



Nurse of Excellence

2021 AWARD
CEREMONY



Nassau-Suffolk
Hospital Council

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 other healthcare professionals 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.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT



It has been the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council's great privilege to sponsor the annual Nurse of Excellence award, continuing a tradition that began in 1989 when the New York State Legislature created a Nurse of Distinction program. The award was so highly regarded that when the state program ended six years later, Long Island hospital leaders were unwilling to let it end. The Hospital Council took up the mantle, developing its own program in the region to honor Long Island's outstanding registered nurses. Not even a global pandemic could get in the way of this important recognition.

Member hospitals and Long Island schools of nursing each year nominate one extraordinary candidate from their institutions, in accordance with the criteria established by the Council's Nurse Executives Committee. These individual nominations are in and of themselves a significant honor, which is why we recognize every candidate today. The Nurse of Excellence subcommittee, comprised of chief nursing officers, deans of nursing, nurse managers and previous winners, then selects one winner from among the blinded nominations. This is an unenviable task, as every one of these nominees is a winner.

On this occasion, the Hospital Council's 25th Nurse of Excellence Award ceremony, we are more in awe of the achievements of nurses than ever. The events of the last 18 months have demonstrated to the world the power of nursing — the strength, the resilience, the leadership, the compassion, and most of all, the incredible skill of these professionals. On behalf of our board of directors, the Council staff and the leadership at all of our institutions, we express our sincere appreciation to all nurses and salute their commitment to patients, our communities and the pursuit of excellence.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wendy Darwell".

WENDY D. DARWELL

President and Chief Executive Officer
Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council



THE NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL

2021 NURSE OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

ORDER OF PROGRAM

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

WENDY D. DARWELL

President and Chief Executive Officer
Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council

GREETINGS FROM THE NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL

ROBERT S. CHALONER

Chairman of the Board
Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council
Chief Administrative Officer
Stony Brook Southampton Hospital

INTRODUCTION OF NURSE EXECUTIVES COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ALL NURSE OF EXCELLENCE NOMINEES

MARIE MULLIGAN, PHD, RN, CNOR, NEA-BC

Vice President for Nursing and Chief Nursing Officer
Mather Hospital Northwell Health

DEBRA GRIMM, DNP, MS, RN

Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President
Long Island Community Hospital

REMARKS BY THE HONOREE

FAITH LYNCH, MSN, RN

Clinical Nurse Manager of Acute Dialysis
NYU Langone Hospital Long Island

REMARKS BY THE HONOREE

MARIJEAN BUHSE, PHD, RN

Clinical Professor
Stony Brook School of Nursing

PRESENTATION OF THE TEAPOT

CLOSING REMARKS

MARIE MULLIGAN, PHD, RN, CNOR, NEA-BC

Chairperson of Nurse Executives Committee
Vice President for Nursing and Chief Nursing Officer
Mather Hospital Northwell Health





NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL 2021 AWARD FOR
NURSING EXCELLENCE IS PRESENTED TO

FAITH LYNCH, MSN, RN



MARIJEAN BUHSE, PHD, RN

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.

NURSE OF EXCELLENCE SELECTION CRITERIA

Outstanding contributions to the nursing profession and to the field of
healthcare 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 in functioning 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's Nurse Executives Committee is eligible to nominate one individual for the award. Each nominating entity has an internal selection process to facilitate making an appropriate nomination.

2021

Nurse Executive COMMITTEE

Ann Cella, MA, MEd, RN, NEA-BC

Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services
and Chief Nursing Officer
St. Francis Hospital & Heart Center

Kathleen Cino, PhD, RN, CNE

Professor and Chairperson
Farmingdale State College

R. J. Civello, RN, BS-HCA, MSN

Associate Executive Director
Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer
South Shore University Hospital Northwell Health

Stacey A. Conklin, MSN, RN-BC, MHCDS, NE-BC

Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer
Mount Sinai South Nassau Hospital

Gara Edelstein, RN, MSN

Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and
Chief Nursing Officer, Good Samaritan Hospital
Chief Nursing Officer, Catholic Health

Mary Jane Finnegan, MS, RN

Chief Nursing Officer
St. Catherine of Siena Hospital

Nicolette Fiore-Lopez, PhD, RN, CENP

Chief Nursing Officer
St. Charles Hospital

Maria Fletcher, RN, PhD, CNE

Director of Department of Nursing
St. Joseph's College

Marcia R. Gardner, PhD, RN, CPNP, CPN

Dean of Barbara H. Hagan School of Nursing
Molloy College

Barbara Gibbons, RN, MS, FNP

Vice President of Patient Care Services and
Chief Nursing Officer
Mercy Hospital

Catherine O'Brien, RN, BSN, MBA, NEA-BC

Vice President of Nursing and Chief Nursing Officer
St. Joseph Hospital

Debra Grimm, DNP, MS, RN

Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer
Long Island Community Hospital

Susan Knoepffler, RN, MPA, NE-BC

Vice President of Nursing and Chief Nursing Officer
Huntington Hospital Northwell Health

Doreen O'Grady, RN

Associate Executive Director of Patient Care
Services and Chief Nursing Officer
Glen Cove Hospital Northwell Health

Christine Kippley, RN, MBA, NE-BC, CCM

Vice President of Patient Care Services and
Chief Nursing Officer
Peconic Bay Medical Center Northwell Health

Irene Macyk PhD, RN

Associate Executive Director of Patient Care
Services and Chief Nursing Officer
North Shore University Hospital Northwell Health

Althea Mills, RN, MSN

Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of
Patient Services
Stony Brook Southampton Hospital

Carolyn Santora, MS, RN

Chief of Regulatory Affairs & Chief Nursing Officer
Stony Brook University Hospital



Marie Mulligan, PhD, MSN, RN, CNOR, NEA-BC

Vice President for Nursing and Chief
Nursing Officer
Mather Hospital Northwell Health

Suzie Marriott

Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services
and Chief Nursing Officer
Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital

Janice Pateres, MS, MBA, RN, BC

Chief Nursing Officer and Executive Vice President
Nassau University Medical Center

Valerie T. Terzano, MSN, RN, NEA-BC

Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President
for Nursing
NYU Langone Hospital Long Island

Marianna Vazquez, RN, MS, NE-BC

Associate Executive Director of Patient
Care Services
Plainview and Syosset Hospitals Northwell Health

Maureen T. White, RN, MBA, NEA-BC, FAAN

Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse Executive
Northwell Health

Annette B. Wysocki, PhD, RN, FAAN

Dean and Professor
Stony Brook University School of Nursing

Terry Pando, RN, NEA-BC

Associate Executive Director and Chief
Nursing Officer
Long Island Jewish Valley Stream Northwell Health

**2021 NURSE OF EXCELLENCE
SUB-COMMITTEE**

Marie Mulligan, Chair

Vice President for Nursing and Chief Nursing Officer
Mather Hospital Northwell Health

Debra Grimm, Co-Chair

Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer
Long Island Community Hospital

Gara Edelstein

Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and
Chief Nursing Officer, Good Samaritan Hospital
Chief Nursing Officer, Catholic Health

Stacey Conklin

Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer
South Nassau Communities Hospital

Marcia Gardner

Dean
The Barbara H. Hagan School of Nursing
Molloy College

Lila Hageman-Sheehan

Nurse Manager of Emergency Department
NYU Langone Hospital Long Island

Cathy Jo Catalano

Nurse Manager of Labor and Delivery
NYU Langone Hospital Long Island

Lisa Koshansky

Nurse Manager of Critical Care
St. Catherine of Siena Hospital

2021 Nurse of Excellence Honoree

FAITH LYNCH, MSN, RN

Clinical Nurse Manager of Acute Dialysis
NYU LANGONE HOSPITAL LONG ISLAND

Faith Lynch began her fifteen-year nursing career as a licensed practical nurse in dialysis. She went on to complete both a bachelor's and master's degree in nursing and is currently enrolled in a doctor of nursing practice program at Chamberlain University focused on healthcare systems leadership.

Faith is a true Magnet® nurse leader who embraces the transformational leadership style and empowers exemplary professional practice and innovation in her staff. She has been described by her peers as a forward thinking and compassionate nurse leader who has the ability to make those around her better and see their potential for growth. Her focus on empowerment for excellence is so great that it was recently featured in a Nephrology Nursing Journal article titled, "Promoting Patient and Nurse Safety in Acute Dialysis Units through Advocacy and Collaboration."

Within the organization, Faith spear heads the implementation of innovative care models and best practices. Most recently, she and the medical director for inpatient dialysis have been working on a model by which select patients can transition directly to home hemodialysis from the acute care setting. She is also currently leading an evidence-based study focused on the impact of exercise during dialysis and its impact on depression in the dialysis population.

Faith credits much of her professional growth to the American Nephrology Nurses Association and currently serves as the Chair of the Acute Care Specialty Practice Network. She was a contributor in the most recently revised edition of the ANNA's Nephrology Nursing Certification Review Guide and previously

held two board positions as the President and Secretary of the Association's Long Island Chapter.

