

CALA 2015 Outstanding Resident Service Awards
Loretta Ward, Chef Manager

Loretta Ward has a personal mantra, “whatever is best for the Residents” and she lives this mantra far past her duties as Chef Manager. Having worked at Middlewoods of Newington since 2004 and now at Middlewoods of Farmington since January of this year, she has taken the opportunity to make a real difference in both buildings.

On Valentine’s Day, Loretta has been the “Secret Admirer” ...to EVERY Resident in the building by putting a handwritten valentine in each mailbox.

There is not a holiday or opportunity to dress up that gets by Loretta. She has dressed up as a leprechaun, a hula dancer, an Olympic ski jumper, a bumblebee and even Tinkerbell, just to name a few! A potentially imposing figure at nearly 6 feet tall, she knows how to laugh at herself and make those around her giggle with delight.

Loretta goes out of her way to check on Residents, check in with Residents and be present with Residents. She will get down on her knee to be at eye level with a seated Resident, take their hand to find out what she can do to help – and it goes beyond just meal preparation and service.

Most recently, the family of a 102 year old Resident who had lived at Middlewoods of Newington for more than a decade, made the difficult decision to move her closer to them – in Maryland. As they began discussing logistics and the difficulty of transporting an elderly woman by airplane, Loretta jumped in and in true Loretta fashion, volunteered to drive the Resident, all of her belongings and her daughter to her new home in Maryland on her weekend off.

Having worked with Loretta for more than 11 years, I find myself thinking and often speaking in “Loretta-isms”. From, “there is no blame, but only solutions”, to “matters not to me”, working with Loretta has enhanced the lives of all she meets. There is not a moment that goes by that she is not making a true difference in the lives of the Residents she serves and the staff she works side by side with – setting the tone and being a living example of the mission, vision and values of United Methodist Homes.