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Local Nurse Recognized as RN Hero of the Year by BAYADA Home Health Care

Patient with spinal muscular atrophy describes his nurse as priceless

Charlotte, NC — June 11, 2013 — Charlotte resident and registered nurse (RN) John Morris was chosen from over 18,000 home health care professionals as the BAYADA Home Health Care RN Hero of the Year. Morris received this prestigious honor for exemplifying the highest standards of care for Ari Anderson, 20, who was born with spinal muscular atrophy. BAYADA President and Founder Mark Baiada presented Morris with the Hero award during the company's annual awards meeting in Hershey, PA on June 8.

"This is an incredible honor from an incredible company," said Morris as he accepted the award in front of more than 1,800 BAYADA employees, as well as Anderson and his mother Stephanie, who made the journey from North Carolina to Pennsylvania to show their support for the nurse they describe as priceless. "This entire company is full of heroes, and to be singled out is just remarkable."

Spinal muscular atrophy is a motor neuron disease affecting the voluntary muscles that are used for walking, head and neck control, swallowing, and breathing. Since 2009, Morris has cared for Anderson, whose basic needs of breathing and eating have to be managed by carefully trained health care professionals.

Anderson's mother Stephanie truly appreciates the expertise and compassion that Morris has shared with her son. "He's not just the cream of the crop medically who can come in and in a 911 situation calm everyone's nerves," she said. "He can also touch a person's soul because he cares so deeply, and Ari feels that deep caring. John is a great friend to him."

Morris and Anderson can often be found discussing their favorite science fiction movies or History Channel programs. What's more, Anderson truly appreciates when Morris takes the time to read aloud to him, giving him the chance to enjoy 15 of his favorite books over the past three years!

"When I think of a BAYADA hero, I think of someone who represents our company's core values of compassion, excellence, and reliability," said BAYADA Director Melissa Allman. "John listens and shows empathy for his patients' needs, no matter how big or small. He also advocates for his patients and the many people in North Carolina who need home care."

Indeed, Morris has taken his passion for nursing all the way to Raleigh, accompanying Anderson to the state capital to stress the importance of nursing care in the home. Morris also spent hours creating a movie and photo presentation for Anderson in preparation for their meetings with legislators.

“He dropped everything to come to the capital with us because he knows that this is a priority for Ari,” said Goldberg.

Morris brings a wealth of experience to his patients at BAYADA. He has worked in the intensive care unit at Carolinas Medical Center and spent five years as a health services technician in the Coast Guard. He also works at a local trauma center to keep his emergency skills current. Morris recently earned a promotion to BAYADA Clinical Associate, a role that will allow him to serve as a mentor to a team of home care nurses and to continue to make a positive impact on the many patients who benefit from his care.

While Anderson was thrilled to learn that his nurse had been selected as the Hero of the Year, the news did not come as a surprise. “I’ll tell you what makes John special,” he said. “Whenever I have a stressful week, I look forward to the day he comes. I wake up with a smile when John comes to work, and I still have a smile when he leaves at the end of the day. Thank you John for the past four years, you will always be considered my hero.”

Established in 1999, the Hero on the Home Front Program recognizes care professionals who consistently demonstrate the BAYADA core values of compassion, excellence, and reliability. Each quarter, local heroes are nominated by their clients and peers, and the award recipients are honored in a local celebration. From the local heroes, division heroes are chosen, and finally, one national hero is selected for four disciplines and each of the four is recognized at the annual awards ceremony.

Watch what makes John Morris a hero at http://bayada.com/education_heroes2013.asp

Founded in 1975 by J. Mark Baiada, BAYADA Home Health Care provides nursing, rehabilitative, therapeutic, hospice, and assistive care services to children, adults, and seniors in the comfort of their homes. Headquartered in suburban Philadelphia, BAYADA employs more than 18,000 nurses, home health aides, therapists, medical social workers, and other home health care professionals who serve their communities in 25 states from more than 250 offices. For more information, visit www.bayada.com.

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Pictured during the BAYADA Home Health Care annual awards meeting in Hershey, PA are (l to r) BAYADA Director Ann Baiada, BAYADA client Ari Anderson, Registered Nurse Hero of the Year John Morris, Ari’s mother Stephanie, and BAYADA President and Founder Mark Baiada.