Outside of the organization, Faith serves as a per diem nurse consultant and educator, focusing on dialysis-related matters. She has given numerous national and international podium presentations related to acute dialysis nursing care and is considered a national expert in her field. She is an accomplished curriculum writer for nursing and has published several book chapters focusing on core curriculum for nephrology nurses. She is currently co-authoring a chapter of the Contemporary Nephrology Nursing textbook focusing on acute kidney injury. She has also served as a reviewer for multiple peer-reviewed journals and other publications related to dialysis. She volunteers for the National Kidney Foundation where she is a team organizer for the annual Long Island Kidney Walk.

Faith strives to constantly support the advancement of clinical practice in dialysis. During the war on COVID-19, she led the adoption of a new technology that resulted in increased acute dialysis resources, versatility of treatment modalities, and remote monitoring during the pandemic. This capability drastically decreased nurse exposure to COVID-19 and ensured that dialysis could be provided to more patients than traditional modalities would allow. Additionally, by adopting this new technology, fewer intradialytic events have been reported.

Faith has described the COVID-19 pandemic as the truest test of her leadership skills and attributes her success to her nursing team, which she considers her biggest asset.



2021 Nurse of Excellence Honoree

MARIJEAN BUHSE, PHD, RN

Clinical Professor

STONY BROOK SCHOOL of NURSING

Dr. Marijean Bushe began her career in critical care with a focus on cardiac management. She then obtained a master's degree in nursing education from Lehman College followed by a PhD and an Advanced Practice Certificate as an adult nurse practitioner from Adelphi University. During that time, she joined the faculty at Stony Brook School of Nursing where she fulfilled the qualifications of clinical professor and assumed a leadership position as chairperson of two graduate departments. As a board-certified adult nurse practitioner, her clinical practice focuses on the management of persons and families with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Her scholarship in older adults with MS is recognized internationally, nationally, regionally, and locally.

Nursing students, no doubt, benefit from having a professor who demonstrates mastery of subject matter; however, they are fortunate to have a faculty role model who demonstrates professionalism and collaboration in leading the nursing profession. Her many contributions that have moved our academic institution to new heights are rooted in her spirit of inquiry. To build and sustain a viable environment for geriatric education, Dr. Buhse secured over 1.8 million dollars in grant funding for interprofessional education in care of frail, elderly adults living in the community.

Dr. Buhse is one of the first faculty to volunteer or participate as collaborative initiatives are announced. Most notably, she brings back experience gained through these initiatives for the development of faculty, students, and practicing nurses. For example, in 2017, Dr. Buhse attended an evidence-based immersion with Dr. Bernadette Melnyk at the Fuld Institute for Evidence-Based Practice. This immersion experience included a fifteen-month implementation of an EBP project to improve chemotherapy induced nausea and vomiting. Participation in this effort was above and beyond expected faculty responsibilities. The candidate and her team published the findings from this project in *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing* journal. Many nursing leaders would be satisfied with this wide dissemination of scholarly nursing practice; however, Dr. Buhse went the extra mile. She used her expertise in EBP to lead faculty in

their development of EBP principles and revision of curricula so that future nurses will be best prepared to practice EBP. This level of commitment is truly remarkable.

Dr. Buhse's research is focused in the area of older adults with MS and their families, including quality of life and caregiver experiences. She regularly disseminates her work in the form of scholarly presentations to the community of Nurse Practitioners and MS Neurologists. She is a manuscript reviewer of a number of journals, including the *International Journal of MS Care*, *Public Health Nursing*, and *Quality of Life Research*.

Her steadfast dedication to patient care is evidenced in her commitment to leadership roles within professional organizations that move forward important agendas for the promotion of high-quality patient care outcomes. Currently, she serves on the Board of Directors and is Chairperson for Academic Outreach for the International Organization of MS Nurses. She is the President of the MS International Certification Board. Her service to our local Nassau-Suffolk community is evident in her role on the Clinical Advisory Board of the Long Island Chapter of National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Additionally, she is a founding member and former president of the Long Island Multiple Sclerosis Nurses Society. Her dedication to patient education is demonstrated by her leadership of an annual MS Wellness Program for Patients and Caregivers. Most recently, in response to challenges imposed by the COVID pandemic, she developed and chaired a virtual, Zoom-based eight-week training program for nurses new to MS care.

Her significant efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2017, she was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She has received the International Organization of MS Nurses Research award, and the Community Leadership award from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. She is honored as well by her students, with the Excellence in Teaching Award.

Healthcare advances to improve patient care outcomes require a nursing perspective; Dr. Marijean Buhse provides that perspective and represents our school and profession at the highest level.

GLEN COVE HOSPITAL NORTHWELL HEALTH

Paola Wilches, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, GERO-BC

Patient Care Manager of Ambulatory Family Medicine Clinic

Paola Wilches is the patient care manager at Glen Cove's ambulatory family medicine clinic. Most of the patients served at this clinic are uninsured and in need of a number of resources in addition to the clinical care they are receiving. Paola often volunteers her time and demonstrates compassion and understanding to many who are in need. She organizes food donations throughout the organization and has a genuine passion for serving the community.

During the COVID pandemic, Paola displayed courage and support to all of her staff in the ambulatory family medicine clinic. At the height of the patient surge, Paola opened a new unit to accommodate the needs of the increased volume of patients, and managed the stress and demand of multiple roles seamlessly. She also led a team of outpatient nurses in caring for patients in the inpatient setting. She is known for consistently recognizing her team for the large and small things they do, and is constantly motivating her staff to provide excellent care for patients.

Paola reports she is most proud of the diabetic care that she and her team are able to provide to the community. She recently completed an IRB approved research study on the impact of point of care testing for hemoglobin A1C in the treatment of patients with poorly controlled diabetes in an outpatient family medicine program and published "The Final Act of Nursing Care" in the Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing in 2012.

Paola says that the most satisfying aspect of her work is that she has the ability to truly make a difference in her patients' lives. Her kind and charitable spirit is obvious to everyone she meets. One physician recently commented that "Paola always goes the extra mile for the clinic. She is detail-oriented and never forgets a birthday. She has a kind heart and makes everyone around her feel special." Paola is known to always help others and it is evident that she is a superior role model for us all.

GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL

Kathy DiBenedetto, MSN, RN, CIC

Nursing Director of Infection Prevention

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, healthcare workers across the globe were struck with a wave of newfound anxiety. In New York, infection rates rose rapidly and guidelines change daily, making it difficult for hospitals to keep up. Our Nurse of Excellence nominee, Kathy DiBenedetto, immediately recognized and validated the high levels of anxiety among our staff and got to work. She spent countless hours keeping herself and the infection control team educated and up to date on the current guidelines and best practices. She collaborated with the organization's CEO to conduct staff briefings twice a day, including weekends and holidays, to provide updates and to address questions and concerns. She and her team of infection preventionists, rounded the hospital frequently and met with staff in all clinical areas to provide guidance and support. Kathy was a key advisor on several large projects aimed at increasing the hospital's capacity to accommodate the influx of COVID patients including the creation of make-shift units, the installation of additional ICU beds and the enhancement of existing units to support infection control practices.

Kathy's dedication and commitment was not contained within the walls our facility. She worked extensively within the community to educate people on the transmission of the virus and how to protect themselves and their families. She met with local chambers of commerce and other organizations including

John's Crazy Socks via Zoom; visited the Alfonse M. D'Amato US court house in Central Islip and educated groups on safety measures; and presented at the virtual webinar "Coping with COVID," led by the West Islip school district. As a result of our candidate's community outreach, our facility was recognized and received a proclamation by Islip Town Supervisor, Angie Carpenter recognizing our commitment to patients and the community during the COVID pandemic.

Kathy DiBenedetto began working in IP in 1999 and has been certified in infection control and epidemiology since 2005. Prior to the pandemic, she demonstrated her ability to be an effective change agent within our facility. She spearheaded an initiative to implement a "buddy system" during catheter insertion that reduced CAUTIs related to insertion technique by over 15%. She also led an initiative to administer Profend to dialysis patients resulting in a 44% decrease in the number of dialysis patients acquiring MRSA.

Kathy's dedication, passion, and perseverance inspires those around her to want to achieve more and accomplish the best possible outcomes for their patients. She is a beacon of light for all staff looking to advance their professional growth and development.

HUNTINGTON HOSPITAL NORTHWELL HEALTH

Glaxy Roy, MSN, RN-BC, GERO-BC, CVRN-BC

Clinical Professional Development Educator

Excellence can be defined as the condition of surpassing some standards of expectation. Glaxy Roy so clearly meets that definition through her work as a clinical professional development educator and valued member of the Huntington Hospital nurse leadership team.

