The New York State Legislature in 1989 created a Nurse of Distinction Program. The program, coordinated at the time by Senator Tarky Lombardi Jr., recognized individual excellence in the nursing profession. Hundreds of nurses were nominated from across the state, eight regional designees were selected by peer review, and one nurse from that group was awarded. The program was highly regarded by those within the health care industry and continued until 1995.

Since then, it has been the honor of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council to continue this tradition on a regional level through our annual “Nurse of Excellence” program. The Hospital Council opted to maintain this recognition program because the registered nurse is truly the core of any hospital. Each member hospital and nursing school selects a nominee based on specific selection criteria. The nomination in and of itself is an honor. Then a Council peer review committee selects “the best of the best.” More important than those individuals named and honored is the celebration of the entire nursing profession that pervades this program. We are proud of the nominees and congratulate this year’s top nurse. We are just as proud of all of the nurses who care for thousands of Long Islanders, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

On behalf of our board of directors, the council staff and the leadership staff at all of our hospitals, we express our sincere appreciation to all nurses and salute their commitment to compassionate quality patient care.

Kevin W. Dahill
President/CEO
2013 Nurse of Excellence Award
Order of Program

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS ................................................. Kevin W. Dahill
President/Chief Executive Officer,
Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council

GREETINGS FROM THE NASSAU-SUFFOLK
HOSPITAL COUNCIL ................................................................. Paul J. Connor, III
Chairman of the Board,
Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council &
Chief Executive Officer,
Eastern Long Island Hospital

INTRODUCTION OF NURSE OF EXCELLENCE
COMMITTEE MEMBERS ............................................................. Patricia Darcey, MS, RN-BC-NE
Chairperson, Nurse Executive Committee &
Chief Nursing Officer & Vice President of Patient Care Services,
Southampton Hospital

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ALL
“NURSE OF EXCELLENCE NOMINEES” ........................................ Gara Edelstein, RN, MSN
Chairperson, Nurse of Excellence Sub-Committee &
Sr. Vice President of Administration & Chief Nursing Officer,
St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center

REMARKS BY THE HONOREES ................................................... Catherine Videtto, RN, MSN, CCRN, ANP, CPHQ
St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center
And
Lori Escallier, PhD, RN, CPNP-BC
Stony Brook University School of Nursing

PRESENTATION OF THE TEAPOT ................................................ Anuli A. Erike, BSN, RN
2012 Nassau–Suffolk Hospital Council Nurse of Excellence

CLOSING REMARKS ................................................................. Gara Edelstein, RN, MSN
Chairperson, Nurse of Excellence Sub-Committee
Sr. Vice President of Administration & Chief Nursing Officer,
St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center
The Nurse Executives Committee is comprised of the chief nursing officers from all member hospitals and deans and directors of schools of nursing.
2013 Nurse of Excellence Award

Nurse Executives Sub-committee

Gara Edelstein, Chairperson  
Sr. VP of Administration & CNO  
St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center

Patricia Darcey  
VP of Patient Care Services & CNO  
Southampton Hospital

Nicolette Fiore-Lopez  
Chief Nursing Officer  
St. Charles Hospital

Amy Pakes  
Nurse Manager  
Nassau University Medical Center

Valerie Terzano  
VP Nursing & CNO  
Winthrop University Hospital

Lee Xippolitos  
Dean, School of Nursing  
Stony Brook University School of Nursing

Nurse Executives Selection Criteria

Outstanding contributions to the nursing profession and to the field of health care must be demonstrated based on the following criteria:

- Significant achievement within a particular area of nursing, including clinical practice, education, research, or administration. The provision of direct nursing services to assist patients and their families to function at optimum levels of health is one example within clinical practice.

- Demonstrated leadership that provides a role model for the quality of their performance and assists other nurses in their development.

- Participation in activities that foster a positive public image of nursing as a profession.

