

## INTRODUCTION

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Since the Circle of Life Awards were first presented in 2000 to recognize innovation in end-of-life care, the programs being honored have demonstrated vision, depth, and scope: hospitals embracing palliative services as part of the definition of high quality care...hospices expanding their reach to new populations... long-term care providers incorporating principles of end-of-life and palliative care into their services.

The 2006 Circle of Life honorees reflect the commitment, expertise, and innovation that have driven this growth. This year's honorees have very different stories to tell: from the community hospital that has made palliative care part of its culture, the health system that has incorporated palliative and end-of-life services throughout its hospitals...to the hospice providing truly open access using evidence-based medicine. What they all have in common are dedication to their fundamental patient care missions and a drive to fully serve their communities.

Congratulations to the 2006 Award and Citation of Honor Winners whose stories are told in this booklet. We hope that you will read them, share in their triumphs, and join us in honoring their achievements.

The American Hospital Association has joined with the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, the American Medical Association, and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization to sponsor the Circle of Life Award, with funding through grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. On behalf of all of these organizations, we thank 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. Their commitment and dedication touches millions of patients and families throughout the nation every year.



Steve Franey  
*Chair*  
*Circle of Life Awards Committee*  
2005–2006



Dick Davidson  
*President*  
*American Hospital Association*