Glaxy began working for the hospital in 2006, after her commitment to grow within her profession brought her from the crowded city of Mumbai, India to United States. She spent a few years working on the medical surgical unit and in the ICU, during which time she also completed her master's degree in nursing with a focus on leadership and management. She is currently enrolled in a doctoral program, holds two professional certifications, and sits on many councils in our hospital.

Glaxy demonstrates achievement within the areas of education and clinical practice. She participates in the interview process for all potential hires and runs the hospital's nurse fellowship program. She provides education, customizes preceptors and supports the hospital's nurse fellows professionally and personally throughout the entire fellowship, which is very lengthy. Last year, she empowered twenty-two critical care nurses to successfully pass the cardiovascular certification exam.

Her engagement and enthusiasm are obvious, any ideas that are discussed are operationalized immediately. She has written policies and inserviced the team, collaborated with other system

colleagues and always thought of ways to improve our current processes. She was also an essential member of the Beacon Award writing team, which we were honored to receive in 2019.

Glaxy's actions during the COVID surges were truly heroic. When our capacity tripled, nurses who never cared for such severely ill patients had to suddenly pivot and become ICU nurses. Throughout this period and even now, she was available to educate, support, demonstrate, update and develop guidelines. Since the first surge, she has continued to provide education to help nurses maintain these new competencies in preparation for additional surges.

Some sources identify the Eight Keys of Excellence as: integrity; failure that leads to success (seeing failure as feedback); speaking honestly and kindly; focusing on the moment; commitment; ownership and flexibility. She is one of the most honest people you will ever meet, sometimes to a fault. She has so much integrity that it is difficult for her to deal with people who don't possess that quality, but she always remains professional and focuses on the job at hand. Her commitment to our Hospital and nursing is obvious as is her commitment to excellence. She makes us all want to be a better people and better nurses.

As Colin Powell said, "Excellence is not an exception; it is a prevailing attitude." Her prevailing attitude is the pursuit of excellence.

LONG ISLAND COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Mary Ellen Guszack, MS, BSN

Administrator/Director of Patient Services for a Hospital-Based Homecare/Hospice

For Mary Ellen Guszack, “Delivering the best patient experience” is more than just a theme line. It’s a commitment she makes each and every day. In her current role as the director of patient care services for both our home care and hospice programs, she serves as a mentor for staff while providing direct oversight of the care and services provided to our patients. Her leadership has resulted in a number of national and state awards and accreditations for quality. Most recently, the Hospice and Palliative Care Association of New York ranked our hospice program fourth in Top Box Scores for the Hospice Item Set (HIS) and Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & Systems (CAHPS).

The ability to earn and maintain remarkable government ratings while implementing successful programs and working towards the goal of excellent patient care takes teamwork guided by an inspiring leader. The many successes of these programs are a testament to our Mary Ellen’s vision and her ability to motivate and shepherd her staff. She demonstrates these strong transformational leadership skills in her day-to-day interactions as she teaches, mentors, and provides support for her teams. Her leadership and professional influence has certainly impacted many lives in the communities we serve.

During her tenure as the director of patient services for our home care and hospice services, Mary Ellen has played a key

role in shepherding the implementation a new electronic medical record system for both service lines. This was not an easy endeavor as it required a change in workflow for the clinical team and a redesign of the way care is both delivered and monitored. Her ability to remain focused on the goal of integrating this new system, while leading her team through a total electronic conversion, was a major factor in ultimately improving the delivery of care to our patients.

Prior to joining our organization, this nominee received the Change Agent Award from St. Joseph College, and the Samaritan of the Year Award and the Manager of the Year Award from Good Samaritan Hospital. She was also an active leader in “Healthy Sundays,” an initiative through the Catholic Health Services and the Dioceses of Rockville Center, to assure access to healthcare screening, vaccines, and education for minority communities. She also led a team of home care and hospice employees to multiple parishes, where she coordinated health screenings, flu vaccinations, and education on a variety of topics, including blood pressure and blood sugar management.

Mary Ellen truly is an authentic nurse leader, often making home visits for the most acute cases herself to ensure she has an understanding of the challenges facing her staff. Her team feels respected and valued for the care they provide to our patients.

LONG ISLAND JEWISH VALLEY STREAM NORTHWELL HEALTH

Maria Mildred Casareno, BSN, RN

Registered Nurse

Mildred Casareno has served as a practicing nurse for over twenty-six years in a variety of clinical areas including medicine-surgery, hospice, critical care, cardiology, and orthopedics. She began her career as a nurse radio announcer teaching preventive health medicine and pediatric nursing in the Philippines. When she moved to the United States in 2002, she immediately began her training to be a nurse's aide. She went on to become a registered nurse and to obtain her bachelor's degree in nursing and has been practicing in the acute care setting ever since. But perhaps what makes her stand out most among her colleagues is her holistic approach to patient care. She is certified in aromatherapy and has a plethora of knowledge pertaining to mindfulness, meditation, wellness, and healing.

Mildred currently works on LIJ Valley Stream's orthopedic total joint replacement unit in which patients are trying to mobilize shortly after surgery and require pain management to facilitate their mobility. Mildred spends time educating her patients on ways to use mindfulness, meditation, breathing techniques, prayers, aromatherapy, hand massage to assist with the pain they are experiencing—strategies they can also utilize once they are discharged home to reduce pain. She often collaborates with our patient experience department to promote wellbeing of hospital employees and improve the quality of patient care.

Mildred shares her knowledge and talent to promote the wellbeing of her colleagues as well. She has conducted aromatherapy and mindfulness sessions at the hospital and for the past two years has devoted time during National Nurses Week to exercise, train, and heal the minds of our healthcare workers. After the initial surge of COVID patients subsided, it became obvious to Mildred that her colleagues needed tools to relieve their stress and return their mental health. Mildred was critical in the

hospital's efforts to support its staff by helping them to understand their stress levels, learn techniques to mitigate their stress and identify ways to support each other and themselves.

Recognizing her talents, Mildred was asked to speak about mindfulness to the hospital's Nursing Leadership Council. This was a wonderful opportunity for the directors, nurse managers and nurse educators to take a moment, focus on themselves and learn meditative mindfulness techniques. It was so well received that she presented to the entire hospital leadership team.

Mildred is so skilled at what she does that she was asked to present at the Sigma Theta Tau Phi Pi Chapter's Mindfulness Webinar. During the webinar she taught participants across the world how to assess their stress levels, demonstrated various meditation and mindfulness practices, and encouraged the professional nursing audience to be kind and thankful to themselves. This was a very successful, well-received webinar with highly positive reviews.

Given the challenges healthcare workers have endured over the past year, it has been inspiring to see this nurse rise above fear and foster a healing environment from within our hospital. Mildred truly goes above and beyond normal daily responsibilities at the bedside to calm her patients' anxieties (she sometimes even sings and dances).

Mildred says that sharing her knowledge with colleagues and patients makes her workday so much better because she feels she is able to provide a ray of hope, especially during these trying times. She says we all need hope, positivity, and to continue to heal. It is her stated hope to improve every person she meets by being mindful, kind, caring and loving because for her nursing is LOVE!

MATHER HOSPITAL NORTHWELL HEALTH

Jeanne Brennan, MSN, RN-BC, CNL

Director of Medical Surgical Services

Jeanne Brennan is a uniquely talented individual whose outstanding performance and professional achievements exemplify the influential role of a nursing director in today's complex acute care environment. First and foremost, she demonstrates extraordinary enthusiasm, flexibility and a willingness to serve the organization in challenging situations. This includes when the task at hand involves ambiguity and risk-taking; and when transformational leadership of the highest caliber is needed to achieve positive outcomes.

Jeanne has worked with Mather Hospital for 23 years. She began her career as a clinical nurse on a medical surgical unit and progressed to an assistant nurse manager role, prior to being promoted to nurse manager and then to nursing director. She holds professional certifications from the American Nurses' Credentialing Center (ANCC) in Medical/Surgical Nursing and as a Clinical Nurse Leader. She is also a member of several professional organizations, including: Sigma Theta Tau-International Honor Society of Nursing, American Nurses' Association (ANA) and the New York Organization of Nurse Executives and Leaders (NYONEL).

Jeanne has received meaningful recognition for her exceptional performance at our facility and has been the recipient of Service Excellence Awards and the Nurse Leader of the Year Award. In addition she was honored to be selected as a coach for several participants of the Advisory Board's Front-line Leadership Program in 2018. This Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Program prepares future healthcare leaders to become EBP experts, problem solvers and lifelong learners. As a Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) she is prepared to act as a change agent focused on quality of care and patient outcomes. The CNL is a new and evolving role in nursing. As catalysts and planners for change, CNLs are transformational leaders who are redesigning the way healthcare is delivered. They take accountability for patient care outcomes through assimilation and application of evidence-based information to design, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of patient care processes and models of care delivery.

