

# 2013 FACILITY SUPER STARS

The CAHF Board of Directors selects the 20 Facility Super Stars from among dozens of impressive nominations.

## Elvia Aguilar

32 years in long-term care Activities Director, Windsor Gardens of Los Angeles

What is most amazing about Elvia is her thirst for knowledge and her desire to learn how to be the very best at what she does. When she migrated from Guatemala, she did not speak English. So she not only took English classes but Braille, typing classes, cooking classes, psychology and social-work classes – all to relate better to her residents. Elvia always incorporates new activities to her calendar so residents don't feel as if the programs lack creativity and therefore stop attending.



## Sheila Allen

34 years in long-term care Maintenance Director, Creekside Care Center, Stockton

An inspiration to all who is loved and respected by residents, families and peers, Sheila Allen started out as a certified nursing assistant before advancing to maintenance, housekeeping and laundry supervisor. Along the way, she has held numerous positions, always with the residents as her first priority. She is always willing to do anything asked of her. She is always in a positive mood and makes everyone feel better for being around her.



## Norma Baskette

26 years in long-term care MDS Nurse, Granada Rehabilitation Center, Eureka

There are employees, and then there is Norma Baskette. She started her career in 1969 as a member of the first registered-nurse class to graduate from College of the Redwoods. After five years as director of nursing at another facility, she took a break from work to raise her two boys, then returned to work as a staff developer, making a positive impact on the many certified nursing assistants she taught. Now, as MDS nurse at Granada for the last 14 years, Norma always strives for precision and completeness in all tasks and has been a mentor to many of the younger employees.



## Hilario Estrella

41 years in long-term care Cook, Jewish Home for the Aging, Eisenberg Village, Reseda

When Hilario Estrella began work as a dishwasher at Eisenberg Village, there were only 15 employees in the kitchen. Now there are 55. As he rose through the ranks, he demonstrated a passion for pleasing the residents through his excellent cooking skills, including his specialties, matzo-ball soup, breaded chicken and breaded fish, which earned him the nickname "Matzo-Ball Man." Another part of the legend of Hilario is that he found his true love at the home's first holiday party, in 1988. He invited his future girlfriend, and the two have been inseparable ever since.

## Karen Fox

29 years in long-term care Business Office, Windsor Hampton, Stockton

To call Karen the go-to person at Windsor Hampton is an understatement. Starting as a receptionist, then moving on to such business-office duties as accounts-receivable backup, payroll, admissions, payables, she also has worked in social services and activities and serves as facility historian along with filling multiple backup positions. Karen is the "glue" in a building with 10 administrators and five separate owners in 29 years.



## Tracy Fritts-Nash

31 years in long-term care Payroll Benefits Coordinator, Kindred Nursing & Transitional Care, Santa Cruz

After three decades at the same facility, almost all employees have come to rely on Tracy not only for her knowledge of payroll and benefits but also the history of the facility and her broad knowledge of company and facility systems. Aside from holding the positions of CNA, central supply clerk and payroll benefits coordinator, Tracy has always pitched in to help in other departments such as staff development and medical records when there was a need, even while overcoming medical adversity.



## Lydia Gonzalez

27 years in long-term care Director for Alzheimer's Unit, Country Villa Redlands

At age 16 Lydia started out as a certified nursing assistant working with developmentally disabled people. She quickly moved up the ladder to supervisory roles, including activity director, where she developed a "Fine Dining Program." Running Country Villa Redlands Alzheimer's unit since 2004, she has expanded on that dining experience. Birthdays and holidays never go without a party, and you will find Lydia right in the middle of things. She is always the first to jump in when help is needed, and her calm approach and positive attitude create a nurturing environment for both staff and residents.



## Ron Harris

37 years in long-term care Environmental Services, Vista Pacifica Center, Jurupa

Ron Harris excels in the environmental-services department by ensuring a safe and clean facility. He also has a unique and therapeutic relationship with the mental-health residents and on many occasions has demonstrated his ability to guide agitated residents through their day. With the highest character, integrity, humility and respect for life, Ron is active in church and school, and he and his wife Gloria have become foster parents for a 2-year-old boy.



## Elena Moreno Landeros

37 in long-term care LVN, Treatment Nurse, Vista Cove Care Center at Santa Paula

A two-time CAHF Channel Islands Chapter Licensed Nurse of the Year, Elena Landeros started out as a nursing assistant at age 17 and went on to be a certified nursing assistant, restorative nursing assistant and, in 2002, an LVN. Thanks to Elena, Vista Cove can admit residents with complicated wound treatments because she is there to make sure treatments are done correctly. She also teaches others how to do the ordered treatments and has become an enormously popular instructor.



