2020 Health Care Worker of the Year Awards

105 YEARS

NOMINEES
Ed Bastien, MDiv
MANAGER OF PASTORAL CARE

Ed Bastien’s mission is to give people hope by providing guidance and wisdom to patients and staff. As manager of Pastoral Care, Ed serves as an advocate for patients and their families in all life-changing events as a spiritual caregiver. He established the hospital’s Honor Walk program for organ donations, is involved in the Help Endure a Loss, or HEAL, program, and assists hospital staff in navigating obstacles they face everyday.

Jonas Sykes, PT
DIRECTOR OF HOSPITAL THERAPY SERVICES AND LYMPHEDEMA CLINIC

Since 1998, Jonas Sykes has served the patients of critical care units at Aultman Hospital. His compassion and clinical excellence propelled him into a leadership track that has included roles as team leader, therapy department lead, and most recently, therapy department director. Jonas is a well-respected member of our interdisciplinary team, and his passion for improving clinical care and living Aultman’s mission of “Leading our Community to Improved Health” is evident in his contributions, both within the health care delivery system and in his community.
Kimberly Masters, RT (R)(M) (CT), CRA
UNIT DIRECTOR, RADIOLOGY

Aultman Orrville Hospital
Aultman Health Foundation
33 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
33 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Kim Masters has dedicated over 30 years to serving the Orrville community as a radiology and mammography technologist. She currently serves as the director of imaging services and leads by example in excellent patient care. Her commitment and mentorship to the hospital, her department and its patients are qualities all admire and celebrate. Kim also continues her service into the Orrville community as an advocate for the health and safety of others through various organizations including The American Heart Association, Strides against Breast Cancer, Harvest for Hunger and more.

Jane Wood, RN
ASSISTANT NURSE MANAGER

Avita Health System

43 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
43 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

As a nurse for 43 years, Jane Wood works in many different areas throughout the Avita Health System. She defines exemplary care through her commitment to her patients with dignity and grace. She creates an environment where attributes of trust, compassion, mutual respect, continued professional development and ethical behavior are exhibited and supported. Jane’s hardwork earned notable achievements throughout her career, such as winning Avita’s first DAISY Leader Award and contributing to the development of Avita’s Total Joint Program. When Jane is not at work, she enjoys giving back to her community through photography and ministry of her faith.
Recognized as the associate of the year in 2019, Tenna Rhonemus is a resilient force at the Blanchard Valley Health System as a pharmacist, board certified geriatric pharmacist, preceptor of pharmacy students and residents while succeeding in the area of service excellence. Tenna’s largest impact is practiced in the bedside delivery program at the hospital, in which she ensures her patients receive their medications prior to discharge. She is also a wife, mother and a devoted member to the Bluffton community through her leadership of various organizations.

Monica Nelson is a highly successful and empathetic nurse who maintains a postitive, compassionate and lasting impact on her patients and fellow caregivers. Her titles throughout her 18 years at Cleveland Clinic Akron General include: clinical nurse manager, mentor, educator and nurse leader. During her current role as nurse manager, Monica continues to decrease the department turnover rate and builds employee engagement. Additionally, she assists with colleagues at the Akron Canton Food Bank and serves as vice president of the Akron area chapter of the Emergency Nurses Association.
Time and time again, patients and colleagues recognize Mark Lancaster for providing compassionate care in Cleveland Clinic Union Hospital’s Vascular Lab. Throughout his 15 years of service, Mark is known for his incredible connection to patients and leadership skills to implement new initiatives, including the establishment of the hospital recycling program, making it the best in the Cleveland Clinic health care system. Mark is committed to his community as he is chairman of “My Town Stratsburg,” a legal charity to assist residents of Stratsburg in need.

For over 40 years, Becky Weaver continues to demonstrate exemplary leadership and patient care at Community Hospitals and Wellness Centers. Becky tirelessly advocates for implementing evidence-based, empathetic patient care while providing thoughtful leadership and education to all hospital staff. Regarding education, Becky implemented an extensive patient education program related to the cardiac patient population and is involved in Community Hospitals and Wellness Centers’ CPR, Basic Life Support and Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support training community. Without Becky’s thorough and comprehensive leadership, the community would be without an essential service.
Joe Fuller serves as the supervisor of the Security team for Diley Ridge Medical Center. His oversight includes all aspects of keeping the campus safe, assisting in forming processes, policies and ensuring patients, visitors and staff are provided a secure environment. Additionally, Joe is a protector and servant of his community as he began his career at the Fairfield County Sheriff’s Office in 1984 and holds numerous fundraisers to help families in need with medical conditions.

