

2013 March of Dimes Virginia Nurse of the Year Award Recipients

Student Nurse - *Eric Croucher* – James Madison University



Eric Croucher will graduate JMU with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing next month. Since his best friend was diagnosed 2 years ago with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, Eric has taken on the personal mission of increasing awareness of blood cancers and expanding the bone marrow registry. To date he has registered 135 people in this registry and is seeking to bring more. Eric clearly has used a personal experience to make a difference to those needing stem cell transplants. His reach will extend far beyond his local community. With caring and committed nursing students like Eric, our profession's future is in good hands.

Rising Star - *Megan Hetzel* – Mary Washington Healthcare



Award sponsored by Bon Secours Richmond Health System

Megan Hetzel works as a Patient Care Supervisor at Mary Washington Hospital. She took on this role when several resignations led to a crisis in leadership at the institution and has worked consistently with staff to encourage engagement and empowerment. She has facilitated a culture of caring and accountability that has led to a significant rise in patient satisfaction scores. Megan stepped up in a time of leadership void and her efforts clearly have demonstrated that one person's efforts can make a difference.

LPN - *Leigh Tucci* – Renaissance Pediatrics



Award sponsored by Anthem

Leigh Tucci works at Renaissance Pediatrics, where she has written most of the clinical policies for labs and procedures. She customized her practice's electronic health record system to allow for smoother office flow, allowing for a 10-provider practice to comfortably accommodate 225 patients each day. Leigh is a "Happiest Baby on the Block" instructor and in that role works with parents of new babies to ensure that the newborns have a safe and happy environment. She is a long-time March of Dimes volunteer and helped to organized the Annual Renaissance-sponsored Premie Gala, which raised over \$5,000 for the Foundation. Leigh also volunteers & fundraises for the MDA.

Critical Care - *Joni McCombs* – Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital



Award sponsored by Ernst & Young

Joni McCombs works at Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital. She recently completed a Clinical Scholars quality improvement program related to risks of aspiration in adult ICU patients who receive food by mouth. Her professionalism and commitment to the nursing profession make her a leader in direct care in her unit. Joni's passion and desire to leave a legacy of stewardship, integrity, innovation, respect and compassion make her a role model for competent, caring, and professional nursing behavior. She currently is enrolled in a masters program in nursing education.

Case Management/Employee Assistance - *Maria DeLalla* – Winchester Medical Center



Award sponsored by Mercer

Maria DeLalla works at Winchester Medical Center as a Perinatal Nurse Case manager, where she works with medically, psychologically, socially and financially at-risk patients in Labor & Delivery, Mother/Baby, and the NICU, and serves as a Family Resource Specialist. She works to find financial and community resources for families in need, and helps them to understand how their insurance plan works. She is a non-judgmental person who works to mentor new and seasoned nurse and physician colleagues, showing them how to approach each patient as they would a cherished family member. Her goal is to help families and communities achieve optimal outcomes, and she describes herself as a "front line nurse."

Behavioral Health - *Kimberly Hemphill* of Tucker Pavilion



Award sponsored by VCU Medical Center

Dr. Kimberly Hemphill is the Administrative Director of nursing at Tucker Pavilion. She has been funded to examine the health risk behaviors of juvenile offenders and has presented her research to the National Commission of Correctional Health Care. She has given her heart and soul to advancing the profession of psychiatric nursing and to the specialty's contributions to patient care. Her leadership in an area of nursing with those who are so vulnerable truly has made a difference to patient care outcomes and to our knowledge base in the field.

Community Health/Public Health/School Nurse - *Janet Wright* - VA Dept. of Health



Award sponsored by Sentara Healthcare

Janet Wright works for the VA Department of Health. She describes herself as a team player who focuses on the interests of the students, school health professionals and school nurses. She is especially interested in the professional development of school nurses in all types of settings, including public, private, and parochial schools. Janet is a key participant in the VA Dept of Education's Summer Institute for School Nurses, where she works with the planning committee to educate nurses about timely school health topics, including the impact of current legislative initiatives on the practice of school health nurses. She recognizes that the educational needs of non-public school nurses may be different from those who work in the public sector and has developed a special interest group to help those nurses meet their educational needs. She is a member of several key stakeholder groups that work to enhance professional school nurse practices.

General Medical/Surgical - *Florence Jones-Clarke* - VA State University



Award sponsored by Owens&Minor

Florence Jones-Clarke has been in leadership and management with the Department of Veterans Affairs for over 20 years. She says she is most proud of her role in helping to assure that elderly veterans have appropriate assessments, especially those who drive cars or own guns. Ms. Jones – Clarke was the president of the Virginia Nurses Association for 4 years, served on the Board of Directors of the American Nurses Association for 4 years, and served on the VA Board of Nursing for 8 years. Her leadership has made a profound difference for nurses throughout the state as well as her beloved veterans. We thank and honor her tonight for her service.

