The Blossom Bulletin

March & April 2023

MAKING THE MOMENT

Cynthia Fernandez



It was very early in the morning on Thanksgiving of 2022. Molly Dillon, Compliance Officer at Blossom, was covering for COVID-19 check-ins and was experiencing some technical difficulties. **The app Blossom uses to perform these check-ins with our aide staff was unresponsive.** Molly did not want to bother anyone early on a holiday and attempted to solve the problem on her own by using a different phone to contact our field staff. Cynthia Fernandez, a Staffing Coordinator at Blossom, was working on-call that day and immediately helped Molly when she saw that she was struggling. Cynthia took the lead and made sure all field staff and clients were taken care of over the phone, sacrificing time away from enjoying the holidays with her own family. Cynthia did so with her trademark generous spirit and positive attitude. This act of selflessness is why Cynthia is our 2022 Making the Moment Award winner.

Not only did Cynthia Make the Moment on Thanksgiving, but she is always eager to provide help to others. Molly and Cynthia have worked together for several years, and their departments often overlap. Knowing the strong bond that Cynthia has with staff and clients, Molly will often times reach out to Cynthia for assistance during a QA investigation. Cynthia is a ray of light, providing reassurance and peace of mind during what can be a stressful situation. "… I also think it's really challenging to deliver that level of, you know, just positivity and compassion and patience day after day after day after day, and I think she does a really great job of it." Molly expresses.

As a Staffing Coordinator, Cynthia's job is like solving a giant puzzle and requires her to wear many hats. In addition to scheduling, matching clients with aides, and replacing call-offs, Cynthia acts as an emotional support system for aides and clients. She is always someone they can confide in and get things off their chest with. Cynthia is a perfect match in this role as she is always willing to help out and has a strong desire to contribute to people's happiness. In her own words, Cynthia states, "… I think it's really important to look out for others. Especially when others are in need and they're down. You know, you never know what effect you will have on somebody."

Making the Moment is our core purpose here at Blossom. For Cynthia, Making the Moment means giving it your all. She believes Blossom exemplifies Making the Moment by constantly doing the impossible. This was, and still is, especially evident in navigating the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic brought about many challenges for Blossom. One of the major challenges was finding staff to serve people in need of care, an obstacle Cynthia witnessed first-hand in her role as a Staffing Coordinator. Through the challenges, Cynthia and the Blossom team have responded with perseverance and creative solutions.

Cynthia finds the motivation to persevere and stay positive from her daughter, "…having pictures of my daughter helps out a lot. Yeah, that helps out a lot. Whenever I'm having a stressful day, I just look at her pictures." Family is everything to Cynthia and she is grateful to come from a large one, "I come from a big family. I come from a family of six of us, three boys, three girls." Cynthia's mom moved her family to Rochester from Puerto Rico after a hurricane had devasted their home. Cynthia is appreciative of all the opportunities the move has granted her and her family.

(Continue reading on page 2)

Blossom Bulletin Board

Welcome to Blossom!

Cheryl Long, RN Educator
Yaite Leon, Staffing Coordinator
Kate St. John, HCSS Supervisor

Welcome, New Blossom Field Staff!

Emable B, Heischa R, Kasey B, Kasina W, Kayvona C, Keith J, Keyahnna M, Miguel SF, Shayla C, Shenna S, Tammy S, Unique L

Blossom is going *BLUE* for



Brain Injury Awareness

on Friday, March 10. *Join us!*

Donate for Denim

Donate for Denim Recap:

In January we raised money for **Focus on the Children.** FOTC has been serving children in Livingston County since 1993 and providing assistance with new beds, clothing, and more.

In February we supported the **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Rochester.** The organization's mission is to develop mentoring relationships that empower younger generations.

What's YOUR favorite charity?

Know of a charitable organization that resonates with the Blossom mission? We want to know about it! **Email your suggestions to bfindlay@blossommhcs.com.**

Denim Down the Line:

In March we'll be raising money for **Brain Injury Association of NYS.** Many of our clients suffer from traumatic brain injuries. Help support our clients and the numerous individuals experiencing traumatic brain injuries by donating to BIANYS. Throughout it's history BIANYS has provided resources to help the lives of those affected by traumatic brain injuries. **Join us on Friday, March 10 and wear blue to show your support!**

In April we'll be supporting the **Happy Birthday Cha Cha Cha.** The organization is committed to bringing Birthday joy to kids in need.

