



The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare Raises \$1,036,000 at Annual Fundraising Dinner

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BOSTON (October 30, 2024)—[The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare](#), a national nonprofit dedicated to partnering with healthcare organizations to advance compassion for patients, care teams and their healing relationships, announced today that its annual fundraising dinner raised \$1,036,000, marking it as one of the most successful fundraising events in the organization's history. The event, attended by more than 500 community leaders, healthcare professionals, and philanthropists, will support the expansion of vital healthcare programs around the globe.

"This extraordinary demonstration of community support will help us extend compassionate care to thousands more healthcare workers – and their patients," said **Michael Gustafson, MD, MBA**, CEO of the Schwartz Center. "These funds will have a direct impact on our community and around the world."

One of the evening's highlights was a moving testimonial from **James Paul Qazilbash**, whose experience as a seriously ill child inspired him to dedicate his life to compassionate care – and learned how the Schwartz Rounds program has helped him share that passion with his colleagues. "Schwartz Rounds: there is nothing like it. There is no alternative," he said. "Only Schwartz Rounds can provide this type of unity and connection-building to create a safe space for teams."

Major corporate supporters included **CRICO**, which sponsored the National Compassionate Caregivers of the Year Award, which was given to three extraordinary caregivers at the event.

The 2024 NCCY Award recipients are:

- **Dinh To**, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, IL – Dinh To is a licensed clinical social worker who specializes in treating patients with stroke, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, and various neuromuscular conditions at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab. His patients have often suffered catastrophic losses, and "Dinh is their guiding light to be able to find a path forward." Said one colleague: "Dinh has a unique ability to meet suffering with deep compassion, and he has impacted innumerable lives."
- **Erik Garcia, MD**, UMass Memorial Medical Center and UMass Chan Medical School, MA – Dr. Erik Garcia is a physician who has been providing healthcare to the homeless population in Worcester for several decades. He cares for patients with the Road to Care mobile clinic and at AIDS Project Worcester as a physician with UMass Memorial Medical Center. "Dr. Garcia embodies compassion and humanism like no one I have seen in my three decades of providing care," said one colleague.

- **Sylvia Parker, NP**, Optum, CT – Sylvia Parker is a nurse practitioner who provides care to patients with complex needs in nursing home settings. “The joy Sylvia brings goes beyond medicine,” said a colleague. “The connections she creates through her unique presence with patients, families, and co-workers invite everyone she works with into a higher level of care.”

The Schwartz Center is grateful to CRICO for its generous support of this award. For close to 50 years, CRICO has provided industry-leading medical professional liability coverage, claims management, and patient safety resources to all of the Harvard medical institutions and their affiliates, and is a recognized leader in evidence-based risk management. Through a national data collaborative, Candello, a division of CRICO, provides clinical risk intelligence products and solutions and fosters an active online community of shared learning.

About the National Compassionate Caregivers of the Year® Award

Since 1999, the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare has honored outstanding healthcare professionals who display extraordinary devotion and compassion in caring for patients and families.

The National Compassionate Caregivers of the Year Award recognizes extraordinary healthcare professionals from across the country who embody the characteristics of compassionate care and whose professional achievements have helped to create healing healthcare environments for patients, families, colleagues, and communities. Award finalists are chosen by a national review committee.

Visit theschwartzcenter.org/award for details.

About the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare

Founded in 1995, the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare is a national organization whose mission is to partner with healthcare organizations to advance compassion for patients, care teams and their healing relationships.

The Schwartz Center has 600 member healthcare organizations across the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The benefits of membership extend to all staff within the member organization. There are also more than 300 healthcare organizations in the U.K. and Ireland conducting the Schwartz Rounds program through a partnership.

Our evidence-informed programs and resources have proven to be versatile, sustainable and effective across diverse settings, including acute care and rehabilitation hospitals, outpatient clinics, cancer centers, Veteran’s Administration medical centers, organ procurement organizations, nursing homes, hospice providers and health insurers.

Schwartz Center members rely on our offerings to support clinician mental health and well-being, enhance the quality of care, enable better outcomes and create a more positive and rewarding experience for all members of the care team, patients and their families.

The Schwartz Center's vision is to be a global leader in championing compassion for all who seek and provide healthcare.

Visit us at theschwartzcenter.org or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

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