



### **Apprentice caring for dementia sufferers nominated for national award**

Growing up in a family of care workers, 19 year-old Megan Nicolaou-Dance from Southampton, was inspired to follow in her family footsteps and wasted no time in finding an adult care work apprenticeship soon after leaving school.

Two years on and Megan achieved a Distinction on her end point assessment becoming a fully-fledged lead adult care worker. Not only that, she's also a finalist in the breakthrough apprentice of the year category at the prestigious [Our Health Heroes Awards](#).

Needless to say, Megan has done herself and her family *proud*.

Since entering the profession aged 17, Megan has made remarkable progress as an apprentice. Within 6 months of achieving her Level 2 qualification, Megan was going above and beyond to support senior colleagues to achieve their Level 3.

Clearly a rising star, Megan is an apprentice wise beyond her years, whose empathy and compassion makes her stand out from her peers.

In a tough working environment where getting to know your patients is key, Megan has mastered the art of providing individual, people centric support to develop supportive relationships with those in her care.

Every Sunday Megan gives up her free time to take a service user in her care to church. While not religious herself, she recognises the importance of treating people as

individuals and the role of this in supporting those needing care to live happy and healthy lives.

Over Christmas 2020, many of the service users in Megan's care were without their families. True to form, Megan and the team at Way Ahead Leisure Pursuits went above and beyond by staying open and putting on a Christmas dinner, showing care and compassion at a time when it mattered most.

Already in her short career Megan has changed lives for the better. Most notably helping one of her service users to find a job and live independently. You cannot help but think that there will be countless others transformed by the rising star and her mentor and apprenticeship provider Chris Jasiczak of Paragon Skills agrees: "Recognised as a strong team member, building collaborative and supportive relationships with service users, external professionals and internal staff, Megan exemplifies the core values of an apprentice and is an outstanding ambassador for the healthcare sector."

Our Health Heroes Awards 2022 is delivered by [Skills for Health](#). To show your support for Megan, voting is now open for the breakthrough apprentice of the year award (sponsored by UNISON): <https://bit.ly/3pYRQek>

**ENDS**