



President's Awards

The President's Awards: A Celebration to Remember

The Annual President's Awards Program was created in 2007 by Michael Dowling, president and CEO of the North Shore-LIJ Health System, to honor employees for their extraordinary performance. There are three award categories: Exceptional Patient Experience, Innovation and Teamwork. In 2011, a total of 58 individuals and teams were nominated for the award, not only making it a banner program year, but also underscoring the organization's focus on recognizing employee excellence.

This June, three award winners and 55 finalists were invited to attend one of two prestigious President's Awards galas in honor of their achievements at the Garden City Hotel. Bringing together

members of facility and senior leadership, nominators, finalists, winners and guests, Mr. Dowling personally congratulated all nominees for their extraordinary contributions to the organization. Also in attendance were members of the program's External Selection Committee, composed of local service excellence leaders from companies such as the Americana Manhasset, Sodexo, Castagna Realty and the Garden City Hotel, who spent countless hours reviewing applications in order to select this year's winners.

With more than 200 nominations received in the program's five-year history, Mr. Dowling also extended special thanks to all of the departments, staff and individuals who are dedicated to making the

Annual President's Awards Program a celebration to remember — and also to the Garden City Hotel, which generously sponsored both of this year's award galas.

Cathy Nelkin Miller, president and CEO of the Garden City Hotel, has served on the program's External Selection Committee since 2007. "The President's Awards are an amazing commitment to recognizing employee excellence. The Garden City Hotel has witnessed first-hand how truly inspirational the program is for employees," she said. "In support of North Shore-LIJ's efforts to reward exceptional employee service, we are proud to sponsor both award galas this year, and we congratulate all the winners and finalists."

— Lisa D'Ambruoso

Exceptional Patient Experience Winner

The President's Award for Exceptional Patient Experience recognizes the extraordinary and selfless efforts of one individual to deliver service of the highest caliber, ensuring that the North Shore-LIJ Health System exceeds the expectations of the patients and communities it serves. This year's winner, Linda Spadafina, an assistant manager of physical therapy, exemplified this mission by uniquely transforming a personal hobby into an ongoing fundraising effort to benefit rehabilitation patients at Staten Island University Hospital's North Site. She is a dedicated care giver who approaches every situation with a special blend of humor and compassion, and her ability to bring people together to achieve a common goal has profoundly affected the lives of many patients, families and colleagues.

A 26-year employee of the health system, Ms. Spadafina is devoted to helping patients recover from orthopedic and spinal injuries and surgeries, strokes and amputations. So, when confronted with a limited budget for the Outpatient Physical Therapy Gym, she jumped into action, converting her personal passion for baking into a weekly fundraising venue with all proceeds going toward rehabilitation equipment and supplies. Every Friday, she hosts a bake sale staffed by volunteers and students to benefit the hospital, while

patients frequently donate goods in full support of the cause.

"My passion comes from years of working with patients who have been challenged," said Ms. Spadafina. "My philosophy is, what better way to bring a sense of comfort than to share a piece of cake?"

Her approach has more than paid off. In October 2010, she and her staff held their 5th Annual Halloween Bake Sale, raising \$5,600 to purchase a much-needed "Nu-Step" recumbent bicycle for patients suffering from neurological injuries. Success, however, has not slowed her down—next on the agenda is a seated hamstring-strengthening machine.

As a patient advocate, Ms. Spadafina is also committed to helping those undergoing physical therapy to overcome emotional obstacles, and proactively promotes socialization among patients to optimize healing. By opening the door for peer support, she enhances the overall patient experience, ensuring that no individual goes through the process alone. And, while the friendships formed under her watch usually last long after treatment concludes, the true testament to Ms. Spadafina's gift for fostering communication can be found in patient surveys: Many say they want to continue physical therapy just for the social connections they have made during the recovery process.

"Ms. Spadafina is an incredible asset to

the hospital," said Anthony Ferreri, president and CEO of Staten Island University Hospital. "She is a true role model whose contributions have directly impacted patient care, welfare and satisfaction on multiple levels. Her dedicated service to this hospital and its patients is greatly appreciated by the board, the administration and the medical leadership of Staten Island University Hospital."

