

2009 Nurses' Week Award Winners (as submitted by nominator)

Compassion – Teagan (NVU)



Compassion is a word most would attribute to the field of nursing. Those who work in the field have a deeper understanding of what compassion means, but become somewhat immune to the power of true compassion because we are exposed to it everyday. Through her attitude, outlook, and creativity, this nurse brings new meaning to compassion in nursing and helps those who work with her to deepen their understanding of what it truly means to provide care with compassion.

Caring for patients with neurological deficits can pose a challenge both to the mind and patience of a nurse. One particular patient, was severely brain injured and, due to placement issues, present on our unit for a long time. He had a pleasant attitude, but was impulsive and would frequently come to the desk, attempting to hold up his brief in one hand, to "visit" with the staff. Other times he would shout out to the staff he could visualize at the nursing pods. As you can imagine, this was a dissatisfier for other patients and their families. After traditional methods for occupying patients such as "busy aprons" failed, this nurse came up with creative solutions. My personal favorite was telling him: "I need you to fold the laundry!" She would bring the patient towels which he would organize and fold. He referred to this nurse as "Mom." He was so proud when he had finished, he would call her and show her his work. Due to the nature of his injury, she could then start the process again and keep him occupied for hours.

Another challenging patient population to care for can be the mentally ill. A patient who stayed on our unit recently was refusing medications for everyone but this nurse. This patient had become extremely violent with many of her caregivers. This nurse, again, utilized creative methods to ensure that the patient received her medication. With the medication, the patient was less violent.

This nurse not only has compassion for her patients and their families, but colleagues, as well. It is all too easy to run with the popular opinion and make decisions based on judgment, rather than collecting the facts. This nurse is someone who seeks to understand with everyone she meets. She has a positive influence on her coworkers and patients alike.

Respect – Bronica (AMU)



Bronica had a 98 year old woman under her care, who still lived independently and remained active as a volunteer. She was alert and oriented, and when her physical condition continued to decline during her hospital stay, she decided she wanted nothing more done to sustain her life. She fully understood that lack of treatment would cause her to pass away. With her sons at her bedside, her oxygen, PPN, IV's and medications (except roxanol for comfort) were all discontinued. She smiled at us and told us thank-you, and stated how she felt she was at peace. The next day her granddaughter came in, and when Bronica returned that night, some of her treatment had been restarted. The patient had told Bronica that she restarted treatment because of her granddaughter, but admitted that she knew it really wasn't the right choice because it wasn't what she wanted. She then asked Bronica to help her die. Bronica, being a patient advocate, went to the Community room where the granddaughter was sitting and brought her to her grandmother's bedside. She helped facilitate a conversation between the two of them, and with Bronica's support, she was able to tell her granddaughter what she really wanted. Shortly afterward, treatment was again stopped. The patient hugged

Bronica and thanked her for her support in meeting her needs. Early the next morning, with Bronica and family members at her bedside, the patient peacefully passed away as she had wished for. Bronica was instrumental in assisting this patient in self-determination of care, and she was able to die with dignity and by her own will. Bronica also supported family members as they mourned their loss.

Expertise – Dorothy (PICU)



Z is regarded as an expert by all who work with her. In the many years Z has been a Pediatric Transport nurse, there have been many ill or injured children she has transported from the region's patient care providers (such as emergency departments) to Bronson. These are situations that require autonomy, competency in advanced skills, critical thinking, evidence-based practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration. When not on a transport, Z is available and always willing to assist the physicians, nurses and patients during admissions and with procedures. She is an excellent preceptor and teacher for novice staff as well.

Z participates in professional activities as a past member of the unit shared governance council, as a member for many years of the planning committee for the annual Perspectives in Pediatrics conference, and when the Bronson Regional Coordinator asks for someone to present education in the region, Z is often that person. Z is an energetic proponent for process improvement such as assisting the transport team write best practice guidelines and in choosing appropriate patient care equipment.

Z is a PALS Lead Instructor (Pediatric Advanced Life Support) and has been for many years. She says, "The reason I like to teach PALS is, I want to inspire the person to run toward a child who is in trouble, not away!" and "I am always learning from the other instructors and professionals who attend the PALS class, I consider it an honor to be able to teach". Z's expertise and positive attitude were recognized when she was asked and agreed to be PALS Regional Faculty, a volunteer leadership position in the American Heart Association. In this role, D travels to observe and audit PALS courses taught in other health care facilities.

We are grateful to have a person of Z's qualities at Bronson and hope she knows how much she is appreciated.

Pride – Chekesha (VIP)



B, RN, BSN, started at Bronson as a Nurse Extern on GMU in 2001. She graduated from Kalamazoo Valley Community College in 02, with her ADN. After graduating, she continued with at Bronson as a VIP RN, supporting all Bronson MedSurg units, maintaining all competencies. In 07 she completed her BSN from Spring Arbor College. She is hoping to start on her MSN with an Education focus in 2010.