In her current Nursing Director role, Jeanne expertly manages several patient care units. She is accomplished in leading initiatives that translate scientific evidence into clinical practice. She collaborates with her staff, and colleagues from other

departments, to implement wide-ranging, evidence-based initiatives that significantly improve the quality of patient outcomes. She has put evidence-based nursing practices in place that decreased hospital-acquired pressure ulcers to zero on her clinical units. She was selected to present the outstanding outcomes of the pressure ulcer prevention program as a podium presentation at the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) conference. Under her leadership, quality outcomes have continued to improve and nursing communication questions on patient satisfaction surveys consistently exceeded target goals.

Jeanne's exceptional performance as a patient advocate, professional role model, educator and leader is evident in a recent patient safety initiative. Nurses had identified that blood glucose levels were not being adequately controlled within established guidelines among patients with Diabetes, who were admitted with cellulitis. Hyperglycemia is a significant clinical problem that placed patients at risk for negative outcomes, such as delay in response to treatment. To investigate the clinical program she collaborated with her nurses, physicians and colleagues from Pharmacy, Medicine, Laboratory, Food and Nutrition, and Information Technology, and developed an interdisciplinary EBP project titled: "Improving Glycemic Control in the Hospitalized Patient with Diabetes and Cellulitis." As a result, the number of consults with the Diabetes Nurse Educator increased by 67%, patients' average blood glucose levels decreased from 175 to 152, and the length-of-stay (LOS) decreased.

She establishes a culture on her units that encourages staff to embrace principles of a Healthy Work Environment and Team STEPPS®. For example, she challenged all members of the healthcare team to examine the patient discharge process in order to decrease length-of-stay (LOS). Using true collaboration and skilled communication, she helped her staff to identify situations that delayed discharge. The initiative was a success in decreasing LOS on one of our Med-Surge units to below the established benchmark.

Jeanne is an exceptional role model, gifted educator, inspirational leader and valued mentor to her colleagues. She exemplifies the professional attributes and qualities of a true Nurse of Excellence daily, while leading future generations of professional nurses into the unprecedented and challenging times ahead in healthcare.

MERCY HOSPITAL

Shinelle Burgess, BSN

Registered Nurse of Medical Surgical

Shinelle Burgess is a staff nurse on a busy medical surgical unit. She considers nursing her passion, but began her professional career in banking. In 2017, Shinelle went back to school for an associate's degree in nursing and after one year of working as a nurse went on to obtain her bachelor's degree. She is now pursuing a master's degree in nursing and hopes to become an adult nurse practitioner.

Shinelle can always be counted on to step forward in difficult situations. Her gentle and quiet demeanor only enhance her ability to influence staff, effect change in patient care and achieve positive patient outcomes. She is a genuine team player, and her team-building skills have resulted in staff cohesiveness on a very busy unit. She willingly shares her knowledge and clinical expertise with all of her colleagues and is a mentor to newly hired staff and nurses who are new to the profession.

Shinelle actively participates in the hospital's performance improvement activities. She uses quality data to influence her practice, and shares findings with staff to ensure positive patient outcomes. She always uses good judgment and critical thinking skills and is a patient safety advocate in the truest sense of the word. She provides thoughtful and confident guidance for many complex patient situations all the while maintaining the patients' needs as the priority focus. She seeks out educational opportunities, and stays current with the latest trends and practice changes which has resulted in her achievement of Clinical Ladder II status.

Shinelle's hard work and genuine dedication is always evident, but never more so than it was during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our hospital's first COVID-positive patient was admitted to Shinelle's unit in March, 2020. Within a matter of weeks her unit was the first to become a fully COVID unit with 40 infected patients. She made it possible for many to endure truly brutal work schedules and to navigate the emotional ups and downs during the worst of times. She is always flexible, working extra shifts even when it means working off shifts when she would rather be with her husband and four sons.

She often laughs with her patients and has cried with others. She can be seen holding many hands through difficult times. Her smile can light up a room (even through her mask) and her infectious laugh and pleasing personality help to ease a person's pain and certainly make a difference in their day. She is an inspiration to all. Her patience, integrity, loyalty and dedication are evidence that she has been gifted with a sympathetic heart. Her high energy, kind and thoughtful approach to patients, families and staff always assures the delivery of safe, competent nursing care for all our patients.

Shinelle is quoted as saying that any and every job consists of challenges and as nurses, we encounter many. But it is not the challenges that define us, it is how we handle them. No matter how challenging the job may become, the thought that she has impacted someone's life for the better makes it all worth it and she wouldn't trade her career for any other.

MOLLOY COLLEGE

Dr. Jennifer Mannino, RN, PhD

Professor of Nursing; Coordinator for Foundations of Humanistic Nursing Practice and the Academic Assessment Coordinator for Undergraduate Nursing

Dr. Jennifer Mannino is an educator and scholar whose work across teaching, scholarship, and service supports excellence in nursing education, and allows students to develop as competent, skilled and knowledgeable new graduate nurses who make a difference in the healthcare workforce. She is a highly experienced nurse educator, whose achievements, including contributions to the healthcare transitions and nursing education literature, have significant effect on education, theory, and clinical practice.

Through the recent pandemic's fifteen-plus months, nursing education programs have been challenged to create and deliver innovative alternatives to clinical experiences, as well as to deliver the respective curricula via remote delivery modes. Our program was exceptionally ready for this challenge because of the educational and clinical innovations that were created, operationalized, and evaluated by Dr. Mannino, who remotely lead a large team of faculty colleagues in a fundamentals of nursing course, which involves approximately 600 students each year. Dr. Mannino drew on her experience in program assessment to compile program outcomes data has informed the delivery of the prelicensure curriculum and has allowed the program faculty to feel confident that despite modifications to teaching modalities both before and during the pandemic, their students continue to master the

competencies needed for compassionate and evidence-driven clinical practice.

Across the past several years, our nominee has created and refined a standardized on-campus clinical experience, grounded in the QSEN quality and safety competencies for entry to clinical practice. The experience, involving both skills stations and simulation cases, continue to be used to verify student mastery of the competencies. Data from the experience has been collected, analyzed and presented and published. During the pandemic, Dr. Mannino created additional virtual and hybrid learning opportunities to support student learning, while sharing, modeling and inspiring teaching innovations for her colleagues. These strategies were critically important during a time when actual patient care encounters were highly restricted, yet students had to have opportunities to develop, master and demonstrate the foundational safety and quality skills and competencies necessary for progression in the nursing program. The number of students being serviced as well as the number of faculty on the team, required Dr. Mannino to demonstrate her exemplary leadership skills, which continually result in stellar student outcomes.

Dr. Mannino exemplifies excellence through work and significant outcomes as a nursing scholar, researcher, teacher, leader, colleague, and role model.

MOUNT SINAI SOUTH NASSAU HOSPITAL

Janice Campbell, BSN, RN, LCCE, IBCLC

Coordinator Lactation Resource Center and Parent-Child Education Department

Janice Campbell is an extraordinary nurse who advances nursing practice through innovation and unconditional commitment. She has been a registered professional nurse for nineteen years. She is a Lamaze certified childbirth educator and certified breastfeeding counselor. For the past five years Janice has served as our organization's lactation coordinator, exemplifying a spirit of caring, initiative, and leadership in her role. Recognized as a highly valued member of our nursing team, she is well respected by colleagues, patients and families alike.

Janice is a team player and collaborates well with interdisciplinary groups to solve problems and improve the care of women and children throughout our organization. She is an expert in her practice and led our women and children's team in their pursuit of Baby Friendly designation for our organization. She played an active role in our achievement of Joint Commission Perinatal Specialty Certification, and under her leadership, our organization is participating in the New York State Birth Equity Improvement Project.

We are so fortunate that Janice shares her talents as a nurse coach and change agent, cultivating the professional development of our nursing staff and inspiring the elevation of practice to its highest levels. She is a long-standing member of our organization's Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Council. She recently became co-chair of this dynamic team and now guides others as they develop and conduct nursing research. She has also disseminated new nursing knowledge through publication of her own research on topics that include understanding millennial mothers' choices in childbirth education, exploring barriers to breastfeeding among black women, and ways to reduce racial disparity related to breastfeeding practices. She truly is a leader in advancing nursing practice.

Janice also fosters support of breastfeeding mothers throughout our organization, including through the development of a lactation station for staff who return to work and plan to continue breastfeeding their babies. She has coordinated annual breastfeeding symposiums at our organization each year to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week, providing a unique venue for breastfeeding mothers and professionals to come together to learn from each other.

Janice has served birthing families from different cultures for over fifteen years. Her experience as a nurse and researcher has led to her passion for patient education, childbirth, early parenting and breastfeeding. She extends her caring beyond our walls into the communities we serve. She leads and participates in numerous forums to advocate for and coach breastfeeding women and is a board member of the New York Statewide Breastfeeding Coalition. She engages with women in our local community through education to activate their maternal essence and support breastfeeding. As founder of We Breastfeed, Black Breastfeeding Coalition of New York, she strives to improve the health indicators of black women and children through breastfeeding education and support.

