

Baird Wins Top Honor

Life Care presented its highest award for performance in nursing to Maria Baird, the director of nursing at Life Care Center of Melbourne, Florida, in ceremonies Monday evening during the annual DON meeting. Susan Biro, director of nursing at Life Care Center of Kona, Hawaii, was named the Company-Wide Director of Nursing of the Year.

Baird is personally committed to quality care, spending time one-on-one with residents who have painful or terminal illnesses. She demonstrates patience, fairness, consistency and calmness that endears her to all her staff. On one occasion, when returning from the Life Care Journey orientation program at 11:30 p.m., she drove straight to the facility to pick up a night shift for a nurse who had called in sick at the last minute, and then worked straight through the next day with an upbeat, energetic demeanor.

Biro enabled Life Care Center of Kona to achieve a deficiency-free state survey in 2006. She promotes quality care and a positive interaction with patients' families, resulting in excellent customer satisfaction surveys and a response rate as high as 70 percent during the past two years.

Winners of the Division Directors of Nursing of the Year were: Darla Parton, Life Care Center of Morristown, Eastern Division; Linda Filan, Life Care Center of Valparaiso, Heartland Division; Kathleen Nesbitt, Life Care Center of Littleton, Mountain States Division; Michael Magnoni, Rivergate Terrace, Northeast Division; Sheila Werner, Life Care Center of Bothell, Northwest Division; Benay Kass, The Gardens Court, Southeast Division; and Tracy Brantley, Life Care Center of Paradise Valley (Nevada), Southwest Division.

Honored for receiving deficiency-free surveys in nursing were Susan Clark, Garden Terrace Alzheimer's Center of Excellence in Fort Worth, Texas; Elizabeth Harmon, Life Care Center of Banner Elk, North Carolina; Jocelyn Biggs, Life Care Center of Plano, Texas; Stacey Demps, Life Care Center of Sparta, Tennessee; Theresa Zick, Wooldridge Place Nursing Center, Corpus Christi, Texas; Susan Neal, Life Care Center of Brookfield, Missouri; Barbara de la Torre, Life Care Center of Sullivan, Missouri; Susan Biro, Life Care Center of Kona, Hawaii; Robert Albu, Life Care Center of Medina, Ohio; Susana Macary, Life Care Center of Merrimack Valley, North Billerica, Massachusetts; Wendy McCormack, Life Care Center of Raynham, Massachusetts; Ellen Snyder, Lake Vue Gardens Convalescent Center, Kirkland, Washington; Alice Williams, Life Care Center of Pullayup, Washington; and Sherri Bell, Valley West Health Care Center, Eugene, Oregon.

Also recognized were the directors of nursing who had achieved Joint Commission accreditation for the first time, and those who were certified by NADONA.

We congratulate all of our winners, and we salute them for their commitment to excellence and the standards they set.

--Beecher Hunter