



Nassau-Suffolk  
**Hospital Council, Inc.**

*The collective voice of Long Island's  
not-for-profit and public hospitals*

1383 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite 26  
Hauppauge, NY 11788  
631-435-3000 Fax: 631-435-2343  
[www.nshc.org](http://www.nshc.org)

Contact: Janine Logan, Director of Communications  
631-963-4156 (direct line) 631-435-3000 (office) 631-334-8321 (cell)  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Long Island Nurses Recognized for Excellence**

### *North Shore University Hospital Bedside Nurse Takes Top Honor*

(Hauppauge, NY . . . May 23, 2014) Nurse leaders from Long Island's hospitals and nursing education programs gathered Wednesday, May 21, 2014 at the Woodbury Country Club to bestow recognition upon their nurse peers at the Nurse of Excellence Award Ceremony hosted by the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC). One nurse from each of the Hospital Council's member hospitals was nominated for this award, which recognizes outstanding leadership and clinical practice. Deans of area nursing schools also submitted nominations recognizing nursing excellence in education.

**Roosevelt resident Renee Gilchrist RN, a cardiothoracic intensive care nurse at North Shore University Hospital** (Manhasset, NY), rose above a field of 26 nominees. Those nominees were selected from a field of about 500 nurses at hospitals and teaching institutions from across Long Island.

A 39-year nursing veteran, Gilchrist works in one of the most medically complex patient care units, a 23-bed open-heart surgery unit where most of the post-operative patients are highly unstable. These patients require intense care and monitoring and their fragile conditions leave them vulnerable to a variety of complications. Gilchrist noted that many of these complex patients were experiencing skin breakdown on their heels. This motivated her to partner with the hospital's Skin Care Team to trial a device to address the problem. The intervention ultimately resulted in a 50 percent decrease in skin breakdown in patients on the cardiothoracic intensive care unit. She took her interest in skin care a step further and initiated a research study to determine why some patients on her unit developed pressure ulcers. Her work revealed that some of the medications used in surgery, kidney disease in the post-op period, and the length of the surgery may be related to the development of pressure ulcers.

Gilchrist is further distinguished by her status as a Clinical Ladder III nurse. This is a professional development program designed to recognize excellence among frontline staff nurses. Only three percent of North Shore's nurses have attained level three. When not tending to her patients, Gilchrist is out in the community teaching others about heart health, conducting community health fairs, and offering nursing care at a clinic that treats the poor and uninsured.

"If we put our trust in the nursing profession, we can be assured that nurses will provide the guiding light and focus as the health care system undergoes redesign," said Paul Connor, chair of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council and president/CEO of Eastern Long Island Hospital.

The Hospital Council's annual salute to nurses is fashioned after the New York State Legislature's Nurse of Distinction Program that ended in 1995. NSHC is one of the few hospital associations in the state to continue this program voluntarily. It is now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year. The NSHC represents Long Island's not-for-profit and public hospitals.

For more information about this program and a full listing of nominees, visit [www.nshc.org](http://www.nshc.org).

**(See Photo on page 2 . . . MORE)**



From left: Valerie Terzano RN, member of the NSHC Nurse of Excellence Sub-committee and Senior VP of Nursing and Chief Nursing Officer, Winthrop-University Hospital; Kerri Anne Scanlon RN, Chief Nursing Officer of North Shore University Hospital; 2014 Nurse of Excellence Winner Renee Gilchrist RN; and Patricia Darcey RN, Chief Nursing Officer and VP of Patient Care Services at Southampton Hospital and Chair of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council Nurse Executives Committee

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