Janice clearly recognizes the value of continuous learning and professional growth. For her own enrichment, she has recently enrolled in a doctoral program to attain her PhD. She is tech savvy and willingly assists others in adapting to a practice environment expanding with new and innovative technology. As an advocate and activist, Janice dedicates her professional life to support mothers and babies in the initiation and continuation of positive breastfeeding experiences. She illustrates expertise, collegiality, and excellence - every day, every way!

NASSAU UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

Simon Ulubabov, BSN, RN, TCRN, RN-BC, EMT-B

Nurse Educator

On January 14, 2013 a bright-eyed, energetic and enthusiastic young man attended Nassau University Medical Center's new graduate nurse orientation class. He was so excited to begin his nursing career. If he asked one question that day, he asked a hundred! He had an undeniable thirst for knowledge and a desire to make himself the best professional that he could be. That enthusiasm and energy has persisted throughout his time at our hospital.

Simon Ulubabov began his nursing career at NUMC on a surgical unit, and quickly proved himself to be an excellent patient caregiver and advocate. He expertly cared for the most challenging patients, educated patients and families, resolved any complaint or dilemma that arose, and did it all with a smile. He often collaborated with nursing leadership to solve problems on his unit and exhibited interpersonal skills far beyond the expectations of a new nurse graduate. Because of his demonstrated clinical expertise and passion to lead, Simon was promoted to Assistant Nurse Manager within five years.

While Simon was building his clinical expertise at the bedside, he also pursued several different educational goals. He returned to school to obtain his Bachelor's Degree and became an American Heart Association certified instructor for BLS, ACLS and PALS. He later became regional faculty for New York State, and is considered an expert in the field of resuscitation. Because he was working on the surgical unit of a Level 1 Trauma Center, he became certified in TNCC and he received his RN-BC. But he didn't stop there. Simon is also currently enrolled at St. Joseph College pursuing the educational requirements to become an Adult Health Geriatric Nurse Practitioner, wishing to specialize in Adults and Hospice Care.

Simon was recently appointed to the hospital Code Committee and together with physicians and nurse peers, he is directing mock codes and debriefing staff on their performance. Staff have expressed appreciation for his informative and non-threatening review of their performance. His participation in the review led to changes in the crash cart composition, eliminating redundancies and resulting in an instant savings of \$3,151. With over 700 cart exchanges per year, this equated to cost savings of \$25,568.34 annually. He also re-designed the cart drawer supply arrangement for ease of use and advocated for a portable suction machine for every crash cart, rather than per unit. Simon's work and his

commitment to staff education has led to an increased interest in participation of mock code review.

Outside of the hospital, Simon continues to advocate for improvement in resuscitation standards worldwide. After discovering that some developed countries, including Russia, do not have formal, organized resuscitation centers, he proposed to use a training center model based on AHA standards to promote resuscitation education among government EMS, and private EMS staff. His proposal is currently under consideration by the AHA, but is temporarily on hold due to the COVID pandemic. Simon is also a member of the International Society for Rapid Response Systems based in Europe and together with a professional colleague, has developed a New York Chapter--the first in the United States.

Recognizing his passion for teaching, Simon transitioned to a role as a nurse educator. His contribution to this team has been invaluable. He spends a tremendous amount of time researching, collaborating, writing and developing lesson plans, competencies, fact-sheets, and checklists to ensure the effectiveness of a session or program. His commitment is frequently recognized by those he teaches through highly positive program reviews and requests from nurse peers and physicians to be in his certification classes. Recently he was recognized by a Joint Commission surveyor for his educational contributions, competencies, and knowledge of the Opioid Treatment Program.

The amount of energy and effort Simon puts into ensuring he is an informed and effective educator holds no bounds. Most recently, Simon became interested in how the care rendered by the first responders in the field can influence a patient's course in the hospital. With this in mind, he enrolled in the Fire Police Academy and has become an EMT-B. He brings the lessons he learns from his work with EMTs to the classes he teaches. His classes are so multi-dimensional that his attendees, regardless of title, are enthralled because he has managed to make the class relevant to each and every one of them.

Simon is an excellent role model, an accomplished educator, collaborative colleague, and a caring professional nurse. He clearly does not understand the meaning of the word no and his favorite response is always "definitely, 100%".

NORTH SHORE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NORTHWELL HEALTH

Danielle Gonsalves, MBA, BSN, RN, CVRN

Nurse Manager of Neurology, Stroke, Epilepsy, and EMU

Danielle Gonsalves exemplifies transformational leadership at its core. As a nurse manager for North Shore University Hospital's 42-bed intermediate level neuroscience unit, Danielle and her team care for a very challenging and multifaceted patient population that consists of neurology, neurosurgical, stroke, and epilepsy patients that are at times highly impulsive. Danielle is not only dedicated to making every moment matter for the patients and families that we serve, but she has made it her mission to spread that ideology across her unit.

Holding true to her belief that staff satisfaction is the driving force behind improvements in quality outcomes and patient experience, Danielle prioritized cultural transformation soon after becoming a manager on her unit. She developed and implemented a true professional governance infrastructure that empowers team members by involving them in the decision-making process for those decisions that affect their work. As a result, the unit has moved from a Tier 3 (low morale and engagement workforce) to a Tier 1 -- the highest employee engagement tier group. Under her leadership her unit has also outperformed the Magnet mean in all domains of the NDNQI employee engagement survey.

In creating a culture of engagement and accountability, Danielle has made improvements in quality and patient experience the goal of every member of her team. Equipped with the unit's most recent performance metrics, Danielle empowers her staff to lead and drive change from the bedside. She clearly communicates goals and expectations, actively listens to understand barriers, elicits feedback during her decision-making

process and has supportive and crucial conversations with her staff as appropriate. As a result, her unit achieved and maintained a 96% fall reduction over five years, and zero CLABSI and CAUTI for two years. Patient experience scores have also soared under her leadership with an increase from the 16th to the 86th percentile in nursing communication, and an increase from the 48th to the 92nd percentile in "likelihood to recommend", which the unit has sustained for the last two years, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Danielle sponsors and participates in the nurse clinical and nurse leader mentorship program designed to promote professional growth beyond clinical acumen. Through authentic leadership and motivation, she also encourages her staff to demonstrate leadership and scholarship by progressing through the clinical advancement program. Under her leadership, the unit has increased staff certification by a 27-percentile point increase, improved clinical ladder advancements by 70%, and increased BSN rates from 80-90%.

Danielle and her team are active in the community and attend various events that support neurology patient populations. More than 70% of the unit staff actively participate in the annual brain aneurysm walk. They also provide community education on the importance of healthcare, neurology and stroke, and provide support group services.

Danielle is highly committed to creating an atmosphere that promotes teamwork and increases morale. She brings out the best in her staff, and in turn provides the best possible experience for the patients we serve.

PECONIC BAY MEDICAL CENTER NORTHWELL HEALTH

Patricia Mupo, BSN, RN

Program Director of Infection Prevention

Patricia Mupo started her career as an orthopedic nurse in 1984. Throughout her career she has worked in many different capacities including medical surgical, case management, CDI, pre-surgical, ambulatory care, education in a correctional facility, and finally landing in the complex role of infection prevention. She began at Peconic Bay Medical Center in 2017 and has provided the leadership and motivation needed to assist the nursing team in striving for zero hospital infections.

Patricia is very well regarded throughout the building and has earned a great deal of respect with the staff. Her “boots on the ground” approach and her curious nature create a non-threatening learning environment for staff education. They are incredibly responsive to her and understand the why behind the steps to prevent transmission of disease. Her close relationships aren't limited to the nursing team. Patricia has developed strong relationships with all of our interdisciplinary partners from physicians to housekeeping to engineering. They view her as a true partner and always take pause when there may be an infection control issue in order to get her input. The reduction in infections has not only had an impact on patient outcomes but has resulted in hospital cost savings.

Patricia strives to advance infection control practices outside of the hospital and has had several presentations featured at the ANCC pathways conference including “Education and Collaboration of the Team Leads to Zero CLABSI” and “Making Education Fun-Get the Scoop on Poop”. She has also been an active participant in our hospital's residency program and has submitted poster presentations at our end of the year

residency poster day. Working with the residents she submitted one poster on reducing C. diff and another on reducing overall hospital-acquired infections and received awards for both posters. She most recently submitted a poster to the IHI on sustaining zero hospital acquired infections in the ICU during a pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Patricia was a beacon of light as she and her colleagues traveled through uncharted waters. Because our nominee had built such trust and credibility with the staff, she was able to calm their fears and assure them that both they and our patients were as safe as possible during this very challenging year. She gave her personal cell phone number to all of the nursing units in case questions came up and tirelessly maintained surveillance on the units. Because of Patricia's efforts, our staff were able to quickly adjust to new practices and provide quality, compassionate care to our patients. Her encouragement to maintain high standards of practice despite unprecedented times truly paid off.