(Making the Moment Continued)

Cynthia carries her value of family into the workplace and is a living example of our core value, Extending the Family. Just recently, Cynthia reached out to an old client to check up on her and show her that she cared, "For example, I had a client I haven't talked to in a few months since the holiday last year. You know when I called her the other day I said 'hey I know you're getting great services I know I haven't talked to you in a while. I just wanna make sure you're okay and that I am thinking about you.'" Here at Blossom, we want to thank Cynthia for all her moments with us and congratulate her on receiving the incredibly well-deserved 2022 Making the Moment Award.

2022 Fourth Quarter State of the Company

By Chris Gauvin

A lot has happend over the last quarter.

As of January 1, our field staff are making an increased wage on both the LHCSA and CDPAP side. Many COVID-19 restrictions have started to loosen up and because of that, we have been able to open our offices back up. It has been nice to have the vibrant energy of more and more people back in the office. Blossom leadership has also decided, in line with Department of Health guidance, to make masks optional in the office for individuals not experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Masks will continue to be required when in the field and working with clients.

We have had some new and returning faces join the Blossom team since last quarter. My father, Al Gauvin, has temporarily come back from retirement to offer some assistance and guidance. Since the last State of the Company, we have had nine new hires here in the office. Sophia Ruddock and Genesis Diaz have joined the Blossom family as Health Homes Care Managers. Andre Bell has joined as a Children's Health Homes Care Manager. We were able to hire two new nurses, Kristina Bergeron and Kate St. John. Alicia Gayden has come in as our new On-Call Staffing Coordinator. Over in the education department, we have added Cheryl Long as our RN Educator. Lastly, we have Yaite Leon joining the team as a new Staffing Coordinator.

This quarter we awarded existing employees for exemplifying Blossom's core values. Kimberly Notebaert, Health Homes Care Manager, received the Extending the Family award for carrying an additional caseload of clients outside her designated county. The Get it Done award was given to Dan Oonk, QA Generalist, for covering additional administrative responsibilities, assisting with COVID-19 check-ins, front desk coverage, auditing safety committee projects, and countless other projects. Sophia Ruddock, Health Homes Care Manager, was honored with the Lead with Heart award for adapting to difficult circumstances and putting her client's needs first. The Solve the Problem award was received by Amber Moore, Health Homes Care Manager, for helping her client establish a safer home environment. Andre Bell, Children's Health Homes Care Manager, received the award for Little Funnies. He received the award for beatboxing with his client, making them more comfortable opening up to him.

Congratulations to everyone who recieved an award and thank you to everyone for their continued diligence!

2022 FOURTH QUARTER

CORE VALUE CHAMPIONS

1	EXTENDING THE FAMILY	Kimberly Notebaert
2	GET IT DONE	Dan Oonk
3	LEAD WITH HEART	Sophia Ruddock
4	SOLVE THE PROBLEM	Amber Moore
5	LITTLE FUNNIES :)	Andre Bell

Breast Cancer COALITION

Pink&Teal CHALLENGE

ROAR!

AGAINST CANCER



The Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester (BCCR) has a special place in our hearts. Blossom (previously Companion Care of Rochester) started from founder, Al Gauvin's, desire to help his sister who was diagnosed with stage-four breast cancer. Al was unable to find adequate care for his sister and decided to create his solution by forming Companion Care of Rochester in 1997. In honor of Muriel, Blossom particpates in BCCR's annual walk and run fundraising event. This year's **BCCR walk and run event** is now called the **Pink and Teal Challenge** to encompass gynecologic cancer as well as breast cancer.

1. Join the Team!

Go to the website https://runsignup.com/teamblossom and click "Join." Go through the registration prompts. (If there is more than one person in your group, you can "Add another registrant.")

2. Raise Money!

Raise $50 or more by April 21 for a free Blossom t-shirt! Your walk registration must be linked to Blossom's team in order to receive the t-shirt.

3. Walk!

The event will be Saturday May 13 at 9:45am at Monroe Community College and we plan to walk as a team.

Want to support the team? Go to https://runsignup.com/teamblossom and click "Donate."





