



Angel of the Month: Marie Bellefleur-Raymond

We are extremely honored to award Marie Bellefleur-Raymond Angel of the Month for September 2022. She joined the Visiting Angels Newton/Canton team in March 2017. We are delighted to share Marie's outstanding work and accomplishments over the past five years.

Marie has fully dedicated herself to supporting seniors who want to remain in the comfort of their homes. Since joining our team, she has assisted seventeen of our clients - all live-in and long-hour assignments. Each senior she's cared for has had challenging health conditions and circumstances that require great skill, knowledge, and experience. Marie has excelled in navigating all complex situations. Marie is naturally compassionate and brings warmth and joy to her work.

This is not the first time Marie has been honored by Visiting Angels. She was awarded Co-Angel of the Month in June 2019 for her excellent care for one of our former clients. She has received *Caught in the Act of Caring* and *Home Care Pulse Excellence* awards for consistently exceeding requirements and expectations. Her first client with us was a hospice patient. Marie cared for her until she passed. She was consistent and dedicated to our client's needs. Marie never wavered in her commitment to making her feel loved, supported, and comfortable in her final days.

Marie has been working with Senior Case Manager Susan Saris for one of our current clients, who has received assistance from Marie for over two years. Our client has advanced dementia and is primarily bedbound. Marie explained, "There was a long stretch of time when she was experiencing issues with sundowning and high anxiety at night. I needed to reassure and redirect her, keeping her safe and as comfortable as possible. She does not speak much anymore, so I have created a schedule and assist her based on her previous care requests and with much communication with her family and Susan. Our client is a very sweet woman – she and her daughter are wonderful people. The whole family has been gracious and appreciative of my care."

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Our client's daughter shared, "I can't think of anyone more deserving of recognition than Marie. Not only is she one of the most thoughtful, caring people I have ever met, but she is an impeccable caregiver; capable, responsible, courteous, and dedicated. Marie has a warm personality and a wonderful sense of humor. But what is most impressive about Marie is her genuine kindness and generous spirit. She has been an unexpected and unique gift to my mother and my family. We all feel truly blessed to have Marie in our lives, and we can't thank her enough for everything she does. Thank you so much for this Angel!"

A Genuine Angel

Senior Case Manager Susan Saris shared, "Marie has all the qualities of a stellar caregiver. She is compassionate, professional, and skilled...if you look up the definition of an Angel, it is Marie. She genuinely shows up for our clients and gives everything she has every shift. Marie is an excellent communicator and will report concerns or recommendations about adjustments to care when needed."

Susan added, "I will continue to do anything I can to support Marie. She is an incredible person who truly cares about others and is a remarkable caregiver. Marie, we so value and appreciate everything you do each day. There is no one more worthy of receiving the Angel of the Month award for a second time. You are a treasure, and we are so grateful to have you. Congratulations!"

Senior Case Manager Elizabeth Quagraine agrees. "Marie embodies all the positive strengths you look for in a caregiver," Elizabeth said. "She is one of the most patient, kind, and caring people I have ever worked with. Marie does this job from the inner depth of her heart and consistently goes above and beyond for her clients. She is so sweet, reliable, loyal, dedicated, and living proof of an Angel on earth. I consider it a privilege to work with Marie and celebrate her today!"

Professional Background

Marie started her career as a caregiver while living in New York City. Her first client was 100 years old. Marie remembers that experience with great fondness. She realized how much she enjoyed assisting seniors and became a certified HHA after relocating to Massachusetts. She worked on several private cases before becoming one of our agency's top caregivers. Marie received specialized dementia care training soon after joining our team and obtained her CNA certification in 2018.

Marie said. "I have never worked for another home care agency since joining Visiting Angels. I love this agency and have gained so much from my experience here.

The case managers are critical to our success and put in great effort to ensure we are comfortable and have the guidance we need to do our best," Marie continued. "Senior Case Manager Susan Saris is an extraordinary woman. She gives me so much reassurance and support. And Senior Case Manager Elizabeth Quagraine is my personal Angel. She has the ability to uplift my spirits and inspire me when I'm down or feeling fatigued. Because of Susan's and Elizabeth's support, I have stayed on my most

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challenging cases when I thought I couldn't continue. They are the perfect case managers and have made my time with Visiting Angels quite special."

Words of Wisdom

Marie's advice to caregivers joining the Visiting Angels team is consistent with what our other award-winning caregivers have shared. "You must do this work from the heart – not for money," Marie said. "If you do your best and put yourself in your client's shoes, treating them as you would your own loved one, the financial gain will be there, but it should not drive your efforts. Put your heart, body, and knowledge into this job. Being a professional caregiver is not easy, but the reward in knowing you are helping others is great."

Marie offered recommendations for caregivers assisting clients with dementia. "You will learn cues from your client by watching and communicating with them. Sometimes they will become agitated or anxious – imagine not having control of your mind over time. It is crucial to reassure them and offer them help with their daily tasks; even though you may be doing the work, if you involve them, they will feel like they are accomplishing something. Also, going through old pictures in photo albums and videos and learning about their favorite music or television shows you can listen to or watch together will bring them comfort. It is crucial to prepare a schedule and be consistent. Planning ahead and providing structure is so important when helping your client."

Profoundly Grateful

Marie, it is an honor to award you Angel of the Month for September 2022. You are the epitome of an exceptional caregiver and an integral member of the Visiting Angels Newton/Canton team. We are profoundly grateful to you for all the loving care you have given our clients through the years. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your hard work and dedication and look forward to working with you for years to come.