



**Contact:**  
Kim Winn  
603-315-4426  
Kimberly\_Winn@HPHC.org

## HARVARD PILGRIM HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION HOSTS 9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARDS HONORING FOUR RECIPIENTS FOR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

*Robert Lewis, Jr., president and founder of the BASE, reflects on own personal journey of community work*

(Quincy, MA) May 3, 2017– The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation honored four individuals and organizations for their significant volunteer contributions to their communities as part of the Foundation’s 9th annual Community Spirit Awards held this morning at its offices in Quincy, Mass. Robert Lewis, Jr, founder and president of The BASE, an organization that leverages sports as a vehicle to engage youth, joined Eric Schultz, president and CEO of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, and Janelle Woods-McNish, Director of Employee Service and Giving for Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation to highlight the importance and value of community volunteerism.

“It is always an honor to host this Community Spirit Awards presentation and recognize those who are so dedicated to the communities and organizations where they live and work,” said Woods-McNish. “Nominated by their co-workers, the award recipients exemplify the meaning of community engagement and serve as an inspiration to us all.”

The four Community Spirit Award recipients are as follows, along with an excerpt from their nomination forms:

- **Community Spirit Volunteer: Rebecca Shannon**, Senior Sales Analyst, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Wellesley

*“Rebecca is currently the President of the VFW Auxiliary in Norwood, supporting veterans in her community and surrounding towns. She helps Auxiliary members stay engaged, enthusiastic and empowered to help veterans in need by coordinating coat, backpack and sock drives, sending care packages overseas, and working with area hospitals on parades, dinners and more for veterans and their families.”*

In honor of Shannon’s award, the VFW Auxiliary, Post 2452 in Norwood, Mass., will receive a \$250 grant. Shannon is a resident of Norwood, Mass.

- **Community Spirit Leader: Tania Gonzalez**, Director, Project Manager Office, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Wellesley

*“Tania goes above and beyond to cultivate a skilled, engaged and inclusive workforce for our entire team. She created a survey to find out what the team is interested in doing and then scheduled volunteer opportunities accordingly. She also ensured that each member of our team awarded their Mini-Grant. Tania encouraged a group of us to volunteer with Cradles to Crayons and the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program and she is a true supportive leader who constantly makes caring, developing and communicating a top priority for her team!”*

In honor of Gonzalez’ award, the Vi Tutuny Food Pantry, supported by the Natick Service Council, will receive a \$250 grant. Gonzalez is a resident of Natick, Mass.

- **Community Spirit Team: Worcester office**, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care

*"With many social service and support organizations located in and around the downtown area, it is hard to miss the signs of those in need when coming into work every day. About two years ago, the team in Worcester set up a regular volunteer schedule at St. John's Food for the Poor. From washing dishes and prepping food to working hands-on with the hundreds of people coming in from the streets for a warm meal, the work HPHC's Worcester office does at the St. John's food program is always meaningful and well-received."*

In honor of the Worcester office’s award, St. John’s Food for the Poor in Worcester, Mass., will receive a \$250 grant.

- **Community Hero: Ethos**, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

*"Ethos is a private, not-for-profit organization that promotes the independence, dignity, and well-being of the elderly and disabled. Ethos achieves its mission through the coordination and delivery of high-quality, affordable home and community-based care. In all aspects of its work, Ethos supports family care giving, fosters social interaction and respects cultural diversity. Ethos is proud to be the sponsor of Out4Supper, Café Emmanuel and Out2Brunch - safe, affirming environments for LGBT seniors to make friends, strengthen their support circles and rebuild resiliency."*

Ethos will receive a \$500 grant from the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation.

### **About The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation**

Created in 1980, The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation supports Harvard Pilgrim's mission to improve the quality and value of health care for the people and communities we serve. The Harvard Pilgrim Foundation provides the tools, training and leadership to help build healthy communities throughout New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Maine. In 2016, the Harvard Pilgrim Foundation awarded more than \$2.4 million in grants to more than 900 nonprofit organizations in the region. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than \$140 million in funds. For more information, please visit [www.harvardpilgrim.org/foundation](http://www.harvardpilgrim.org/foundation) and view [video](#).