Tina Anderson has served the Fairfield Medical community as a dedicated health care worker for over 38 years. Tina carries a brightness with her as she manages Fairfield Medical Center’s Urgent Care, Occupational Health, Employee Health & Wellness and various community programs. Despite being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2019, she maintained her encouraging and positive nature, continuing to lead her team and transform the organization. As a cultural advocate, Tina works tirelessly to provide exceptional care and experiences from the heart to patients, staff and community members. Through her dedication, she truly makes a difference in the lives of others.
Kelly Schaffer, BSN, RN
CRITICAL CARE SPECIALIST

Fisher-Titus Medical Center

30 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
32 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Kelly Schaffer’s 30-year career at Fisher-Titus Medical Center involves dedication to nursing excellence by providing exceptional care to her patients, a calming presence to their families and mentorship to her peers through exceptional leadership and support. Kelly is a masterful leader by her empowerment and approach in training new critical care nurses in the Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit. Through her hard work, Kelly has been recognized with Fisher Titus’s first Nurse Excellence Award in 2015. Additionally, Kelly proudly serves her community through her position on the medical board of two local churches.

Seleste White, MA, CCC-SLP
SPEECH THERAPIST

Fort Hamilton Hospital
Kettering Health Network

6 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
6 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

As a speech therapist at Fort Hamilton Hospital, Seleste White readily recognizes specific needs of her patients and peers and takes initiative to serve those needs. She fearlessly advocates for her team and patients, which led to major program changes at the hospital such as adding a stroke support group in the department. Seleste use her own time to research and communicate with experts around the country to find out what she needed to do to begin the support group in Hamilton County. Seleste leads by example while demonstrating that hospital staff members can always improve their skills and learn more in their specialty.
For the past 20 years and still today, Tara Powell continues to be a great asset to the Kettering Health Network’s Cath Labs, specifically now as the manager of the catheterization lab at Grandview and Southview medial centers. Tara’s peers recognize her passion for work, and how she connects with her team and patients on a personal level. She is always looking for opportunities to improve, whether that’s through creating a new process at work or by pursuing continued education. Tara is extremely involved in the American Heart Association, where she raised over $30,000 and eventually accepted a role on their Executive Leadership Team from her hardwork and dedication to the cause.

Mendy Williams is known for her strong qualities as a leader and mentor as administrative director of Nursing at Greene Memorial Hospital. She truly cares for her staff and is always taking the steps necessary to ensure they have the tools they need to succeed. She also takes time to meet with her patients to ensure they are receiving the care they need and monitors their quality of care. Mendy’s care for others extends beyond the hospital walls as she traveled to Zambia, Africa to help an orphanage in 2019 and dedicates her talents in the community on behalf of Kettering Health Network.
Shari Kebler, MBA, BSMT (ASCP)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LABORATORY SERVICES

Holzer Health System

21 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
21 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Shari Kebler, executive director of Laboratory Services of Holzer Health System, is the definition of contribution—changing the health care landscape and offering an indisputable positive character, mindset and outlook for the health of the community. As the leader of Laboratory Services, she manages 18 locations that span six counties and two states. Her staff, the management team and the executive team see her as a knowledgeable mentor always willing to coach, advise and offer assistance. Additionally, one of Shari’s most significant accomplishments includes her innovation and oversight of a free-standing Emergency Department in Meigs County.

