

Arizona Nurses Association Awards Merits of Excellence to Nurses and Facilities

TEMPE, Ariz. (November 17, 2011) – The Arizona Nurses Association (AzNA), the largest professional association of registered nurses in Arizona and a constituent member of the American Nurses Association (ANA), honored nursing students, practicing nurses and healthcare facilities from across Arizona at the 2011 Biennial Nursing Convention, *Imagine Nurses Driving Healthcare* held on October 13-14. The following members and facilities were selected as award recipients for their dedication and efforts to advancing the nursing profession and excelling in their area of expertise:

Barbara Miller, who has been a longstanding AzNA member and edited the *Arizona Nurse* for more than three decades, was recognized as an *Outstanding Member* proving to be a driving force in the nursing profession. Miller advocates on behalf of AzNA to promote professionalism in nursing and most recently serves as chair of the AzNA Archives Committee.

Kristi Hunter was selected for the *Mentoring Excellence* award. Hunter is a faculty and student mentor at The University of Phoenix. She works closely with students who are in need of assistance to identify additional resources in order to ensure their success.

Michael Lally was honored for *Excellence in Clinical Practice*. Lally currently serves as manager of the neuro unit at Tucson Medical Center and also serves as an adjunct faculty member for med-surg and psychiatric nursing at Pima Community College. Lally is a strong advocate and supporter of Tucson's medical community and dedicates much of his time to community service and volunteer work. He is described by colleagues as fair, consistent and supportive.

Beth Hunt was recognized as *Outstanding Chapter President*. She has shown leadership through holding the office of chapter president for many years and has worked diligently on behalf of members coordinating meetings and events for the members' benefit.

The **Tucson Medical Center** (TMC) was honored with the *Employer Excellence* award for recognizing the diversity and skills of their nurses and promoting nursing advancement. The medical center has a wall dedicated to nurses that promotes their accomplishments throughout the year. Additionally, TMC nurses are often recognized with coveted industry awards for their excellence in the profession and the center further supports its nursing staff through equitable mechanisms and professional development.

Jasmine Bahtti and **Jennifer Rhea** were recognized as *Outstanding Nursing Students* for their motivation and drive of truly making a difference for those they care for.

Additionally, **Jodie Willams** and **Sara Withgott** were awarded with board approved lifetime memberships to the AzNA. Williams joined ANA and AzNA when she became a RN in 1979. Her service to AzNA over the years demonstrates her commitment to the advancements of the nursing profession. Withgott has been an active member of AzNA for over 20 years and has served on several committees where her impact was measurable. She developed a chapter for Impaired Nurses and participated in the Arizona Substance Abuse Consortium for Knowledge, Exchange and Research for many years.

More than 450 nurses and nursing students attended the conference which focused on nurses stepping up and becoming the primary force in reshaping health care. The event featured guest speakers, exhibitions and presentations that explored nursing legislation, the future of nursing and health care, and opportunities where nurses can help redesign the health care system.

ABOUT ARIZONA NURSES ASSOCIATION (AzNA)

Since 1919, Arizona Nurses Association has helped nurses navigate an increasingly complex healthcare environment. AzNA is the largest and most widely recognized professional nursing organization in Arizona with members from all practice roles and settings. The services provided by AzNA include advocating for professional practice in a supportive work environment, providing continuing education related to professional practice issues, disseminating information related to practice issues, and lobbying at the state and national level for the profession of nursing. For more information, please call (480) 831-0404, or visit www.aznurse.org.

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