

Pediatric CARE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION FOR PEDIATRIC CLIENTS AND FAMILIES OF
BAYADA HOME HEALTH CARE

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Mathew Gunkel, RN
BAYADA Pediatrics



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO



NEW PEDIATRIC PRACTICE LEADER MELINDA PHILLIPS IS COMMITTED TO MAKING BAYADA THE GOLD STANDARD IN PEDIATRIC HOME HEALTH CARE

Despite the passage of more than 20 years, Lisa Black still recalls her first conversation with Melinda Phillips, then a client services manager in the Winston-Salem, NC office, assigned to staff her first pediatric case for Lisa's son, Nicholas Black.

At 18 months old, Nicholas faced an uncertain future. The baby suffered a stroke while in utero, which caused an underdeveloped cerebellum. The condition impacted his ability to suck, swallow, and breathe.

"Melinda worked so hard to get coverage for Nicholas, which was a challenge because he required such complex care," shared Lisa. "Melinda took the time to listen to our needs. She was as emotionally invested as I was. She may have had other cases, but she made me feel like Nicholas was the most important person in the world to her."

Melinda's relentless desire to stop at nothing to help clients like Nicholas became the driving force behind her successful career at BAYADA. She began her 24-year tenure as a client services manager where she helped to start the pediatric business in Winston-Salem, NC. Since then she has worked with clients of all ages and diagnoses as a director, division director, regional director, and chief people officer. Now, she is both humbled and excited to take on the role she considers the most rewarding—pediatric practice leader.

"I am so proud to lead BAYADA Pediatrics because I believe there is no better place to make a huge impact on the lives of others," she said. "When I worked with Nicholas, I saw the huge potential of BAYADA and its people, and that same inspiration motivates me today."

A people-first focus: delivering the best experience for clients, families, and clinicians

While never losing sight of her positive spirit, Melinda acknowledges the challenges that face the home health care industry. Yes, there is a nursing shortage, but she insists BAYADA will figure out the winning move.

"We will create a remarkable candidate and employee experience and add new technologies to streamline the recruiting, hiring, and onboarding process," she said. "This will allow us to offer our clients peace of mind, knowing that they can count on BAYADA to be there when we say we will."

Melinda also knows the key to great coverage is matching clients with nurses who have the right skills and personality to meet their needs. She has witnessed the joy that comes when nurses work in an environment that fosters compassion and love. These are the nurses who treat each child as their own, who become part of the family.

"Melinda understands what clients are looking for in nurses," shared Lisa. "Thanks to her, Nicholas has had so many wonderful nurses who have helped him thrive."

Nicholas is now 22 and a high school graduate who enjoys competing in the Special Olympics. With the help of his BAYADA Nurses, he attends the Skills Opportunity Awareness Readiness (SOAR) program at Rowan Cabarrus Community College in Salisbury, NC. He also volunteers at the Community Care Clinic of Rowan County, where he was recognized as the 2017 Volunteer of the Year!

"Doctors told Lisa that Nicholas would never walk or talk or do anything, but she was not going to let anyone determine

what her son was capable of doing," said Melinda. "Nicholas proved them all wrong. As your practice leader, I want to support parents like Lisa who believe so much in their kids—parents like you."

Supporting clients every step of the way

The success of clients like Nicholas is what motivates Melinda to look to the future, to solve challenges for our clients, to develop great teams that every nurse will want to join, and to become an extension of the families that need our care.

"I am here in this new role because I believe BAYADA will become the gold standard for pediatric home care services worldwide!" said Melinda. "And I want to be a part of that story."

When she is not working at the job she so loves, Melinda enjoys baking, decorating cakes, and bike riding with her husband Eric, a bicycle shop owner. Of all the roles she has held in her life, perhaps the role she holds most dear is mother to her two daughters, Aspen and Charleigh. ■



BAYADA Client Nicholas Black accepts the 2017 Volunteer of the Year Award from the Community Care Clinic of Rowan County.