Note: All registered professional nurses employed at a Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council membership organization, or affiliated school of nursing, at any employment level or scope of responsibility, are eligible to be nominated for the award. Prior nominees are not eligible. Each hospital or nursing school member of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council, Inc. is eligible to nominate one individual for the award. Each nominating entity has an internal selection process to facilitate making an appropriate nomination.
THE NASSAU–SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL

Award For

Nursing Excellence

Is Presented To

Catherine Videtto, RN, MSN, CCRN, ANP, CPHQ
and
Lori Escallier, PhD, RN, CPNP-BC

2013

For achieving significant accomplishments in an area of practice, serving as a mentor and inspiration for staff, providing assistance to patients and families, and fostering a positive image of nursing.
Catherine Videtto has worked tirelessly throughout a 38-year nursing career, including 13 years at St. Catherine of Siena. She has held positions as a staff nurse and clinical nurse specialist in critical care, nurse practitioner in cardiology, and performance improvement coordinator, and is currently the coordinator of the stroke program. Her contributions related to the management of the stroke patient are by far her greatest achievement.

She began her career in nursing after completing an Associate’s Degree in nursing. She quickly obtained her Baccalaureate Degree in nursing and then again returned to graduate school to obtain a Master of Science degree, majoring in adult health as a nurse practitioner. She is a life-long learner and has continued her education by attending various conferences as a participant and a speaker. As a Six Sigma Green Belt, she has led several initiatives with great success and has presented at a research conference: “How to Achieve Improved Patient Satisfaction Scores Regarding Patient Education in New Medications.” In addition, she has also maintained certifications as a critical care registered nurse and health care quality professional.

For the past three years, Catherine has combined all of her experience to focus on a major disease entity, stroke. She is a pioneer in her field and looked upon as the expert to call for consultative services. Under her guidance and direction, St. Catherine’s has attained New York State Department of Health Stroke Certification and The Joint Commission Disease-Specific Certification for Stroke, with no recommendations for improvement. Catherine believes that it takes a team to provide comprehensive stroke management and has worked with multiple departments and various disciplines to attain this outcome. You can observe her speaking to and educating staff to ensure that quality care is achieved. She maintains open lines of communication with nearby tertiary facilities to provide appropriate feedback to first line rescuers.

She has served as chairperson of the Long Island American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and has worked steadfastly on presenting quality conferences on current cerebrovascular and cardiovascular modalities. She has served as a leader in the Greater New York Metropolitan-area Stroke Consortium, whereby best practices are shared amongst leading stroke coordinators with a focus on improving patient outcomes. In addition, she has coordinated stroke conferences at the hospital bi-annually to showcase the latest research in stroke management.

She was recognized for playing a crucial role in adding strength, innovation, and inspiration to the diversity and quality of life in New York State. The New York State Senate identified her as a woman of remarkable character who had shown initiative and commitment in pursuit of higher goals for herself and acting as a role model to be emulated by all women. Catherine was recognized as a leader who achieved this recognition and was confirmed as a New York State Woman of Distinction in June 2009 during a tribute ceremony held at the State Capital in Albany.

Her dedication and perseverance to this unique disease process inspires those around her to achieve more than they ever dreamed possible, to accomplish the best possible outcomes for the patient, to become expert in stroke care, to provide the best possible education on stroke education strategies, and to advance their professional growth and development.
Lori has been a professor in the School of Nursing since 1988 and has worked for the medical center for more than 30 years.

Her accomplishments in discovery - building new knowledge through research - are evident through her recent publications and presentations within peer-reviewed forums of journals and national and local conferences. Her research includes nationally grant-funded research on nursing education, delivery models, and organizational outcomes. She has a body of research regarding theoretical foundations in evaluation and outcomes which frames the evaluation process within the school. Within an empiricist-dominated era of scholarship, her research has provided a clear voice for evidenced-based evaluation in nursing curricula. She is invested in creating new knowledge that is needed to continue required scholarly discourse in the current outcomes-focused research milieu.

Lori is a nursing scholar who has demonstrated the integration of scholarship across disciplines. She has been a principal investigator on federally-funded nursing research, including retention strategies in diverse workforces. She has continued scholarly integration across disciplines throughout her career, working with faculty from various schools and hospitals, as well as other national universities. She has acted as a mentor in writing evaluation plans for others who have submitted federal grant proposals.

