



**For Immediate News Release
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FIRST CNA CAREER LADDER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM APPROVED IN DC

Creative Workforce Solution for LTC Nurse Aide Retention

We would all love to clone the exceptional certified nurse aides that are the backbone of nursing home and long-term care communities. The first CNA career ladder apprenticeship program in DC seeks to take shining-star-potential CNAs, sharpen their skillsets in an 8-month program, and set them loose to inspire, engage, and lead their peers.

Forest Hills of DC (FHDC) has partnered with Suma Prime School of Healthcare and, in collaboration with the DC Department of Employment Services the partnership is building an apprenticeship program for the advanced CNA that combines traditional CNA classroom instruction with structured and supervised on-the-job learning. New CNAs are often surprised at the actual work of being a CNA; this program provides on-the-job coaching to help CNAs successfully adapt to their new work environment with supported mentoring. Competency paths for Dementia and Behavioral Health, End-of-Life, and Leadership foster career tracks. CNAs receive a portable, industry recognized credential as the apprenticeship program meets national and DC standards, as well as an agreed bump in wages. Graduates of the program will also receive encouragement, support, and connections to resources to further their nursing education into LPN and RN careers. FHDC received grant funds from DC Healthcare Career Advancement Program (H-CAP) to jump start the program in part. The first cohort of students will start in Spring of 2022.

Expected outcomes from this program include: 1) better recruitment and retention of a skilled workforce as 94% of apprentices continue in their employment after completing apprenticeships; 2) reduced costs for on-boarding and turnover of staff, and 3) improved productivity.

Forest Hill of DC's (FHDC) mission is to continually grow as a supportive community that inspires and engages seniors. <https://foresthillsdc.org/> Seniors have been served at our non-profit community for more than 135 years via assisted living, assisted living memory care, respite, CMS 5-star skilled nursing care, and rehabilitation services. Our values of Compassion, Growth Mindset, Inclusion, Integrity, Respect and Sustainability keep us grounded during changing times.

For further information, contact Tina Sandri, CEO of Forest Hills of DC, at 202-966-7623 or tsandri@foresthillsdc.life.

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