

# The 2017 Advocate Nurse Award

More than 1,000 nurses from across Advocate Health Care were nominated for our inaugural The Advocate Nurse Award. Nominations were submitted by physicians and associates, including many non-nursing associates, to recognize Advocate nurses who empower, serve and thrive. These nominations were vetted and presented in blinded format to site-based review committees who scored each according to a metric that took into account each nominee's passion for patient care, commitment to service, problem-solving abilities and leadership aptitude.

The winners, approved by each site/business unit's chief nurse executive, are nurses from a variety of specialties across the patient care continuum. They represent diversity in their backgrounds and experiences; some are veteran nurses with more than 30 years of experience while others are relatively new to Advocate or to the nursing profession yet have already made an impact on their patients and colleagues.

Here are the 16 winners for 2017, presented in alphabetical order by site/business unit:



**Advocate At Home: Erica Reid;** sub-location: Bloomington

Central Illinois home health nurse Erica Reid acts as a positive role model for other Advocate at Home associates, even in times of stress for the rest of the department. Her positive attitude during these times serves as an example to new associates on how to handle crises and use critical thinking skills to come up with the best plan for patient care. Known as a team player, Erica often takes on additional responsibilities. For example, once when the home care liaison had an urgent family emergency, Erica quickly adjusted her own schedule and took on that role to allow her fellow associate to be with her family without concern. She fulfills other roles as needed, often within a regular workday, including field visits with her patients, hospice

admissions and intake, and various office duties while still managing her caseload independently. She actively and independently seeks out additional responsibilities when her schedule and time allows without being asked. She is extremely competent in home health, hospice and infusion and has completed additional training to learn new skills, including complex wound care. Erica's always lending a hand to help. She tackles problems and takes time to look for the best solutions.



**Advocate Children's Hospital: William Nelson;** sub-location: Park Ridge campus

Coupling his passion for model making and design with his compassion for pediatric patients and their families, pediatric nurse William Nelson created two interactive train displays for patients at Advocate Children's Hospital-Park Ridge. This makes the hospital a less frightening place for kids, many of whom look forward to visiting the trains on future visits. William pursued nursing as a second career later in life but uses his master's degree in science and teaching to mentor other nurses seeking certification and professional development. In addition to his overall pediatric expertise, he's regarded for his expertise in pediatric diabetes, even developing a pediatric pathophysiology class that has become very popular. William is a formal trainer in hypnotic

healing in pediatrics and is known as "the baby whisperer." Yet he's equally effective in educating teens newly diagnosed with cancer and providing emotional support for their families, fathers in particular.



**Advocate Medical Group: Quiana Sowell**, oncology; sub-location: Beverly

Oncology patients at Advocate Medical Group’s Beverly location receive compassionate care from nurse Quiana “Kiki” Sowell. She gets to know many chemotherapy patients quite well as they spend many hours together during treatment; some have been known to come into the office post-treatment just to visit with Sowell and give her a hug. Kiki’s energy is infectious; co-workers and patients alike can’t help but smile when she’s around. Not only does she provide direct patient care but she also is competent in the area of mixing chemotherapeutic agents and teaches new nurses in the area of chemo-biology. She leads the practice’s participation in a stringent outpatient quality certification program administered by the American Society of

Clinical Oncology and has assisted other practices seeking certification. Within the practice, Kiki has engaged other clinicians and physicians, identifying opportunities for improvement and developing processes and workflows to ensure the practice meets high standards – particularly in the areas of patient education, patient monitoring and assessment, chart documentation, chemo prep/administration, competency evaluations and emergency preparedness. She’s also committed to her community, participating in an annual event that helps young athletes obtain their physicals prior to participating in Special Olympics programs.



**BroMenn: Barbara Hancock**, specialty head, operating room

As the first nurse in BroMenn Medical Center’s operating room to become certified, Barbara Hancock has long been recognized as an excellent clinician and the “go-to” nurse for new projects and practices. Patient safety is her top priority; because one of her specific concerns is skin integrity during surgery, she developed creative ways to ensure that patients’ skin is protected during each procedure. She worked closely with her physician colleagues to ensure their engagement in this process as well. Her contributions in the area of perioperative normothermia (keeping the patient’s body temperature within a normal range) have led to the utilization of lined hats that patients wear during surgery to prevent heat loss; she collaborated with other

nurses in perioperative services to find practical solutions to keep patients warm throughout the entire process. Barbara also examined processes around instrument sterilization and served on a committee supporting the hospital’s pursuit of Magnet certification, a nursing excellence accreditation. Her achievement becoming the hospital’s first certified OR nurse has led to seven additional nurses successfully pursuing CNOR certification.



