

Alzheimer's OC honors outstanding caregivers in Anaheim

By **admin** - 10/02/2019



Liberty Samplio.

Local caregivers recognized for their commitment to compassionate care

On Thursday, September 12, Alzheimer's Orange County honored local Anaheim residents Cheryl Vargo and Liberty Samplio, who have shown extraordinary compassion in caring for someone who has Alzheimer's disease or a related form of dementia. Each was nominated by someone who observed their commitment to compassionate care.

Cheryl Vargo was recognized in the category of Family Caregiver—Unpaid caregivers who are on the frontlines of providing compassionate care to a loved one with Alzheimer's or a related form of dementia. She took on managing the life and wellbeing of her beloved aunt in 2018. Then her mother developed an illness that required her to support her as well. Cheryl jumped in and took it all on, not to mention having a full-time career with Kaiser Permanente and raising two small children.



Cheryl Vargo.

Liberty Samplio, a nurse at Walnut Village Rehabilitation and Care Center, was honored in the category of Medical/Clinical Professional—Physicians, researchers, geriatric counselors, clinical social workers, geriatric nurse practitioners, care managers, case managers or other clinical professionals in the field of dementia care. She has demonstrated exceptional patience and communication when working with her memory care clients and understands the core values of caring conversations and having the ability to step into her clients' reality and ensuring they are comfortable and safe.

They were recognized at Alzheimer's Orange County's 13th Annual Visionary Women Caregivers Luncheon held at Rancho Las Lomas, a private estate, zoological garden and special event venue in Silverado. The event opened with a shopping boutique, where a percentage of sales from vendors was donated to Alzheimer's Orange County. Lunch followed, with poignant keynote remarks about caregiving from special

guest and friend of the organization, Eve LaRue (best known for her roles on "All My Children" and "CSI: Miami"). During the program, Alzheimer's Orange County spotlighted them, playing audio vignettes of their story and remarks and presenting them with plaques.

With over 5.5 million Americans affected by Alzheimer's—84,000 of which live right here in Orange County—most people are bound to know someone who has been touched by the disease.

"The task of caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease represents a challenging and emotional journey," said Jim McAleer, Alzheimer's Orange County CEO and president. "We were honored to recognize these incredible individuals who have selflessly poured their hearts and energy into improving the lives of those who can no longer care for themselves."

Event sponsors included Avanir Pharmaceuticals, Farmers & Merchants Bank, CareCHOICES, Caring Companions at Home, Oakmont Senior Living, Belmont Village Senior Living, Kaiser Permanente, Irvine Cottages and Rancho Las Lomas.

For more information, visit alzoc.org.

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