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TENNESSEE HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
2011
AWARDS PROGRAM

November 3, 2011 • Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center • Nashville, TN
THA 2011 Awards of Excellence

Distinguished Service Award

James Brexler
President & Chief Executive Officer
Erlanger Health System
Chattanooga, TN

Jim Brexler was honored for providing invaluable leadership and administrative expertise in the delivery of health care at Erlanger Health System and throughout the state of Tennessee.

With more than 30 years of expertise in healthcare administration, Brexler has served as CEO at Erlanger since 2004. His mix of government, academic and private sector experience has proven to be the perfect match for the expansive health system. Moreover, he has devoted his skills and expertise in healthcare administration not only to the challenges faced by Erlanger, but also to those faced by the community, region and state.

Since arriving at Erlanger, Brexler has successfully guided the organization into becoming one of the state’s premier health systems. Among his many accomplishments are establishing a model compliance program, developing a board continuing education program, and stabilizing and strengthening financial and clinical operations through the initiation of strategic initiatives, comprehensive organizational restructuring and operational quality improvement.

Brexler also has been a strong advocate of the health system’s role within the region as a teaching hospital along side the University of Tennessee, College of Medicine, Chattanooga (UTCOMC). He actively involves himself in medical education as well, currently serving as adjunct assistant professor at UTCOMC.

As a healthcare leader, Brexler has long been an advocate on behalf of Erlanger, statewide healthcare policies and national healthcare reform. He served as chairman of the Tennessee Hospital Association (THA) board of directors from 2009-2010 and currently serves as immediate past chairman. He also has chaired the association’s insurance reform task force, patient safety council and THA Solutions Group board of directors. He received the American Hospital Association’s (AHA) 2011 Grassroots Champion Award for Tennessee earlier this year and currently serves as a member of the AHA President’s Forum for Health System Leaders.

He also is one of three coauthors of the book *Lean Six Sigma for Healthcare; A Senior Leader Guide to Improving Cost and Thoughtput.*

He received a bachelor’s degree in political science at Westminster College, Fulton, MO, and a master’s degree in public affairs at North Carolina State University, Raleigh.
State Representative Vance Dennis, Savannah, was honored for his support and advocacy on behalf of hospitals and on healthcare issues.

This year, Dennis sponsored landmark legislation, formally called the Tennessee Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2011, which completely rewrote and restored the hospitals’ and physicians’ peer review privileges in Tennessee. The purpose of the legislation was to rectify a Supreme Court decision overturning a major portion of the statute that made discussions of healthcare providers’ patient safety efforts through a peer review process that is privileged and not subject to discovery.

Dennis also shepherded Governor Bill Haslam’s tort reform legislation through the House this year. THA was part of a 75-member coalition, representing healthcare and business interests, which worked with Dennis to ensure passage of this historic legislation. In addition, he is a strong supporter of the hospital coverage assessment.

Representing the 71st district of Tennessee, which encompasses McNairy, Hardin and a portion of Decatur counties, Dennis was elected to the General Assembly in 2008. He serves as the secretary of the House Judiciary Committee, vice chair of the General Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee and a member of the House Health and Human Resources Committee.

Dennis has been a partner at the law firm of McGee and Dennis for 10 years. He received a bachelor’s degree in agricultural economics at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a law degree at the University of Tennessee College Of Law.
Sheri Smith was recognized for her leadership in patient safety initiatives at East Tennessee Children’s Hospital, Knoxville.

While attending a meeting of the Tennessee Center for Patient Safety in 2007, she became an early committed supporter of the center’s efforts to reduce central line-associated bloodstream infections. Her passion and hands-on leadership sparked a culture change in the neonatal intensive care unit and pediatric intensive care unit at the hospital. The NICU staff success in reducing CLABSI is reflected in the reduction of central line infections from 21 in 2008 to six infections in 2010. Their work was used as a template in developing a statewide collaborative.

The PICU has achieved similar success by reducing CLABSI from seven infections in 2008 to two infections in 2010. The NICU and PICU have had zero infections in 2011 so far. This important work has been used by children’s hospital to expand central line “bundles” to all inpatients, outpatients and home health patients.

Smith has been employed at ETCH since graduating from nursing school in 1985. She has held various positions at the hospital before being named nursing director for critical care services. She is responsible for NICU, PICU, transport, trauma and children’s neonatal services, as well as a number of special projects.

