



**Alzheimer's Orange County Honors Outstanding Dementia Caregivers in  
Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Lake Forest, Orange, Mission Viejo and Santa  
Ana**

by: Dan Pittman  
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LtoR: Margie Wright - AlzOC VP of Community Engagement; Mallory Vega - AlzOC VP of Direct Care Services; and Sonia Garcia – Francia of Santa Ana, Administrator at Guardian Angels Homes in Santa Ana, in the category of Lifetime Caregiver

**SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO**...On Friday, November 19, Alzheimer's Orange County (AlzOC) honored deserving caregivers at the 2021 Visionary Women's Caregivers Luncheon who have shown extraordinary compassion in caring for people living with Alzheimer's disease or a related form of dementia.

The event was held at the spacious San Juan Capistrano estate of AlzOC Board member Dr. Jacqueline DuPont-Carlson, and her husband Marc Carlson. The day began with a shopping boutique, where a percentage of sales from vendors was donated to AlzOC, followed by a lunch and poignant keynote remarks about caregiving from special guest Emmy nominated and SAG award-winning actress Sharon Lawrence of Grey's Anatomy and NYPD Blue television shows.

During the program, AlzOC spotlighted each of the caregiver honorees, playing vignettes of their stories and presented each with a plaque.

Here are the honored dementia caregivers in their respective categories:

Terri Wheeler of Fountain Valley, in the category of Family Caregiver – Unpaid caregivers who are on the frontlines (present or past) of providing compassionate care to a loved one with Alzheimer's or a related form of dementias.

Sharon Mulhall, a caregiver with Carefree Home Care in Orange, in the category of Professional Caregiver/Direct Service – Paid caregivers who are on the frontlines of providing compassionate care in the dementia field. This classification is

Ronald Simpson of Mission Viejo, owner of Granny's Place Assisted Living in Mission Viejo, in the category of Administrative Professional – Individuals in licensed residential facilities, other care facilities, or who serve as administrative professionals in other service agencies to persons with dementia (i.e., hospice, in-home care, etc.).

Jason Abney, DO, medical director, founder and CEO of Doctors Direct Medical Group in Costa Mesa, 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.

Marie DeGuzman of Lake Forest, a house manager with the Cottages Memory Care Community, in the category of AlzOC Team Member Award – Staff/caregivers who work for AlzOC, Healthy Aging Center: Acacia, Healthy Aging Center: Laguna Woods or The Cottages Memory Care Community who exemplify compassionate care through the direct care or other forms of support they provided for the individuals and families the organization served.

Sonia Garcia – Francia of Santa Ana, Administrator at Guardian Angels Homes in Santa Ana, in the category of Lifetime Caregiver.

Thanks to the generosity of Dr. DuPont-Carlson all of this year's awardees are eligible for the DuPont-Carlson Scholarship program that awards \$2,000 to use towards continuing education of any kind to further their lives and careers.

With over 6 million Americans affected by Alzheimer's Disease – 84,000 of whom live right here in Orange County – most people are bound to know someone who has been touched by the disease.

"We are delighted to recognize these caregivers, who have displayed extraordinary compassion in caring for those touched by Alzheimer's disease and related forms of dementia," said Jim McAleer, AlzOC President and CEO. "They have poured their hearts and boundless energy into improving the lives of those who can no longer care for themselves."

Event sponsors include Julia and George Argyros, Dr. Jacqueline DuPont-Carlson, and Marc Carlson, CareCHOICES, Guardian Angels Homes, Crescent Landing at Santa Ana, Caring Companions at Home, Farmers & Merchants Bank, First American

AlzOC is located at [2515 McCabe, Suite 200, Irvine, 92614](#). For more information, visit [www.alzoc.org](http://www.alzoc.org)