

Contact: Carol Rubiano
212-580-9706

BI-KINGS HIGHWAY DIVISION TO HONOR 2010 HEART AWARD WINNERS ON FEBRUARY 1

January 22, 2010 -- Five extraordinary women who work at Beth Israel Medical Center-Kings Highway Division have been named winners of the 2010 Heart Award. Evangeline Abalos, RN, Lucy Cannizzaro, RPh, Catherine Leota, RN, Janece Lyons, PCA, and Dorota Rybicka, RN, will be honored at a ceremony to be held across the street from the hospital on Monday, February 1, at 10:30 am.

The honorees were nominated by their fellow employees and selected by a special Heart Awards Committee. The coveted award is given in recognition of extraordinary dedication and the special way they interact with co-workers, as well as with patients and their families.

Ms. Abalos, named a "Champion of 3 East" for fostering harmony and cooperation and exercising leadership, would have been an agricultural engineer but turned to nursing after her father thought that managing their farm in the Philippines better suited her brother. She has flourished in her alternative career choice in Saudi Arabia before immigrating to the US. She has worked at Beth Israel for 18 years and was honored in 2006 with the Beatrice Renfield Circle of Excellence Award for Patient-Centered Care.

Ms. Cannizzaro begins the work day with a welcoming smile and a brief chat about the hot topic of the day, which puts employees in a good frame of mind and ready to tackle the day's tasks. "She makes the entire department feel like a family" was how she was portrayed by the person who nominated the cheerful Pharmacy Manager. "The best part of work is the people I work with," said Ms. Cannizzaro. "I am honored to be in the company of this group of Heart Award winners because they have been great teamwork role models for me."

Ms. Leota is a Nurse Manager in Patient Care Services and was Beth Israel's 2007 nominee for Nurse Leader in the 1199 SEIU-League citywide honors. Praised as "a consistently compassionate nurse manager to both staff and patients who works hard and is a respected clinician, Ms. Leota has recently completed 30 years of service to the hospital.

"Kind-hearted" does not begin to describe what Ms. Lyons does at work and during off-hours. For many years, she has been doing something so unusual and noteworthy that her co-workers are awed by her generosity. From the time she started working at the hospital she has kept the practice of coming in on Mother's Day and Father's Day to bring presents to patients, in the beginning just in her unit and later expanded throughout the hospital. "It is important to give back in whatever way each person can and I try my best to do something for others no matter how small and I encourage others to do the same."

Ms. Rybicka says she was surprised to hear of the recognition. The 3 North nurse, who came to the US from Poland in 1992, "is kind and compassionate toward her patients" ... she is a quiet person and although not known throughout the hospital, she is well-respected by unit co-workers on all shifts. "I feel good whenever I can help ... often a smile, a hug or giving a hand can make a difference," she said.

“Our honorees occupy a special place in the hearts of everyone at the Kings Highway Division. They give a lot of themselves to our patients and staff,” said Rhona Hetsrony, Vice President for Administration. “Their dedication and personal character are an inspiration for us all.”