

Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc.



NEWS

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Helping Others Motivates, Inspires Health Care Employees *WHA Recognizes 76 Hospital Employees for Dedication to Patients*

MADISON (May 7, 2009) ---- They work in 76 different Wisconsin health care organizations. Some always knew they would work in health care. Others followed a less direct path. They all have one thing in common – they want to make a difference in other people’s lives.

Today the Wisconsin Hospital Association recognized 76 persons employed in hospitals for their dedication to their career, service to patients in their hospitals and their contribution to meeting the health care needs in their community.

Each employee honored submitted an essay describing why they chose a health profession. The reasons they gave were deeply personal and reveal the type of individual that seeks a health career. One hospital employee wrote, “I know I am making a difference in this world, one patient at a time.”

Judy Warmuth, WHA vice president, workforce, said many people decide on a health career after a relative, a close friend, or they personally, were treated for a chronic or life-threatening illness.

“Early encounters with a nurse, physician or other health care professional during a personal illness or that of a family member can profoundly influence a person’s career choice, or in some cases, trigger a career change later in life,” Warmuth said. Several of the employees described how they had tried other careers, only to find their “true calling” in health care.

Hospitals offer a wide variety of occupations, starting with positions that require a high school diploma through a doctoral degree. The 76 honored employees represent nearly 60 different health care occupations, including professions commonly associated with health care, such as nurses, physical therapists, and radiology technicians, but also massage therapists, financial services specialists, environmental services and food service.

The fact that hospitals offer secure jobs with family-sustaining wages and benefits makes them desirable choices for employment, according to WHA President Steve Brenton. But training, recruiting and retaining a workforce large enough to meet the growing demand for health care is a constant challenge for hospitals and other health care providers.

“Even in a down economy, we continue to be concerned about whether we will have enough health care employees in the future to meet the growing demand for care. As the economy improves, we could see a large percentage of people now in the workforce retire. That requires us to plan now to ensure we have well-trained professionals to fill these positions,” Brenton said.

“Health care today offers people an opportunity to work in a high-tech, yet high-touch, environment. By showcasing the personal stories of health care employees, we are able to share the rewards of choosing a career serving others,” Brenton said. The employee essays are posted at www.wha.org.

Employees Honored at WHA's Pride Program (by city-their essays are posted at www.wha.org):

Antigo

Langlade Hospital
Theresa Clark, Cancer Center Receptionist

Ashland

Memorial Medical Center
Theresa Hoyles, Registered Dietitian

Baldwin

Baldwin Area Medical Center
Sarah Anton, Certified Nursing Assistant

Baraboo

St. Clare Hospital & Health Services
Judy Hannaford, Director, Alcohol and Drug Counselor

Barron

Luther Midelfort Northland-Mayo Health System
Brittany Homer, Massage Therapist

Beaver Dam

Beaver Dam Community Hospital
Alicia Madigan, Exercise Physiologist - EKG/Cardiopulmonary

Berlin

Berlin Memorial Hospital
Connie Belter, Telecommunications Operator

Black River Falls

Black River Memorial Hospital
Kathy Guenther, RN, Registered Nurse

Chippewa Falls

St. Joseph's Hospital
Catherine Kromrie, RN, Service Area Coordinator

Columbus

Columbus Community Hospital
Michele Hein, Accounting Specialist

Cudahy

Aurora St. Luke's South Shore
Stacy Wilson, RN, Registered Nurse

Darlington

Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County
Michelle Edwards, Medical Coder

Dodgeville

Upland Hills Health
Sherry Wenzel, RN, Emergency Room RN

Eau Claire

Luther Midelfort-Mayo Health System
Kurt Ellis, Lead - Clerical Medical Imaging

Sacred Heart Hospital
Diane Zakopyko, RN, Registered Nurse

Fond du Lac

Agnesian HealthCare
Barb Van Egtern, Employment Specialist

Fort Atkinson

Fort HealthCare
Florence Falk, LPN, Licensed Practical Nurse

Glendale

Columbia St. Mary's
JoAnne Arndt, Clinical Nurse 2

Orthopedic Hospital of Wisconsin
Mark Ahrens, Diagnostic Services Director

Grantsburg

Burnett Medical Center
Julie Andersson, Physician Assistant

Green Bay

Bellin Hospital
Lindsay Hintz, RN, Team Facilitator

St. Vincent Hospital
Patty Bekkers, RN, Registered Nurse, Outpatient Renal Dialysis

Hartford

Aurora Medical Center in Washington County
Lynn Reynolds, RN, Registered Nurse - Emergency Department

Hayward

Hayward Area Memorial Hospital
Jaime Harris, Business Office Receptionist

Hillsboro

St. Joseph's Community Health Services
Kevin Dean, Emergency Services Coordinator