She is an active participant in THA’s Tennessee Center for Patient Safety and Tennessee Initiative for Perinatal Quality Care programs to improve patient care.
Reginald Coopwood, MD, was honored for exemplifying passionate and effective leadership in the healthcare community while serving as chief executive officer at the Regional Medical Center at Memphis.

Coopwood’s contributions to the fiscal, strategic and operational matters at Regional Medical Center at Memphis are creating a vibrant hospital with a focus on providing accessible and quality health services to patients. During his tenure, he has directed a financial and operational turnaround that has resulted in significant improvements in the health system’s financial position, core operating processes, quality and customer service.

With his unique experience in progressive healthcare management, Coopwood endeared himself to his employees by coining the phrase, “It’s a new day at The MED.” He led by example, fostering an environment of friendliness to patients and guests and a sense of accountability among the staff.

Creating a fiscally strong organization also has been a top priority for Coopwood. He, along with the leadership team, has been responsible for notable improvements. The hospital has undergone a major campus streetscape project and patient rooms have been renovated. His accomplishments also are complimented by his commitment to the overall health, well-being and quality of life for the entire community.

A member of the Tennessee Hospital Association (THA) board of directors and chairman of the THA Council on Diversity, Coopwood also is a member of the board of directors for Qsource, Community Health Charities of Tennessee, MidSouth e-Health Alliance and National Association of Public Health and Hospitals Institute, and a member of the American Hospital Association’s Metropolitan Governing Council.

The founder and senior partner of a successful surgical practice in Nashville, Coopwood served as chief of surgery at Nashville General Hospital at Meharry before being named chief medical officer in 2000. Five years later, he was named chief executive officer at Metropolitan Nashville Hospital Authority, a position he held until moving to his current job in 2010.

He received a bachelor’s degree in general studies at Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL, and a medical degree at Meharry Medical College, Nashville.
Toni Buchanan was recognized for her competence, compassion and ethics as chief financial officer of Unicoi County Memorial Hospital.

In today’s business and economic environment, hospitals need top-notch finance professionals when pursuing their strategic objectives. Buchanan is not only an outstanding CFO with a keen financial sense, she also has the ability to turn challenges into opportunities for growth. She has empowered the CEO and hospital board with information, allowing the hospital to remain an independent, stand-alone rural facility.

While the administration relies on her wisdom to assist with decisions that are necessary to guide the hospital now and into the future, Buchanan brings more than just financial abilities to her position as CFO. Her skills as a leader also are exceptional. She handles difficult situations with remarkable patience and admirable tact.

Buchanan also brings unquestioned character, integrity and the desire to help others in an unselfish manner. She has helped set up several health fairs and educational programs for senior citizens, assisting with financial needs, along with preparing financial data for a charitable foundation. She has proven to be a capable leader for the accounting, patient accounts and information technology departments and has served as a clinic board member.

Last year, Buchanan worked full-time while acquiring her MBA and graduated with a 4.0 grade-point average (summa cum laude). She received a bachelor of business administration degree with an accounting emphasis at East Tennessee State University and a master’s of business administration degree at Liberty University.
Russell Chesney, MD, was honored for his instrumental role in shaping the care provided at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital and children’s hospitals across the country.

Joining Le Bonheur in 1988, Chesney is the longest standing department chair of pediatrics in the U.S. He has practiced as a pediatric nephrology expert for 38 years and leads a national nephrology research network. His research has contributed to the fields of pediatric nutrition, nephrology, genetics and metabolism. He also has been fundamental in the recruitment, mentoring and retention of more than 100 faculty members in the department of pediatrics.

Colleagues call Chesney “the consummate pediatric clinician-scientist.” Throughout his career, he has pursued the highest ideals for research, clinical care and education, as well as advocacy and community service, bringing honor and prestige to the practice of pediatrics in Tennessee. Yet he maintains a sincere humility, easy approachability and a sense of humor that few accomplished professionals can match. He is simply “the best of the best” as it relates to service, teaching and mentorship.

In addition to his responsibilities at Le Bonheur and UTHSC, Chesney has been a major supporter and partner of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, Memphis. He has helped provide St. Jude with different subspecialists, with the recruitment of top-notch physicians and participated in the development of cutting edge therapies.