One of 19 nominees for the 2011 President's Award for Exceptional Patient Experience, Ms. Spadafina's achievements were celebrated at an awards gala sponsored by the Garden City Hotel in June, where she received a standing ovation, an engraved Baccarat crystal sculpture, a \$10,000 bonus and a cruise for two to the destination of her choice.

"Ms. Spadafina is an exceptional person who does exceptional work," said Mr. Dowling, president and CEO of the health system. "We are very privileged to have people like her in our organization."

— Lisa D'Ambruoso



Linda Spadafina

Innovation Nominees

- Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York**
"Recipe for Success" Team
- The Feinstein Institute for Medical Research**
Immunobiology Laboratory Team
- Forest Hills Hospital**
Central Monitoring Team
- Franklin Hospital**
Fall Prevention Collaborative Team
- Glen Cove Hospital**
Weight Management Team
- Huntington Hospital**
Specimen Error Reduction Team
- Lenox Hill Hospital**
Vascular OR Team
- Long Island Jewish Medical Center**
Cystic Fibrosis Improvement Team
- North Shore University Hospital**
The Education Innovators Team
- Physician and Ambulatory Network Services**
Tough Love Ambulatory Pediatrics Team
- Plainview Hospital**
Gaspere Maltese, Lab Operations Manager (single nominee)
- Southside Hospital**
Neuroscience TeleStroke Program Team
- Staten Island University Hospital — North**
Fira Berlin, Lead EEG Technician (individual nominee)
- Staten Island University Hospital — South**
Cardiology Information Systems Team
- The Stern Family Center for Extended Care and Rehabilitation**
Safe Coumadin Administration Team
- Syosset Hospital**
Foundations Team
- System Services**
*Financial Help Web site Team
- The Zucker Hillside Hospital**
Heartbeats "Stop the Leakage" Team

*Winner

Innovation Winner

The President's Award for Innovation honors an individual or a team whose entrepreneurial initiative has significantly affected one of the organization's primary success indicators — quality, service or financial performance. This year's winner, the System Services Financial Help Web Site Team, has done all three. Responding to consumer needs, the team redesigned the financial section of North Shore-LIJ's Web site, simplifying existing applications and adding new functionality with a two-fold outcome in mind — to enhance the patient experience while expediting payment processes. Completion of the project also established the North Shore-LIJ Health System as one of the first healthcare networks in the New York metropolitan area to offer pricing transparency on its Web site.

Led by Kathryn Cashin, director of finance, the group set the wheels in motion to redesign the site from the consumer's perspective, with easy-to-understand instruction, simple navigation and enhanced resources. While a new "Personal Expense Estimator" was implemented to provide out-of-pocket estimates for medical services prior to appointments, other tools were constructed to help patients understand hospital bills, determine financial assistance eligibility, establish affordable payment plans, coordinate online payments and supply guidance on enrolling in government subsidized plans. Finally, to promote the new services available, the link to the new financial Web site was strategically placed on each and every patient bill.

Since its launch, the site has met with tremendous success, greatly improving customer service and information accuracy while increasing annual cash collections by approximately \$200,000. The recent recipient of a Silver Award for "Best eBusiness Site" by eHealthcare Strategy and Trends, the Web site has also attracted the attention of other organizations look-

ing to replicate its superior functionality.

"The team has done a spectacular job on this project," said Robert Shapiro, senior vice president and chief financial officer at North Shore-LIJ. "Such collective team effort, innovative thought and dedication to the patient experience are truly what set North Shore-LIJ apart from other healthcare networks."

At an awards dinner at the Garden City Hotel in early June, Mr. Dowling, president and CEO, commended the Financial Help Web Site Team on their efforts to keep North Shore-LIJ on the cutting edge of technology. The team was presented with an engraved crystal sculpture and a \$10,000 bonus to be split equally among all team members. Each team member also received dinner for two and two tickets to a Broadway show.

— Lisa D'Ambruoso

Honoring Milestones in Volunteerism

The North Shore-LIJ Health System has more than 3,200 volunteers who make a difference every day in the lives of patients, family members and visitors. At this year's Annual Board of Trustees Meeting, Michael Dowling, president and CEO of the health system, paid special tribute to six such volunteers, who at 50 years or more of service, have achieved a milestone that deserves to be celebrated. From greeting and transporting patients to performing gift shop duties to fundraising and beyond, these individuals have devoted themselves to delivering excellence for five consecutive decades. Presenting each honoree with a crystal Partnership Award, Mr. Dowling extended his personal gratitude to the group for their extraordinary contributions to the organization.



