Willow Award®
EXCELLENCE IN END-OF-LIFE CARE

Dear Willow Award, 7/16/2026

I am honored to nominate Chaplain Michael Davis of the Little Rock VA Hospice Unit (6E) for the Willow Award in recognition of his extraordinary compassion, unwavering dedication, and exceptional care for hospice patients and their families. My husband, Hugh Lawhon, was a patient in the Little Rock VA Hospice Unit.

During the most heartbreaking and difficult time of our lives, Chaplain Davis became a source of strength, comfort, and peace for our family. His presence was a blessing that will never be forgotten. From the moment we met him, he treated Hugh with dignity, respect, and genuine love. He was compassionate, professional, kind, and generous with his time. He never made us feel rushed, and he always made us feel that Hugh —and our family— truly mattered.

What makes Chaplain Davis especially deserving of this award is that his ministry did not end when my husband passed away. In the five weeks since Hugh's death, he has continued to reach out, offering prayers, encouragement, and words of comfort. His ongoing support has been a lifeline as I have navigated the grief of losing my husband. Three weeks after Hugh's passing, Chaplain Davis took the time to hold a beautiful, personal mini-memorial service for me and our daughter, Chloe. That thoughtful act gave us an opportunity to honor Hugh's life, reflect on cherished memories, and find comfort in our faith. It was an extraordinary act of kindness that brought us peace during an incredibly painful time.

Chaplain Davis has a true calling to hospice ministry. His passion for serving patients and their families is evident in every interaction. He has an exceptional gift for bringing calm in moments of fear, hope in moments of despair, and spiritual peace when it is needed most.

While every member of the Little Rock VA Hospice team provided outstanding care, Chaplain Davis, alongside the dedicated hospice nurses, helped make the most unbearable season of my life one that I did not have to face alone. He gave me strength through his encouragement, comfort through his kindness, and peace through his prayers and unwavering presence. As a registered nurse who has spent many years caring for critically ill patients in intensive care units, I recognize excellence in healthcare when I see it.

Throughout my career, I have worked with many dedicated professionals, and I can say without hesitation that Chaplain Michael Davis represents the very best of compassionate, patient-centered care. His clinical professionalism is matched only by his kindness, empathy, and unwavering commitment to the emotional and spiritual well-being of the patients and families he serves. Chaplain Michael Davis exemplifies the very qualities the Willow Award was created to recognize: compassion, selfless service, dignity, and excellence in end-of-life care. His impact on my husband, my daughter, and me will remain with us for the rest of our lives.

It is with profound gratitude and my highest recommendation that I nominate Chaplain Michael Davis for the Willow Award.

Mary Lawhon, RN Wife of Hugh Lawhon