After a 22-year career at Le Bonheur and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Chesney plans to retire after the next chairman of the department of pediatrics has been named. He recently received the 2011 John Howland Medal, the highest honor of the American Pediatric Society. He also has received awards from the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Society of Pediatric Nephrology and the Ira Greifer Award from the International Pediatric Nephrology Association, the organization’s highest honor.

He received an AB in biology at Harvard College and a medical degree with honors at the University of Rochester.
Joan Frierson was honored for her exceptional leadership, insight and knowledge in all of her work at Memorial Health Care System.

Frierson’s involvement with Memorial began almost 20 years ago when her mother was a patient at the hospital. The caring spirit of the nursing staff and physicians inspired her to volunteer as a way to give back. Her tireless dedication was recognized by hospital leadership and she was asked to serve on Memorial’s board of directors, a seat she has held for almost 18 years. During this period, she has served two terms as board chairman.

With her understanding of governance, Frierson has arranged education for the entire board, wanting them to understand their role in the oversight of clinical care. The board helped define the system’s quality matrix and measures performance monthly to be sure it is maintaining its high standards.

During her tenure, Frierson’s vision, leadership and undying devotion helped shape Memorial’s growth and plans for the future. She helped guide the hospital through important changes in leadership and numerous visionary decisions. She has provided strategic planning and leadership for a number of projects, been instrumental in fundraising, and has helped provide essential continuity during critical periods of transition. She also has an incredible gift for leadership, an unwavering commitment to the Memorial mission, and the ability to listen and share ideas with tremendous insight, eloquence and grace.

Frierson was a key component in the decision to purchase North Park Hospital in 1998, which improved care and provided a faith-based option for individuals in north Hamilton county. She also helped spearhead the certificate of need approval for “Mission Forward,” Memorial’s historic $330 million expansion in 2008. In addition, she works closely with the Memorial Foundation and assists in major fundraising campaigns.

Frierson received the 2009 humanitarian award, an annual award given to an individual who demonstrates outstanding leadership in the Chattanooga community.

She received a bachelor's degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
Harrison Turner, MD, was honored for his lifetime commitment to improving heart care.

Upon completing his medical residency and fellowship, Turner set out to find a small town to begin his practice, and eventually landed in Kingsport. The founder of Cardiovascular Associates (CVA), which is known today as the Wellmont CVA Heart Institute, Turner has been able to provide top-quality, low cost cardiovascular services close to home since beginning the practice more than 30 years ago. His hard work and dedication have resulted in a nationally recognized cardiovascular program meeting the needs of thousands in northeast Tennessee.

Today, the heart institute consists of 36 double board-certified cardiovascular specialists and 20 non-physician practitioners, serving more than 50,000 active patients annually in nine office locations and eight hospitals. Turner's vision to meet the community's needs has allowed his practice to become the largest cardiology practice in the region.

A highly respected member of the medical staff, Turner is known not only for his excellent clinical skills, but also for his compassion and understanding of the needs of his patients and their families.

Turner selflessly volunteers his time for organizations such as Friends in Need Health Care, providing medical and dental services for working uninsured patients with no means of obtaining insurance. He also assists the Crossroads Medical Mission, a free clinic and Christian mission bringing health care to individuals in need in southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee.

He received a bachelor's degree at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a medical degree at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville.
Charles Mascioli, MD, was honored for establishing a critical care program that has greatly impacted the lives of patients and families at Methodist Medical Center (MMC).

Mascioli joined the medical staff at MMC in 2006 to lead the development of the intensivist program for the organization. Since then, the intensive care unit (ICU) mortality rate at the hospital has dropped by nearly 50 percent, the ventilator-associated pneumonia rate has declined to be almost non-existent, and the catheter-related bloodstream infection rate across the hospital has dropped to less than half of what it was four years ago.

With an emphasis on quality care, Mascioli has brought the latest in critical care medicine to the community, including numerous protocols, such as the HOPE protocol using hypothermia treatment for cardiac arrest patients and the RESCUE ME protocol for sepsis treatment, that have resulted in many patient lives being saved that would have not been possible in prior years. His leadership, knowledge and compassion have led these programs to their current level of success.

In January 2011, Mascioli assumed the role of hospital chief of staff. His keen understanding of the importance of communication allows him to keep the medical staff apprised of activities affecting the practice of medicine at MMC. He has been called “the true epitome of the philosophy of seeing how something can be done instead of why it can’t be done.”