She has presented nationally and internationally on the process of creating and maintaining diverse workforces and evaluation and outcome methodologies. An example of her most recent international work was a podium presentation on “Sensory Processing Differences and Urinary Incontinence in School Aged Children” at the International Children’s Continence Society/Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence/British Association of Pediatric Urology Joint Congress, for the Royal College of Physicians, on October 2012 in London. Her approach to scholarship is that differences do not represent impasses but, rather, opportunities for scholarly exchange and growth.

Application of scholarship by aiding society and professions in addressing problems has been demonstrated by this individual in various leadership roles within the nursing profession. Most notably, she is the recipient of the 2012 Five Year Distinguished Service Award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

Lori has taken an active role in advising junior colleagues and students both on an informal basis, when novice faculty and students come to her for professional and academic direction, as well as on a formal level as a senior faculty member within the school. This mentoring has received national recognition and she is the recipient of the 2012 Outstanding Achievement in Education and Student Relations for the Robert Wood Johnson RWJ Scholars.

The expertise and approach to scholarly discourse make her a valuable resource for faculty and students. Her mastery of nursing evaluation and theory resonate in her teaching moments, as does her essence of being a nurse leader.

She has demonstrated academic and professional growth and continues to do so as a national and regionally-supported researcher and scholar. She is a leader within the school, the university, and nursing profession. Her collegiality and mentorship is valued by faculty and staff and her influence is far reaching. Her perspective and presence as a nursing scholar has enriched the school’s development.
2013 Nurse of Excellence Nominees

BROOKHAVEN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER

Jason Layug, RN, BSN, CMSRN
Telemetry RN – Staff

Jason has worked at Brookhaven for five years and is currently staff nurse on the telemetry unit. He collaborates with the multidisciplinary team on his unit to ensure all are moving toward excellence. In his daily work, he supports, encourages, and ignites his colleagues to continue their development and takes great pride in promoting a very positive professional nursing image. He uses continuing education as a bridge to excellence and promotes a cyclical pattern where practice and the integration of knowledge lead to satisfaction and improved outcomes. Jason’s unit consistently has the highest patient satisfaction scores within the hospital. Volunteering in both hospital and local educational programs, he promotes change to save lives, and demonstrates a career pathway to the community. Jason is a true professional.

EASTERN LONG ISLAND HOSPITAL

John J. Fazio, CRNA
Chief CRNA

John has worked at Eastern Long Island for four years and is responsible for the daily operations of the anesthesia department: assessing the patient, and preparing for and formulating a safe and well-executed anesthetic plan. He has facilitated multiple anesthesia administrative and clinical processes within the surgery department. He formulated an overall plan to incorporate the department’s goals within a simple but efficient quality improvement process. He wrote a variety of articles to educate and inform the community about the new and innovative procedures performed at Eastern Long Island. His articles are timely, informative, accurate, and well-received. John exemplifies the expert health care professional; he is bright, articulate, highly motivated, educated, intuitive, and patient-focused. He demonstrates these invaluable characteristics in both administrative and clinical implementation.

FRANKLIN HOSPITAL

Ellen Baglivi, RNC, BSN, MSN
Clinical Transformation Coordinator

Ellen has been a nurse for 30 years. Her role at Franklin involves transitioning the staff for implementation of the electronic medical record while improving processes and workflow across the organization. With her guidance, Franklin was the first hospital in their health system to implement an interdisciplinary knowledge-based clinical charting system and computerized physician order entry simultaneously. She was the liaison between staff and the information technology department in developing an acceptable work flow process. Ellen presents at the hospital’s Performance Improvement Coordinating Group and the nursing and hospital-wide leadership. She continues to educate, support, and bring changes in documentation to constantly upgrade the level of expertise for all users.