**Christ: Eileen Coverick**, cardiac rehab, High Tech Offices

When Eileen Coverick is passionate about something, she takes action. A longtime nurse in cardiac rehabilitation at the outpatient High Tech Office Park affiliated with Christ Medical Center, Eileen led a successful yearlong process for program certification. She is committed to continuing education as a nursing professional, achieving certification as both a cardiology nurse and diabetes educator. Her community service includes advocating for patients with Huntington’s Disease, a progressive brain disorder; volunteering as a “baby cuddler” at a local children’s hospital; and volunteering as a nurse guardian for Honor Flight Chicago, assisting and accompanying World War II and Korean War veterans on flights to Washington, DC, for a day of

honor and remembrance. Through that program she assists with flight preparation, arranging the veterans’ medical care and assisting them in the boarding process and then returns to the airport to pay tribute and welcome these heroes back home.



**Condell: Christine Lemieux-Crowcroft**, Labor & Delivery and Mother-Baby units

An Advocate associate since 1979, Christine Lemieux-Crowcroft has been active in Condell Medical Center's shared governance from its inception and has repeatedly led major initiatives to empower her colleagues such as the hospital's obstetrics hemorrhage education project and annual nursing skills fair. She has thrived in her career, starting as an obstetrics technician who went on to earn her nursing degree, bachelor's degree and specialty certification; she now mentors other nurses and is well known for her innovative problem-solving skills and positive attitude. Christine has collaborated with colleagues in other departments, including the emergency department, to improve care for OB patients. Patients appreciate her bedside manner, often citing her by name as an associate who made their stay excellent. She recently spent part of her day off to attend a service for families honoring the loss of an infant or child.



**Dreyer: Mary Bryant**, OB/GYN, Rush-Copley Hospital campus, Aurora

With more than 30 years of experience as an OB nurse, Advocate Dreyer associate Mary Bryant has demonstrated her commitment to both patient care and teamwork. Patients have commented on how comfortable she's made them feel and how much they appreciate her follow-up to ensure they're feeling better after undergoing a procedure. She has a heart for education, providing in-depth hands-on training to her colleagues during in-services. She also has served on a number of committees to improve processes and create standard work in her department, including the development of a rapid response team for OB/GYN-related emergencies.



**Eureka: Joy Jirousek**, operating room

Eureka Hospital operating room nurse Joy Jirousek is known for her calm demeanor. Other nurses depend on her for advice regarding patient care issues because she's always ready to help. She is a good listener who empowers staff and remains open to others' ideas; she's also an adept problem solver who comes up with creative solutions to scheduling and staffing issues. Joy uses humor appropriately to lighten the moment while remaining professional and steadfast in guiding nurses to do their best and follow best practices. She also is a volunteer in the community in which she lives and works.



**Good Samaritan: Ruth Ann Nichols-Walker**, Critical Care Unit

As president of Good Samaritan Hospital's nursing staff, Ruth Ann Nichols-Walker is a clinical coach and mentor committed to advancing the professionalism of nursing not only in her Critical Care Unit but also throughout the hospital. With more than 30 years of nursing experience – including 10 in the CCU – Ruth Ann is known as a calm and level-headed problem solver, particularly during times when patient volume is high. Although she works full time, she often picks up additional shifts, including night shifts, when needed. She has lobbied on behalf of nursing to state legislators and continues to expand her knowledge of evidence-based practices, becoming a certified cardiovascular nurse and a member of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses. As a member of the Magnet team, she helped lead the hospital's effort to nursing excellence re-accreditation. Ruth Ann also is active in service projects on behalf of Advocate Health Care, such as serving on the hospital's annual fundraising team to raise money for the American Heart Association; her church, where she served on a mission trip to New Orleans; and her community, where she volunteered at a pediatric diabetes camp. She has helped raise money to support colleagues going through personal difficulties and sent care packages to military serving overseas, including one of the hospital's trauma surgeons. As a bedside nurse, Ruth Ann is known for delivering

compassionate care, patiently answering questions from patients and their family members and empowering them to take an active role in their health care. She is passionate about end-of-life care and treating all patients with dignity and respect.



**Good Shepherd: Emily Hendler**, cardiovascular ICU

Good Shepherd Hospital cardiovascular intensive care unit nurse Emily Hendler empowers her patients by educating them on their conditions and encouraging them throughout their recovery; similarly, she empowers her colleagues by being available to answer questions or provide more information on new equipment and processes even when she's not working on the unit. Patients and family members have complimented this nurse's listening skills and willingness to spend time with her patients to find solutions; she also collaborates with colleagues in other disciplines to provide holistic care so her patients are able to thrive post-discharge. In one case, a patient was so comfortable with her care that the family hired Emily to provide follow-up home health care. When her unit merged with another during the hospital's modernization construction, Emily served as a goodwill ambassador by welcoming her medical-surgical ICU colleagues and helping them acclimate to an unfamiliar unit.