## Robert Linden

25 years in long-term care Medical Records Clerk, Golden Empire Nursing and Rehab Center, Grass Valley

Dishwasher, maintenance worker, activities assistant, social-service designee, human resources, staffing coordinator – Robert Linden has worn many hats at Golden Empire – much of it while working multiple jobs to put himself through college. As medical records clerk, he works closely with the director and also serves as IT representative three weeks each month. Always ready in an emergency, Robert also finds time to work, go to school and help other private theater groups with scenery construction and rehearsals and can be relied upon to help make any facility event a success.



## Norma Llamas

41 years in long-term care Health Information Management Director, Golden LivingCenter-Fresno

After serving as a CNA, ward clerk and medical-records assistant, Norma Llamas became HIM director in 1994 and proved herself to be a master auditor who has kept the facility deficiency free in Medical Records for the last 14 years. She is also an advocate for her fellow employees, who describe her as honest, humorous and dedicated. Norma also ensures the well-being of residents by looking for inconsistencies in systems, monitoring bathing reports and completing room inspections.



## Adela Lopez

34 years in long-term care Scheduling Supervisor, Joyce Eisenberg-Keefer Medical Center of the Los Angeles

Adela Lopez began work as a CNA in 1979 with the encouragement of her mother, who was also a CNA. In the next nine years, she went on to become a medical technician, medical-records staff and assistant to the medical director before taking over as nursing scheduler for more than 550 nurses at a multi-campus organization that includes skilled nursing, assisted living and transitional care. Recently she also took on the responsibility of scheduling for the dietary and housekeeping departments. Through it all, Adela maintains her professionalism, confidentiality, sense of calm and hard work which often includes long hours above and beyond the call of duty.



## Claudia Mallory

40 years in long-term care Cook, Seaview Rehabilitation and Wellness, Eureka

Born and raised in Eureka, Claudia Mallory was 19 and had been traveling with a carnival when she came home in 1973 and was hired at Seaview as a dietary aide before moving up to cook. Now her main job is preparing breakfast. She loves the residents and loves making them smile. She has seen a lot of changes in the dietary department through her years of service and has remained very dependable and hard-working, with a full heart and dedication.



## Christina Mijares

36 years in long-term care Charge Nurse, Windsor Post Acute, Hayward

Christina Mijares is an LVN who always has a smile for residents and their families. She closely follows changes in condition, and her sweet personality helps make the working environment pleasant. Away from work, she performs concerts at churches in the community.



## Marta Perez

33 years in long-term care CNA, Glendora Grand

Starting as a housekeeper in 1980, with a tour of duty in laundry services, Marta Perez has been an inspiration to many CNAs. A quiet and mothering individual, she is always willing to help others and places her residents before anything else. She brings a positive attitude, works hard and provides great customer service. Glendora Grand is proud to have Marta as part of its family.



## Sandra Poitan

32 years in long-term care Laundry and Housekeeping Supervisor, Windsor Gardens of Hawthorne

“Dedication” and “compassion” are the words to describe Sandra Poitan. She believes that her residents’ well-being depends on the cleanliness of the facility, and she always ensures that it is in order. In Sandra’s laundry and housekeeping department, the motto is “Every resident is my resident.” She trains her staff always to answer call lights and never pass residents without speaking to them. As a result, the housekeepers at Windsor Gardens know the residents so well that they often notice a change of condition and communicate it to the LVN.

## Ines Sanhueza

32 years in long-term care Activity Assistant, Windsor Gardens Healthcare Center of the Valley, North Hollywood

Ines Sanhueza spoke no English when she and her family arrived in the United States from Chile in 1980. She accepted a job as a bed-maker at another facility, took language classes and became a CNA. In 1997 Ines was promoted to activity assistant at Windsor Gardens and has brought smiles to the residents’ faces every day since. She takes pride in fixing the residents’ hair and making each resident look and feel their best. Ines excels at creating stimulating programs for lower-functioning residents. She has committed her life to enhancing the lives of residents.



## Arleen Shelton

32 years in long-term care CNA, Windsor Care Center of Cheviot Hills, Los Angeles

In a profession that undergoes a lot of turnover, Arleen is an amazing CNA who stays grounded. She is a mentor to her fellow caregivers, popular with residents all over the building and a go-to person whenever the facility undertakes an innovative program. She was already a veteran of 28 years when new owners took over four years ago. Administrator Mark Galeck says, “I can always rely on Arlene – she is the best.”