GLEN COVE HOSPITAL

Adriana Paz-Mongrut, RN, BSN
Nurse

Adriana has been a nurse for five years in the acute setting on the respiratory medical unit at Glen Cove. She utilizes her skills as she fulfills the roles of the patient educator, advocate, liaison, and friend. She is one of Glen Cove’s diabetes champions and assists in educating patients, their families, and her co-workers. As a preceptor, she assists in the training and orientation of new hires, and acts as a preceptor/mentor to interns from various colleges and universities. You will find her comforting a hospice patient and consoling their loved ones. Very involved with the community setting, she works at two group homes, one for post-incarceration mothers, preparing them to be reunited with their children, and the second one educating teenage mothers/mothers-to-be. Her drive and passion to make each patient encounter meaningful separates her from the rest.
GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTER
Chukwuma Egbuziemi, MS, RN
Performance Improvement Coordinator - Dialysis

Chukwuma has been at Good Samaritan for ten years. He serves as an advocate for both dialysis patients and staff. He is responsible for managing the dialysis data, which include, but are not limited to, measures of adequacy, albumin, phosphorus, hemoglobin, and vascular access. His commitment to enhancing his knowledge base has enabled him to meet the unique and individual needs of those he serves. He developed a unit-based website to improve communication with the staff. This allows the nurses on all shifts to keep up-to-date on the latest policies, procedures, and competencies so they can provide the best possible care to their patients. There is no assignment he could not handle and he goes above and beyond to provide his patients with everything they need. He is active in his church, serving as a lector and providing food to the poor and homeless. He also belongs to the Ugiri Progressive Community, which provides humanitarian assistance to African communities. His dedication to humanity is evident in the caring, competency and compassion he displays at work every day.

HUNTINGTON HOSPITAL
Mary Skaf, RN, NCC-OB, MS
Labor and Delivery Staff Nurse

For 16 years Mary has worked as a staff nurse in labor and delivery. Her strong interest in holistic nursing led to her pursuit of a Master’s Degree from New York College of Health Professionals in Holistic/Oriental Medicine and Acupuncture. She is an active member of the Breastfeeding Collaborative, Perinatal Safety Collaborative, and the Council for Holistic Nursing. Her involvement in these councils has facilitated change by sharing her knowledge in holistic nursing. This has prompted an enhanced application of holistic practices, which positively impacts the safety and well-being of the mothers and babies. She facilitates the use of aromatherapy during the birthing process. She brings thoughtful insight into her clinical practice with her thorough and concise assessments. In addition to her full-time work on the labor and delivery unit, she opened her own practice and provides acupuncture and massage therapy in an outpatient setting. Mary is considered one of the most dedicated, enthusiastic and caring nurses on the labor and delivery unit.

JOHN T. MATHER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Faustina Stoebe, BSN, RN, CPAN
Clinical Instructor/Nursing Education

For 37 years, Faustina (Tina) has worked in nursing on a medical surgical unit, emergency department and the post anesthesia unit. Presently she works in nursing education, where she shares her wealth of knowledge and experience. Being reliable and very approachable, she is considered an excellent resource person, mentor, and educator while working in the PACU. Tina has always been a great supporter of education and certification for herself as well as her peers. She is an instructor for PEARs, PALS, and BLS. She was involved in meeting the goals of a critical care grant. She assists co-workers in study groups to obtain specific certifications. Being a successful community fundraiser, Tina has also been active in fundraising for medical missions to Ecuador in addition to working 12 hours a day in challenging conditions. Tina is a team player and well respected by her peers.

LONG BEACH MEDICAL CENTER
Joanne Bonura, RN, LTHHCP Supervisor
Patient Service Manager

Joanne has been a nurse for 30 years and has worked at Long Beach in nursing supervision and performance improvement for many years. She has been the long term home health care program supervisor for six years and is responsible for the clinical and operational functions of the long-term program. She has participated tirelessly in the marketing outreach to the community and is a valuable asset, as well as an enthusiastic patient advocate. She is an indispensible member of the management.
Nominees (continued)

team, serving as an excellent resource due to her extensive knowledge base and dedication to performance improvement. Joanne has demonstrated a great deal of energetic initiative and creativity in overseeing all aspects of the LTHHCP, providing enlightened leadership, ensuring that patient needs are met, and working to see that all requirements for the LTHHCP are in compliance. During Hurricane Sandy, Joanne and her staff worked tirelessly to assist patients in preparing and planning for the storm. After Hurricane Sandy she and her staff located their patients to re-establish their services.