Emergency - *Margaret McCauley* - Sentara Norfolk General Hospital



Margaret McCauley works for the Nightingale Regional Air Ambulance out of Sentara Norfolk Central practice. She has been a flight nurse for 17 years and currently is the team educator for Nightingale. She actively participates in the education of the team from both clinical and safety perspectives. Since the air ambulance industry has a less-than-optimal safety record, she has put together a "lessons learned" program for her flight crew and has demonstrated that this attention to safety has made a difference. She currently is one of the senior flight nurses in the program and her leadership and mentorship is recognized by her recognition as the 2013 March of Dimes Virginia Nurse of the Year in emergency nursing.

Oncology - Kelly Anchell - HCA, Thomas Johns Cancer Hospital



Award sponsored by McGuireWoods

Kelly Anchell works at the Thomas Johns Cancer Hospital. She is most proud of the confidence she has gained in her assessment skills in the oncology patient population, and describes how she has worked with families of patients who have died in her facility to reunite with the nursing staff and work towards closure and moving forward. The efforts she put forth were rewarded when her unit was recognized as a runner up for the award of “best nursing team” by the Advance for Nurses Journal. Her efforts at excellence in family-centered patient care are recognized by her being named the 2013 March of Dimes Virginia Nurse of the Year in Oncology.

Performance & Risk Management/Quality Improvement - Patra Reed



Augusta Health

Award sponsored by Deloitte & Touche

Patra Reed works for Augusta Health, where she led the process of implementing shared governance. This model was a huge culture change for her organization and is instrumental in nurses driving their own excellence and best practice on the journey toward Magnet recognition. Petra is recognized as a transformational leader responsible for continued clinical excellence and enculturation of all magnet components throughout the organization.

Advanced Practice - Brenda Baker of VCU Medical Center

Award sponsored by Virginia State University



Dr. Brenda Baker is a neonatal nurse whose practice spans 30-plus years of practice in maternal child nursing in settings ranging from Labor & Delivery to the NICU. She has worked in the area of prematurity prevention for her entire career, and has been a Clinical Nurse specialist for 18 years. She has influenced patient outcomes directly through her clinical practice in direct patient education and inter-professional care; through her numerous publications and presentations, and through her support of professional nursing staff. She currently works with her interdisciplinary partners to truly better the outcomes for women and newborns based on science and evidence.

Nursing Education - Sandra Annan - James Madison University Award



Award sponsored by HCA Virginia

Dr. Sandra Annan is on the faculty of James Madison University where she played a significant role in the revision of the nursing curriculum over the past 5 years. She currently is one of the first faculty members to implement an electronic medical records and new testing software in her courses. She is the faculty advisor to JMU’s nursing student organization and has spearheaded the drive to foster political and professional involvement of nursing students within the National Student Nurses Association. She also has significant involvement in the campus coalition against sexual assault at JMU.

Research & Nurse Author - Karen Roesser -



HCA, Thomas Johns Cancer Hospital

Karen Roesser works at Thomas Johns Cancer Hospital. Throughout her career she has focused on educating and mentoring nurses who have chosen the field of oncology nursing for their career. Karen believes that providing a nurse with expert knowledge will help them have the necessary tools to deliver the highest level of care. She has delivered over 50 posters and podium presentations at national meetings, and is the mistress of ceremonies at an annual program to honor and recognize those nurses at her hospital who have achieved oncology certification. Karen started the hereditary cancer counseling service at her hospital at a time when cancer genetics/genomics was in its infancy. The genetics of cancer hold great promise in finding causes and cures for this group of diseases, and Karen has been a leader in this burgeoning area of knowledge development.

Nursing Leadership/Administration & Management -



Deborah Zimmermann - VCU Medical Center

Award sponsored by Sands Anderson

Dr. Deb Zimmerman is the Chief Nursing Officer at VCUHS. She's been a nurse for over 30 years and is a Certified Nurse Executive Advanced. Deb is dedicated to strengthening the nursing profession and health care delivery system through lifelong learning and education progression of registered nurses. She has focused her work on the statewide establishment of organizational education standards and the creation of national/international criteria on education for Magnet organizations. She is dedicated to preparing the nursing workforce of the future. Less than a month ago, Dr. Zimmerman was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, a designation awarded to the leaders of our profession. Dr. Zimmerman is one of fewer than 3,000 of the 3 million RNs in the USA to achieve this designation.

Home Care/Hospice & Palliative Care - Carol Showalter -



Augusta Health Hospice of the Shenandoah

Carol Showalter works for Augusta Health Hospice of Shenandoah. Last year, she began thinking about the high cost of continuing professional education for nurses, and developed a high-quality, effective system of providing locally based continuing education that was accessible and affordable. This effort has led to the Hospice Unit Council Education taskforce, which she currently shares. Her efforts are easily replicable and have led to increased investment and interest in the hospice unit as well. Carol has created a win-win-win situation that benefits patients, clinicians and the greater community, an incredibly effective and important achievement.

