her 16 years with CareLink, Patrina Newman has made a profound impact on both participants and staff. For the past 13 years, I have witnessed her dedication firsthand while working together at the Providence Road program.

Patrina has supported agency growth through her previous work as a Documentation Trainer and now as a Medication Trainer, helping staff across departments strengthen their knowledge and confidence. As a Documentation Trainer, she provided thorough instruction and ongoing support for new and current employees. CareLink leadership later recognized her exceptional expertise in medication administration and asked her to lead medication training, a role she embraced wholeheartedly. Her upbeat, engaging teaching style makes her an effective and memorable trainer.

Patrina also serves as a lead Delaware County medication practicum observer, traveling to multiple sites to provide constructive feedback and reinforce strong practices. Her guidance has contributed to Providence Road achieving 100% compliance with medication audits for three consecutive years. She also directly supports participants by helping them gain independence with medication self-administration; currently, about half of our residents self-administer successfully due to her efforts.

When I think of the President's Award, I think of someone who leads through consistent action and integrity. Patrina Newman truly embodies this standard. Her impact on training, participant independence, and staff development has strengthened CareLink in many lasting ways. —*Raymone Snow*

PRESIDENT'S AWARD RECIPIENT

Anisatu Tunis – Direct Care

Anisatu Tunis began her CareLink career in 2007 as a Residential Counselor at the Bryn Mawr and Charmont program sites before transferring to Jefferson Street CRR, where she has become indispensable on weekend shifts. In her role as a Residential Counselor, Anisatu consistently manages household needs, secures supplies, handles remodeling and decorating tasks, and is the only staff member who coordinates Saturday lab appointments for residents, tracks participant weights, identifies site repairs, monitors cigarette distribution, and contributes detailed insight during planning.

Known as the weekend program's "number cruncher," Anisatu keeps operations running smoothly and is the go-to person for special projects and outings. Her leadership, work ethic, and positive attitude are evident in her ability to manage multiple responsibilities while supporting participants with compassion and respect. She exemplifies CareLink's mission by encouraging residents to take ownership of their recovery and by staying attentive to their daily needs, ensuring progress toward even small goals.

Anisatu is currently studying Nursing at Delaware County Community College, enhancing her clinical knowledge and strengthening her role as a full-time residential counselor. She readily supports new staff, offers clear guidance, and uses her strong organizational skills to improve weekend operations. Her commitment to growth is evident in her self-directed learning, including independently developing Excel and spreadsheet skills to better support the program.

Anisatu's dedication, creativity, and reliability make her a trusted colleague. She is consistently sought out for her problem-solving abilities and steady presence, contributing far beyond what is expected simply because she wants the best for the program and those it serves. Anisatu is an excellent staff member and peer! —*Yahayah Conteh*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Daniel Darden

As Assistant Program Manager at STAR 1, Daniel Darden supports both participant recovery and daily operations. He connects with residents in genuine, thoughtful ways, taking time to understand their goals and helping them develop confidence and practical skills. Daniel's communication style is patient and clear, making him a trusted source of guidance; he keeps residents focused on recovery, teaches daily living skills, and creates an environment where individuals feel respected and capable.

Daniel is also a dependable operational partner to the Program Manager. He identifies concerns early, communicates effectively, and ensures the program remains safe, organized, and policy-compliant. He supports staff development by modeling best practices and stepping in whenever needed.

Alongside his full-time work, Daniel is a graduate student in Clinical Counseling at Saint Joseph's University and is completing an internship toward licensure as a professional counselor. Despite this demanding schedule, he remains fully engaged at STAR 1, applying what he learns academically to his work and strengthening the program with fresh insight.

Daniel began as a PRN Residential Counselor at CareLink while studying Psychology at Widener University, later became a Relief Shift Supervisor, and then Assistant Program Manager. He plays a key role in achieving strong quality-management scores through careful oversight of documentation, medication procedures, and maintenance standards. Daniel actively identifies improvement needs, supports corrective plans, and reinforces best practices, contributing significantly to the program's ongoing success. —*Shannon Huff*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

John Fausnaught

In just three years, John Fausnaught has become one of Friendship Manor's most dependable and consistent team members. He exemplifies CareLink's values by ensuring that participants receive timely meals, medications, updated medical administration records (MARs), and transportation. John follows supervisory guidance, treats everyone fairly, and contributes to smooth daily operations.