As her professional journey continued, B added precepting to her nursing practice and currently works with externs as well as orienting VIP RNs. Her precepting involved supporting Orientees to learn the strategies and routines that make floating successful between VIP Staff and Unit Staff. B also acts as faculty with an area community colleges, managing the clinical learning activities with groups of nursing students.

B is also involved in her Unit's Shared Governance and as an active member at the Divisional Level Shared Governance. This work has opened her eyes to the broader world of nursing at Bronson?. she says ?I no longer just do my hours and go home; I'm now on the alert to keep improving things.? Her shared governance activities include fostering the placement of VIP Staff RNs with Unit Councils. These nurses exchange information about Unit and VIP changes and increases the effectiveness of the floating staff. She

is also engaged with the Professional Practice Council to establish standards and consistency for frequency of monitoring or re-checking abnormal vital signs. This work will lead to protocols for when to initiate Rapid Response.

Diabetes education with non-compliant patients is something B has a passion for and does well. She recalls a patient who was discouraged and labeled non-compliant. He was angry because he felt he had to restrict his activities with his family so he could do the testing and medicating. B worked with him to clarify his goals then fit learning about diabetes into his lifestyle. He taught back about how he would be plan to adapt by using a bathroom for privacy for his testing and medicating if he wasn't at home. After she shared information about how OutPatient Diabetes Education would help him help fit his care needs into his lifestyle, he was enthusiastic about calling for a time there. She says she likes to use the phrase: "Diabetes doesn't stop you from living. You stop you from living." Her patient was discharged looking forward to going to an upcoming family wedding.

With any learner, B asks first about what they want or need to learn. She then adjusts her feedback to fit the learner's goal. "This was hard for me when I started precepting, but it meets with good success, so I've learned to be successful. I use it with students, orientees and patients."

B credits her success to people at Bronson who have mentored her. These include Nurse Managers, Preceptors, friends and advisors. Bronson's flexibility has helped B make the time to work with a nursing student clinical group as well as work as a Bronson Staff RN. Tuition Assistance also helped support her efforts to obtain her BSN.

The obvious pride that B has in her nursing practice at Bronson makes her a wonderful candidate and model for our Nursing Pride award. She recognizes her own growth to become a powerful professional and role model. She also has pride in the way she and Bronson have partnered to provide the best patient care and education. Thank you for considering this Bronson nurse for the Hazel Latondress Award for Nursing Pride.

Impact – Laurie (ED)



This story meets every single one of the Hazel Latondress Professional Nursing Awards but am nominating Laurie for IMPACT, as I believe the IMPACT award is one of the hardest to achieve especially on a community wide basis. Laurie has achieve impact on that level.

Laurie Sweet is currently an ER nurse with a long history with Bronson. She was a PICU nurse and also the manager or PICU many years ago. For about the last 15 years, Laurie has worked in the ER. I believe Laurie's story of service is deserving of the IMPACT award because not only has she contributed to clinical excellence, cost effectiveness, efficiency in care delivery and safety, she has had an impact on nursing practice and the community at large.

Laurie came to the ER approximately 15 years ago with a Pediatric background. The ER welcomed her expertise in Peds, as this was before Child Life Specialist and a focus on peds in the ER. Laurie brought with her the pediatric expertise and began changing practice. Specific example: She brought EMLA cream almost 6 years ago to the ER for Pediatric patients. She made many small little practice changes related to peds one by one. She continued influencing practice by precepting and mentoring staff in the care of the pediatric patient. Preparing to write this nomination, while interviewing Laurie's director, it was discussed how difficult it is to work in the ER for a long period of time. The stress of the work environment takes it toll on every single nurse who works the ER. Laurie was no different. She realized the need for a different balance in her life and she has found the right blend. She made the move in ER to "fast track or the gold team as it is now referred" and found the SANE program. By finding ways to change herself in a very hectic chaotic environment, she also found a way to change the lives of others. This is why she is being nominated. Laurie began working with the Sexual Assault Nurse Examine (SANE) program while working in the ER. She saw how women who were sexually assaulted received their treatment in the ER. The event that brought

the patient to the ER was traumatic enough but now once in the ER, the woman needed to be seen by the Medical Social Worker, a physician who was typically male, a nurse and the police and others. The woman had to tell her story multiple times to each of these different people. To top off the event, if the woman was in the clothes she was assaulted in, we took those for evidence, and gave her paper scrubs to leave the ER. Laurie saw a better way and it was through her leadership she worked toward changing the many processes associated with a sexual assault victim. A position opened at the YWCA for the program director of the SANE program. Laurie works in both places, the YWCA and Bronson ER. Let me tell you a bit more about what the SANE program now does. Laurie worked with the Police Department to bring the sexual assault victims directly to the YWCA. A SANE nurse sees the woman. Laurie is a SANE nurse and there are about 5 others who are trained. This process allows the SANE nurse to perform the sexual assault examine which I learned can take up to 4 hours to perform. The woman only has to tell her story once-so important for someone who has just experienced probably the most traumatic event in their life. The SANE nurse also triages the woman for additional injuries and will involve the ER when appropriate. To tell the rest of the story, I would like to format it in the criteria for IMPACT.