MERCY MEDICAL CENTER
Grace R. Grisafi, RNC, CEFM, CBC
Grace has worked at Mercy for more than 30 years in labor and delivery. Her first priority is patient care and safety. She regularly takes on the role of charge nurse, collaborating with the staff, and using the chain of command when necessary. She regularly attends educational seminars and shares her learning experience with her peers. She has been actively involved in the development of the computer system, Centricity Perinatal System, used by Mercy and other CHS facilities, and was instrumental in educating staff to ensure its success. For the last five years she has been an active participant in the CHS user group which regularly discusses system upgrades and changes needed to ensure best practice. She has been a preceptor for nurses to be oriented and has mentored many nursing students throughout her career. She has earned the respect of her peers and physicians, and is a regular resource for the staff.

NASSAU UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER
Olubukola Keshinro, RN, BSN
Psychiatry Float Nurse
For five years, Olubukola has been a psychiatry float nurse at Nassau University Medical Center working in the institution’s large psychiatry division, which includes two adult inpatient units, a child/adolescent unit, a psychiatric emergency department, and psychiatric criti-
cal care unit. She is proficient and competent in all of these areas of psychiatry; the nurse managers compete to have her assigned to their units. Being a founding member of the Nigerian Nurses Association (NNA) in NY, she mentors fellow students and is active in health education and wellness within the community. For the past seven years, through the NNA and other nursing associations, she has participated in medical missions to Nigeria. Prior to these missions, she spends her time in New York seeking donations of money, clothing, health supplies, and non-perishable foods, as well as seeking donations from pharmacies. She is quiet and unassuming, but a powerhouse in her ability to get things done.

NORTH SHORE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
Barbara Ruvolo, RN
Nurse Educator/SANE Coordinator
For 35 years, Barbara has been a nurse, spending the last 10 years, as a Nurse Educator at North Shore, where she has oriented a large number of new staff and run nine successful, often concurrent, fellowship programs. As a result of her dedication, expertise, and teaching style, the department has the distinction of having the highest retention rate for fellows in the health system. She also stays busy teaching ACLS, PALS, TNCC, and Emergency Nursing Pediatric courses. As part of her responsibilities she serves as the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Coordinator (SANE) for the ED. In this role she acts as liaison with various government agencies, including local police departments, district attorney’s offices, advocacy groups, and the Coalition for Domestic Violence. She oversees all aspects of this program and leads a group of 13 forensic-trained nurses. She is able to educate staff not only with her knowledge of subject content, but with her quick wit and energetic demeanor.
Nominees (continued)

PECONIC BAY MEDICAL CENTER
Donna Lyburt, RN, RN
Nurse

Donna has been a nurse for nine years, and has worked in Peconic’s Emergency Department since 2005. She represents caring and compassion in everything she does and has demonstrated this throughout her career. She is the leader on the unit and is regularly designated as the charge nurse. Donna inspires and motivates her peers with her leadership abilities and readily accepts any assignment given to her. Maintaining high standards for patient care, she expects the same from her co-workers. She never loses sight of the fact that the patient and family come first, and holds her colleagues accountable for the same. She is active in the ED Council Group, a small group of ED staff that works together to improve patient and staff satisfaction and work toward the best patient outcomes. She maintains certifications in BLS, ACLS and PALS. Donna is an exceptional preceptor of new employees and certainly leads by example. She is truly one of a kind.

PLAINVIEW HOSPITAL
Noreen M. Grady, RN, MSN, CEN
Nurse Manager

Noreen became a nurse manager more than a year ago, after 25 years as a direct care nurse. As the nurse manager on an oncology-medical-surgical unit, she cares for a patient population that includes many patients who are not only compromised by cancer, but are also battling acute illnesses such as pneumonia, sepsis, and renal failure. She approaches the nurse manager role with the same enthusiasm as she did at the bedside. She has leveraged the diversity in the workforce by identifying and fostering the skills, talents and preferences of the staff to meet their professional goals and to provide optimal care. She has dedicated herself to learning about oncology nursing and leadership in nursing. Noreen promotes learning in her staff as well as encouraging the RN staff to attend oncology courses and medical-surgical certification preparation courses. As a leader in the community of nursing, she takes the time to precept nursing students from Molloy College. Noreen always goes above and beyond, but particularly so during difficult times.