John's communication skills really stand out. His calm, professional demeanor helps ease the many challenges that arise at the Friendship Manor program. Both staff and participants trust him, viewing him as a team player who willingly assists wherever needed. He has earned respect through active listening, empathy, and a steady presence during participants' difficult moments.

He consistently completes Relias trainings and supports coworkers in maintaining compliance. John embodies the qualities essential to Human Services—empathy, compassion, non-judgment, and inclusivity—and plays an important role in the program's continued progress. —*Anthony Abson*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Doris Kandeh

Doris Kandeh received two nominations for the 2025 President's Award. The following incorporates elements of both applications.

Doris Kandeh has been a steady and essential presence at the Kings Highway program for several years. Beginning as a Residential Counselor and now serving as Assistant Program Manager, she oversees supplies, manages grocery shopping, and maintains a deep understanding of every aspect of daily operations. Her knowledge of the program, residents, and routines has been invaluable during periods of transition, and she consistently anticipates needs before they arise.

Doris brings warmth, dependability, and a strong person-centered approach to her work. She manages meal planning, cooking, supply oversight, and household organization with ease, and maintains strong rapport with participants. Her work ethic and commitment make her an anchor for the site.

Always eager to learn and grow, Doris is the first to complete required trainings and regularly seeks additional opportunities to strengthen her skills. She communicates effectively with peers, shares knowledge generously, and supports new staff with coaching and encouragement.

Doris's greatest achievement is her everyday presence. She ensures the Kings Highway home is safe, welcoming, and engaging, and her colleagues look to her for guidance. Doris keeps schedules full, ensures participant needs are met, and brings a positive, reliable presence that profoundly benefits both residents and staff. —*Victoria Pittman & Erin Dermigny*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Jeff LaFontant

For 14 years, Jeff LaFontant has been a dedicated Residential Counselor at CareLink's Senior Supported Living (SSL) program. Beginning at STAR 2 and later transferring to SSL, he has served as PRN, full-time, and now part-time. Jeff provides steady support to residents through medication assistance, detailed shift documentation, and helping maintain a home-like environment through cooking, cleaning, and attentive daily care.

Jeff is known for his reliability. Each year, he serves on the SSL snow team, ensuring safe conditions for staff and residents during inclement weather. His professionalism and kind demeanor make him a trusted and stabilizing presence.

He maintains full compliance with Relias trainings and recently completed training in The Mandt System, strengthening his de-escalation skills. His versatility allows him to work effectively across shifts, programs, and resident needs. Jeff is consistently dependable, often covering additional shifts and demonstrating a strong team-oriented spirit. His longevity, flexibility, and dedication make him a valuable asset to SSL.

—*Ashley McKelvey*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Terri Neely

Terri Neely, Weekend Shift Supervisor at SSL, has been with CareLink for four years and brings valuable experience from her previous work in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) programs. At SSL, she provides consistent oversight and ensures operations run smoothly. She frequently picks up additional shifts, demonstrating exceptional dependability and commitment.

Terri monitors medication assistance and models effective de-escalation techniques, helping maintain a safe and supportive environment. Her communication during shift exchanges is thorough and ensures continuity of care. She maintains full compliance with Relias trainings and recently completed training in The Mandt System to enhance her crisis response skills.

Terri's strong observational abilities, adaptability, and leadership made her transition into the SSL role seamless. She addresses concerns proactively and supports both residents and staff with thoughtful problem-solving. Her positive attitude and "can-do" approach make her a valued and trusted member of the team. —*Ashley McKelvey*

SPECIAL RECOGNITION RECIPIENT

Sean Wallace

In his five years with CareLink, Sean Wallace has demonstrated unwavering dedication to participant well-being. He began as an Assistant Program Supervisor in the agency's IDD Region and continued his role at the Manor Road site after transitioning to mental health when CareLink's IDD programs were discontinued.

Sean approaches his work with a strong person-centered focus and consistently goes above expectations to ensure participants' needs are met. He is a medication practicum observer and ensures correct medication-assistance practices across the team. Sean manages scheduling, medication refills, and daily participant needs with reliability and care. He supports participants with service plans, menu planning, grocery coordination, and day-to-day tasks, and often steps in to cover shifts when needed.

Sean fosters a collaborative team environment, supports coworkers, and remains open to learning new methods for improving participant care. His adaptability and willingness to embrace change make him an asset to both staff and residents. —*Victoria Pittman*