He received a bachelor’s degree in biology at Franklin and Marshall College and a medical degree at the University of Texas at Houston.
Alan Drake was recognized for his leadership at White County Community Hospital.

For the past 24 years, Drake has maintained one of the busiest solo primary care practices in White county, making him a rare breed through all of the changes that have occurred in the healthcare industry. He has been extremely involved in the hospital through various positions on the medical staff, including chief of staff and a member of the board of trustees. He also has been the physician advisor for the hospital for over five years.

Drake’s leadership style has also proved valuable to the hospital’s physician leadership group (PLG), which helps strategically guide the hospital. The group was formed to bridge the communication gap between physicians and the hospital, and Drake was unanimously chosen to chair the group.

In 2009, during the hospital’s struggle to survive, Drake helped organize the physicians and eventually formed a group that would purchase a small portion of the facility. He was elected to be one of three physicians on the joint venture steering committee, which is ultimately charged with the decisionmaking for the physician side of the joint venture.

Known for his decisionmaking abilities, caring attitude and commitment to patients, Drake is very active in the community, performing athletic physicals free of charge to students in the White County School District. In addition, he has participated in six healthcare mission trips to various countries.

He received a bachelor’s degree in zoology and chemistry at Olivet Nazarene University, Kankakee, IL, and a medical degree at Wayne State University School of Medicine, Detroit, MI.
Don Hutson was recognized for developing a system to better facilitate communication between a family and the care team at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital.

As the parent of a critically ill child, Hutson, an industrial engineer at International Paper, spent many days at Le Bonheur. After his son, Davis, passed away in 2008, he and his wife began volunteering at the hospital. Hutson soon stepped up to serve as chair of the Family Partners Council’s Quality and Safety Subcommittee. He and his family learned it takes a strong partnership between the parents and medical community to navigate the challenges of a complicated medical case. His perspective as a parent of a former Le Bonheur patient reminds the hospital to keep families at the forefront when making decisions.

While Hutson has worked on several quality improvement initiatives at Le Bonheur, one stands out. The issue involved a letter one Le Bonheur family wrote to Meri Armour, hospital president and CEO, regarding concerns about a communication breakdown between the hospital’s medical staff and their family. After reading the letter, Hutson began working on a plan to fix the communication gap. He helped form a committee representing all levels of the care team at Le Bonheur. The committee now is working on the tools to help the medical team take the emotional temperature of family members throughout the day, and the staff will learn how to address issues that surface using resources available to them.

Hutson brings a voice to hospital quality meetings that previously was lacking. He knows about the wide range of emotions families can feel while their children are hospitalized. His insights have helped Le Bonheur create tools to better communicate with parents.

He received a degree in industrial engineering at the University of Tennessee.
Kiyhon Kim was recognized for his remarkable humanitarian efforts to assist those affected by natural disasters as part of the shelter box response team (SRT).

Kim joined SRT with a desire to help those in the most desperate situations. Becoming a member of SRT was not a decision to be taken lightly. With only 150 members worldwide, the SRT provides boxes with emergency shelter and other life-saving supplies to the most needy disaster survivors around the globe. He has since traveled to Haiti, the Philippines, Uganda, Guatemala and Honduras.

However, SRT is not Kim’s only missionary work. Upon returning from Haiti following the devastating earthquake of 2010, he helped raise over $30,000 for the disaster relief charity. That fall, he also paid his own way to travel to Africa to help immunize children from polio. In addition, he volunteers at Korean-American Social Services, which provides educational, health and wellness, and legal and social services to Korean-Americans in Tennessee.

He moved from Korea to the Hendersonville area at the age of 17. Not knowing any English, Kim enrolled at Gallatin High School and later graduated from Middle Tennessee State University.

Kim works at Hendersonville Medical Center as a food and nutrition services supervisor. He is a true example of a humanitarian who enthusiastically gives of himself, regardless of the personal sacrifice and expense required. He recently received the President’s volunteer service award from President Obama for his outstanding humanitarian efforts.
Maria Chandler was honored for the tremendous impact she has had on the lives of children and families at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital for more than 25 years.

Chandler began her volunteer service at St. Jude in 1985. In her early years, she helped ease the stress of many international patients by lending herself to them in any way they needed. She transported, housed, shopped and cooked for hundreds of families who came to Memphis from abroad, long before the hospital offered these services at an organizational level.