ST. CHARLES HOSPITAL
Elizabeth Chille, RN, MS, CPNP, PMHS
Pediatric NP of Specialty Care Center

Elizabeth has worked in the nursing profession for more than 36 years, the last 15 of which have been at St. Charles in the role of nurse practitioner. She was responsible for laying the groundwork that established the hospital’s Outpatient Specialty Care Center for children with complicated medical conditions. The center encompasses many different services for specific illnesses and diagnoses including orthopedic, audiology, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, neurology, diabetes and more. She is available for support, guidance, and assistance, and often acts as a resource for the family members of this pediatric population, who require specialized and multidisciplinary care. Her knowledge and professionalism are exemplary and command respect from her colleagues, her employees, and physicians with whom she works. Elizabeth volunteers in community outreach programs, doing health screenings and education, as well as giving free flu shots at the hospital. It is her collaborative approach in all areas of her responsibility for which she stands out as a nurse leader.

ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL
Allison Chenel Trevellini, MSN, RN, CWOCN
Wound Ostomy Continence Nurse Specialist

Allison has worked at St. Francis since 2009 and is responsible for staff development for clinical nurses in the areas of assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of wound, ostomy, continence, and specialty tube care. Her scope of responsibility includes research, performance improvement, staff development, risk management, and consulting. She facilitates the standardization of policies, procedures, and protocols related...
Nominees (continued)

to the tri-specialty areas of WOC Nursing. Through her expertise and mentorship, significant improvements in patient care delivery have been achieved as evidenced by nursing sensitive indicator outcomes. She offers workshops which combine didactics and hands-on training to all clinical staff, and shares best practices through publications and public speaking. Allison is considered an expert in the field of wound, ostomy, and continence nursing, has authored numerous manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals, and has guest-lectured at many schools, and local, regional, and national conferences. She also assists in planning, recruiting and participating in the Colon Cancer Challenge held annually in Central Park.

ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL
Kareen Lewis, RN, MSN/Ed
Staff RN
Kareen has been a RN for more than 12 years and has worked at St. Joseph since 2005 as a medical-surgical bedside nurse. She is a manager as well as a primary care provider in both the acute care and long term environments. In addition to her exemplary work at the bedside, she is passionate in patient education and advocacy. She works very closely with the nursing education department and administration in order to be an instrument of change in culture and nursing practice. Although she always serves as a role model and resource for her colleagues and patients for nursing care, she is regarded as a senior resource for diabetes care, management, and education. As a true educator, she can be found at the bedside of patients teaching, demonstrating, and reviewing. She often is just communicating with the patient and family in an effort of gaining more understanding, so that when the patient goes to the next level of care, he or she will go “well prepared” to be as independent as possible. She is the go-to person on the unit and has won the respect of her colleagues, hospital staff, and administrative staff.

SOUTH NASSAU COMMUNITIES HOSPITAL
Barbara B. Guy, MS, RN-BC
Director, Electronic Medical Record Department
With more than 30 years of nursing experience, Barbara was hired to head the EMR department. In her role as the director of the Electronic Medical Records department, she has flourished as a dynamic, knowledgeable and sought after leader. Keeping patient safety at the forefront of all decisions, she has been able to use her years of clinical judgment and decision-making to successfully implement the EMR at South Nassau. Led by her ability to uphold best practices, she has been able to develop workflows, build order sets, and improve clinical documentation. She models how to incorporate caring through technology and strives to involve nursing staff in all EMR critical decisions. She recognizes that active participation of the nursing end-users is critical to help avoid workflow issues and encourages staff to embrace the new technology. In keeping with the facility’s vision, she brings her brand of excellence to every challenge that is brought her way.