In the spring of 2020, my sweet Gran Jessie passed away. It was during the pandemic (not COVID-19 related), and on top of everything else going on in the world, her death left me crushed. She had always been my favorite and we had the best memories together; from drinking tea, to baking pies, eating lots of chocolates, doing her hair, and shopping. Many years prior, my Gran had battled breast cancer. I was young at the time, so it wasn't something we talked about much. Since her passing, I have learned the stories of how strong she was during her battle. She had to journey to the next town over 5 days a week for 6 weeks to receive her treatments. She never once complained. After her battle she lived a healthy life for 20 more years, passing away at the age of 87. Her passing and knowing of her battle is what motivates me to participate in this walk/run each year! My sister and I have either ran or walked the event for the last 3 years and I am excited to do so again this year. It's a great way to support a wonderful organization, support the Blossom team, get some fresh air and exercise, and most importantly have fun! Brooke Findlay

I don't have anyone who I know personally that has had cancer, but I have participated in one walk. It was cold and raining, I had my husband and 3 kiddos in strollers. We did not make it the entire walk, but it made for a fun Mother's Day! Emily Briggs





This is a photo of my sister and I walking the pink ribbon walk back in 2019. It's was a great experience and I can't wait to do it again with my daughter this time. My grandmother was a breast cancer survivor, so every year for the last 7 years, I would donate money in honor of her name. Cynthia Fernandez



My good friend Lea Ann Sawyer is a breast cancer survivor. She is on the "Embrace Your Sisters" board. "Embrace Your Sisters" is an organization that provides financial support for people with breast cancer. Katy Robinson



I will walk for my mother-in-law, Evadne Ruddock, who passed away on February 2nd, 2018. Evadne died from gynecological cancer. She was a kind, loving, and God-fearing lady who left us too soon. Sophia Ruddock

aide of the MONTH



January 2023

zorimar torres

FINDING FULFILLMENT

OUR 2023 AIDE OF THE MONTH

program is starting strong with recipient Zorimar Torres. Zorimar Torres, a kind, loving, and dependable individual received this honor for exhibiting Blossom's core value of Extending the Family. Originally from the island of Puerto Rico, Torres moved to the United States in 1999. When Zorimar first moved to the U.S., she lived in Dunkirk, NY, and later moved to Rochester in 2011. Before Blossom, she worked as a Quality Technician for 11 years. Over a year ago, she decided to get certified as a Personal Care Aide at Blossom to find more fulfillment in her life, "… what I enjoy most is taking care of my clients and I find a lot of fulfillment in that."

> "… what I enjoy most is taking care of my clients and I find a lot of *fulfillment* in that."

Zorimar is thankful to have a meaningful career with a company that acknowledges the hard work of its employees. She is grateful for all she has learned as a Personal Care Aide. Working at Blossom has given her a fresh and appreciative outlook on life, "…sometimes we're young and we don't think about, you know, how lucky we are to just be able to get up in the morning and brush our teeth and go on with our day."

Zorimar passes along her feeling of fulfillment to her clients by keeping them engaged with entertaining activities. "I like to see what motivates them. So, with some of them, I've brought arts and crafts." She also finds that her clients are stimulated by playing fun card games or board games like the classic "Trouble". Working on puzzles together is also a popular pastime with her clients. "… when I bring different things to do with them you can see how that lightens up and brightens up their day so that's very fulfilling."

Outside of work, Zorimar enjoys spending time with family and her two adorable Pomeranians, Gizmo and Cocoa Bear! She is also involved in her elevation church group as a co-leader. In her spare time, Zorimar is an avid reader and enjoys reading faith books and biographies. One of her favorite books is *A Child Called "It"* by author Dave Pelzer.

> "… if you take it seriously and you really do it because you love doing it then it will change you forever. *For the better.*"

Zorimar would encourage someone interested in the healthcare field to become a part of the Blossom family. She finds this type of work to be incredibly rewarding and recognizes its potential to change someone's life, "… if you take it seriously and you really do it because you love doing it then it will change you forever. For the better." Here at Blossom, we are truly grateful for the fulfillment Zorimar brings to her client's lives. Thank you for your compassion and empathy, Zorimar! ■



Aide of the Month

February 2023

Yolanda Bollar

Compassionate, Caring, Creative

Our February Aide of the Month, Yolanda Bollar, has had a long career in helping others. She has been a part of the Blossom family for almost nine years, and before that, she worked at Senior Life for around twelve years. Originally from Florida, Yolanda moved to Rochester when she was eleven years old. She is married and has three daughters and one son who has passed away, an adorable grandson, and pet shorkie (a shih tzu/yorkie mix).

> "I have three young ladies that look up to me. So, I try to put my *best foot forward* for them and for my grandbaby as well."