Lisa Roettger, BS, RT (R)(M) (ARRT)
MAMMOGRAPHY TECHNICIAN—MEDICAL IMAGING SERVICES

Joint Township District Memorial Hospital
Grand Lake Health System

14 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
18 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Fourteen years ago, Lisa Roettger began her career in Medical Imaging at Grand Lake Health System. Currently, in her work as Mammography Technician, she understands the importance of women’s health and the care she provides, handling each patient with a comforting and caring presence. On a daily basis, Lisa does whatever is needed to support the Medical Imaging Department and our patients. She also stays up to date in her field through continuing education and networking with peers. Lisa leads by example. She maintains a positive attitude when faced with adversity, looks for opportunities to improve processes and generates a positive atmosphere in the work place.
For nearly 20 years, JoAnn Bambauer remains a dedicated and driven proponent at Kettering Health Network as a nursing supervisor. While her job can be hectic and stressful, she exudes professionalism, kindness and obtains extensive knowledge that she shares with the staff. Although JoAnn is responsible for a large team, she makes an effort to know both patients and staff members on a personal level. She also finds time to assist her community as she feeds the homeless and serves on the Mission Board and the Church Council at David’s United Church of Christ.

Christine White, serves as the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, SANE, in the Emergency Department. Christine developed a passion for sexual assault victims in 2014, and developed a program for Knox Community Hospital to better address the unique needs of these victims. As an active member of the Sexual Assault Response Team for the local community, her true passion is the care of the sexual assault patients and to educate the public, especially students, in order to help prevent a potentially dangerous situation.
Melissa Loop, RN, CN-BN
DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING PATIENT NAVIGATOR

Lake Health TriPoint Medical Center
Lake Health

13 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL

13 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Diagnostic Imaging Patient Navigator, Melissa Loop always finds a way for her patients to be cared for and satisfied while at the same time dealing with the challenges of diagnostic imaging, biopsies and screenings. She is a positive, cooperative liason for coordinating nurses, radiologists, surgeons and technologists requirements and schedules for patient care at three Lake Health facilities. Melissa was the catalyst in developing a program titled, “Breast Pathways,” which greatly improved the processes for patient care. Lastly, she is passionate about spreading awareness, raising funds and educating the public about Lake Health’s breast and lung programs.

Victoria Lennon, RN, BSN
COMMUNITY CASE MANAGER

Licking Memorial Hospital
Licking Memorial Health Systems

14 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL

34 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Vicki Lennon, community case manager for Licking Memorial Health Systems, LMHS, is a great leader with a servant heart and assists individuals in the county to maintain their independence, safely manage their physical health and enhance their social wellbeing. As a nurse of 34 years, Vicki is effective in helping her patients navigate the health care system while embracing the health system-wide directives of meeting community needs and promoting patient safety. Some notable achievements include assisting local EMS personnel to decrease the number of visits to recurrent 911 callers, facilitating LMHS’ involvement at a local community center and playing an integral role in the development of a Health Coach program with Denison University.
Doug LaRue is known for his motto, “Be nice and smile.” His EMS career spans over 25 years, with the last 12 years being a dedicated leader at Lima Memorial. Doug has a strong desire to teach and mentor those on his team while thinking of ways to improve the patient and family experience for all involved. A great accomplishment spearheaded by Doug was the development of the Cardiac Monitor Modern Project which provided improvements of patient information prior to their arrival at the hospital. Additionally, Doug serves as Chief of EMS for Alger-USV, a role he began 20 years ago, and is committed to ensuring all communities, regardless of location, have the resources needed to provide the best care to their residents.

Regina Morris, RN, BSN
EMPLOYEE HEALTH NURSE

Known for her personal motto of, “care for one another,” Regina Morris, plays a key role in Employee Health which enables her to usher new employees into the Memorial Health Family and empowers them to serve patients and the community to the best of their ability. She is well known for her tireless, positive spirit and values her position of onboarding new staff while tending to injured employees and assisting them with recovery to return to work. Regina goes out of her way to make everyone feel comfortable, welcomed and well cared for at Memorial Health.
Michelle Ashman, CNP, WOCN
RN-CNP

Mercer Health
Mercer Health Disease Management Center

16 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
17 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Michelle Ashman, CNP, WOCN, serves at Mercer Health specializing in wound, ostomy and continence care. She thrives on accepting challenging situations and patients from other organizations to partake in their care, with the goal of obtaining excellent patient outcomes. To do this, Michelle maintains positive working relationships with referral sources and collaborating providers. She also assisted the implementation of the wound treatment associate program through WOCN to Mercer Health and is instrumental in developing services in long term care for wound, ostomy and continence at five local nursing homes.

