



News Release

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NEWS RELEASE

Date: April 6, 2016

Release Number: 201604-01-16

WJB Dorn gets the Gold Five Dorn nurses to receive prestigious Palmetto Gold Award

By Bob Hall
Dorn VAMC Public Affairs Specialist

In 2001, various nursing organizations from around the state came together to develop a program to recognize nurses for their contributions and support nursing education with scholarship funds. The result was the Palmetto Gold Award program.

Each year, employers from a wide variety of health care settings in South Carolina nominate their outstanding nurses to be considered as of the top 100 nurses for this prestigious award. Each nurse nominee must demonstrate excellence in the nursing profession by addressing the following criteria: promote and advance the profession of nursing in some way; display a caring and commitment to patients, families, and colleagues; and demonstrate leadership by assisting others to grow and develop in their profession.

This extremely competitive program usually garners several 100 nominees from around the state but only 100 nurses selected. To select the top 100 nurses, a panel of six nurses conducts a blind review of all the nominee packages.

The William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center is proud to announce that five of its nurses were selected this year.

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Dorn VAMC's five recipients of this prestigious Palmetto Gold Award are: Dr. Andrea Boyd, the education and research department associate nurse executive; Dr. Kahlil Demonbreun, the medical director of women's health; Dr. Patricia Dzandu, Dorn the mental health associate nurse executive; Lisa Gleason, a registered nurse in Dorn VAMC's Community Living Center; and Young Meadows, a primary care nurse manager.

"The Palmetto Gold award is truly a highlight of any South Carolina Nurse's career," SAID Ruth Mustard, Dorn VAMC's associate director for patient care/nursing services. "Dorn VA has had winners every year, and is a testament to the caliber of nurses we have here caring for Veterans.

"The Palmetto Gold Recognition Program also supports the future of South Carolina nursing with the scholarship program where a nursing student in each one of the state nursing schools is given a \$1,000 scholarship," Mustard added.

Boyd, who has been a nurse for 11 years, has been with Dorn VAMC for the past five years and is presently responsible for nursing education and research at Dorn VAMC, as well as supervising the wound care and barcode management nurses here. Boyd frequently assists other nursing leaders in the facility by providing management for acute care nursing. And if this was not enough, Boyd is also an active researched at Dorn VAMC and is presently conducting research with heart failure.

When she's not at work or spending time with her family, Boyd, originally from Anchorage, Alaska, serves as an administrator and clinician in a faith-based clinic; volunteering to organize and provide care to those in need.

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Demonbreun has been a nursing professional for 18 years and has only been at the Dorn VAMC for about a year. He recently transferred here from the Medical University of South Carolina, College of Nursing Family Health Center in Charleston, S.C.

For the Dorn VAMC, Demonbreun is responsible for overseeing the women's health clinic here, which includes primary care and gynecologic care.

Demonbreun, who is originally from Detroit, Mich., has recently been named as a 2016 Fellow to be inducted into the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. He is the South Carolina state representative for the AANP and serves on the AANP Health Policy Committee; on the Board of Directors for the National Certification Corporation; on the Board of Directors for the South Carolina Nurses' Association; as the chair of the SCNA Advanced Practice Registered Nurse chapter; and as chair for the South Carolina Board of Nursing's Advanced Practice Committee.

Patricia Dzandu, a nurse for more than 35 years, is the associate nurse executive for Dorn VAMC's mental health department. Dzandu has a passion for evidenced based practices and implemented the first Nursing Evidenced Based Poster Session for the Dorn VAMC's Nurses Week in 2015. She mentored 20 nurses last year in poster development and improving their awareness of the positive impact of evidence-based practices in their specialty practice areas. Dzandu has presented numerous poster presentations during her career and in 2012 she presented her research on *Schizophrenia and Auditory Hallucinations* at the Mayo Clinic Nursing Research Symposium in Rochester, Minn.

Dzandu, is originally from Hampton, Va., and worked at Hampton VAMC for eighteen years until her relocation to Dorn VAMC two and half years ago. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society and is a New York University Nursing

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Leadership Fellow. She is also the past recipient of Veteran's Health Administration's Secretary's Award for Nursing Excellence and VHA Best Practice Innovation Award.

Lisa Gleason, who hails from Lexington, S.C., is a registered nurse who functions in the role of Resident Assessment Coordinator in Dorn VAMC's Community Living Center. In this role, she oversees and impacts the quality of life by means of assessment, implementation and care planning for every veteran admitted to the CLC for short- or long-stay care.

Gleason has been a professional nurse for more than 35 years. She served in the military as a captain in the Army Nurse Corp, prior to coming to work at Dorn VAMC where she has served her fellow Veterans for nearly 27 of those 35 years.

In addition to her assigned duties in Dorn VAMC's CLC, she serves as the lead secretary for the Nursing Professional Standards Board and is an active member on committees such as the Quality Improvement/Magnet/Research Committee, Geriatric and Extended Care Sub-Council Committee, Long-Term Care Institute Survey Readiness Committee and the Community Living Center Process Improvement Committee. Gleason is also active with, and serves on the Board of Directors for, "Keepin' It Real Ministries"; which helps provide food, clothing, housing and counseling for the homeless and less fortunate in the downtown Columbia area and beyond.

Young Meadows, originally from Seoul, South Korea, has nearly 36 years of experience as a registered nurse; 21 of which she spent as a U.S. Army Nurse Corps officer. She's been with Dorn VAMC for nearly four years and is a nurse manager for Dorn VAMC's primary care clinics; responsible for daily nursing operations to include coordination of Patient Centered Care delivery, providing management and leadership oversight including coaching of nursing and clinical support staff, monitoring of quality improvement activities, assessing performance targets, development and implementation of action plans to improve performance measures,

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facilitating implementation of processes and policies regarding clinic operations for the veteran patients.

Since arriving at Dorn, among many other accomplishments, Meadows arduously worked to accommodating unscheduled walk-ins for the entire primary care teams, serving for more than 200 patients a week, and increasing two-day post discharge follow up calls from 54 percent to 80 percent, above the national average.

Additionally, Meadows was responsible for promoting the implementation of the VA's medical home model – Patient Aligned Care Team at Dorn VAMC's five primary care clinics and the women's health clinic. This program, designed enhance patient-centered care provided by health care professionals, resulting in improving patient access, patient satisfaction, and care coordination for more than 40,000 enrolled Veterans in the main campus.

"I am continually impressed by the caliber of staff we have here at Dorn," said Timothy McMurry, medical center director. "As a retired U.S. Navy Nurse Corps officer, I understand the work and drive it takes to do what these nurses do day-in and day-out.

"It's not an easy job – being a nurse. And many times, the nurse's job goes unrecognized," McMurry added. "My hat goes off to each one of these nurses for a job well done."

These five Dorn VAMC nurses will be honored, along with 95 other of South Carolina's finest nurses, at the 15th Annual Palmetto Gold Gala on April 16 at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

Cutline information:

Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC's five recipients of this prestigious Palmetto Gold Award are (from left to right): Lisa Gleason, a registered nurse in Dorn VAMC's Community Living Center; Young Meadows, a primary care nurse manager; Dr. Andrea Boyd, the education and research department associate nurse executive; Dr. Patricia Dzandu, Dorn the mental health associate nurse executive; and Dr. Kahlil Demonbreun, the medical director of women's health.

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