

Catholic Health Association honors three people, one program

CHICAGO – The Catholic Health Association honored two longtime leaders, a hospital safety and quality expert, and an educational program in Birmingham, Ala., during its annual convention in Chicago.

Bon Secours Sister Patrick Eck, who chairs the board of the Bon Secours Health System in Marriottsville, Md., received the Sister Concilia Moran Award, which recognizes ministry leaders who demonstrate creativity and visionary leadership.

The award is named for the first post-Second Vatican Council superior of the Sisters of Mercy of the Union, who died in 1990.

CHA's Lifetime Achievement Award went to Dominican Sister Mary Trinita Eddington, who has served the community of Jackson, Miss., for 50 years, first as a staff nurse for St. Dominic Hospital, then in various administrative roles and later as a nurse and administrator with St. Dominic Community Health Services and its clinic.

"After 35 years serving as the vice president of nursing in a hospital setting, I was ready for a change and felt challenged to pursue what I knew was a great need – and that was to provide health care to the poor, homeless, uninsured and vulnerable in a very poor segment of the city," she said as she accepted the award June 17.

Sister Trinita said the St. Dominic clinic has become "a beacon for others to do volunteerism," with physicians, social workers, nurses, pharmacists, ministers and others coming together "in creating a healthier Jackson community."

Shelley Voelz, director of standards compliance and patient safety at St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers in Beech Grove, Ind., received the 2007 Midcareer Award, given annually to an individual who demonstrates "outstanding leadership" in his or her field.

Dr. Doug Johnson, St. Francis medical director for quality and patient safety, said

Voelz has earned the respect of staff and convinced the board to invest financial resources and significant staff time in quality initiatives.

Voelz said her primary motivation in almost 30 years of nursing has been the welfare of patients. "If I ever forget the patient I am here to serve, I don't need to be doing this job," she said.

The 2007 Achievement Citation, CHA's most prestigious honor, went to the Jeremiah's Hope Skills Center in Birmingham, which in less than five years has trained more than 300 people for hard-to-fill entry-level jobs in health care at St. Vincent's Health System and other hospitals in the Birmingham area.

Founded in December 2002 with a start-up grant from Mission & Ministries, a Daughters of Charity foundation, the program targets underemployed and unemployed individuals, especially single mothers, who are poor, vulnerable and motivated.

During the June 17-19 assembly in Chicago, Sandra Bennett Bruce, president and CEO of St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise, Idaho, was installed as the new chairwoman of the CHA board of trustees for fiscal year 2007-08.

She succeeded John F. Finan Jr., president and CEO of Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System in Baton Rouge, La., who became 2007-08 speaker of CHA's Membership Assembly.

Lloyd H. Dean, president and CEO of Catholic Healthcare West in San Francisco, was elected vice chairman of the board and will lead the board in fiscal year 2008-09.

Two board members – Samantha Platzke, senior vice president for finance and chief financial officer at Mercy Health Partners in Oak Harbor, Ohio, and Jesuit Father Myles N. Sheehan, a physician who is senior associate dean of medicine/geriatrics for Loyola University Health System in Chicago – were elected to their second three-year terms.

Three others were elected to the board for their first term. They are: Richard Blair, retired chief financial officer of Allina Health System in Blaine, Minn.; Roslyn Brock,

director of system fund development at Bon Secours Health System; and Dr. Robert Kuramoto, managing partner of Quick Leonard Kieffer International in Chicago.