## Emelita Villanueva, LPT

32 years in long-term care Nursing Services Auditor, Country Villa Riverside Health Care Center

After training and working as a registered nurse in Britain in the 1980s, “Emi” Villanueva brought her positive energy to Country Villa. Colleagues say she is like a tornado swirling around the facility, and she leaves no one in her path untouched by her caring, attentive and helpful manner. In behavioral health, the residents don’t always want what they need, but somehow Emi succeeds in getting their needs met – and they even thank her for it. Her sunny disposition and charismatic approach towards the patients always help them to manage their day better.

## Michele Zarate

31 years in long-term care MDS Coordinator/Case Manager, Windsor Chico Creek

Michele Zarate is always looking for ways to improve processes at her facility. She develops checklists to streamline the work of others. She provides education to the staff to ensure accurate documentation of care. She approaches her work with a keen eye and attention to detail. She has an extensive background in diabetes management and is an excellent resource for the other nurses. She also is a hard worker with a good sense of humor.



## Rogelio Zarate

46 years in long-term care Maintenance Technician, Grancell Village – Los Angeles Jewish Home

Our final 2013 Super Star also has the most seniority and has been working at the same facility since he started as a housekeeper in 1967. His incredible length of service alone would make him a Super Star, but his value is much greater than this. Rogelio works from the heart with attention to small but important details that make a big difference in the life of the residents. Much has changed during his four decades at Grancell Village, but Rogelio's adaptability has always remained consistent.



# Facility Super Star Certificate of Merit Recipients

**Margaret Alvarez**, 25 years in long-term care  
Dietary Assistant Manager, Golden LivingCenter-Hylond

**Banjamin Archambault**, 14 years in long-term care  
DSD, Fortuna Rehabilitation & Wellness Center

**Tomasa Arteaga**, 20-plus years in long-term care  
RNA, Windsor Gardens of Hawthorne

**Tina Casem**, 19 years in long-term care  
ADON, Torrance Care Center West

**Eileen Castisimo**, 15 years in long-term care  
ADON, Flower Villa, Los Angeles

**Noelia Edwards**, 21 years in long-term care  
Recreational Services Director, Golden LivingCenter Galt

**Ruth Ferrer**, 14 years in long-term care  
HMO Nurse Case Manager, Kindred Transitional Care & Rehab

**Bridget Flores**, 18 years in long-term care  
CNA, Vista Pacifica Convalescent, Riverside

**Afrashteh Gharai**, 23 years in long-term care  
CNA, Kindred Transitional Care and Rehabilitation Village Square, San Marcos

**Maria Guzman**, 11 years in long-term care  
Admissions Coordinator, Windsor Convalescent Center of North Long Beach

**Rhodora Lacap**, 10 years in long-term care  
CNO, DNS, LifeHOUSE San Diego

**Jesus Mares**, 12 years in long-term care  
CNA, Torrance Care West

**Elvia McDaniel**, 23 years in long-term care  
DSD, Shea Family Care Magnolia, El Cajon

**Consuelo "Sol" Natividad**, 22 years in long-term care  
CNA, Windsor Gardens of Los Angeles

**Rihanna Quinlan**, 13 years in long-term care  
LVN, Charge Nurse, Eureka Rehabilitation and Wellness Center

**Larry Ragan**, 16 years in long-term care  
Mental Health Counselor, Vista Pacifica Center, Riverside

**Danny Reynolds**, 23 years in long-term care  
Director of Admissions, Rancho Mirage Health Care

**Erlinda Soto**,  
LVN, Pacific Coast Manor, Capitola

**Jadwiga Strelau**, 19 years in long-term care  
MDS Coordinator, Kindred Transitional Care and Rehabilitation Village Square, San Marcos

**Tom Sylvander**, 10 years in long-term care  
LVN, DSD, Lemon Grove Care and Rehabilitation

**Martin Torres**, 29 years in long-term care  
Dietary Supervisor, Windsor Gardens Healthcare Center of the Valley, North Hollywood

**Halina Triplett**, 14 years in long-term care  
Case Manager, Shea Family Care Mission Hills

**Marrinett Uglade**, 25 years in long-term care  
LVN, Torrance Care East

**Angela M. Unutoa**, 15 years in long-term care  
DSS, Pacific Rehabilitation and Wellness Center, Eureka

**Ricardo Vera**, 10 years in long-term care  
Environmental Manager, Shea Family Care La Jolla

**Melicia Williams**, 12 years in long-term care  
CNA, Torrance Care East