

## Costandi Top Winner

Karin Costandi, the director of nursing at Life Care Center of Orange Park, Fla., has been named the winner of the Mary Denton Award, the highest honor given to a nurse by Life Care Centers of America. The presentation Monday evening came during a ceremony honoring excellence in performance by directors of nursing gathered in Cleveland from around the country for their annual meeting.

Shelly DeBerry, director of nursing at Life Care Center of Tullahoma, Tenn., received the Company-Wide Director of Nursing Award for 2010. The top two awards led a parade of tributes bestowed by Life Care Chairman Forrest L. Preston, President Beecher Hunter, Corporate Medical Director Dr. Kenneth Scott, and Senior Vice President of Clinical Services Dee McCarthy.

Costandi has led her staff at Orange Park to provide excellent care, as demonstrated by several state surveys with no direct resident-care deficiencies. She has supported other area Life Care facilities with training and advice. She has lowered the turnover rate at the facility and is a chief reason for high staff morale. John Driggers, executive director of Life Care Center of Orange Park, said Costandi “has personally cared for residents, including providing support for one gentleman long after his discharge, staying by his side and holding his hand – along with his daughter – until he passed away.”

DeBerry also significantly reduced the turnover rate at her facility in Tullahoma.



*Shelly DeBerry is the 2010 Division-Wide DON of the Year Award Winner.*

She set high standards for nursing staff and works alongside them to provide the best resident care possible. Kenneth Eisele, executive director of Life Care Center of Tullahoma, said DeBerry “had the courage and skills to jump from a position as assistant director of nursing to interim director of nursing after only three months at the facility – and then on to director.”

Divisional director of nursing of the year awards for 2010 were won by Rena Casanova, Wooldridge Place Nursing Center in Corpus Christi, Texas, Eastern Division; Elaine Rathsack, Life Care Center of Fort Wayne, Ind., Heartland Division; Valerie Veraldi, Villa Manor Care Center in Lakewood,



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Colo., Mountain States Division; Susana Macary, Life Care Center of Merrimack Valley in North Billerica, Mass., Northeast Division; Carol McIver, Life Care Center of Lewiston, Idaho, Northwest Division; Susan Paules, Darcy Hall of Life Care in West Palm Beach, Fla., Southeast Division; and Teresita Daiz, Lake Forest Nursing Center in Lake Forest, Calif., Southwest Division.

Honored for deficiency-free surveys in nursing were Sheila Phillips, Alameda Oaks Nursing Center in Corpus Christi, Texas; John Sitienei, Life Care Center of Plano, Texas; Brandy Rahi, Renaissance Park Multi-Care Center in Fort Worth, Texas; Michelle Yosick, Life Care Center of Elkhorn, Neb.; Jenell Burger, Life Care Center of LaGrange, Ind.; Elizabeth Buchanan, The Lane House in Crawfordsville, Ind.; Barbara Dolloff, Life Care Center of Acton, Mass.; Karen Brady, Life Care Center of Attleboro, Mass.; Susana Macary, Life Care Center of Merrimack Valley in North



*Beecher Hunter and Forrest Preston honored the current and former senior vice presidents of Clinical Services (left to right): Dee McCarthy, Mike Carson and Susie Hutchings.*

Billerica, Mass.; Nancy LaRock, Life Care Center of Nashoba Valley in Littleton, Mass.; Mary Ellen Forster, Life Care Center of the North Shore in Lynn, Mass.; Joanna Ritchey, Life Care Center of Raynham, Mass.; Kathleen Hunter, Life Care Center of Stoneham, Mass.; Patricia Sherman, Life Care Center of West Bridgewater, Mass.; and Ellen Snyder, Life Care Center of Kirkland, Wash.

As part of the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of annual meetings of directors of nursing, Susie Hutchings and Mike Carson, former senior vice presidents of clinical services, returned to join Dee McCarthy, who currently serves in that position, to reflect on memories of people and events of past gatherings.

We are proud of the outstanding leadership of our directors of nursing and those who guide them in regional, divisional and corporate roles for the exceptional clinical services they provide to our residents.

– Beecher Hunter