SOUTHAMPTON HOSPITAL
Roberta Griffin, RN, BSN, CCRN, CEN
Critical Care Nurse
Roberta has 20 years of experience in critical care nursing and has worked in Southampton’s ED for the last nine years. Roberta has cared for and helped stabilize severe trauma patients in a non-trauma center; she does not shy away from the most complex, traumatically injured patients. She has taken on the role of education officer for the department, mentoring new staff, precepting, and assisting with the hospital’s “skills day.” As a preceptor to new nurses or EMS students, she finds the best educational opportunities for them and maximizes their interactions. She is a team player when it comes to helping other nurses with their workload or a critical patient. Roberta believes in all staff learning by example and is always willing to help the department, such as covering a sick call or covering a meal break. She truly lives the concept of team work. She exhibits excellence
Nominees (continued)

in her nursing practice by maintaining the most up-to-date knowledge of her practice through conference attendance and journals. Doing missionary work in Africa is another example of Roberta’s passion, using her own time, vacation, and money.

SOUTHSIDE HOSPITAL

Hilda N. Rivera, RN, BSN
Staff Registered Nurse

Hilda has 37 years of experience as a registered nurse working in various areas of nursing. She has worked at Southside for 13 years in ambulatory care services. Her clinical focus is primarily on family practice and public health nursing services. The persons served are those in need of pre-natal care, pediatric care, and family practice medicine and community/public health nursing care. She is a steadfast facilitator and an active advocate for patients and others who may be unable to advocate for themselves. Her fluency in Spanish and her personal awareness of cultural diversity and its implications on care have been instrumental in augmenting the provision of healthcare services. As a staff member, Hilda provides essential supportive, preventive, therapeutic, and educational nursing services and healthcare counseling. She has assumed the role of informal leader and mentor to new and experienced nurses. Her educational efforts are targeted on community health, wellness maintenance, and preventive services. Hilda excels as a patient educator and her positive attitude is one of her greatest assets.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

William D. Roberts, RN, ACNP-BC, DNSc
Associate Director of Nursing

William has been a member of the Stony Brook Medicine family since 2009 in the role of Associate Director for Nursing Quality, Research, and Nursing Support Services. His diverse professional background provided the foundation to support the numerous roles he has accepted during the last four years. His span of responsibility includes the nursing office, staffing office, transport and distribution services, general medicine service, hemodialysis and emergency medicine, while also serving as a member of the executive steering committee for health information technology, and providing oversight for nursing quality. He examines the practice of healthcare for Stony Brook Medicine, builds evidence from clinical data, monitors quality process control, recommends and initiates process improvements utilizing relevant methodologies across the organization, clinics, and community. William has had numerous articles and research studies published. He is a role model and inspiration for nurses at all levels of practice and education.

SYOSSET HOSPITAL

Laura Ditzel, RN
Staff Nurse

With 27 years of dedicated work experience at North Shore's affiliated hospitals, Laura has been at Syosset Hospital for the past five years. She is currently working on a 15-bed telemetry unit with a large population of bariatric patients. She is recognized by her patients and co-workers for her caring, compassion and dedication to her profession. She is very involved in the hospital’s collaborative care council, which she chairs, and has developed several projects, such as reducing the noise level throughout the unit, and developing diagnosis-related education packets for the patients. She also enjoys teaching nursing students. Laura’s enthusiasm and drive leads her co-workers to excel in their jobs and the patients to become actively involved in their own care. She continually aids and assists her co-workers at a moment’s notice, and takes charge whenever requested or needed. Laura exemplifies the essence of the nursing profession and the term “team player.”
Nominees (continued)

VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER

Jason C. Serigano, RN, LCSW
Staff RN – Mental Health Clinic and Community-Based Outpatient Clinic

Jason has worked at the VA since 2009, currently splitting his time between the mental health clinic at Northport, and the Valley Stream outpatient mental health clinic. He has demonstrated continued leadership, commitment, and advancement in psychiatric-mental health nursing practice. His contributions to this area of practice have positively impacted veterans’ care at the Medical Center. He promotes trust, team building, and collaboration among his colleagues, as well as sharing his expertise with peers. Jason developed a ‘New Employee Unit-Based Resource Guide’ for newly hired employees, and has assisted new employee orientation in mental health. He has volunteered to serve on hospital-wide committees and is an active member of the Nurse Professional Standards Board, Policy and Procedure Committee, and a member of the CBOC’s Planetree team. He is a role model, contributor and an exceptional nurse at the VA.

