

Parishioner's award becomes St. Agnes Hospital's gain

When Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, Homeland, parishioner Albert "Skip" Counselman was awarded a lifetime achievement award from a Hartford, Conn.-based insurance firm, it was St. Agnes Hospital in Baltimore that took the big-cash reward.

Travelers - the nation's second-largest writer of property and casualty insurance - gave the Caton Avenue hospital a \$10,000 check, because Mr. Counselman serves as its chairman of the board and it was his charity of choice, said Jay Fishman, chairman and chief executive officer of Travelers.

The 59-year-old Cockeysville resident is the president and CEO of Riggs, Counselman, Michaels & Downes, Inc., one of the leading 100 insurance and risk management agency/brokerage firms in the U.S. and headquartered in Baltimore.

Travelers' inaugural lifetime achievement award and donation to St. Agnes was presented to Mr. Counselman during an April 13 ceremony in Naples, Fla., which also featured a video presentation of the care being given at the Catholic Baltimore hospital.

"What was really nice was St. Agnes was given a national audience," he said. "Travelers spent a day and a half filming and they were able to capture the compassionate care they give at St. Agnes and show how they treat everyone, regardless of their ability to pay."

Travelers' selection of Mr. Counselman was based on his industry leadership, unwavering commitment to integrity in his role as an independent broker, and his strong philanthropic record of serving the community through civic leadership and volunteerism, Mr. Fishman said.

"Skip Counselman is a true role model," he said. "He has distinguished himself as a leader in the industry, while maintaining upstanding values and keeping in synch with the needs of his community."

The \$10,000 donation has been funneled into a fundraising campaign currently underway at St. Agnes, which has so far raised a little more than \$4 million from major donors since it began in 2006, said Sherry Welch, president of the St. Agnes Foundation.

The fundraising campaign goal is \$25 million, which will go toward the five-year-\$180 million redevelopment of the Caton Avenue campus, Ms. Welch said.

“We have not done a major capital fundraising before, so a \$10,000 gift is really meaningful to us,” she said. “Given that it comes from an award for Skip makes this exceptional. He’s given so much of his time, effort and his personal dollars to us. Anything attached to his name is so special to us. He is very beloved at St. Agnes.”

In addition to his roles at RCM&D and St. Agnes, Mr. Counselman also chairs the investment committee of Ascension Health – the nation’s largest affiliation of Catholic hospitals – serves on the boards of Loyola College in Maryland’s Sellinger School of Business, is first vice chair of the Maryland Hospital Association and serves on the president’s advisory council of the Greater Baltimore Committee.

The married father of three and University of Notre Dame graduate is a knight in the Order of Malta, established in 1050 and nowadays provides medical services and humanitarian aid in war-torn and impoverished regions around the world.