

# Mountain Home Care Announces the Creation of 'Caregiver Leadership Award'

ARDEN, N.C., Oct. 30, 2013 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – In celebration of its 10th anniversary and National Family Caregiver's Month in November, Mountain Home Care announces the creation of its "Caregiver Leadership Award." The award recognizes exemplary professional caregivers with dual roles of service in the workplace and in their families.

Founded in 2003, Mountain Home Care is a leading provider of home care and geriatric services in western North Carolina.

Founder Lana Wilde recalls her own dual role care-giving experiences while launching Mountain Home Care and caring for her mother-in-law, affectionately called "Granny."

"We set up office in the basement of our home, and Granny lived in the 'bonus room' over the garage. She was on the third level, we were trying to work, and Granny's calling in on the intercom," Wilde says. "We must have been a sight for sore eyes."

The "Caregiver Leadership Award" for dual role caregivers within the Mountain Home Care community comes directly from Wilde's experience. Award recipients will be honored in an informal, family style reception Friday, November 22, 2013 from 2-4 p.m., at the Arden Presbyterian Church Fellowship Room. Learn more at <http://www.mountainhomecare.com/> .

## Dual Role Caregivers May Provide 'Round the Clock Care

Professional care giver Karen Austin, an employee of Mountain Home Care, cares for her aging father who suffers from dementia. Whether she is on the clock or not, Austin lives and works with her father full time, providing the 24 hour care he needs and would otherwise be unable to receive and remain in his home.

"When I clock out from my work, I'm still here taking care of Dad," Austin says. "It's morally the right thing to do, but I couldn't do it if I had to be working out in the world. The ability to earn an income while taking care of Dad has made it possible for me to be his professional care giver. I'm someone he's comfortable with, someone he trusts, and I treat him differently than another paid caregiver might."

Austin says, "The compensation I receive professionally covers a small portion of what I do personally, and it enables Dad to stay at home and keep his dignity. It was worth the sacrifice of leaving the work I was doing."

Why a Caregiver Leadership Award?

The Caregiver Leadership Award will recognize excellence in the profession and draw attention to the growing challenges of health professionals in dual roles, says Wilde.

Few available studies exist regarding dual role caregivers employed in health care professions. In the U.S., where seven million individuals are caregivers, employment in the health services has consistently risen between 1990 and 2010, according to U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics.

In 2010, the most recent year for which figures are available, 3,129,000 persons work in nursing and residential care settings. In North Carolina, for example, nurses alone comprise 88,190 members of the active labor work force. As more than one-third to one-half of adult children in the U.S. who provide parent or elder care are employed, it may be inferred that as many as 29,400-44,000 nurses may be dual role caregivers. Nurses, of course, are only one segment of the population which provides care to others at work and at home.

What Dual Role Care Giving Means to Employers:

The issue of care giving is widespread and growing, says Wilde. "The need for flexible work policies for professional caregivers in dual roles contributes to the success of individuals as well as geriatric and home care companies."

Wilde adds, "Caregivers who unsuccessfully try to balance full time work with care giving roles may find it difficult to focus on the positive aspects of the profession. Gratefully, professional training enhances preparation for dual roles."

"Conversely, family caregivers often lack that preparation and often run themselves into the ground. Qualified professional care givers can help supply a higher quality of care than the family members can manage on their own," says Wilde.

Significant numbers of dual role care givers are found outside the profession, too. About one-third of the Baby Boomer generation is caring for parents, with men as well as women fulfilling that role in roughly equal numbers, according to a Cornell Human Resources Review published in December 2011.

The "Caregiver Leadership Award" reception will be Friday, November 22, 2013, from 2-4 p.m., at the Arden Presbyterian Church Fellowship Room, 2215 Hendersonville Road.

Mountain Home Care, serves home and geriatric care clients throughout western North Carolina.

Mountain Home Care is online at <http://www.mountainhomecare.com/>.

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