Chandler then went on to head the volunteer-lead interpreter services program for many years. Highly skilled as a translator, she facilitated the critical link between patient and staff, offering comfort and support during the darkest times in so many families’ lives. She continues to make a positive impact in the lives of St. Jude patients and families through the effort she made to help build the interpreter services department into the thriving department it is today.

In 1990, Chandler founded the International Interpreter’s Club, a social organization within St. Jude with the mission of bringing volunteers together as a network. She continues to serve as president of the Interpreter’s Club. One of her most useful skills is the ability to understand a person’s capabilities and match them to the proper volunteer job.

In all of her volunteer endeavors, Chandler understands the importance of documentation for sustainability purposes of all projects and programs she creates. This ensures that all of her ideas, creations, systems and programs will be able to continue for many years to come.

Resourceful, calm, kind and passionate, Chandler epitomizes what it means to be a volunteer, and she is one of the most dedicated volunteers at St. Jude.
Pat and Dennis Kimbrough were recognized for their inspirational volunteer work with stroke patients and families at Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center.

In August 2005, the Kimbroughs were excited to be in Pigeon Forge with their grown children for a family vacation when Dennis suffered a stroke on the first day of their trip. He was taken to Fort Sanders Sevier Medical Center (now LeConte Medical Center) and transferred to Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center. After three days in acute care, Dennis progressed to the Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center. During his recovery, he credited his wife for his turnaround.

Back home in Minnesota, the Kimbroughs became very active in the volunteer community. Dennis worked with the stroke peer visiting program, sharing his experience and listening to patients that were within 12-24 hours of the onset of their strokes. Pat volunteered at a family day shelter for the homeless.

Over the years, they kept in touch with the Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center’s stroke program lead, Wendy Callahan. She facilitated the stroke support group at the center and began working with Dennis on developing a peer visiting program. In August 2009, the Kimbroughs moved to Lenoir City, TN, and became volunteers at Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center, where they will participate in the peer visiting program to provide support and encouragement for both stroke survivors and their caregivers.

The Kimbroughs are known to “arrive early and stay late,” and serve the community by providing quality of life and compassionate care during an uncertain time for patients.
Fox 13, nominated by Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, Memphis, was honored for featuring important health issues for children and families in the Memphis area. Health Matters reporter Lauren Johnson highlighted health initiatives, patient stories and complex medical issues in a way that the public could easily understand. Fox 13 recently completed a series on teen pregnancy, a hot topic in Memphis. Knowing that such a complex issue could not be explained in one story, the station developed a series that examined various services available to teens in the city. Through the series, two programs at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital were highlighted that work with young teens and fathers to reduce pregnancy rates and ensure parents have the resources to raise their children. While they were trying to tell the story, they were attacked by teen boys. Johnson was able to escape unharmed, but the photojournalist was beaten.

The Fox network also partnered with the Children's Miracle Network to showcase the work of children's hospitals across the country. The Fox 13 reporters relate well to patients and their families, allowing them to share the difficult moments of their journeys. This series has helped the hospital tell the community how important their support is at Le Bonheur.

Fox 13 also brought to light little known programs at Le Bonheur that work to improve the health and well-being of children and families in Memphis, such as the hospital's early intervention and development program, which helps local child care centers better care for children with special needs.

The station brings an informed voice raising questions about the city's most vulnerable citizens. Fox 13 does research to identify issues that trouble Memphians and then finds medical experts to explain the issues and translates the information in ways that the public can understand. This commitment to excellent reporting has been extremely valuable to the Memphis community.
WCYB-TV5, nominated by Wellmont Health System, was recognized for its vital role in the success of Wellmont Health System’s Go Red for Women campaign, which seeks to improve women’s health by highlighting risks associated with heart disease and promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

WCYB’s partnership with Wellmont and the American Heart Association began in 2009 when they launched the Go Red for Women public education program in the television station’s broadcast area. WCYB’s level of involvement with the program has increased every year. In 2011 alone, the television station donated nearly $40,000 in air time to promoting Go Red for Women. The station’s commitment to the health of the region’s women sets WCYB apart as a dedicated community service partner.

The television station also has aired “Speak Up to Save Lives,” a 30-minute program filled with valuable information about Go Red for Women on a national level, three times. News features on cardiovascular-related topics also air on the fifth of each month throughout the year. WCYB broadcasts public service announcements about diabetes screenings, facts related to heart disease and cholesterol screenings in March, April and May. Since the program launched two years ago, nearly 1,000 women have registered online to receive educational materials through the mail and electronic media from Wellmont.