Hudson

Hudson Hospital
Lindsay Rees, CNA, Certified Nursing Assistant

Janesville

Mercy Health System
Janet Schlegel, RN, Case Manager

La Crosse

Franciscan Skemp Healthcare
JoAnne Damaschke, RN, CNRN - Neurosurgery

Gundersen Lutheran Health System
Rebecca Berg, Medical Assistant

Madison

St. Mary's Care Center
Suzanne Dungan, Activities Coordinator

St. Mary's Hospital
Lauren Pallin, Administrative Supervisor, Nursing

University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics
Elinor Gbedey, Scheduler Senior

Marshfield

Ministry Health Care - Saint Joseph's Hospital
Kelly Friesen, RN, Registered Nurse

Mauston

Mile Bluff Medical Center
Rhonda R. Larson, RN, Director of Cancer Care Nursing

Medford

Memorial Health Center
Nicole Buehler, RN, Registered Nurse

Menomonie

Red Cedar Medical Center
Kristine Brekke, Mail Clerk

Merrill

Ministry Health Care - Good Samaritan Health Center
Nancy Johnas, RN, Registered Nurse

Milwaukee

Aurora Sinai Medical Center
Gloria Jackson, Patient Transporter

Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center
Jeffrey Klister, RN, Registered Nurse - 4KLM Dept.

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
Debra Martin, Lead Specialty Pharmacy Technician

Froedtert Hospital
Mary Jo Burgoyne, Clinical Nurse Specialist

Monroe

Monroe Clinic
Linda Sangrene, Contract Management Specialist

Neillsville

Memorial Medical Center
Philan Susa, CNA, Certified Nursing Assistant

Oconto Falls

Community Memorial Hospital
Jennifer Patzer, Patient Financial Advocate

Osceola

Osceola Medical Center
Dody Lunde, RN, Lead RN, Oncology Infusion Services

Oshkosh

Aurora Medical Center
Marta Hoch, Manager, Medical Staff Services

Osseo

Luther Midelfort Oakridge
Stacey Connell, Nursing Assistant

Park Falls

Flambeau Hospital
Barbara Koch, RN, Home Health and Hospice Nurse

Platteville

Southwest Health Center, Inc.
Kari Pace, RN, Registered Nurse

Portage

Divine Savior Healthcare
Kendra LaCrosse, Occupational Therapist

Prairie du Sac

Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital & Clinics
Kathryn Murphy, Employee Health Practitioner

Rhineland

Ministry Health Care - Saint Mary's Hospital
Kathy Van Ryen, RN, Nurse Manager

Rice Lake

Lakeview Medical Center
Kathleen Evertsen, Patient Registrar, Admitting

Richland Center

The Richland Hospital, Inc.
Lisa Clary, RN, BSN, Clinical Coordinator

Ripon

Ripon Medical Center
Ann Soda, RN, Registered Nurse

River Falls

River Falls Area Hospital
Shauna Knott, Wellness Coordinator

Shawano

Shawano Medical Center
Terri Reuter, Cafeteria Aide

Sheboygan

Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center
Jody Keil, IS Training Specialist

St. Nicholas Hospital
Jon Paquette, Chaplain

Spooner

Spooner Health System
Diane Neste, Social Worker

Stevens Point

Ministry Health Care - Saint Michael's Hospital
Jared Davis, Physician Recruiter Specialist

Stoughton

Stoughton Hospital
Lori Larsen, RN, Registered Nurse

Superior

St. Mary's Hospital of Superior
Jane Cain, Surgical Technician

Tomah

Tomah Memorial Hospital
Margie Weber, RN, Registered Nurse

Veterans Administration Medical Center
Susan Schmitz, RN, Registered Nurse

Two Rivers

Aurora Medical Center Manitowoc Co.
Berdie Maigatter, Patient Access Representative

Viroqua

Vernon Memorial Healthcare
Eric Thunstedt, Exercise Physiologist - Clinical

Watertown

UW Health Partners Watertown Regional Medical Center
Holly Brom, RN, Registered Nurse

Wausau

Aspirus Wausau Hospital
Lisa Breaman, RN, Registered Nurse

West Allis

Aurora West Allis Medical Center
Patricia Celek, RN, Certified Diabetes Educator

West Bend

Aurora Health Center
Peggy Hays, Physician Assistant

St. Joseph's Hospital
Suzanne Yanke, RN, Registered Nurse

Weston

Ministry Health Care - Saint Clare's Hospital
Kris Contois, Housekeeper I

Wild Rose

Wild Rose Community Memorial Hospital
Denise Reilley, Administrative Assistant

Wisconsin Rapids

Riverview Hospital Association
Kelly Akkerman, Employment Coordinator

Woodruff

Ministry Health Care - Howard Young Medical Center
Patrick Baker, Respiratory Care Practitioner