Geriatrics/Long Term Care & Rehab - Janet Were -



UVA Transitional Care Hospital

Janet Ware works at UVA in the Transitional Care Hospital where she participated in a study to reduce the use of indwelling Foley catheters. These efforts led to a significant reduction in catheter-acquired urinary tract infections. The results of these efforts are currently being implemented hospital-wide. Janet is a role model who is highly skilled and admired by her peers for her team spirit in activities that support overall employee engagement.

Pediatric - Julie Strunk - James Madison University

Award sponsored by Richmond Magazine



Dr. Julie Strunk works at James Madison University. She describes her proudest accomplishment as the creation of an afternoon program for pregnant teens that provided important, necessary information to these new mothers as well as a nurturing, supportive environment. In addition, she worked to create an environment of on-site child care at high schools so that these young women had the childcare necessary for them to return to school and complete their high school diplomas. These efforts have expanded to include child development programs hosted by JMU and Eastern Mennonite University nursing students. This is a win-win in that nursing students have valuable clinical learning opportunities and young mothers have some of the educational resources needed for them to learn valuable parenting skills.

Women's Health -

Sharon Fickley -

Martha Jefferson Hospital, Sentara

Award sponsored by Mary Washington Healthcare



Sharon Fickley works at Martha Jefferson. She describes herself as the type of nurse who must find the answers to clinical questions or problems. After many years of practice she returned to school and received her Master's degree as a Clinical Nurse Leader about 18 months ago. She's been a part of her facility's shared governance structure since its inception and has worked to implement many important changes in nursing practice. Sharon has been involved in AWHONN activities at the local, state, and national levels, and has been instrumental in using her role as unit nursing educator to engage her colleagues in activities that promote the implementation of evidence-based practice.

NICU - Laura Lane -

Henrico Doctors Hospital, HCA

Laura Lane works in the NICU at Henrico Doctors Hospital, where, for the last 2 years she has been the chair of the Unit Practice council, the entity that oversees changes in practice to improve patient outcomes. Laura shared the details of the care of an infant with complex needs – a baby that, unfortunately, did not survive. She describes in exquisite detail how she worked with colleagues to care for this baby and family, and how this situation taught her to think outside the box and become an advocate for her tiny patients. This baby and family, although not realizing the outcome that everyone wanted, were enriched to have Laura as their nurse – it's clear that she made a big difference in their journey.



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: Dona Dei

It truly is a privilege to recognize Dona Dei with the March of Dimes Lifetime Achievement Award.



Dona Dei received her undergraduate and graduate nursing degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. In addition, she has advanced education in neonatal resuscitation, childbirth education, pregnancy loss counseling and parish nursing. She has been a staff nurse, clinical director, prenatal educator, and faculty member. She's been with the March of Dimes for over 20 years until her retirement last year, serving the organization in a variety of roles.

Dona's leadership and service qualities have been recognized throughout her career, from the time when she received the Outstanding Student Nurse award from Allegheny General Hospital in 1965. The list of her awards and recognitions is long and impressive.

Dona has served on the national March of Dimes National Nurse Advisory Council since 2006.

As part of the Council, Dona helped direct the March of Dimes education program and provided guidance on continuing nursing education activities, nursing grand rounds and graduate nursing scholarships. She met with the other Council members and March of Dimes staff annually to review existing programs; suggest new directions; and establish nursing networking opportunities. She also provided guidance as necessary throughout the year to address critical issues and evaluate the effectiveness of current March of Dimes nursing activities.

Dona has been a tireless advocate for moms and babies in Virginia as well as in our nation's capital. Thanks to her work with policymakers more babies now benefit from folic acid which protects them from birth defects; more babies are screened for conditions that when detected at birth can prevent disability and death; and more babies and their mothers are covered by health insurance.

During the March of Dimes folic acid campaign, Dona recruited her mother to tie green ribbons which she used to promote the use of folic acid among women of childbearing age to prevent serious birth defects of the brain and spine. On Advocacy Day, Dona courageously handed out samples of folic acid while dressed in costume as a big slice of an orange!

Dona has exemplarily skills in recruiting and mentoring volunteers. Dona has a supportive way to encourage the best from everyone, including parents who came to testify before the General Assembly as well as on Capitol Hill. She has a way of making mundane committee meetings fun and enlightening

Dona served as chair of the Northern Virginia Perinatal Council for several successful years she set high standards for collaboration and improvement of health care delivery in the region. She managed five Neonatal Intensive Care Unit family support projects in obstetrical hospitals which bring support and education to staff and families dealing with the stress and critical care of newborns. She has mentored and trained countless interns over the years and helped guide them into productive and successful careers.

Dona introduced the Centering Pregnancy prenatal care model and has promoted this improved care delivery to many sites. She is a caring, selfless, thoughtful, inspiring professional who has not only created a legacy of her own contributions but has played a role as an incredible role mentoring future public health advocates.