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Alice Nash, MA, RNC-NIC
Clinical Educator

With 25 years of clinical experience in the neonatal intensive care unit, Alice recently assumed the role of clinical educator in the NICU at Winthrop. She has developed clinical education programs for the staff and the community, conducted research and mentored new graduate nurses. She addressed an issue of oxygen delivery to infants to decrease the incidence of chronic lung disease and developed a program coined “BEAR” (Before Excess Assess Requirement). This became a formal education program for the neonatal staff including nurses, resident physicians, respiratory therapists and nurse practitioners. Alice also developed a program for safe “technique” for phenobarbital administration in the NICU in collaboration with the pharmacy department. Recognizing a deficit for parent education regarding car seat safety as part of a safe discharge from the NICU, she took the initiative to become a certified infant car seat technician through Safe Kids of Nassau County. She is the hospital’s representative for the March of Dimes Annual March for Babies Walk and, through her efforts, in 2012, Winthrop received the gold award-level acknowledgment. She serves as a role model for all staff in the NICU.
2013 Nurse of Excellence Award

Prior Recipients

Nassau-Suffolk Nurse of Excellence Award
sponsored by the
Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council

2012  Anuli A. Erike, BSN, RN, Nassau University Medical Center
2011  Lisa Quinones, Suffolk County Community College
2010  Debra Giugliano, Stony Brook University Medical Center
2009  Eileen M. Roberto, Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center
2008  Amy B. Pakes, Nassau University Medical Center
2007  Donna A. Tanzi, Huntington Hospital
2006  May-Lynn Andresen, North Shore—Long Island Jewish Health System
2005  Kathleen Perro, St. Francis Hospital
2004  Madeline Cozzi-Gottlieb, South Nassau Communities Hospital
2003  Virginia Reichert, North Shore University Hospital
2002  Donna M. Johnson, Nassau University Medical Center
2001  Susan Hovani, J.T. Mather Memorial Hospital
2000  Kathleen Southerton, University Hospital at Stony Brook
1999  Kathleen Miller, Long Beach Medical Center
1998  Elizabeth Devine, J.T. Mather Memorial Hospital
1997  Alice Friedrich, North Shore University Hospital at Plainview
1996  Phyllis Parker, J.T. Mather Memorial Hospital

Long Island Nominations to the
New York State Nurse of Distinction Award Program
1989 - 1995

Eleanor O'Boyle
J. T. Mather Memorial
Sr. Rita Vanson
Mercy Medical Center
Rachel Lin (deceased)
Komanoff Center for Geriatric & Rehab Medicine (NYS recipient)
Dorothy Pessoli
Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Mildred O'Connor
Lutheran Center for the Aging
Nancy Maehl
Veterans Affairs Medical Center
Darlene Paduano
University Hospital at Stony Brook
Carolyn Van Helden
St. Charles Hospital and Rehabilitation Center

The collective voice of Long Island’s not-for-profit and public hospitals.
The Legend of the Teapot

The teapot tradition began in the 1980s with the New York State Legislature’s Nurse of Distinction Program. The first recipient of the Long Island Nurse of Distinction nomination spoke of the challenges that nurses and all of health care face, and will face, in the decades to come. In keeping with the message that day, it was recollected her comments included, “most of us nurses are like teabags, we don’t know our own strength until we get into hot water.”

The allegory resonated among those involved in the program and it eventually became a custom for a prior recipient of the Nurse of Excellence award to bestow a teapot upon the current honoree. The teapots remind our honored colleagues of their achievement and of their strengths. Like each of us, the teapots are seldom exactly alike. They celebrate the unique value that each Nurse of Excellence brings to those they serve. And, the teapot symbolizes and reminds us that “hot water” often brings out the best in us and in our profession.
NASSAU–SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL

Representing the not-for-profit and public hospitals serving the residents of Long Island

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