Clinical Excellence- Laurie contributions to the ER are vast. She is no longer a peds expert but is a TNCC (Trauma Nurse Core Curriculum) instructor. Her director did not know if she was a current ACLS instructor but in the past has been an ACLS instructor for many years. She is certified in PALS, ACLS, ENPC, and Advanced Trauma. Laurie is also a member of her professional organization –ENA (Emergency Nurse Association) and is not just a member-she is an active member, serving as a state delegate at the national conference for many years. Laurie has demonstrated her clinical excellence by previous achievement on the clinical ladder.

Laurie is an expert in the sexual assault nurse exam program. When a rape victim presents to the ER, it is crime so evidence must be collected and the integrity of the evidence must remain intact. Through Laurie's leadership of moving the sexual assault exam to the YWCA, the chain of evidence is much cleaner and remains intact.

Cost Effectiveness- Moving this process to a quiet, much more private environment is not only a good thing for the patient, it is a good thing for a busy ER that is frequently backed up. As mentioned above, the sexual assault exam may take up to four hours. The other aspect of cost effectiveness is court time. The nurse involved in the sexual assault exam will be called to testify. Limiting the number of nurses who perform the exam accomplishes multiple things, first they know the process for collecting and maintaining the evidence, second, they know how to testify in court, third, the lawyers have a very difficult time breaking down system. These nurses keep the evidence system intact for the patient.

Efficiency in care delivery- As mentioned under cost effectiveness, the inherent efficiencies that Laurie has brought to the SANE system is evident. The ER is an ever-changing environment and over the last several years, Laurie has participated in numerous Kazien events associated with ER and specifically with compartmentalization. She brings her ideas to the events and works to change and improve the flow and processes in the ER.

Healing Environment- Laurie's leadership to improve the care for the sexual assault victim is apparent not just by changing the environment in which the exam occurs but she has worked to change the whole approach of the patient. The program promotes dignity and respect and is patient centered. A busy chaotic ER is not a healing environment but the SANE program provides more than just a change in location. The SANE nurse receives special training to care for the emotional needs and for continued treatment they connect the victims with the sexual assault counseling center which helps heal the deep wounds no one can see.

Safety-Bronson defines safe patient care as: availability of clinical information, clarity of management plans, coordination of communication with patients and families and consistent implementation and execution of diagnostic and treatment plans (Bronson Innovations for Excellence-2009). The work Laurie has achieved by changing how sexual assault victims are cared for in our community has accomplished each one of these objectives! Laurie's impact has been far reaching. The process changes Laurie has achieved are not just for Kalamazoo, woman from all of our surrounding counties and community hospitals utilize this program.

Leadership – Marla (Endoscopy/Radiology Nursing/IR)



This person is an amazing, transformational leader. She has high expectations for herself and everyone she works with and leads by example every day. She is fair and gathers all available information before making a decision. She makes herself available and is found to be very approachable by all. She is kind and considerate and I feel lucky to know and work with her. She is a wonderful, positive representative of Bronson's values in everything she does. Personally she has been my mentor and I have grown and done things in my nursing career that I previously would never have

dreamed. I think she is a fabulous role model and deserves to be recognized. Thank you.

This was a difficult nomination for me to write, not because it is difficult to say nice things about this candidate, but because Bronson is blessed with many phenomenal leaders who will be nominated as well.

I want my nomination to stand out, really be listened to and be valued even by people who do not have the opportunity to work with her every day. Hopefully this nomination will reflect one of the many things I've learned from Marla in the past two years... when you are trying to communicate with many people, try to find a common language that is meaningful to everyone involved.

My common language for this nomination is the Nursing Professional Model of Care. The Nursing Professional Model of Care for this hospital provides insight into the attributes of a professional nurse that are valued in our culture. Leadership is summarized as personal accountability, coaching, coordination of care, flexibility, promotion of a healthy work environment, loyalty, mentoring, professional organization participation, risk taking, shared decision making and team building. In reviewing and reflecting on this description, I believe that Marla has embraced this model of care in her leadership style. Through her mentoring she has helped this department embrace and value these qualities as well.