Partnership Award recipients included Yana Hirsch from LIJ Medical Center (57 years of service), Sylvia Lester from North Shore University Hospital (57 years of service), Dotsy Modlin from LIJ (53 years of service), Elsie Stepnoski from Glen Cove Hospital (50 years of service), Beverly Sutton from LIJ Medical Center (56 years of service) and Jane Widmayer from Huntington Hospital (51 years of service).

From left, Michael Dowling, president and CEO, with the winning team for Innovation: Richard Miller, vice president of finance; Oscar Castaneda, specialist, e-marketing; Mary Ellen DiLorenzo, director of finance; Kathryn Cashin, director of finance; Robert Lewinter, vice president of regional claims recovery; Frank Rizzo, chief financial officer, North Shore University Hospital; Mark Solazzo, chief operating officer of the health system; Patti Drolet, vice president of finance; Thomas Cronin, assistant vice president of revenue cycle management; and Robert Shapiro, senior vice president and chief financial officer. Not shown are: David Floccari, project manager; Allison McGuire, vice president of community health and public policy; and Christina Birrer, assistant vice president of Web services.

Teamwork Winner

When team members collaborate to achieve a common goal, "absolutely exceptional things can happen," according to Michael Dowling, president and CEO of North Shore-LIJ. Such is the case with this year's winner of the President's Award for Teamwork, the Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery Team, whose implementation of a new open heart surgery program at Southside Hospital has transformed the scope of healthcare available to southern Suffolk County residents.

Upon receiving approval from the New York State Department of Health to launch a cardiac surgery program at Southside Hospital in September 2010, the Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery Team knew it was a celebratory moment. Not only would the program be the first of its kind created in Suffolk County in nearly 30 years, but it would also establish Southside, a long-standing community hospital, as a tertiary facility. As a result,

the level of care accessible to surrounding communities would dramatically improve. Using this knowledge as a springboard, the team immediately implemented measures to turn the vision into reality.

Led by Stephen Bello, director of cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, this group tirelessly renovated existing operating rooms, created state-of-the-art surgical facilities, built office space, conducted competency training, purchased equipment and recruited new talent, all in less than five months — about half the time such an enormous undertaking would typically require. As a result of the team's dedication, Southside's new cardiac surgery program opened its doors in February 2011, performing surgery on 11 patients during its first week.

Composed of multidisciplinary professionals from locations ranging from Southside Hospital to North Shore University Hospital to LIJ Medical Center and beyond, the Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery Team's achievements are more than impressive. Enhancing both quality of care and financial performance, successful implementation of the program is expected to benefit the Long Island community for decades to come.

"Southside Hospital's new open-heart surgery program was established in a remarkable four-month time frame, an extraordinary accomplishment that reflects the excellence of our dedicated team," said Ms. Winifred Mack, executive director at Southside Hospital. "We are very proud to bring this vital program to our community and I salute each and every person who made this possible."

As a tribute to their outstanding efforts, the team attended a special awards dinner in June, where they received a crystal sculpture and a \$10,000 bonus to be divided equally among all members. Each team member was also awarded dinner for two in Manhattan and two tickets to a Broadway show.

— Lisa D'Ambruoso

Teamwork Nominees

- Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York**
Bone Marrow Transplant Team
- The Feinstein Institute for Medical Research**
Generations Project Team
- Forest Hills Hospital**
Collaborative Care Team
- Franklin Hospital**
Joint Replacement Team
- Glen Cove Hospital**
Back to Basics Team
- Hospice Care Network**
The Hospice Inn Team
- Huntington Hospital**
Breastfeeding Collaborative Team
- Lenox Hill Hospital**
ED Team
- LIJ Medical Center**
5 North Care Model Redesign Team
- North Shore-LIJ Health System Laboratories**
Franklin Laboratory Team
- North Shore University Hospital**
Transfer Center Team
- Physician & Ambulatory Network Services**
Monter Conversion Team
- Plainview Hospital**
Teletracking Transport Team
- Post Acute Services (Center for Emergency Medical Services)**
Stroke Rescue Program Team
- Southside Hospital**
*Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery Team
- Staten Island University Hospital — North**
Go Red Planning Team
- Staten Island University Hospital — South**
Team X-Ray
- Stern Family Center for Extended Care & Rehabilitation**
Heart Failure Initiative Team
- Syosset Hospital**
CSS/OR Pioneers Team
- System Services**
H1N1 Community Prevention Team
- The Zucker Hillside Hospital**
Perinatal Psychiatry Team

