

INTRODUCTION

Exciting and innovative...comforting and thoughtful...and, most importantly, life-affirming. Incredible programs and services that help individuals, families, and communities cope with life-threatening illnesses and death. And incredible programs that, this year, are the recipients of the 2003 Circle of Life Award and Citation of Honor.

The Circle of Life Awards celebrate innovation in palliative and end-of-life care. This year's 10 honorees include providers of all sizes, from one corner of the nation to the other, delivering much needed health care services to all ages. The men and women who provide sensitive care at a critical time are having a profound effect in their communities and regions. And they are making inroads into one of the most difficult aspects of health care — palliative and end-of-life care. They are stretching the current boundaries of who is served, how services are integrated into a seamless continuum, and how palliative and end-of-life services intermesh with traditional medical treatment. Their stories and examples will enrich and inspire us all.

Congratulations to this year's Circle of Life Award winners — Hospice & Palliative CareCenter, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Providence Health System, Portland, Oregon; and University of California Davis Health System, Sacramento.

And congratulations to the seven programs receiving 2003 Citations of Honor: The Renal Palliative Care Initiative, Baystate Health System, Springfield, Massachusetts; The Center for Hospice & Palliative Care, Buffalo, New York; Palliative Care Service, Detroit Receiving Hospital, Detroit, Michigan; Hope Hospice and Palliative Care: Open Access, Ft. Myers, Florida; Hospice of Lancaster County, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Mercy Health Partners — Southwestern Ohio, Cincinnati, Ohio; and FOOTPRINTSSM, SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital, St. Louis, Missouri.

Read their stories, share in their triumphs and join us in honoring their accomplishments. They provide ideas and examples for health care workers across the nation to emulate.

The American Hospital Association in conjunction with the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, the American Medical Association, and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization sponsors the Circle of Life Award, with funding through grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Special thanks to these organizations...and to all the hospitals, systems, hospices, nursing homes, and community programs that shared with us their palliative and end-of-life programs through Circle of Life Award applications and committed to changing and improving the culture of dying in America...to the Circle of Life Award Committee...and, especially, to The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for its generous support.



Steve Franey
Chair
Circle of Life Awards Committee
2002–2003



Dick Davidson
President
American Hospital Association