BAYADA RECOGNIZES PEDIATRIC NURSE AS NATIONAL RN HERO OF THE YEAR

Mathew Gunkel grew up with nursing in his blood. As a young man, his grandfather sustained an injury that required him to go to the ER. He liked the nurse who cared for him so much that he asked her out—and that woman became Mat’s grandmother!

However, Mat didn’t know if nursing was for him. After transitioning through careers in pharmacies and benefits administration, he realized his greatest joy came from making people happy. He completed an RN program and began working in a hospital cardiac unit. Mat enjoyed providing care but wanted more time with his patients. He discovered BAYADA and never looked back. He thrived, providing holistic, one-on-one care to his clients, and eventually earned the title of 2018 RN Hero of the Year!

Chosen from among thousands of nominees, Mat accepted the prestigious award in front of nearly 2,500 employees at the company’s annual awards meeting held recently in Charlotte, NC. The award was presented by BAYADA CEO David Baiada.

“Mat is a magical mix of the ultimate professional and friend to his pediatric patients,” said BAYADA Clinical Educator Chantel Denny from our Pediatrics office in Mount Laurel, NJ. “He jumps in with enthusiasm and a laser focus to help his young patients reach their full potential.”

Mat made it his personal mission to raise \$5,000 so Dominic could start riding again. He contacted everyone he knew, as well as local businesses and TV news stations. Thanks to his relentless spirit, the donations came pouring in. “Mat raised the money because he knew the bike was going to be beneficial for Dominic,” said Joanne. “The only way I thought of trying to thank him was by nominating him for the Hero award.”

BAYADA’s Hero Committee took notice of Joanne’s nomination. Several months later, he stood on the stage in front of a packed room, his National Hero Award in his arms, expressing heartfelt appreciation for the recognition. “This is my absolute dream job,” he told the crowd, which included Dominic and his parents. “I didn’t know that jobs like this existed.”

Mat concluded, “It is unbelievable the inspiration I get from working with people with true adversity, and it makes me strive to be a better person. Thank you so much for this honor.”

Watch what makes Mathew Gunkel a Hero: <https://bhhc.co/heromat> ■



RN Hero of the Year Mat Gunkel helps his client Dominic try out his new adaptive bike, purchased thanks to Mat’s fundraising efforts.

Joanne and David Stratton couldn’t agree more. Mat cares for their son Dominic, an enthusiastic 16-year-old with cerebral palsy and type 1 diabetes.

“Mat gives Dominic the attention that a boy his age deserves,” said David, who is grateful that Mat took it upon himself to research everything he could about his son’s medical needs. For Mat, caring for Dominic is more than simply a job, it is a calling. “I am so happy to get up and go to work every day. It’s my therapy. This job has changed my life,” he said.

Some might argue that it’s Mat who is changing lives, especially Dominic, the proud recipient of a new adaptive bike thanks to the nurse who has become his best friend.

Dominic went through a growth spurt and outgrew his adaptive bike. With a price tag of \$5,000, a new one seemed hopelessly out of reach. That’s when Mat stepped in. “I knew I had to get him back on the bike because it helps with his spasticity,” he said. “When he rides the bike, he can actually relax.”



Pictured (l to r) during BAYADA’s awards ceremony are CEO David Baiada, RN Hero of the Year Mat Gunkel, Former Director Ann Baiada, and Chairman Mark Baiada.

Special thanks to Tom Slick, disc jockey (DJ), blogger, YouTube personality, and BAYADA client for more than 20 years, for introducing CEO David Baiada at this year's Awards Weekend in Charlotte, NC, where we honored our four National Heroes of the Year.

Accompanied by his service dog, Bear, DJ Tom expressed his gratitude for his BAYADA caregivers and our commitment to providing exceptional services. Learn more about DJ Tom Slick and subscribe to his YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/TomSlick140>.

Watch the heartwarming stories of our 2018 National Heroes at <https://bhhc.co/2018heroes> and read Pediatric Hero of Year Mat's story above.



BAYADA client Tom Slick and CEO David Baiada share their interview video during our annual awards ceremony.

