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### **Mary Klug Honored as Caregiver of the Year for Work at Arlington Place**

Mary Klug, who works at Arlington Place in St. Joseph, has been honored as the District D Caregiver of the Year among members of Minnesota Health and Housing Alliance. The award was announced Feb. 6 in Minneapolis during the Minnesota Health and Housing Alliance Institute for Older Adult Services. District D is composed of 17 counties in central Minnesota.

Klug's first contact with Arlington Place was when her own mother was at the assisted living facility. As she got to know the staff who took care of her mother, it was the staff who became impressed with Klug. They acknowledged her as someone who always went the extra mile for her mother. It may have come naturally, as Klug at the time was a caregiver at a neighboring nursing home.

About a year after her mother died, Klug made an employment switch to Arlington Place and there she has moved through several employment ranks. Now, with 30 years of caregiving experience to draw upon, Klug was nominated by her peers for the Caregiver of the Year award due to her passion for long-term care and her many skills.

"The word caregiver cannot adequately describe the many unique qualities that Mary brings to her job," said one, Housing Manager Mary Kay Hawkins. "I've been privileged to share in her vivacious spirit for the lives of our aging residents."

Resident Care Coordinator Jill Hawkins Dassah told of Klug's willingness to tackle any challenge, including once complying with a request to don hockey gear to deal with a particularly combative resident. "She was the only caregiver who was able to bathe that resident," Dassah recalled.

Klug also was praised by nominators for encouraging residents to become aware of political issues. She invited legislators to the facility to discuss governmental policy. Her "political" interests also took the form of taking the facility's resident council to a new level, encouraging participation, voting and residents taking active part in making their needs known.

"She is what makes our house a home," Dassah said.

Caregiver of the Year is a top award from MHHA. The association also honors volunteers, organizational trustees, professional leaders, innovative practices, community service and mission-driven work at its annual Institute. To learn more about MHHA and to obtain consumer information about older adult services, go to [www.mhha.com](http://www.mhha.com).

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