Patricia has not only improved the infection prevention practices of our facility but she has continued to assist raising the bar overall in nursing excellence. She assisted in getting our nursing councils up and running and has mentored new graduates completing their evidence based practice projects.

Patricia has had an incredible impact on the quality of patient care delivered to our patients over the past four years and was a pillar of strength for us over these last 18 months. For that I believe she is a true nurse of excellence.

PLAINVIEW HOSPITAL NORTHWELL HEALTH

Debra Friedl, MSN, NPD-BC

Senior Manager of Clinical Professional Development

Debra Friedl is a long-standing registered nurse who serves as a leader, clinical educator, and mentor to fellow leaders and staff at multiple hospitals. She is an expert in emergency nursing, and is a lead contributor to a large service line for neonatal and obstetrical emergencies which includes education for clinical nurses and emergency department physicians. Debra has developed an ESI triage education program utilized in multiple emergency departments and has coordinated detailed orientations for assistant directors of nursing, educators, and new leaders across a healthcare system. She organizes and teaches yearly enrichment training for all clinical nurses, nursing assistants, and unit clerks. Along with these responsibilities she also maintains instructor status including ACLS, PALS, and BLS with ongoing renewal training throughout the healthcare system.

Debra's commitment to preparing the next generation of nurses is unparalleled. She considers the opportunity to mentor an honor. She is a preceptor and role model for graduate nursing students, often setting the building blocks for careers in nursing leadership or education. She says that watching new nurses develop into their professional roles is one of the most satisfying parts of her job. In Debra's role as a nurse educator, the spiritual, mental and professional needs of the novice nurse is one of her top priorities. This is evidenced by the way she arrives early, stays late, offers support

twenty-four hours a day and reaches out with a phone call on off days to support a new nurse.

Debra is not only vested in the professional development of others, she is currently pursuing a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Throughout her work as a mentor, Debra has recognized a need to find ways to address the transition-to-practice gap that some new nurse's experience when trying to acclimate to increasingly complex hospital environments. To that end, she is conducting research on the impact of one type of evidence-based nurse residency program on new graduate nurse retention and job satisfaction.

Beyond her daily responsibilities, Debra is often the first to volunteer to assist in covering off-shift nursing administration duties. In times of crisis she transitions back to the bedside, supporting staff while providing direct patient care. She always volunteers to assist with projects and is currently facilitating the lantern award for the emergency departments. She participates regularly in community food drives-- purchasing, packing and delivering thousands of pounds of food to local food banks and families. She has consistently volunteered at both hospital and community-based COVID vaccination pods providing education and counseling to hospital personnel and community members regarding the vaccine.

SOUTH SHORE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NORTHWELL HEALTH

Julie Martusciello, MS, RN, NE-BC

Senior Director of Patient Care Services

Julie Martusciello is a remarkable leader who works tirelessly to keep our patients safe and our nurses proud. She is fully committed to the organization's mission statement which places quality at the foundation of all patient care. Her commitment to quality is palpable at all organizational levels as witnessed by her creation of numerous task forces made up of volunteer staff nurses to assure the prevention of CAUTIs, CLABSI, falls, pressure injuries, and assorted infections.

Julie is truly a team player with an open-door policy with not only nurses, but all members of this institution's staff. She listens closely to the concerns of our nurses, values their suggestions, and actively encourages them to come up with solutions for those heart-burning issues. For example, during the COVID pandemic, staff were working diligently and tirelessly to take care of so many critically ill patients, but they were concerned because they could not always be available to systematically prone the patients. It could take up to 6 people to assist with proning a patient and that meant pulling nurses from other patients to help. It became apparent that a prone team was going to be essential if we were going to keep our patients safe. Julie fearlessly moved into action.

Without hesitation, she created an interdisciplinary team to assume this responsibility to the delight of the nurses who were busy with critically ill patients. The proning team consisted of volunteers from numerous disciplines, from patient navigators to environmental workers to obstetricians, who came together to combat COVID.

While every day her leadership skills are visible, it was during the COVID pandemic that her leadership proved to surpass expectations. As our hospital morphed almost overnight into a critical care MASH-like unit, she calmly, and what appeared to be effortlessly, led the changes that were essential for both patient and staff safety. She moved perinatal units offsite, opened critical care beds and supported the education and growth of nurses who had never worked on such units. By carefully buddying the experienced critical care nurses with nurses from various backgrounds, she was able to calm the frightened and support the overwhelmed. It was not unusual to see an ICU nurse and a mother-baby nurse working in tandem caring for the sickest of our sick patients.

When she recognized a need, Julie moved into action. When she was asked to open an Infusion Center to aid community members who were suffering from the early stages of COVID, the unit was up and running within 48 hours. She was also instrumental in the creation of the Open-Heart Unit. Not only did she help plan the geographical structure of the unit, but she was also responsible for recruiting and supporting new nursing leaders and staff nurses to work on it.

Julie is a visionary. She recognizes opportunities before anyone else sees them coming. For example, community members were often transferred to other hospitals when neurological conditions evolved. Being a member of the community, she was disturbed by the transfers and with the help of many other visionary leaders, was instrumental in building a neuro-ICU so that our patients could remain close to their families during hospitalizations.

Julie is a role model. Despite the demands of leading a hospital during the COVID pandemic, she felt it was important to become certified and easily passed the Nurse Executive Certification. She then became instrumental in improving the certification rates of our nurses as well as our leaders. She personally meets with each newly hired nurse leader and assures them that she plans to help them become successful in their new role. She is a coach and a mentor and readily shares her knowledge and her experiences so much so that people just inherently follow her. She is that good.

Currently, we are on a quest for Magnet status. Julie has spearheaded our efforts by encouraging staff to get involved. As such, the nurses have created mottos, logos, and contests to keep the momentum of the journey alive. We have an increase in nurses applying for the Clinical Ladder Program because she recognizes that the more our nurses are involved in the processes that drive the direction of the hospital, the safer our patients will be, and the pride of being at nurse will grow.

It is with great honor that I applaud Julie for all the work that she has done to keep our community safe. She is a remarkable woman, although she doesn't know it, because she is humble, kind, intellectual, and compassionate.

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA HOSPITAL

Sinead Suszczynski, MSN, RN, WHNP-BC, CPHIMS

Director of Woman and Child Center/Informatics Coordinator

Throughout her twenty-one year nursing career, Sinead Suszczynski has served as a staff nurse, an adjunct clinical assistant professor, a clinical nurse specialist, a director of nursing education, and informatics and research coordinator, and most recently as the director of woman and child services at St. Catherine of Siena Hospital. In each of those positions, Sinead has demonstrated integrity, professionalism, and determination. Her approach to her work is a goal-oriented approach and built on teamwork, respect, and dedication.

Sinead started her lifelong educational journey right out of high school as she achieved both a bachelor's degree and master's degree in Biology with a focus on research. She quickly realized something was missing, and recognized a need to have an impact on people's lives. That's when she sought out nursing school. After graduating in 2000 with a bachelor's degree in nursing, Sinead worked as a Level III NICU nurse. In a mere 5 years, she went on to complete a master's degree in nursing to become perinatal/ woman's health nurse practitioner with summa cum laude distinction. She has continued her education with attendance at conferences, and has achieved her board certification as a women's health nurse practitioner, and as a professional in healthcare information systems.

Sinead was quickly recognized as a leader within our hospital because of her ability to take on complex projects and support a smooth transition from old processes to new. One of the first testaments to her ability to lead change and support the staff was with the implementation of Centricity Perinatal Network (CPN) electronic fetal monitoring and nursing documentation system. As the CPN system administrator, Sinead quickly gained an expertise with the system that she shared with her colleagues to improve care.

Sinead's accountability, organization and communication skills coupled with natural techno-savvy capabilities made her the perfect person to lead our hospital on its EMR implementation journey. As the Facility Operational Lead, she managed all aspects of a multi-disciplinary EMR implementation including clinical documentation, orders, radiology, pharmacy, HIM, lab, dietary systems, capital and operational budgets, and the training of over 2,000 staff members and physicians. Sinead spent an enormous amount of time listening to staff and provider recommendations and concerns and the liaison between our hospital and system work teams to promote an EMR that puts patient safety first while ensuring a smooth workflow for staff.

Sinead then pivoted to working on projects related to the implementation of Care Logistics, a program that focuses on patient throughput with a goal of decreasing overall length of stay. Sinead worked with the staff to gain insight into potential

barriers to patient movement. She then became the project manager of revenue cycle. Although outside of her area of expertise, our Sinead worked closely with representatives from patient access, billing and patient movement to develop and implement a successful program. She is extremely intelligent, demonstrates excellent project management skills and is able to adapt to new programs and initiatives in a timely manner, while encouraging and supporting others to accept the change.