Personal accountability, risk taking - In learning how to manage procedural areas versus inpatient units, Marla acknowledges that she is on a steep learning curve. She manages this by taking every opportunity to learn about the areas she manages, and uses her unit experts as resources in decision making. If there is an issue with a decision that has been made, she is willing to hear any concerns, and is very approachable. She is conscientious about closing the loop on issues that do come up and this has led to improved trust and respect from the physicians and her colleagues in the department.

Coaching, mentoring and team building - Marla is very available to her staff. She spends a large quantity of her time meeting with staff one on one, or in small groups. Most of these meetings are about helping staff members develop professional goals and planning with them how to get there, or coaching them in handling interpersonal conflicts and communication. Even in difficult conversations, she encourages people to be accountable for their actions and helps them to find a positive take away from the situation.

Shared decision making - Marla believes in shared governance. She has empowered her USG to address issues like scheduling, LCD policies and practice issues. She is very involved in the Divisional Nursing Council and her belief in the value of this council translates well to the staff.

Professional organization involvement - Marla is a member of MONE and GLARIN.

Promoting a healthy work environment - Marla's involvement in the management of the Radiology department has helped to bring a nursing perspective to the decisions that are made. Through her expertise and professional behavior, Marla has been an excellent advocate for nursing and patients within Radiology, she is respected by the physicians, other managers and staff alike.

She has championed several teamwork building exercises within the department. These exercises have led to better communication among staff, improved staff satisfaction surveys and improved patient outcomes and satisfaction scores.

I sincerely hope that you will consider Marla for this honor. It is hard to describe what she manages to accomplish daily as a nursing manager in a traditionally non nursing unit. I believe that as Interventional Radiology grows, the nurses and radiology techs will grow along with it, in large part thanks to Marla's influence and support.



Rising Star – Rebecca (OSU)

A gifted nurse is a rare commodity. So having worked with one for the past year I feel compelled to acknowledge it broadly. Rebecca Brown of the Orthopedic Surgery Unit clearly exhibits qualities the Nursing Week Awards honor. Showing promise unique among nurses of her experience level, she is a particularly qualified Rising Star.

The RN's journey from novice to expert is often slow and many times rocky. Rebecca's transition, in contrast, shortened through a combination of fundamental intelligence, forceful advocacy, and inherent "Nurse-Sense", is proving to be precipitous. Showing a rare and impossible-to-teach intellectual curiosity, she identified nursing concepts early in her orientation that often take months or years to recognize. Her retention of so many of those early concepts continues to serve positively her practice and her patient's outcomes.

Rebecca's medical knowledge is broad. Her ability to draw on it as it relates to the Nursing Process is substantial. Her implementation of the Process at bedside is precise. That this is true of a RN with roughly one-year's experience is remarkable.

Her instincts, another intangible skill, are particularly acute. Whether it has been observing early physical symptoms that required prompt medical attention, or slight social cues that required the holding of a hand, Rebecca's intuition is exceptional. I have had many opportunities to watch Rebecca's patients benefit in ways subtle and overt, profound and ordinary.

One occasion that bears repeating involved Rebecca's early association of vital signs with bedside assessment to facilitate the early diagnosis of what appeared to be a pulmonary embolism. The early symptoms, subtle yet classic, prompted Rebecca to call Rapid Response. While Rapid Response was on the way, we were able to draw labs, get an EKG, and prepare the patient for a CT scan that later proved positive for a PE that could be treated early. There is no doubt Rebecca's assessment skills coupled with learned instinct served that patient particularly well.

Rebecca is an advocate of unusual skill. I have seen her, at the expense of her own personal comfort, stand her ground to her patient's benefit. When one phone call goes unanswered a second or third follows. The ways her dogged advocacy has specifically benefited patient outcomes include timely discharges, better pain management, truly informed consent, and early conflict resolution.

Commonly sacrificing her time to the profit of patients, families, and colleagues, Rebecca, a selfless teammate, is an optimistic influence on all members of the OSU community. When working in the Charge role it is a comfort to know Rebecca is scheduled. She accepts difficult admissions with an openness that speaks loudly to her confidence and professional pride. I know that I can call on her in difficult situations to help other team members.

A recent example of Rebecca's selfless ingenuity involved a patient's young son that was going to have to spend his birthday at Bronson because his dad was hospitalized with little warning. Rebecca, together with the patient, came up with a plan to help make that birthday as happy as possible. A surprise birthday cake was delivered to that patient's room so the family could celebrate the birthday together.

Perhaps the highest honor a Nurse can earn is the respect their colleagues. On that account, universally liked and respected as a person and professional nurse,

Rebecca is a highly valued member of the OSU team. The greatest praise I can provide is that I would like to think I could be, on my best day, a nurse of Rebecca's caliber and promise.

She deserves hospital-wide recognition as an exceptional Nurse.