*Winner



Exceptional Patient Experience Nominees

- Wayne Albanese, RN**
North Shore University Hospital
- Robin Capel, Nursing Assistant**
Plainview Hospital
- Sister Marge Caulson, Pastoral Care Counselor**
Hospice Care Network
- Keith McAlpine Dempster, Food Service Worker**
Glen Cove Hospital
- Robert Ilse, Emergency Department Case Manager**
Lenox Hill Hospital
- Elzbieta Karkut, RN**
Forest Hills Hospital
- Shawn Lapidès, Nurse Educator**
Post Acute Services (Home Care Network)
- Margaret Lenahan, ED Technician**
Staten Island University Hospital — South
- Karen Livoti, RN**
Huntington Hospital
- Eugene Meyer, PsyD, Senior Psychologist**
Physician & Ambulatory Network Services
- Linda Minlionica, Assistant Nurse Manager**
The Zucker Hillside Hospital
- Walter Oberman, Assistant Director, Engineering & Maintenance**
The Stern Family Center for Extended Care & Rehabilitation
- Donna Popik, Assistant Head Nurse**
Syosset Hospital
- Ceil Sorrentino, Stroke Coordinator**
Franklin Hospital
- *Linda Spadafina, Assistant Manager, Physical Therapy**
Staten Island University Hospital — North
- Jerome Stabile, Lead Food Service Worker**
Southside Hospital
- Michael Swensen, Child Life Specialist II**
Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York
- Pauline Tzikas, Recreation Aide**
Orzac Center for Extended Care and Rehabilitation
- Kirby Veevers, Coordinator, Volunteer Services**
Long Island Jewish Medical Center
- *Winner**



From left: Michael Swensen, Child Life specialist II at Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York; Sister Marge Caulson, pastoral care counselor at Hospice Care Network; Robert Ilse, Emergency Department case manager at Lenox Hill Hospital; Walter Oberman, assistant director of engineering and maintenance at The Stern Family Center for Extended Care and Rehabilitation; Margaret Lenahan, Emergency Department technician at Staten Island University Hospital — South; Pauline Tzikas, recreation aide at Orzac Center for Extended Care and Rehabilitation; Ceil Sorrentino, stroke coordinator at Franklin Hospital; Wayne Albanese, RN, North Shore University Hospital; Karen Livoti, RN, Huntington Hospital; Lawrence Smith, MD, executive vice president and physician in chief for the health system; President's Award Winner Linda Spadafina, assistant manager of physical therapy, Staten Island University Hospital — North; Michael Dowling, North Shore-LIJ president and CEO; Elzbieta Karkut, RN, Forest Hills Hospital; Robin Capel, nursing assistant at Plainview Hospital; Shawn Lapidès, nurse educator in post acute services at the Home Care Network; Kirby Veevers, coordinator of volunteer services at LIJ Medical Center; Donna Popik, assistant head nurse at Syosset Hospital; Keith McAlpine Dempster, food service worker at Glen Cove Hospital; Linda Minlionica, assistant nurse manager at The Zucker Hillside Hospital; and Jerome Stabile, lead food service worker at Southside Hospital. Not shown: Eugene Meyer, PsyD, senior psychologist at Physician and Ambulatory Network Services.



Wayne Albanese, RN



Robin Capel



Sister Marge Caulson



Keith McAlpine Dempster



Robert Ilse



Elzbieta Karkut, RN



Shawn Lapidès



Margaret Lenahan



Karen Livoti, RN



Eugene Meyer, PsyD



Linda Minlionica



Walter Oberman



Donna Popik



Ceil Sorrentino



Linda Spadafina



Jerome Stabile



Michael Swensen



Pauline Tzikas



Kirby Veevers