WCYB’s efforts have contributed to a successful public awareness campaign about the risks of heart disease in women and it has given the public the tools to take control of their own health.
WDEF, Sunny 92.3, nominated by Erlanger Health System, was recognized for its continued loyalty and dedication to Children’s Hospital at Erlanger Health System through its Cure Kids Cancer radiothon, which is partnered with the Children’s Miracle Network hospitals. Since 2007, the radio station has raised over $450,000 in pledged contributions for the pediatric oncology depart- ment.

The dedicated team at Sunny 92.3 is led by James Howard, who broadcasts live each of the three days from within the pediatric oncology clinic. In doing this, the on-air staff has access to patients, families and hospital employees who provide interviews and first-hand accounts of patient stories for the broadcasts.

The money raised by the radiothon has been used by the children’s hospital to pay for the cost of camps for patients to attend in the summer, teen group outings, supplies for the craft room, video games, two computers, gas cards, meal cards and end of therapy parties.

Along with the three days of the actual radiothon, the radio station staff is committed to their mission of helping the hospital through producing and editing montages and coordinating the event. The station also has partnered with the hospital’s foundation for other events within the community, including the Taste of Hamilton Place event that benefits the pediatric oncology department. In addition, Sunny 92.3 sponsored The Hamilton Place Chemo Duck Mall Waddle, which raised money to buy chemo ducks for children in the oncology unit.
Jennifer Elliott was honored for her continuous commitment to providing safe, quality care for patients at Baptist Hospital.

An innovator and visionary, she has the skill, knowledge and wherewithal to bring her visions to fruition. During her 10-year tenure at Baptist, she has held several nursing positions due to her excellent leadership abilities. When she became manager of the emergency department, she elected not only to stabilize staffing, but to take things to the next level. She elevated the employment requirement of the department to include multiple certifications, arrhythmia training and a critical care course, as well as demonstrated nursing competence.

Elliott also made it a priority to transition the emergency department into a collaborative environment and, working in conjunction with the emergency department physician director, implemented a multidisciplinary governance model led by a team of nurses, doctors and technicians. The team collaboratively works out policy and practice concerns, implements regulatory compliance and governs the provision of quality patient care.

An excellent steward who continually looks for opportunities to manage costs, Elliott is one of the founding members of the Metro Area Diversion Committee, which develops and implements rules and policies designed to keep area hospitals open and receiving patients. She also has been working internally on the problem of patient throughput at the hospital, and her efforts essentially eliminated ambulance diversion.

Elliott’s passion is emergency nursing and she is able to jump in and clinically help any time she is needed. She also is known for “growing” great managers. She encourages her staff to expand their horizons with new projects and selects committee memberships for them where will be interested and productive. She is a true leader whom no one hesitates to follow, as she leads with heart and integrity.

In addition, Elliott is active in local emergency preparedness activities. She is a member of the Tennessee Disaster Medical Committee and local community disaster preparedness committees.

She received an associate’s degree in nursing at Tennessee State University, Nashville, and a bachelor’s degree in healthcare administration at Ashford University.
Danita Mowl was honored for her dedication and compassion as clinical leader at the New Life Birthing Center at Bristol Regional Medical Center.

A dedicated clinician and well-respected expert in the eyes of her colleagues who epitomizes nursing at its best, Mowl is constantly looking for opportunities for staff to enhance care, promote safety and improve patient experiences. She is the kind of leader every organization wants to have. She teaches, guides and inspires her staff to live up to the hospital’s mission of providing superior health care with compassion.

Many of Mowl’s goals and projects involve reaching out to the community. Each year, the New Life Birthing Center staff members organize and host a women and children’s expo that offers valuable information and empowers women to take charge of their health and their families’ health.

She also commits substantial time and energy into numerous other causes. She has been instrumental in developing Project Lip Gloss, an initiative to help abused women report domestic violence. In addition, she has helped develop a project responsible for keeping newborns safe called SleepSacks, which decrease the risk of sudden infant death syndrome. The project has since been implemented at Bristol Regional Medical Center and other hospitals within Wellmont Health System.