Shawna Straub, RN, BSN, cEFM
MANAGER OF NURSING, FAMILY BIRTHING CENTER

Mercy Health—Anderson Hospital
Bon Secours Mercy Health

21 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
21 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Shawna Straub, nurse manager of the Family Birthing Center at Mercy Health, is a true servant leader who models Mercy Health’s core values while supporting her team to treat patients to the best of their ability. She is instrumental in many initiatives at the local, regional and national level to improve the health of moms and babies. Shawna’s achievements include the Anderson Hospital’s 2018 Nurse Exemplar Transformational Leadership Award and the Daisy Award at Mercy Health. She is also responsible for the growth of Anderson Hospital’s Family Birthing Center’s partnership with Harleys Against Heroin, a non-profit organization that raises funds to help care for babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome.
Brittany Glover embodies the work of the Mission of Bon Secours Mercy Health. She has a compassionate and caring heart that consistently goes out of her way to make sure patients have the best care available to them at multiple facilities. She assisted the growth of a Mercy Health location by improving imaging capabilities and helped open a brand new outpatient building dedicated women’s imaging. Brittany is instrumental in boosting team morale not only in the imaging department she leads but across Mercy Health sites on the East Side of Cincinnati as she spearheads employee engagement campaigns to grow in team building.

Christopher Williams does not hesitate to go the extra mile in everything that he does for his patients, friends and family all be the grace and glory of God. Williams oversees the pharmacy operations in medication management for the outpatient clinic, the Infusion clinic, and an outpatient Coumadin Clinic. He leads his Pharmacy team to provide safe oncology treatment, inpatient care and ultimate patient satisfaction. The staff know that they can always count on Christopher for help with patients no matter the time of day or night. In addition to serving the Defiance community, he serves internationally by taking mission trips to Haiti taking care of the poor, dying and under-served.
Sr. Sharon Wiedmar is a valued member of the senior leadership team at Mercy Health—Fairfield Hospital. She is active in the development and execution of regional and market strategy while emphasizing the importance of integrating the mission into day-to-day operations. She leads by example, comforting patients and families who experience loss or an employee who faces challenges. Sharon is also active in the communities served by Fairfield Hospital as she revitalized the hospital auxiliary and volunteer teams by 50%. Above all, she ensures the organization adheres strictly to the mission of extending the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health and well-being of the communities and bringing good help to those in need.

Linsey Paul works to ensure that every person who needs her care feels as loved and supported as she did after a traumatic accident when she was 9 years old. Linsey is having a stellar start to her leadership career, in only one year as manager, she led her team to improve patient experience scores by 6%, which is well above the industry-norm. She truly lives out the mission of Mercy Health as her mantra instilled with her team is, “It is our privilege to care for whomever comes through our doors.” She is also a leader on the Human Trafficking Collaborative, where she secured training for 8 additional SANE nurses in the ED and serves in her community as a coach and a United Way volunteer.
Karen Wood
CASHIER

Mercy Health—Tiffin Hospital
Bon Secours Mercy Health

38 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
40 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

In Karen Wood’s 40 years working in health care, she is recognized as an expert in patient registration and billing services. As a highly engaged employee, Karen always demonstrates the compassionate mission of Mercy Health to every patient and person she encounters. After tragically losing her son in 2018, her desire to make an impact in other’s lives is her driving passion today. In rememberance of him, Karen and her family created BE KIND; LIFE MATTERS cards to be used for providing and paying forward acts of kindness. Karen also volunteers her time, treasure and talents to community organizations throughout the Tiffin and Seneca County area.

Clarence Smith
CUSTODIAN/COURIER

Mercy Health—Willard Hospital
Bon Secours Mercy Health

2 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
10 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Clarence Smith is a humble employee who is committed solely to the care and support of others at Mercy Health-Willard Hospital. He is known as a “can do” employee who is always willing to change shifts, roles and assignments to ensure that the needs of patients are met. For example, Clarence recently volunteered to change from his housekeeping position to a courier role in support of an employee on medical leave, and has significantly improved the service to the off-site provider offices. He described one of his humblest accomplishments as a prior nursing aide role when he would stay by the bedside of lonesome patients in their final hours. Aside from his responsibilities at the hospital, Clarence and his wife foster children with special needs and are completing an adoption of two young sisters.
Catherine Woskobnick has a strong passion for the mission, vision and values of Bon Secours Mercy Health. She most notably organizes and facilitates the Rising Star Program, which mentors at risk youth through health care career exploration, volunteering and leadership skill building. Also, she received county-wide recognition for her critical work with the Resource Mother’s program, which was cited by the Lorain County Health Department as a key contributor in the decline of infant mortality of African American babies in Lorain County. Catherine also serves her community through Bon Secours Mercy Health’s Parish Nursing Program which provides health screenings to over 12,000 people annually.

OraLee Macklenar, LISW was instrumental in developing and operating the Trauma Recovery Center at Mercy Toledo, which provides services to underserved children and adults of violent crime. At two hospitals, she supports the personal and professional growth of the team and encourages them to make connections throughout the community by participating in coalitions and boards that support victims of violence. OraLee is a pillar of living the mission and vision of Bon Secours Mercy Health as she also is involved in community organizations such as the Midwest Trauma Recovery Center Alliance, Celebrate Recovery, Great Lakes Groups Human Trafficking Committee and more.
In her role as a Clinical Nurse Manager Heather Price leads the nursing staff in the Level I Trauma Center’s Emergency Department. Her dedication, compassion and knowledge continues to touch thousands of lives in the community over the past 13 years at Premier Health. Recently, Heather rose above the call of duty on the night of the devastating Oregon District mass shooting as the Emergency Department’s charge nurse where she sprang into action and had the department prepared and beds cleared for incoming trauma patients. Moreover, Heather works to educate her colleagues through a mobile education lab, where she provides learning tools for nurses and emergency paramedics.

Pru Hudson’s colleague would describe her as the best patient advocate, an owner of the trauma team and a true servant leader. She works collaboratively with other departments within Mount Carmel East to ensure our trauma patients are getting the best care possible. She lives the Mount Carmel Health System mission and core values of reverence, commitment to those who are poor, justice, stewardship and integrity daily and is a champion to her patients. Additionally, Pru is active in teaching college students enrolled in social work programs as well as fire department and law enforcement colleagues.
Karen LeBlanc is first and foremost recognized for her integrity in patient care; serving patients with a selfless and a compassionate heart for the past 25 years. Karen sacrifices her personal time for the sake of her team as she covers extra shifts and embodies Mount Carmel’s mission of service as she assisted a coworker’s family with financial struggles, accommodating housing needs for them. One of her colleagues describes her impact in radiology stating, “I have never known or worked with anyone who cared more or worked harder than Karen Leblanc.”
Rising health care worker Rachel Dosch currently serves as Administrative Supervisor of Workplace Health and Wellness at OhioHealth Berger Hospital, overhauling the Employee Wellness Program to empower the hospital’s 550 team members to make good choices when it comes to their health. She propelled participation from 24% to 42% in one year’s time of the program launch, an incredible feat for Rachel. Additionally, she is an adjunct professor at Ohio Christian University, where she mentors the next generation by teaching a required course for freshmen on health and wellness. In the community, Rachel enjoys volunteering for the Circleville Walk to End Alzheimer’s as her grandmother suffers from the disease and other activities that involve youth development and wellness.

Amy Tracey shines in every role, but especially as a leader. Under Amy’s nurturing, collaborative style of leadership, her top-performing unit received the highest customer service score across OhioHealth Doctors Hospital in 2019. As a recipient of the 2019 Nurse Manager Award for Compassion, Amy believes in the power of physical touch and compassionate listening with her patients. She also mentors staff, guiding them into leadership roles and cultivating their coaching skills to the best of their ability. Beyond giving back to the people she meets in her daily work, Amy remains active in volunteering with organizations such as the Ronald McDonald House, Capital City Half Marathon and regularly donates blood every six weeks.
Abby Evans’ responsibilities are operational, but she without fail stops to help, heal and nurture. As she believes in leading by doing, Abby finds great value in being an extra set of hands wherever needed, operationally in admin or medically on the floor assisting patients. Distinguished with multiple honors throughout her tenure in health care, she’s especially proud of receiving Grady Memorial Hospital’s Nursing Excellence Award. Abby’s life purpose, both professionally and personally, is to care for people—and she believes there’s no greater gift she could give someone. Furthermore, beyond the hospital walls, Abby speaks to more than 500 students about nursing as part of a career development class as she seeks to encourage others to follow the same path of service.

With a grandfather who succumbed to cancer, Josh Hagler is passionate about educating the public on the importance of yearly colon cancer screenings and takes great pride in signing people up for life-saving colonoscopies. Josh is known for his willingness to quickly manage a situation by jumping in, easily learning new things and serving in multiple areas that aren’t his own at the hospital. His influential qualities were recognized early on as he participated in OhioHealth’s Emerging Leaders Program in 2016 as OhioHealth Grady Memorial Hospital’s sole representative. Josh also continues to be part of the Safe Patient Handling Committee, Nursing Council, Clinical Informatics Group Council at OhioHealth Grady Memorial Hospital and community events to raise awareness of the importance of colon cancer screenings.
Heather McCary, RCP, RRT, TTS
CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD) EDUCATOR

OhioHealth Grant Medical Center
OhioHealth

Over the past 18 years, Heather McCary has established herself as a deeply trusted—and respected—therapist. Heather serves as the Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, educator at Grant Medical Center and lead of the innovative COPD home pilot program. Heather is most proud of her current role as the COPD home program lead because she’s able to directly affect patient outcomes and the continuity of care. Heather’s professional, yet approachable and caring demeanor inspires patients to be confident and empowers them to better care for themselves.

Mike Hinterschied
SERVICE EXCELLENCE AMBASSADOR

OhioHealth Grove City Methodist Hospital
OhioHealth

In his role as Service Excellence Ambassador, Mike Hinterschied, serves as a calming presence, listening ear, warm smile and helping hand to patients, their families and his fellow team members. Quietly and modestly, Mike displays leadership time and time again by acting with conviction and integrity. His job is to take care of people when they initially enter the hospital and while they’re waiting, and he does this by showing empathy: holding the door, never breaking eye contact, using levity in his tone of voice. He has spent a great deal of time refining his presentation to patients and their families so that it’s impactful. Mike consults with nurses about how to best interact with patients and strike that delicate balance between offering hope and being realistic.
A fierce advocate for the patient and her profession, recreational therapist Tamara Cole reiterates the importance of making leisure opportunities a routine practice and exploring positive ways to cope with life stress. Tamara helps plan and lead co-treatment groups on her unit with Occupational and Speech Therapies, proving that treatment can be both beneficial and fun. She has continued to facilitate and grow a monthly Stroke Support Group at her facility to help stroke survivors and their caregivers navigate through life circumstances.

As OhioHealth Marion Hospital’s administrative nurse manager, Mercy Ovuworie strives to make patients feel like the most important person in her life. Mercy decided to enter health care after watching her aunt give up a comfortable life to work at a leprosy camp in Nigeria. It was then she decided that she too would make a difference in the lives of others. Nearly 30 years later, she has received multiple distinctions and, more importantly, touched the lives of thousands of patients, their family members and her fellow health care workers. Elevating the hospital’s services and quality of patient care—and ultimately being a force for positive change—are second nature for Mercy. Her attitude is that you can always find one atom of good in any situation.
With a spirit of compassion and an unwavering commitment to those around her, Barb McKee has dedicated her entire career to preparing the very best nourishment for O’Bleness Hospital patients and their families. She views her role as a cook as a way to lend her talent to something much larger than herself. Barb constantly pushes herself and her team to create the menus and choices that exceed the standards of what’s expected when it comes to hospital food. With every change in nutrition principles, health and wellness practices and guidelines, she embraces and leads others to adapt. In the spirit of always doing better, Barb maintains her focus on the needs of each patient and every dietary restriction.

With great humility, Parnell Pollard, a nurse and senior systems analyst at Riverside Methodist Hospital, leads by example. Parnell makes those around him better—which is the highest and truest definition of leadership. Described as a rare individual who doesn’t take shortcuts, Parnell routinely performs chart corrections, develops documentation for new procedures and partners with coders to ensure procedures are properly identified and charges are captured. His philosophy is simple: Be to them what I would want them to be to me. This has meant spending Christmas day sitting beside a sick patient with no family so she didn’t die alone and befriending the wife of a Parkinson’s patient.
With nearly three decades of service in the nursing field, Theresa Roth is best described as a pioneer. Following in her mom’s footsteps, she became a health care worker to change lives and serve others. In addition to providing best-in-class care for her patients, Theresa is considered a role model for the entire industry—setting new precedents for nursing. As director of Critical Care at OhioHealth Shelby Hospital, she is an avid learner, always looking to better herself for the sake of her patients and the community. Not one to say no, Theresa embraces opportunities and challenges alike to make sure she is always providing her very best to the hospital and her patients.

Heidi serves as the manager of Environmental Services at Soin Medical Center, and her connection with employees and staff has created some of the best employee engagement and patient experience scores in recent years. When she came into her management role, the department had high turnover rate. Rather than make sudden changes, she took time to learn, observing the team and seeing how they conduct themselves. Through her leadership, the department turnover rate reduced by half, and her patient experience scores are the highest in the network. Those around Heidi say that she is the most altruistic person they know, and that is reflected in her daily interactions.
Leslie Doerfler, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P; EMT-P

SANE COORDINATOR

Southeastern Ohio Regional Medical Center

Leslie Doerfler started her career in health care 35 years ago as an EMT, later advanced into nursing. She started at Southeastern Med in the Emergency Department in 1989 where she found her true passion for forensic nursing. She became a SANE, or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, trained nurse and made it her lifelong goal to provide victims with her services. Leslie has not only created SANE programs in two different facilities, but she also unselfishly shares her knowledge. She has developed SANE policies and protocols and is in the process of training more nurses for her team. Leslie has improved the hospital’s processes, equipment and resources for patients.

Don Groff, RPH

PHARMACY MANAGER

Southview Medical Center
Kettering Health Network

Don Groff is known by his staff and colleagues as someone accountable and always brings a positive attitude. Don shares his expertise with future pharmacy professionals by serving on the advisory board for the Pharmacy Tech program at Sinclair Community College. At work his positive attitude always comes with a smile, and he is calm under pressure no matter the challenge. This positivity and calmness help him be an effective manager and help set the tone for his team. Don’s passion to serve his community has inspired members of his team to do the same, and he is always looking for more ways to be involved.
Everything Melissa Kukiela gets involved in is done with a passion for and focus on what is best for patients, her staff or members of our community. She’s not afraid to tackle a single problem or pull together the right people to get the best outcome. Over the last five years, Melissa played an instrumental role in bringing together departments to establish many protocols and programs that improved efficiencies and elevated the involvement of the respiratory therapy staff in critical times of patient care. She uses her passion for teaching and working collaboratively to benefit our patients and the hospital overall.

In her role in Mission Outreach in Cleveland’s Central neighborhood, Cathy Kopinsky, serves a community with nearly 70% of residents living below the poverty line. In this vital role, and with a limited budget, Cathy is a staff of one. In her leadership role of more than 40 years, she has organized thousands of events, gift drives, school carnivals, community meals, meetings and health screenings. Cathy constantly has the best interest of the community at the core of everything she does. She is always kind and acts in a way that people feel respected, important and cared for, but also forceful in her advocacy for community members and their needs.
Rachel Albert, a unit-based specialist at Sycamore Medical Center, is always looking for ways to improve, visualizing what can be and not just what is. This is what makes her an avid learner, constantly sharing new knowledge and information. Rachel wants the best for her team and patients, and she is always looking out for their best interests. She secures input not only from her team and leadership, but also from cross-functional team members like physicians, therapists and other members during weekly huddles to get the departments on the same page. Going above and beyond is nothing out of the ordinary for Rachel.

Caring, nurturing and compassionate are all words that describe The Bellevue Hospital’s community health nurse Jackie Shelley. Jackie has served patients in the 50-bed rural hospital for more than 32 years in many capacities, including inpatient, home care and community services. Jackie, a native of Bellevue, puts her heart into educating her community and impacting their overall health through CPR classes, health fairs and blood screenings. Jackie also teaches local tweens and teens how to become better babysitters through a Babysitting Basics Class, showing them techniques on how to handle emergencies or illnesses and to provide proper nutrition while babysitting.
Tom Stieritz has had a lifetime of health care experience, and that background has served him well in the newly created position of the executive director, chief operating officer of The Christ Hospital Health Network’s physician group. In this role he is responsible for physician practices that were organic to the network, and those that were acquired. Tom needed to knit together these disparate cultures and styles into a cohesive unit moving in one direction, and with one voice. Tom is also a community leader, as a board member for The Dragonfly Foundation, a nonprofit focused on meeting the social and community needs of pediatric cancer families.

In her role as clinical nurse manager, Tina Mayberry, always makes an effort to stay engaged with her staff, often coming in early and staying late to make sure there is a smooth transition between the evening and night nurses. Doing this helps her get to know her nurses on a personal level. Her team members know they can go to her, and she is always willing to lend a helping hand. Tina cares about each of her patients and is constantly checking on each patient to ask about their experience. She holds her nurses to a high standard and wants them to treat each patient with the care and respect they deserve.
Erika Hosey, a cardiovascular technician, gave a life-changing gift to a patient in need. While performing a routine cardiac stress test, she learned that her patient had kidney disease and needed transplant surgery. The next day, Erika began the donor process and ended up being a perfect match. When people ask Hosey why she donated an organ to a complete stranger, her answer is always: “Why wouldn’t I!” Erika is proud to work in the cardiac catheterization lab. Her shift begins at 7 a.m., and she drives more than an hour each morning and evening to work. Erika says she wouldn’t make the commute if she didn’t love her team and believe in the work she was doing.

Rosanne Hountz, DNP, RN, MSN, MSCJ, SANE
HOUSE SUPERVISOR

House Supervisor Rosanne Hountz has the responsibility of arranging staffing schedules, directing patient care and making administrative decisions. She is also co-founder of Josephine’s Clinic, a coalition of volunteer medical and trauma care professionals who serve victims of human trafficking and violence in Greater Cincinnati. She has dedicated her life to raising social awareness of this cause through education and training among health care workers, and provides a victim-centered and compassionate environment for those who are in need to seek trauma-informed medical and mental health care.
Juanita Niekamp, BSN, RN, CCRP
STAFF NURSE

Upper Valley Medical Center
Premier Health

3 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
33 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Juanita, called Nita by colleagues, is known for her leadership, expertise and compassion. As a staff nurse, Nita helps patients by providing lifestyle modification programs and support to help improve their heart health. She is known as the “go-to person” when it comes to cardiopulmonary rehabilitation and educating patients and their families. Her mission to train the community about excellent heart health is reflected in her willingness to meet with patients one-on-one at any time of day. Nita’s drive to help others is an inspiration that makes her not only a leader in the department, but a beacon of light to everyone she encounters.

Kaye Scott, RN, BSN, MS
DIRECTOR OF MATERNITY AND NEWBORN SERVICES

West Chester Hospital
UC Health

10 YEARS AT THE HOSPITAL
35 YEARS IN HEALTH CARE

Becoming a nurse has always been in Kaye Scott’s blood—her grandmother and great aunt were all nurses. She got her start as a candy striper at age 14 and today serves as the director of Maternity and Newborn Services at UC Health’s West Chester Hospital. Her passion for improving maternal and child health in underserved communities has led to the development of a multi-collaborative initiative to expand access to breastfeeding support groups in Butler County. Kaye identified a way to expand a successful breastfeeding educational program to women facing transportation barriers, work that has already positively impacted hundreds of mothers and babies in the community.
Angela Barfield goes above and beyond the call of duty when she steps into the doors of Wilson Health. In her role as Hospice Chaplin she shows leadership by guiding and providing support to those going through the grieving process, along with leading hospice grief and infant loss support groups. Angela has worked to establish Rachel’s Gift, a nonprofit that helps parents grieving the loss of an infant, at Wilson’s Family Birth Center. She touches the community from before birth to the end of life and does it with such passion, while supporting others with a humbled and gracious spirit.