****

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Cary Sponaugle, PR and Marketing Specialist

(304) 463-4181; cary@cortlandacres.org

**Cortland Honors Volunteers at Annual Banquet**

**Thomas, WV** – The Friends of Cortland volunteers held their annual Volunteer Banquet at the Cortland Acres’ Cafe on Thursday, April 11th as part of National Healthcare Volunteer Week. The invitation only event was extremely well attended and provided an opportunity to recognize the many dedicated and faithful volunteers that give their time and energy throughout the year.

This years’ theme, “Every Moment Makes A Difference”, provided the backdrop to acknowledge the scores of individuals who go above and beyond in sharing their time to help improve the lives of the residents at Cortland Acres. Activity director, Marie Grafton and her team of activity assistants, Lorrie Cross, Logan Evans, Cindy Helmick, Amy McDaniel, Linda Shupp and Mary Swisher work daily to foster a culture of service that’s fun and rewarding for everyone.

“What a fun, relaxing evening to show our appreciation to our wonderful volunteers”, explains Cortland Activity Director, Marie Grafton. “Our volunteers provide many extras for our residents throughout the year”.

The banquet, catered by Cortland’s’ Café staff, included a memorial candle lighting to honor volunteers and supporters lost during the past year – Charlie Arnold, Eli Hostetler, J. Pat Nichols and Paul Rudy. An inspirational musical blessing was presented by soloist, Cassie Davis, granddaughter of a Cortland resident. An uplifting reading, “Hickory Dickory Dock” was made by Cortland Acres Resident Council Secretary, Rinda Bonner, and an original poem entitled, “The Powerhouse of One” was presented by Resident Council President, Champ Sedmock.

Cortland administrator, Beth Clevenger, offered the welcome address and words of volunteer appreciation while the speaker for the evening, volunteer coordinator for Potomac Highlands Volunteer Center Casey Gilbert, explained her new role with the Tucker Community Foundation and efforts to support and encourage volunteerism in the region.

The highlight of the evening was recognizing individuals for their exceptional dedication and service throughout the year. The 2019 Rookie of the Year went to Margie Dehlin of Cortland’s Pineview Apartments. Thelma Smith of Thomas received the 2019 Outstanding Volunteer award and Matthew Baxley of Thomas accepted the 2019 Youth Recognition award. Paster Ruth Bullwinkle of Davis received the 2019 Ministry Recognition award while Pat Usnik and Lois Matlick represented Our Lady of Mercy Guild in Parsons for their 2019 Outstanding Group award.

“I don’t do it for the accolades or praise”, explains 2019 Outstanding Volunteer recipient, Thelma Smith. “I do it because I enjoy helping people. It also gets me out and about, so volunteering at Cortland Acres is a win-win for everyone.”

Cortland Acres is a non-profit corporation offering state-of-the-art nursing care and skilled rehabilitation on a spacious 35-acre campus is the heart of scenic Tucker County, West Virginia. The Cortland campus includes a 94-bed long-term care facility, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation and therapy options, as well as a variety of independent living opportunities. For more information call 304-463-4181 or visit [www.cortlandacres.org](http://www.cortlandacres.org).

**Helping people age in healthy, affordable, and meaningful ways.**

# # #

Photo 1: Cortland Acres’ 2019 Outstanding Volunteer recipient Thelma Smith.

Photo 2: Matthew Baxley received the 2019 Youth Recognition award at the Cortland Acres Volunteer Banquet on April 11, 2019.

Photo 3: Our Lady of Mercy Guild of Parsons, represented by Pat Usnik and Lois Matlick, acknowledge the 2019 Outstanding Group award at Cortland’s Volunteer Banquet.

Photo 4: Paster Ruth Bullwinkle poses with Cortland Acres activity staff member Cindy Helmick upon receiving the 2019 Ministry Recognition award at Cortland’s Volunteer Banquet last Thursday.