In an environment where every day brings something new, being a supporter of change is one of Mowl’s greatest assets. As a founding member of a committee at Bristol Regional that focuses on computer physician order entry, she has been instrumental in the creation of a system-wide upgrade to be implemented. She works tirelessly and without need for recognition or praise, simply dedicating her time to accomplishing the task at hand.

Mowl is a member of the Association of Women’s Health Obstetrical and Neonatal Nurses and Northeast Tennessee Organization of Nurse Executives.

She received an associate’s degree in nursing science at Wytheville Community College and a bachelor’s degree in nursing at East Tennessee State University.
Tracy Tidwell was recognized for dedicating her life to helping families whose children have brain tumors and leading two research studies that have made Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital a more family-centered hospital.

A nurse practitioner, Tidwell first understood the importance of family-centered care when she was diagnosed with a malignant melanoma. She heard the medical professionals talking around her and about her, and “it clicked” that the whole healthcare system was not structured to care for the entire patient, family included. She understood what she needed to do to change her small part of the world of health care for her young patients.

A loving caregiver, cheerleader for patients and an advocate for families, Tidwell always is looking for ways to improve care at Le Bonheur. Bedside reporting was introduced at her suggestion and has since been adopted hospital-wide due to its success. Patients and families have reported higher levels of satisfaction with their care due to this practice.

Another study Tidwell helped lead gives parents greater control of their child’s care. Parents are encouraged to schedule their child’s own medication and therapy while at the hospital. This allows children to continue their everyday routines despite being hospitalized. This philosophy also allows parents and children to achieve some normalcy and feel in control of their care.

An excellent clinician, Tidwell is extremely dedicated to her patients. She makes herself available to patients’ families 24 hours a day by giving them her cell phone number. As one individual stated, “If Florence Nightingale exemplifies the perfect nurse, Tracy Tidwell is right there with her.”

Tidwell also volunteers to help with hospital-wide efforts. She recently served on a planning committee to send a medical mission team of physicians and staff to Haiti. Last year, she was named the winner of a 2010 Children’s Miracle Achievement Award. On her weekend days off, she also works at a Le Bonheur outreach primary care clinic in Mississippi.

She received a bachelor’s degree in nursing at Mississippi University, Columbus, and a master’s degree in nursing at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson.
Janice McKinley was honored for her dedication and participation in the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and her respect as a true healthcare leader.

A fellow in the college, she has served as an infection control/employee health nurse, division leader for support services, vice president of cardiac and specialty services, chief operating officer and chief nursing officer.

She currently is the lead chief nursing officer for all Covenant Health hospitals, as well as overseeing the quality and safety divisions. She has been an active leader and member in the American and Tennessee Organizations of Nurse Executives, Tennessee Nurses Association and fundraising for Friends of THA, the association’s political action committee.

Prior awards she has received include the University of Tennessee Sylvia Hart distinguished alumni award, Tennessee Organization of Nurse Executives nursing leader award, THA nurse of distinction award and UT accomplished alumni award.

She received a bachelor’s degree in nursing at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and received a master’s degree in health services administration at the College of St. Francis. She also attended the Johnson & Johnson Wharton fellowship program for nurse executives.
Julie Miller was recognized for her involvement in the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and her local community.

Serving as chief operating officer at Williamson Medical Center since 2009, Miller currently is responsible for the operations and fiscal budget for imaging, security, plant operations, EMS, nutritional services, property management, pharmacy, environmental services, laundry/linen, laboratory, MD practices and construction. She was associate administrator for operations at the hospital from 2004-2009.

She is an active member of the Middle Tennessee ACHE chapter and has participated in its mentor program. She also is a member of the Nashville Health Care Council.

Miller received a bachelor’s degree in accounting at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and a MBA in health management at Lipscomb University, Nashville.
Zach Chandler was recognized for his involvement in the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) as well as his professional accomplishments.

A fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), he currently oversees one hospital in Arkansas and seven hospitals in Memphis. He has worked in the healthcare industry in Tennessee, Missouri, Texas and Mississippi. Under his leadership, hospitals were ranked in the top quartile nationally, the physician satisfaction drastically improved, revenues and outpatient visits increased, and empowered staff teams saved millions of dollars.

He serves on the boards of the Baptist College of Health Sciences and Memphis chapter of the American Heart Association.

Chandler received a bachelor’s degree in business administration at Baylor University, Waco, TX, and a master’s degree in health administration at Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO.