

Nurse of Distinction 2020

The Following Criteria Must Be Met:

1. Registered Professional Nurse
2. Active member of a professional organization or current board certification in area of specialty.
3. Enhances the Nursing profession through leadership and teamwork.
4. Promotes high levels of patient and customer satisfaction.
5. Shows commitment to the community served.
6. Serves as a mentor and professional role model to peers.
7. Encourages a positive work environment.
8. Delivers exemplary direct clinical nursing care to patients and families.
9. Represents PHELPS / Northwell positively at all times.

Nominees and Winner

MICHAEL PALAZZO, 2 CENTER

Michael goes above and beyond in every aspect of his nursing career. He is board certified in geriatrics and attended the 2019 Orthopedic Conference in Atlanta, GA demonstrating his commitment to our patient population. Michael serves as an amazing leader not just on 2 Center but the entire hospital. Recently, Michael served as one of the computer escorts during the Magnet survey. Additionally, he serves on the CNO Advisory Council, is co-chair of the 2 Center Unit Council, is a transfer and mobility coach, and teaches the mandatory safe patient handling classes on his days off. He ensures that the nurses on 2 Center are informed about what is happening throughout the hospital and encourages nurses to further their own careers by moving up the career ladder. He takes pride in precepting new nurses, is currently precepting a new graduate nurse on nights, and has previously served as a mentor for the mentorship program. He goes out of his way to help other nurses during all of his shifts, even when he has a difficult patient assignment. Michael is always being recognized and praised for his extraordinary

patient care in patient survey comments. He consistently comes to work with a smile on his face and positive attitude, going out of his way to make sure his patients are receiving the highest quality care. He inspires me to be the best nurse I can be every shift I work with him. I cannot think of a more deserving nurse for this award during 2020, "The year of the nurse".

AIMEE SMITH, RN. ICU

It is with honor that I nominate Aimee Smith for Nurse of Distinction. She has thrived as an individual starting as a specialty tech on 5 South and working her way up the nursing career ladder. She has obtained her CCRN and is currently furthering her education at PACE University working on her master's degree. Her selflessness is evidenced by her collaboration with her peers. She is always present at the bedside to assist with any admission or unstable patient, even when carrying a heavy assignment herself. She is brilliant and a reassuring resource for new and upcoming nurses in the ICU. She makes goodie bags for her peers during nurse's weeks and holidays. Her involvement in the Education Council Committee is always evident by her elaborate posters and creative presentations. Aimee is constantly recognized by family members for providing extraordinary care which expresses to all the compassionate, empathetic and detailed care she provides to both patients and their loved ones. She recently finished her term as Fire Chief of Pleasantville Fire Department. Aimee is a true representation of Phelps Pride. I am honored to work beside such an amazing individual.

JANE HEARTY, RN ONCOLOGY

Jane is very professional and an outstanding nurse. She is not a 9-5 type of nurse; she reaches out to tend to patients needs at all times of the day. Her heart is always in the right place for staff and patients alike. There is nobody more giving and thoughtful. She is a team player at all times.

BARBARA TURNER, RN ONCOLOGY

Barbara is a research oncology nurse. She is detail oriented. She puts an enormous amount of thought and time into each patient in her study. She is very flexible and works around issues and ensures that the correct patients are selected. We are so lucky to have her at Phelps performing research that could help save our patients in the future!

JENNA HARRIS, RN – 1 SOUTH, PSYCHIATRY

Jenna has shown her capabilities as a professional member of 1 south. She is able to lead the team, as a charge nurse, with patience and effective communication. She interacts professionally with all members of the team as well as the patients on the unit. Patients always feel safe and well taken care of. She is willing to do whatever it takes; she goes above and beyond. I feel she is completely deserving of the Nurse of Distinction award. I have never worked with someone with such a natural instinct, competence and ease with difficult patients. We are lucky to have her as a nurse at Phelps Hospital.