**Illinois Masonic: Jessica Bishop**, medical-surgical unit 541

Although not a supervisor, Illinois Masonic Medical Center medical-surgical unit 541 nurse Jessica Bishop demonstrates leadership qualities by regularly taking on additional responsibilities and accountabilities. She works as a charge nurse on weekends and during shifts when there is no coverage; she recently stepped up as charge nurse when her assistant clinical manager went on leave and took on additional shifts to help the team. Jessica independently took on extra projects that would typically be handled by a leader, including training the 60-person staff on how to use new equipment. During a recent weekend when the unit was short on nursing care technicians (NCTs), Jessica took on the additional patient care responsibilities, bathing, toileting and transferring patients. She's known to stay late and come in early to ensure the best care for patients. Jessica is active in nursing shared governance as a member of her unit council and chairperson of the hospital's clinical informatics council, where she leads a committee that has implemented interdisciplinary plan of care procedures and tracked compliance of this initiative. At the bedside, Jessica treats each patient as if they were a member of her family and is not afraid to show emotion in her work, especially when caring for hospice and oncology patients. She's committed to continually improving her practice by learning evidence-based and alternative approaches; she has studied pet and massage therapies for oncology patients to ease the side effects of the chemotherapy medications. She eagerly shares her knowledge, experience and expertise with both co-workers and patients and is medical/surgical nursing certified and obtained her oncology certified nurse chemotherapy/biotherapy provider card.



**Lutheran General: Diane Lane**, neuro tele

Patients on Diane Lane's unit face many difficult, and sometimes, debilitating challenges but Diane brings hope and empowerment to each and every patient she interacts with. She focuses on making sure her patients understand their plan of care, using the teach-back method to grasp their level of understanding and to make sure their plan of care is appropriate. If not, she works with the patient's provider, advocating on their behalf. She is known to connect with her patients on a personal level, introducing them as her "friend" and cracking jokes with them to make their stay more comfortable. Diane is a team player who always helps her colleagues and involves everyone in patient care, including techs, secretaries and EVS associates. She even developed created a suggestion box for her unit to encourage associates to provide feedback.



**Sherman: Mary Gleason, oncology nurse navigator**

Helping cancer patients and their families is what oncology nurse navigator Mary Gleason does at Sherman Hospital and in her community. She supports the Leukemia Society and has led the Cancer Coalition's Get Your Rear in Gear 5K, which raises funds for a local federally qualified health centers to screen uninsured patients for colon cancer. Working alongside colleagues in other departments and at physician offices, Mary ensures these patients will never get a bill. Her relationship with her patients do not stop at the end of the work day; she's known to check in with patients at night and on the weekends. And she's not afraid to initiate open and honest discussions about difficult topics such as palliative care and hospice. As an oncology nurse for more than 25 years and former hospital leader, Mary returned to direct patient care after her husband died; she cared for her husband for many years and is dedicated to providing that same care to her patients. She's a member of the Oncology Nursing Society and has lobbied U.S. lawmakers on behalf of cancer patients.



**South Sub: Terri Cook, Med-Surg-Ortho (4 East West)**

Patients, physicians and nurses appreciate Terri Cook, a nurse on the medical-surgical-ortho unit 4 East West at South Suburban Hospital. Her goal is to inform and educate patients on their care and ensure they thoroughly understand all parts of their discharge instructions. She works in close collaboration with physicians, who know their patients receive excellent nursing care from her. Her nursing colleagues note her attention to detail, particularly her clear and concise charting; she coaches her fellow nurses on better ways to record information. New nursing graduates look to Terri as a positive example of what an Advocate nurse should be; her knowledge and compassion make her an excellent resource and an important part of her unit and the hospital as a whole. With more than 25 years of experience as an Advocate nurse, Terri is not afraid to learn new innovations and teach others. Her interest in geriatric patients led her to pursue certification from Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE), a highly regarded national nursing program. She also volunteered for the Alzheimer's Association's Walk to End Alzheimer's fundraiser.



**Support Centers: Anne St. John, senior clinical analyst (CareConnection), Kensington**

As a senior clinical analyst supporting CareConnection at the Kensington Support Center, Anne St. John is able to combine her nursing skills with her technical aptitude to ensure safe and efficient patient care and charting throughout the Advocate system. She assists new nurses with documentation questions, sharing her knowledge and experience in a way that is easily understood. An unsung hero, Anne's work has led to process changes that have improved patient safety. Outside of work, Anne served as a volunteer nurse companion to elderly World War II veterans touring the war memorials in Washington, DC; she volunteers annually at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon first responder tent and in 2016 served as a volunteer nurse for a Chicago major league baseball team's home games.



**Trinity: Christina Cavallo**, emergency department

Trinity Hospital Emergency Department nurse Christina Cavallo is passionate about providing exemplary care to victims of sexual assault. To that end, she became trained as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) through the Illinois Attorney General’s sponsored program and has made sure the ED maintains all the needed supplies and equipment to provide comprehensive and compassionate care to sexual assault patients around the clock; she encouraged the other ED nurses to undergo SANE training and serves as a knowledgeable resource for other nurses caring for these patients. Christina also is active in the unit based council and organized a journal club to motivate other ED nurses in examining evidence-based nursing practices they can apply to

improve patient care.