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01: GEMS- A Cut Above

## GEMS- A Cut Above

Last week, we paid tribute to our successful **GEMS Awards Ceremony** held on February 23, 2026, as part of AVENS' 43rd anniversary celebration. This year marks not only a significant milestone in our history but also the seventh year of the **GEMS** program, which has become a cornerstone of our culture and a vital part of our commitment to excellence in care.

*“The greatest treasures are those invisible to the eye but found by the heart”*

*Pablo Picasso*

The **GEMS** program embodies our values and mission, celebrating those who go above and beyond for our residents. As we honor our dedicated staff and volunteers, we recognize the importance of their contributions, particularly in this pivotal year. This ceremony serves as a reminder of our collective achievements and reinforces the strong bonds that make AVENS a supportive community.

I personally want to thank for long-time board member Matthew Spence for sharing his

thoughts during the event and for new board member Taig Connell for attending.



(L to R) AVENS President and CEO, Daryl Dolynny and AVENS Board Member Matthew Spence

## Award Highlights:

**Helping Hands Awards** recognized our incredible volunteers:

- Minnie & Moses Butt
- Linda Henry
- Kendra Codner
- Dave & Bella
- Grace Chambers & Rosie



**Get Smart Awards** for commitment to education went to:

- Anne Hazell Dela Pena
- Emma Lee Marks
- Leizl Ombrog

- Clifford Owusu
- Juanita Crocker Walsh



**Shining Star Awards** honored employees who exemplify our values:

- Richard Abuan
- Yanis Almaguer
- Alvin Bhani (absent)
- EJ Calimlim
- Jelvin Cortel
- Brigida Kelly
- Holly Mann Cassell
- Rick Marshall
- Merin Mathew
- Leizl Ombrog



**Resident Choice Awards** celebrated staff who make a difference in the eyes of our residents:

- **Bess Dozon**
- **Madelon Haener**
- **Prince Sharma**
- **Wendy Sullivan**
- **Nazbi Ukkhoy**



**Long-Term Service Awards** recognized 23 employees for their incredible dedication:

**5 Years:**

- **Maxine Antoine**
- **Ketty Beaverho**
- **Cathy Blake**
- **Josephine Espenilla**
- **Joline Kenny**
- **Diane Kochon**
- **Miraquel Manuba**
- **Marian Temple**
- **Karin VonAllmen**

**10 Years:**

- **Holly Mann Cassell**
- **Xue Chen**
- **Sarojini Jhankur**
- **Mercedes Tuerto**



**15 Years:**

- **Marivic (Vicki) Bray**
- **Ritah Bumhira**
- **Melanya Grigoryan**
- **Alma Jaboneta**
- **Natalia Salodkina**
- **Margaret Shatei**
- **Joicy Vincent**
- **Laurence Wilson**
- **Renee Wiseman**

## 25 Years:

- Victoria Duculan



Way to go Victoria!

EMPLOYEES MAKING A DIFFERENCE				
Through the years your talents and efforts have helped AVENS' success. Together, we take pride in your accomplishment and your commitment to excellence.				
30 YEARS OF SERVICE		25 YEARS OF SERVICE		
Elizabeth Alaga	Geno Samardina	Victoria Duculan		
20 YEARS OF SERVICE				
Lya Embada	Marie Pellissay	Nazli Ukkhoy	Carrie Vega	Sherry Weir
15 YEARS OF SERVICE				
Rubi Alarcia	Marivic Iray	Rikhi Bumbira	Nieves Dezon	Melaysia Ongayan
Alma Jabonero	Frances Marshall	Carol Noweplan	Natalia Saldaña	Margaret Smetter
Ralph Snyder	Jocly Vincent	Laurence Wilson	Reece Wiseman	
10 YEARS OF SERVICE				
Tasmina Adler	Fritoria Acudito	Jue Hua Chen	GJE Chikopara	Joubert Falsounin
Sarojini Jhankur	Holly Mann Cassell	Minka Matsuo	Thubekhe Nyoni	Randie Salaveria
Shirley Stevens	Mercedea Taorta			
5 YEARS OF SERVICE				
Shaunta Ansdell	Maxime Antoine	Kelly Beaverha	Cathy Blake	Juanita Crocker - Walsh
Daryl Dolnyny	Lindsay Dwojak	Josephine Espenilla	Jessica Ewing	Sara Fuller-Lau
Dina Greening	Raymond Jimenez	Jacqueline Hunt-Corsock	Joline Kenay	Diane Kishan
Lawrence Mafaque	Miraquel Manaba	Fayissa Mahamad	Irene Nohwoko	Steven Nicholas
Edgardo Salaveria	Christian Siqueros	Manitake Sotta	Genovosa Tamenc	Marian Temple
Karin VanAlmen	Della Weir			

Each one of us can make a difference. Together these AVENS employees have changed the world.

AVENS GEMS	
Going the Extra Mile for Seniors	
<b>GET SMART</b> Encouraging and motivating seniors to stay active.	
Emma-Lee Marks	
Anne Hazell Dela Pena	
Clifford Okusu	
Juanita Crocker Walsh	
Lizal Ombrag	
<b>RESIDENT'S CHOICE</b> Award given to residents by our residents.	<b>HELPING HAND</b> Award given to employees for their assistance.
Wendy Sullivan	Minnie & Moses Butt
Nazli Ukkhoy	Linda Henry
Prince Sharma	Kendra Cadner
Madsion Haener	Dave Fournier & Belle
Nieves Dezon	Grace Chambers & Rosie
<b>SHINING STAR</b> Award given to employees for their outstanding performance.	
EJ Calamin	Richard Aboon
Jelvin Cortel	Yanisleydi Almaguer
Alvin Bhani	Merin Mathew
Brigida Kelly	Holly Mann Cassell
Rick Marshall	Lizal Ombrag



An incredible thank you to all who contributed to making this event special, including our Maintenance team, Management, and everyone behind the scenes.

As we celebrate our 43 years in operation, let us also cherish this **GEMS** program as a testament to our ongoing commitment to excellence and community. Each award represents not just individual achievements but the spirit of teamwork and dedication that defines AVENS.

Let's take a moment in the following pages to celebrate with some great food and some other noteworthy participants who attended...





**Maybe we will see you  
next year on the red  
carpet?**