CRYSTAL MOSCHIANO, RN – 1 SOUTH, PSYCHIATRY

Crystal is an intrinsic leader and respected among all members of the healthcare team. She is a member of the National American Psychiatric Nurses Association. She has excellent leadership abilities, clinical expertise, flexibility and is outstanding in emergent and crisis situations. She helps with competencies, EBP activities, and anything else she is asked to participate in. This year Crystal was a co-presenter on a poster at the annual (virtual) APNA poster gallery national competition related to implementing a behavioral rapid response support team at Phelps in the med/Surg areas. She will graduate from the prestigious Northwell Zucker/Hofstra Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Program in May 2021. Crystal's commitment to excellence in care for people living with mental illnesses reflected in her choice to devote the rest of her professional life to being a Psychiatric NP.

ANDREA COMPASS, RN – OPERATING ROOM

For over 20 years Ms. Compass has been an RN in the operating room at Phelps Hospital. Achieving her CNOR certification in Sept 2000, she has kept this certification active for her entire eligible time in the OR.

Her capabilities are extensive, as she has served in all services from ortho, vascular, OB, spine and her current service, which is eyes. She is able to "exceed expectations" by exhibiting an ability to take on any role, whether it be circulator, scrub nurse or charge nurse. She shares her expertise by mentoring and teaching novice through expert nurses. Ms. Compass's dedication and attention to detail are unparalleled in the

OR. She is meticulous in preparing for cases and applies her experience in a manner that earns her the respect of her peers and the surgeons.

As an RN who promotes the highest level of patient and customer satisfaction, Ms. Compass is often remembered by patient who come back for laser cataract surgery on the opposite eye, many weeks after the initial surgery. She ensures that the patient remains calm and compliant during the procedure by gently explaining what is happening and what to expect. For this, she is known as “The Eye Whisperer” She shows her commitment to the community through her work with her church, where she can be seen leading the congregation in sermons and volunteering. Phelps is fortunate to have a dedicated Registered PROFESSIONAL nurse such as her.

Dr Buffa – “Andrea is an accomplished professional nurse who gives 110% of her energy to accomplish excellent patient care delivery”

WINNER WINNER WINNER

REBECCA O'BRIEN RN – ICU

My nomination for Nurse of Distinction 2020: Rebecca O'Brien. It started as a whisper, then a “hoax” and within a few days it became a pandemic that would change our lives forever. The ICU at Phelps Memorial was hit hard and fast. When the ICU quickly became saturated with COVID positive patients, we opened-up the 4-bed pediatric unit for COVID positive ventilated patients, and it soon became obvious that 5 South would be the next recipient of these patients. The nurses there had rarely dealt with ventilated patients, who also required numerous drips to adequately sedate and support them while being ventilated with increased PEEP settings. They were clearly overwhelmed and scared. It was then that one of my co-workers, went over to 5 South, surveyed the situation and immediately stepped up and rose to the challenge. She saw the incredible need and without a moment's hesitation, decided to take over the responsibility of managing 5 South and Peds. She worked relentlessly with Phelps anesthesiologists who had been recruited to care for these patients. A job they had never had to deal with, long term vented patients, but it was with her guidance and support, they rose to the occasion and managed the care of these seriously ill patients for many, many weeks. Not only did she manage these doctors but all the nurses and essential workers from other units that had been sent there to help. She trained PACU and OR nurses who had never cared for long termed ventilated patients. She was able to ease their fears of being outside their comfort zone and made an intolerable situation, tolerable. She gave them confidence and support and eventually the security they needed. They survived and became a huge addition to her and to the care of