HELP BAYADA PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Show love to your BAYADA caregiver through the Hero Program

BAYADA goes to great lengths to show our employees they are our most valuable resource because they are the heart of home care. And the Hero Program is at the heart of our recognition initiatives. It is one of many ways we recognize and reward our BAYADA caregivers for setting and maintaining the highest standards of safety and care. Heroes are recognized at the office, division, and national levels. If you'd like to express gratitude to a BAYADA caregiver who provides care with the company's core values of *compassion, excellence, and reliability*, we'd love to hear from you.

Through stories shared by both clients and office personnel, we learn about the ways that many of our clinicians are improving the lives of our clients and their families. You can read and watch their stories on our website at <https://jobs.bayada.com/hero-program>.

To nominate a Hero who regularly puts you first, you may:

- Call your local office
- Write a letter and send it to your office
- Email the name of your Hero, office location, and supporting comments to HeroProgram@bayada.com
- Download and print our Hero nomination flyer to fill out and mail to your office

Thank you for helping us recognize your BAYADA caregivers! ■

AN ADVOCACY GOAL OF 20% BY 2020 | CHAMPIONS AMONG US

Last summer, as the US Senate considered a repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), there was the real possibility of extensive cuts to Medicaid funding. This had the potential to impact access to home health care for thousands of people. BAYADA could not let that happen. Through the combined efforts of clients and employees, thousands of emails were sent to our elected officials, asking them to protect Medicaid. Our voices, united with many others, resulted in success. The ACA remained intact, along with funding for Medicaid.

This is an example of advocacy. It's about people coming together with a common

belief to fight for change. And in the home health care industry, change is so desperately needed. Over the next 10 to 15 years, studies project an increase in the number of people who will need home health care services. In addition, hospitals are reimbursed at a higher rate than home health care agencies, making it difficult to recruit and retain nurses. We must come together now to confront this alarming trend by fighting for higher reimbursement rates. Being able to offer more competitive wages will allow us to recruit more qualified nurses and aides to care for our clients.

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BAYADA client Mark attended PA Advocacy Day to express to legislators what home health care means to him, and to meet CEO David Baiada. He is pictured with BAYADA Associate Kimberly Gardner from the Habilitation Pittsburgh, PA office and David Baiada.



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BAYADA client Alexa and her mother Amy (right) attended PA Advocacy Day to educate legislators about the importance of home health care. They are pictured with Representative Mike Carroll and BAYADA Clinical Educator Marge Floryshak.

We need your help to make this happen
When our clients and families join with our nurses and aides to educate legislators

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about the value of home care, positive change is often not far behind. Our goal by the end of 2020 is to have 20% of all BAYADA employees and clients registered in BAYADA's advocacy program, *Hearts for Home Care*. This effort will give BAYADA a unified and powerful voice to stand up for the home care industry.

So what does 20% look like? The combined strength of 20% of all BAYADA clients and employees is more than 15,000 people. Currently, 2,000 people are a part of the *Hearts for Home Care* program, which leaves us with an ambitious goal to encourage 13,000 clients and employees to join. Imagine the impact of 15,000 voices who can reach out to their elected officials with a moment's notice. This groundswell of support from concerned citizens will

hopefully cause legislators to take notice and act on behalf of those who depend on the home health care industry.

Register for *Hearts for Home Care* today

As the African proverb says, "It takes a village!" So, please stand with your friends, neighbors, and relatives to help the medically fragile in your communities. Register by visiting heartsforhomecare.com. You'll receive email updates about relevant issues and opportunities to learn about the many ways you can become involved in advocacy.

For more information about *Hearts for Home Care* and how you can get involved, please contact BAYADA Director of Grassroots Advocacy Rick Hynick at rhynick@bayada.com. ■

BAYADA SPECIALTY PRACTICES

Home Health Care | Pediatrics | Hospice | Habilitation

Services may vary by location

Thank you for your participation in our 2018 Client Experience Pulse survey. Watch for the results in our next issue.