The COVID-19 Pandemic was a unique and stressful time for staff, leadership, patients and their families. During the first and second surges, Sinead was directly involved in the organizing and retraining of staff to work in other, unfamiliar areas throughout the hospital in order to support patient care needs. It was a time of change, uncertainty, and fear, yet she provided the organization support needed to accomplish this task. She helped to implement the surge plan to meet patient care needs by converting an ASU unit into a critical care COVID unit. She developed workflows and coordinated employee COVID testing. When the vaccine became available, she participated in the development of workflows to allow staff to administer and receive vaccinations and personally volunteered to administer COVID shots. Recognizing the rising levels of stress among staff, Sinead gained leadership approval and developed staff relaxation lounges. The rooms were decorated with inspirational signage, supplied with cold drinks and snacks while soothing music played and essential oils were diffused.

Throughout our candidate's career, she has been an advocate for her patients, the community, peers, leadership, friends and her family. She has developed and facilitated a perinatal mood disorder support group to help new moms that were struggling with post-partum depression. She has worked as a clinical instructor in obstetrics. She has provided undergraduate nursing students a positive clinical experience demonstrating compassion and empathy and enjoys teaching the Neonatal Resuscitation Program and interacting with specialized nurses who care for the sickest of neonates to recognize early changes in their clinical status. She has advocated for the community through participation in health fairs, school fairs, and outreach programs providing blood pressure monitoring, flu shots and patient safety education. She speaks at local high schools on the importance of higher education and career opportunities in nursing and healthcare.

We are extremely proud and fortunate to have Sinead as a part of our leadership team as she makes everyone's job easier. Her enthusiasm, commitment, and passion for what she does makes her an inspiration to all.

ST. CHARLES HOSPITAL

Danielle Forgione, RN

Infection Prevention Coordinator

Danielle Forgione began her career at St. Charles as a bedside nurse in the Rehabilitation Department. Shortly thereafter, she was promoted to assistant nurse manager on the night shift. She guided the staff and promoted best practices in her role. She encouraged rehabilitation certification among her staff, while demonstrating her dedication by successful completion herself.

In August of 2019, Danielle transitioned to the role of infection prevention (IP) nurse. Our infection prevention nurses address issues associated with the spread of infection among and between hospital patients and staff. It is a role that requires keen attention to detail, strong communication skills and the ability to work under pressure. Beyond just monitoring outbreaks of infection and investigating their root causes, infection prevention nurses focus on preventive measures such as hand washing, cleaning, disinfecting and vaccinations. Infection prevention nurses work with patients, physicians, public health experts, and regulatory agencies to protect the health of our patients.

In years past, our IP nurses often worked in the background; analyzing infection data, providing education on infection prevention protocols, and assisting with developing action plans to minimize the potential for outbreaks. COVID-19 brought our infection prevention nurses to the forefront. Leading by example, in a year of unprecedented challenges, Danielle worked tirelessly to assist staff in navigating the evolving infection prevention arena and the many rapidly changing regulatory requirements. She was instrumental in ensuring staff were supported in their efforts to care for patients, through rounding, and informational updates related to changes in infection prevention practices and PPE. Danielle demonstrated excellent interpersonal relationship building and communication skills with our leadership team, nursing staff and physicians. She was always prepared, calm and supportive, maintaining an excellent rapport with all departments.

Danielle has continued to demonstrate strength, perseverance, and leadership as she continues to guide daily operations and facilitate communication with our leadership team on issues related to COVID-19. She was instrumental in the development of a Coronavirus Intranet Page to promote interdisciplinary communications during the height of both surges. Despite numerous challenges, she prevailed and succeeded

in her mission. Not ONE of the nursing staff working in our COVID ICU, which expanded from 16 to 38 beds, tested positive during the pandemic's first wave.

Danielle is highly motivated, self-directed and hardworking. Early in the pandemic, she took on the additional responsibility of assisting with the HERDS reporting for the hospital and came in on weekends to update the staff on COVID admissions and discharges. Even when called on her day off, she addressed any given situation as if it was another workday. She worked closely with many departments, such as pharmacy, environmental services, nutritional services, patient access and nursing education to provide the latest information during a time of constant change.

Danielle's work extends far beyond her job description. She is articulate, engaging, and committed to the staff and patient population. In her support of the profession, and our Nursing Education Department, she eagerly facilitated wound care education, and preceptorships. She enhanced orientation programs on IPC to ensure critical elements were introduced in an engaging and effective manner and that they included all current NYS DOH requirements. Her goal was to ensure the successful transition of new graduates and staff to the units. She also participates in community education and supportive events including our "Healthy Sundays" flu vaccination drives and BP screening clinics at various parishes in the Diocese. In support of the Employee Health Department, Danielle led the coordinated efforts of fit testing to ensure all staff were safely prepared to care for our patients.

When COVID-19 vaccinations were first introduced, Danielle went above and beyond to establish vaccine pods. She took the lead, ensuring that both the staff administering the vaccines and those receiving it were informed and educated. Her leadership abilities and kind nature put everyone else at ease. She was always the first to help others and dedicate her time to assist with the ongoing vaccination effort. This dedication only grew once we opened up the vaccinations to our community members. Through all of this she, amazingly, still was able to follow through on all of her normal daily responsibilities. Not only did her actions portray a positive public image of the nursing profession, but they also helped to motivate others to follow her lead. She is an inspiration to both new and seasoned nurses.

ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL & HEART CENTER

Elaine Stevens, BSN, MSN, JD, RN, NE-BC

Nurse Manager of Emergency Department

Elaine Stevens is an outstanding nurse and the bedrock of our Emergency Department. A nurse for over 30 years, she received her bachelor's degree in nursing from Molloy College and her master's degree in nursing administration from Adelphi. As a lifelong learner, she continued her education and received her Juris Doctorate from Touro Law Center College and successfully passed the NY State Bar Exam. Her knowledge of the law has helped her coach staff on the importance of quality patient care and risk management concerns. She fosters growth and professional development in nurses, including those that advance to become nurse practitioners and has assisted with the development of ancillary staff who, with her coaching, continued on to nursing school and upon on their graduation were mentored and assisted by her with their transition to the role as a nurse in the ED.

A long-standing nurse leader who is always ready to roll up her sleeves, Elaine led her staff tirelessly through the COVID pandemic and continues to lead during the present recovery. The emergency department at St. Francis Hospital was particularly hard hit as it was the unit where, Bamlanivimab, a monoclonal antibody infusion, was administered to help treat COVID. The ED accepted all patients who required the treatment, with no appointment, which consequently doubled the daily census. Recognizing the impact that the pandemic was having on the staff, Elaine found ways to support the staff physically and spiritually, by inviting pastoral care support to pray with them. As a result of her support patient satisfaction mean scores remained consistently in the 90's for the ED.

Elaine is a truly amazing transformational leader. Recognizing a need to improve patient flow and patient satisfaction,

Elaine served as a change agent in our efforts to transition our triage staff from registered nurses to nurse practitioners and pioneered the addition of a rapid assessment nurse to the team. She works beyond the required work day and assures the quality of care provided at our facility is always upheld. The patient fall rate with injury is below national benchmarks and measures for "left without being seen and AMA" remain below 1%. In 2020, our emergency department nurses participated in AACN Healthy Work Environment Assessment survey. The ED summary score exceeded the benchmark. Among the six standards in the survey the emergency department scored excellent in "Effective Decision Making" and "Authentic Leadership".

It is because of Elaine's efforts and the efforts of her colleagues and staff that the St. Francis emergency department has been selected as a Lantern Award recipient by the Emergency Nurses Association. The Lantern Award is a symbol of our Emergency Department's commitment to quality, safety, a healthy work environment, and innovation in nursing practice and emergency care. Our Emergency Department, with credit to its leaders, is one of 33 that met the award criteria for Lantern Award designation in 2021.

But perhaps what is most remarkable about Elaine Stevens is her commitment to service and patient advocacy. Elaine uses her legal prowess and nursing skills to perform pro bono services to the senior citizens who need legal aid. She is truly a role model for compassion to patients and families.

ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL

Michael Newman, RN, MSNRN, AGNP

Registered Nurse of Critical Care

Michael Newman is a critical care nurse that has quickly grown from a staff nurse to an informal leader on his unit. He is bright, inspiring and a wonderful role model. He is committed to providing excellence in nursing as evidenced by the completion of his master's degree to become a nurse practitioner. He is committed to incorporating evidenced-based practices in his daily work and often uses them to suggest ideas for improvement on his unit. As a staff nurse, he is always willing to try new things in an effort to get a better outcome for his patients and he is a champion for unit-based initiatives. He demonstrates initiative by identifying pain points and turning to the research for ways to improve processes and clinical care.

Michael has been instrumental in training the next generation of nurses. As a preceptor, he provides his mentees with a unique style of education that encourages them to consider

all aspects of a given situation, to be inquisitive, and think critically. He has inspired several nurses to grow beyond our organization and into more acute care settings elsewhere.