Yolanda loves working with people and taking care of them. She enjoys doing a variety of activities with her clients from gardening to crafts and having deep discussions. Yolanda's family is what motivates her to do her very best for her clients, " I have three young ladies that look up to me. So, I try to put my best foot forward for them and for my grandbaby as well." Yolanda believes people deserve to be cared for and respected. "…the people deserve it. There's too many people not caring in the world. You know, they got, my clients, they have a lot of things going on. They need to know somebody's gonna be there for them and I always try to be there for them."

In addition to her love of helping others, Yolanda was drawn to Blossom because of our history. Al Gauvin founded this company after he could not find care for his sister who had breast cancer and eventually passed away from the disease. Yolanda was inspired by Al's desire to help not only his sister but other families struggling to find care and wanted to become a part of a company that is dedicated to compassion. She also admires how Blossom has handled all the challenges of the pandemic as well as all the incredible work done by our current CEO, Chris Gauvin, "I think he's been doing a great job since he took over for his dad. A lot of times when, you know, the founders or the parents leave the company, the kids don't always hold the same respect for it that they did, but I think he's been doing a great job, especially having to deal with the pandemic."

> "There's too many people not caring in the world. You know, they got, my clients, they have a lot of things going on. They need to know somebody's gonna *be there for them...*"

When she is not working, Yolanda enjoys crafting and spending time with her family. She loves working with resin, sewing, and experimenting with her Cricut to make designs on things like shirts and bags. Yolanda also loves playing with her grandson who is a precious bundle of energy. Blossom is lucky to have a compassionate, caring, and creative individual like Yolanda on our team. ■

SAFETY CORNER

Spring Cleaning By Dan Oonk

Warmer weather is approaching, and Spring is right around the corner!

With that said, it's a good time to review how to stay safe while doing some Spring cleaning. Here are some tips to safely clean your home this Spring:

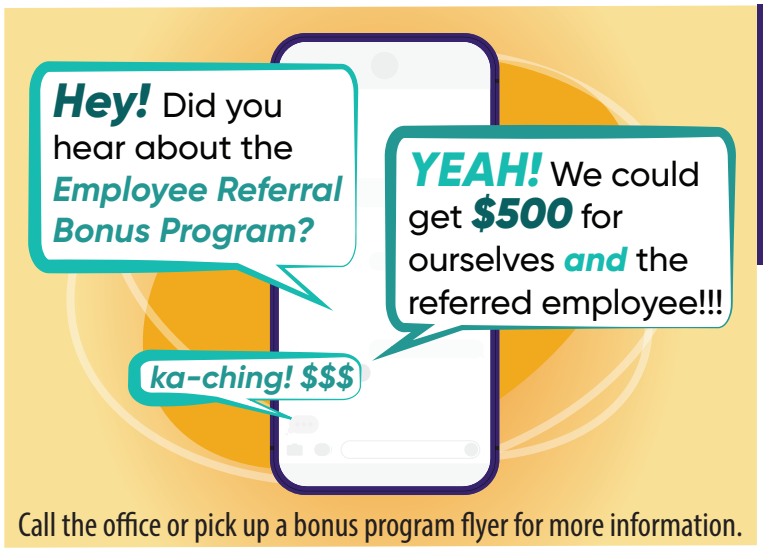
- Start by removing any clutter on the ground that could cause trips or falls
- Be sure to read the labels of any cleaning supplies carefully, and use them accordingly
- When using cleaning products, be sure to keep a door or windows open to provide good ventilation
- Avoid wet floors after cleaning to prevent slips and falls
- Ask for help when moving heavy objects- be sure to lift with your knees and not your back
- Drink plenty of fluids while cleaning to stay hydrated

Spring cleaning is also a time to get rid of items such as old medications and electronics. It's important to dispose of these items safely.

For old medications, the FDA states, "the best way to dispose of your expired, unwanted, or unused medicines is through a drug take back program." Check with your local pharmacy or town hall for any upcoming disposal programs.

For old electronics, try recycling instead of throwing them in the trash! Retail stores and local recycling centers will accept your old electronics through recycling and trade-in programs. Contact your local government or electronics store for more information on where and when you can bring in these items to dispose of them properly.

Enjoy the warmer weather and stay safe this Spring!



Call the office or pick up a bonus program flyer for more information.

Stay up to date on all of our latest news, events, and more! Visit BlossomMHCS.com, and follow us on social media!

BlossomMHCS BlossomMHCS

HIPAA violations & *fraud* must be reported.



Our Compliance Officer is Molly Dillon: 844.546.1600 x1143

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