these patients. She worked constantly, virtually never taking a day off throughout this pandemic. She rarely saw her son or even enjoy a vacation that had previously been scheduled to serve a greater need. I have gone to people who worked with her during this time and asked them for their comments. They said she was the most extraordinary nurse they had ever worked with. She made their jobs easier, and she was their every day in every way. She is a hero but first a nurse who stepped up in a time when we needed her guidance and support and undying dedication to face this pandemic. She made it possible for these COVID positive patients to survive or comforted them and their loved ones as they passed away. In the words of Mary McDermott, "She showed extraordinary courage, compassion, kindness, and patience with every patient, family member and colleague." She surpassed every expectation. She took an utterly chaotic situation and made it controlled chaos. As the pandemic began to calm down, she began working with Dr. Komorowski and all her efforts to introduce the convalescent plasma into the treatment of these COVID-19 patients. She then went on to help in the COVID testing tent, by administering the test to patients in need of that. This year she completed her master's degree in Nursing Education, and weekly instructed nursing students on 5 north. All this time, while working full time in the Intensive Care Unit. Where she also continued to support her co-workers and serve on the Pharmacy committee. As I am sure you will agree she truly is an inspiration to all of us and truly a "Nurse of Distinction".

2) Rebecca first came to Phelps hospital in 2006 as an ICU Technician, and while she was working as a technician, she completed her bachelor's degree in Nursing at Pace University. Rebecca graduated from Pace with her BSN in 2008 and immediately began her nursing career as a Telemetry nurse on 5South. While on 5South, Rebecca achieved her Progressive Care Certified Nurse (PCCN) certification. Rebecca, who is always striving for more education and more experience transferred to the ICU in 2014. Rebecca quickly and naturally assimilated to the ICU and has been a loved and respected colleague since her arrival. Rebecca's most recent accomplishments as an ICU nurse are her completion of her master's degree in Nursing Education and her Board Certification in Critical Care Nursing (CCRN). Rebecca's thirst for knowledge has not ended there and she is currently enrolled in a DNP program. Rebecca is a highly skilled and more than competent bedside nurse. She works hard every day as an advocate to her patients and a strong helping hand to her colleagues. Rebecca goes above and beyond for her patients, treating them with the love and kindness she would her own son. An example of her exemplary work would be the time she cared for a young college freshman who became so sick he was intubated here at Phelps. He was eventually transferred to a NYC hospital and would require 4 chest tubes, tracheostomy and months of extensive rehab. Rebecca did not stop being his nurse when he left Phelps, instead she kept in touch with his mother and even visited him at the NYC hospital! She stayed connected to him and the family answering questions and helping them on his way to recovery. This is not an isolated incident; Rebecca makes these strong connections with many of her patients and her love for the nursing profession leaves a lasting impact to every patient encounter. Rebecca is an excellent

nurse leader, always advocating for both the safety of patients and nursing staff. She demonstrated her leadership above and beyond during the COVID surge earlier this year by bravely helping manage the 5S turned ICU unit working with nursing staff both experience and inexperienced in critical care. In every emergent situation we experience in critical care, she is always willing to take a lead and works well with every discipline in the team. On top of all of these, she serves as the Chairperson of the medication safety council; she is a member of the organ donor committee as well as the ICU education council. Rebecca is an exceptional educator, working with nursing students at Mercy College as their clinical instructor and helping to facilitate and mold the future minds of the nursing profession. Rebecca also mentors and precepts nursing students here at Phelps as well as new hires and floor nurses who are making the transition to ICU. Rebecca is currently involved in the preceptorship of the new Critical Care Fellowship Program. She is working with one of the two nurses who were chosen for this program and will continue this for the next six months. Rebecca uses the Phelps "culture of kindness" approach to teaching and always demonstrates a positive and safe work environment. Rebecca encourages her students as well as the nurses she precepts to ask questions and to never be afraid to ask for help. Rebecca is truly deserving of the Nurse of Distinction Award. Her dedication to Phelps and the nursing profession, her commitment to nursing excellence, her unquenchable thirst of nursing knowledge, her demonstration of high-quality nursing care and most especially her caring and compassionate attitude towards her patients make her one of the greatest role models the nursing profession could ask for.