

# LILLIAN D. WALD AWARD

2022 VNS Health Benefit



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## ABOUT THE LILLIAN D. WALD AWARD



In the 1890s, in the midst of what would become known as the Gilded Age, two women in matching dark blue uniforms, each carrying a small black bag of first aid supplies, were a familiar sight on the teeming streets of Manhattan's Lower East Side. Lillian Wald and Mary Brewster had both recently graduated from the New York School of Nursing and were living in a neighborhood populated mainly by immigrants—families who found themselves living in cramped walk-up tenements, struggling to maintain their health as they tried to

dig their way out of poverty.

One day in 1893, the young daughter of an immigrant student in Lillian Wald's home nursing class asked Wald to attend to her mother, who lay suffering with an untreated hemorrhage back in her small tenement room. The experience shook Lillian to her core, and at that moment she decided she would devote her life to caring for the poor and vulnerable.

The two nurses began providing nursing services to the community, dispensing healing and advice while wearing badges reading "Visiting Nurse Under the Auspices of the Board of Health." So was born the organization that would one day become the VNS Health.

Recruiting other nurses to assist in their endeavors, Lillian Wald and Mary Brewster headed out on their daily neighborhood rounds, which included educating residents about disease transmission and personal hygiene and providing medical care for illnesses, with all fees based on the patient's ability to pay. Thus, the term "public health nurse" was established by Wald. Additionally, Wald was instrumental in creating the first public school nurse position, and in 1900 she convinced the New York Board of Education to let a schoolteacher hold the first-ever class for children with learning disabilities or physical handicaps. She also initiated the first school lunch program in 1905, and in 1912, after years of lobbying, persuaded the U.S. government to establish the Federal Children's Bureau, charged with investigating and reporting on all matters pertaining to the welfare of children among all classes of people. Wald also believed that every person was entitled to equal and fair health care regardless of their socio-economic status, race, gender, or age, and went on to cofound Lincoln House to extend health care to black New Yorkers and joined Florence Kelley and Henry Moskowitz in founding the National Association for Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. Wald was elected the first president of the National Organization for Public Health Nursing in 1912 and remained a leader and innovator in public health throughout the rest of her life.

Today, VNS Health continues to embody this idealistic

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woman's wish to nurse the sick and destitute, as we work to fulfill Lillian's vision through a wide range of programs and activities. We are proud to be carrying out her legacy, and to be part of the broader public health and social support network that she helped to establish.

The Lillian D. Wald Award is presented annually to those who have made significant contributions to the health and welfare of others.

## LILLIAN D. WALD AWARD PAST RECIPIENTS:

April Anthony (2018)  
Peter G. Bergmann, Esq. (2007)  
Adam S. Boehler (2021)  
Richard S. Braddock (2000)  
Frank J. Branchini (2013)  
Douglas D. Broadwater (2014)  
Bert E. Brodsky (2017)  
Samuel C. Butler (2012)  
Kathy Hirata Chin (2017)  
Peter R. Dolan (2001)  
Steven M. Durels (2019)  
Claire M. Fagin, PhD, RN, FAAN (2013)  
Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen (2016)  
Mary Pat Gallagher, MD (2008)  
Stephen V.R. Goodhue (2004)  
Albert H. Gordon (1979)  
John R. Greed (2020)  
Barbara and Donald Jonas (2007)

Attallah Kappas, MD (2010)  
Robert M. Kaufman, Esq. (2011)  
Dr. Gerald Laubach (1983)  
Arthur Levitt, Jr. (1986)  
Robert V. Lindsay (1982)

Ruth Watson Lubic, RN, CNM, EdD (2003)  
John F. McGillicuddy (1981)  
Samuel L. (Tony) Milbank (2018)  
Phyllis J. Mills, BSN, RN (2002)  
Roger Morley (1979)  
Juliet Patterson (2012)  
Charles Peebler, Jr. (1992)  
Jeffrey M. Peek (2005)  
Carl H. Pforzheimer III (2004)  
Emily and John Rafferty (2021)  
Carol Raphael (Special Recognition 2009)  
Irwin Redlener, MD (2003)

Beatrice Renfield (2002)  
Corinne H. Rieder, EdD (2016)  
Leon Root, MD (2008)  
John W. Rowe, MD (2009)  
John M. Schiff (1978)  
Andrew N. Schiff, MD (2015)  
H. Marshall Schwarz (2  
Steven P. Shelov, MD, MS (2008)  
David B. Snow, Jr. (2011)  
Tara I. Stacom (2014)  
John R. Stafford (1992)  
The VNSNY Volunteers (2015)  
Thomas Von Essen (2001)  
Mark Wagar (2010)  
Rawleigh Warner, Jr. (1980)  
Thomas R. Wilcox (1978)  
John E. Zuccotti (2006)

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