Michael is a true team player and helps to create an environment that fosters true collaboration. He says that one of the most satisfying aspects of his work is being able to save a life and to do so with the help and support his team members which consists of other ICU nurses, physician assistants, respiratory therapists and physicians. He feels a strong sense of comradery with his colleagues and says that they all work well together to accomplish their goals for the best possible patient outcome, and in doing so coworkers become a second family. Knowing that he can count on his second family is extremely satisfying and being able to get a patient through the worst time in their lives is what makes it all worth it.

STONY BROOK EASTERN LONG ISLAND HOSPITAL

Nedra Love, RN

Nurse Educator

Nedra Love is the nurse educator for staff development at Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital. Since she began at the hospital, Nedra has always promoted a positive image of nursing in her appearance, as well as the professionalism she portrays. She demonstrates commitment, flexibility and adaptability and is always striving for excellence in providing patient care. She attends departmental meetings and continually brings new ideas to the units.

Nedra first started at the hospital as a strategic nurse, enrolled in our nursing program in connection with a local college. She adapted quickly to the unit, and immediately proved to be an asset. Since then, she has served as a charge nurse, and as the preceptor of new nurses on our telemetry and medical surgical units. Nedra has always demonstrated a thirst for learning and for passing any new found knowledge on to her colleagues, one of the many reasons why she was perfect for the role of nurse educator.

During the pandemic, Nedra quickly proved that she was ready and willing to take on any task that was presented to

the staff. She was a leader, a friend and educator. She is an effective communicator and an exceptional role model for our new employees, as well as our senior staff when it comes to remaining upbeat and positive during many of the changes that have occurred over the past year at our hospital.

Nedra is skilled at identifying gaps in information and is able to gather the necessary resources to streamline the learning process. She can identify and select teaching methods that enable the learner to achieve the desired knowledge, skills and attitudes required to navigate the complexities of nursing. She teaches knowledge components using policies and procedures, books, journals and case presentations. In addition, she demonstrates expert hands-on care and clinical expertise in a way that engages the staff and helps them to be better. Nedra maintains affiliations with professional organizations and keeps her skills current by attending seminars and classes.

Nedra has proven herself as a true team leader and someone who will continue to excel in all aspects of nursing.

STONY BROOK SOUTHAMPTON HOSPITAL

Samantha Pulliam, RN, BSN

Emergency Department & Trauma Program Manager

Samantha Pulliam has distinguished herself as a model for nursing professionalism, creativity, and determination. She has served both as trauma center coordinator and nursing manager for our emergency services department. In both roles she has excelled and led projects and changes that have been directly responsible for elevating the quality and compassion of the care we provide the people we serve. She is highly customer service and patient oriented and maintains a strong focus on efforts to provide exceptional care to our patients and their families.

She is efficient and innovative and has been personally responsible for designing and implementing initiatives to improve the overall performance of our trauma service.

Her knowledge of emergency services is superb. She never shrinks from challenges, with the best example being that she willingly took on the role of nursing leader in our Emergency Department in the middle of the COVID crisis while maintaining her role as Trauma Center Coordinator. She has brought a quiet determination to this work to ensure the safety of our staff, patients, and visitors. Her communication skills and professionalism are a model for all who are lucky enough to work with her.

Samantha personifies the vital role that nurses play in our hospitals and communities during this very trying time in healthcare history.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Alison Rowe, MS, RN, NEA-BC

Associate Director of Nursing Emergency and Cardiac Services

In a year of amazing work by many individuals in the nursing profession, Alison Rowe clearly stood out. Her work has been nothing less than stunning. As an administrative nursing leader and certified emergency nurse, Alison became a critical member of our institution's Hospital Incident Command Center and began her marathon against Covid-19. Working shoulder to shoulder with other ED leadership, she established a critically needed forward triage and treatment area outside of the hospital's main building. This triage area was a large medical tent erected in an off-site parking lot. At its peak the area encountered 150 patients a day.

During that time, Alison donned scrubs and full PPE alongside her staff and lead a team (some of whom she met that day) to care for our community. She assisted with triage and gave direct patient care. In addition to the forward triage area, she set up space in an outpatient building as an alternate location for emergency patients. Once again, in scrubs and an N95 mask, alongside her incredible staff, she cared for patients needing emergency services for COVID. All of this work was done while maintaining her hospital leadership responsibilities. This extraordinary nurse spent many a mealtime and most holidays away from her family in order to care for the residents of Nassau and Suffolk counties.

As the COVID marathon continued, and once the triage area was thankfully no longer needed, she again went above and beyond as a nursing leader for both our hospital and New York State in an effort to vaccinate all of Long Island. This dedicated nurse was well-chosen to be the clinical leader responsible for rolling out COVID-19 vaccinations, first for our staff and then for the community. She led a team who planned the logistics involving the locations needed to mount the vaccine effort which included registration of

clients, administration of vaccines, post-vaccine observation and data entry. She was accountable for the smooth flow of appointments. She oversaw the education needed for the staff who work in the vaccine pods and planned the staffing needs to sustain the vaccine clinic from inception until our current process. This was tireless work, seven days a week, for months to ensure that the maximum amount of staff was available so the public could be vaccinated. Talk about unsung heroes, there are now approximately 450,000 people on Long Island who have been vaccinated as a direct result of her clinical leadership. She is a nurse, like many, that does the best she can for as many as she can each day, but as a nursing leader, she is someone who displays strength, resilience and courage and is truly an inspiration to all who work alongside her.

The vaccine PODs she oversaw were identified as a model of efficiency and practice by New York State received many compliments by those who were served there. The public was impressed by the skill of the vaccinators, their positive disposition and willingness to make a difference. This would not have occurred without the tenacity displayed by this nursing leader who used her skills as an emergency department nurse, administrator and project manager to ensure we successfully are doing our part to end the pandemic.

I am certain that because of her dedication to her nursing mission, multiple lives on Long Island were saved, and many more spared morbidity. She is to be commended and honored. She is a nurse exemplar.

Our organization is proud to have this outstanding nurse leader working the front line and leading the way with a professional commitment to her patients, her staff and to the community we serve.

SYOSSET HOSPITAL NORTHWELL HEALTH

Danielle Milione, MSN, FNP

Clinical Registered Staff Nurse

Danielle Milione has been a nurse for five years. In that short period of time she has excelled. She completed her masters of science in nursing at Hofstra University to become a Family Nurse Practitioner and soon after became board certified by American Nurses Credentialing Center. During that time she also obtained her Clinical Ladder, and her ACLS and BLS certifications.

Danielle is an effective leader that expertly manages her unit when she is in charge. She communicates and collaborates effectively with the team and provides constructive feedback when necessary. She calmly handles conflicts, challenges and emergencies as they come. She is always willing to take on additional responsibilities and does so with a positive attitude. Danielle has an unwavering commitment to her patients and always ensures that they understand their plan of care, medications and diagnoses.

Danielle is highly active in hospital initiatives outside of her unit. She is a member of the Telemetry Unit's Collaborative Council, and participates in the evidence-based research council for patient-centered at our organization. She is also a preceptor to new nurses and nursing students. She recognizes the importance of clinical advancement and, with a colleague, researched newly developed standards for dysphasia assessment on stroke patients that received acceptance to the Sigma Theta Tau National Conference in 2018. She has also received several recognition awards from managers, advanced care providers, hospital leadership and former colleagues.

Danielle is truly compassionate, caring and dedicated to the patients and is a role model for all nurses.



PRIOR RECIPIENTS OF THE NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL NURSE OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

2020

All Long Island nurses honored

2019

JUSTIN M. WARYLORD, Stony Brook School of Nursing

2018

LILA V. HAGEMAN-SHEEHAN, NYU Winthrop Hospital

2017

LISA A. KOSHANSKY, St. Catherine of Siena
Medical Center

2016

EILEEN DWYER, St. Francis Hospital

2015

CHRISTINE GLASER, Farmingdale State College

2014

RENEE GILCHRIST, North Shore University Hospital

2013

CATHERINE VIDETTO, St. Catherine of Siena Medical
Center and LORI ESCALLIER, Stony Brook University
School of Nursing

2012

ANULI A. ERIKE, 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 - LIJ 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

LONG ISLAND NOMINATIONS TO THE NEW YORK STATE NURSE OF DISTINCTION AWARD PROGRAM 1989–1995

RACHEL LIN

Komanoff Center for Geriatric & Rehab Medicine (NYS recipient)

NANCY MAEHL

Veterans Affairs Medical Center

ELEANOR O'BOYLE

J. T. Mather Memorial

MILDRED O'CONNOR

Lutheran Center for the Aging

DARLENE PADUANO

University Hospital at Stony Brook

DOROTHY PESSOLI

Veterans Affairs Medical Center

CAROLYN VAN HELDEN

St. Charles Hospital and Rehabilitation Center

SR. RITA VANSON

Mercy Medical Center



NURSE OF EXCELLENCE 2021 AWARD CEREMONY