

# Bulletin

MAY 2007

The Bulletin is a monthly publication for employees and friends of Mercy Medical Center

Iowa's First Lady visits House of Mercy to announce new grants to help the homeless



First Lady Mari Culver visited House of Mercy on April 19 to announce the launch of a new state and federal grant program that will give more than \$2.4 million to Iowa's homeless service providers. Two House of Mercy residents – Mary Anderson and Lori Auxier – met with Mrs. Culver to share their stories of homelessness and the help they received from House of Mercy.

Serving more than 240 women and children each year, House of Mercy is Iowa's largest single provider of transitional housing for women who are in substance abuse recovery programs, homeless or both.

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Excellence.  
Every Day in Every Way.™

## Mercy is named Iowa's most Psychologically Healthy Workplace

On Friday, April 27, the Iowa Psychological Association (IPA) named Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines the winner of its 2007 Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award. The IPA presents this award annually to recognize an Iowa business that has created a work environment that fosters employee health and well-being while enhancing organizational performance and productivity.

The American Psychological Association says today's heightened productivity demands, information overload and increasing pressure to balance work and home life can chip away at employees' health and job satisfaction. A recent poll shows two-thirds of adults think work has a significant impact on their stress level, and job stress is estimated to cost U.S. employers \$300 billion a year in absenteeism, diminished productivity and employee turnover.

Faced with these issues, businesses are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of implementing psychologically healthy workplace practices, such as increasing employees' participation in decision-making and developing programs that promote healthy lifestyle and behavior choices.

"Mercy believes that the success of our organization directly ties back to having satisfied associates, and we are committed to providing a premier workplace environment that reflects a strong, vibrant culture of caring," said President & CEO Dave Vellinga. "We

are truly honored to receive the Iowa Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award. It reaffirms our dedication to the health and well-being of the entire Mercy Family."

Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer Robyn Wilkinson agrees, attributing the award to Mercy's many programs that provide support, resources and opportunities to employees. "Employees can take advantage of the Employee Assistance Program, tuition reimbursement, on-site child care, pharmacies and wellness center, a variety of scheduling options, career development, community outreach programs and WOW 4U, which offers incentives for healthy lifestyle behaviors," she said. "These programs were developed to create a healthy workforce."

As Iowa's 2007 Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award winner, Mercy has been recognized for:

- Demonstrating its commitment to the health and well-being of its 6,600 employees
- Attracting and retaining top-quality physicians and health care professionals
- Engaging employees and boosting job satisfaction
- Enhancing organizational performance and productivity
- Responding to employee expectations and concerns
- Controlling health care costs

# President's Message



Dave Vellinga  
President & CEO

In an organization of more than 6,600 employees, it sometimes can be difficult to recognize every achievement, acknowledge every special occasion, address every concern or remedy every situation as quickly as we would like. But at Mercy, we're a family – and like the members of any extended family, we each have different lifestyles and priorities; but at the end of the day we know we care about one another.

In today's 24/7 society, the demands of work and family – combined with external pressures to achieve and internal desires to succeed – can take a toll on employees' health, well-being and overall job satisfaction. So while Mercy is always striving to attract and recruit high-quality employees, we are equally committed to retaining the employees we have and boosting workplace morale.

To meet these objectives, the Leadership Team and I must ensure that every member of the Mercy Family feels valued. One way we do this is by utilizing the Gallup Employee Engagement Satisfaction Survey each year. This tool – which we recently completed for 2007 – not only helps us identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, but also gives each of you a confidential forum to make your voice heard.

Two-way communication is essential to the type of organizational culture Mercy is striving to create – one that is based on trust, honesty, purpose and values. It is not surprising, then, that the Iowa Chapter of the American Psychological Association recently selected Mercy as the recipient of its Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award. By emphasizing employee participation and implementing mechanisms for employees to evaluate job satisfaction, Mercy is demonstrating its commitment to fostering employee health and well-being while enhancing organizational performance and productivity.

As we move forward, I encourage each of you to speak up when you notice something isn't working – don't wait for the annual survey to give us your helpful input. Equally important, please continue to celebrate the daily accomplishments of your friends and co-workers. Recognizing every individual achievement is not always possible, but trying is a vital part of what makes the Mercy culture special. Also, as we all know, it's impossible to overlook the amazing work of Mercy as a whole. We are a strong, vibrant organization, and it's all due to you and the members of the Mercy Family.

Thank you sincerely for all the efforts you make on behalf of our organization, our community, our patients and families and one another. You truly make Mercy excellent – every day in every way.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave".

# Five Mercy nurses named to 2007 list of 100 Great Iowa Nurses

Five nurses from Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines have been named to the list of 100 Great Iowa Nurses for 2007. Honorees included Karen Gamerding, Clinical Practice; Felicia Miedema, Patient Care Services; Cindy Peeler, Centralized Flex Staffing; Sister Maurita Soukup, Administration; and Sister Mary Martina Woulfe, Bishop Drumm Retirement Center. Nurses are chosen based on their demonstrated concern for humanity, a significant contribution to the nursing profession and leadership through mentoring.



*Karen Gamerding Felicia Miedema Cindy Peeler*



*Sister Maurita Soukup, RSM Sister Martina Woulfe, RSM*

“Mercy has always taken great pride in knowing that our nurses were among the best,” said Jackie Frost-Kunnen, senior vice president and chief nursing officer. “These five professionals represent a cross section of specialties, demonstrate

leadership in their respective areas and represent a commitment to nursing, patients and health care excellence. Mercy is fortunate to have such strong nurse leaders to help us actualize our mission and values every day.”

## MERCY MEDICAL CENTER MISSION

The Mission of Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines and Catholic Health Initiatives is to nurture the healing ministry of the Church by bringing it new life, energy and viability in the 21st century. Fidelity to the Gospel urges us to emphasize human dignity and social justice as we move toward the creation of healthier communities.

### REVERENCE

Profound spirit of awe and respect for all of creation, shaping relationships to self, to one another and to God, and acknowledging that we hold in trust all that has been given to us.

### INTEGRITY

Moral wholeness, soundness, uprightness, honesty, sincerity, as basis of trustworthiness.

### COMPASSION

Feeling with others, being one with others in their sorrows and joy, rooted in the sense of solidarity as members of the human community.

### EXCELLENCE

Outstanding achievement, merit virtue; continually surpassing standards to achieve/maintain quality.

### Mercy celebrates Nurses' Week

Nurses' Week is May 7-12, and Mercy would like to invite all members of its nursing team to attend and enjoy the following activities:

#### Monday, May 7:

Meditation on the Hands  
East Tower Auditorium (7:30 – 9 a.m., 11 a.m. – noon)

Nursing Fair  
East Tower Auditorium (8 a.m. – 3 p.m.)

#### Tuesday, May 8:

Blood Pressure Screening at Jordan Creek Mall Walkers  
Jordan Creek Town Center, Upper Level (8:30 – 10 a.m.)

Comedic Entertainment by Lee Cole  
East Tower Auditorium (11:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m.)

#### Wednesday, May 9:

Finley Group Lecture and Q & A  
East Tower Auditorium (11 a.m. – 1 p.m.)

Meditation on the Hands  
Bishop Drumm, Mercy Capitol, Mercy Franklin and Mercy Hospice

#### Thursday, May 10:

Doctors' Breakfast for Nurses  
Marketplace & Grille (6:30 – 9:30 a.m.)

Meditation on the Hands  
Our Lady of Mercy Chapel (2 – 3 p.m., 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.)

Certification Tea  
East Tower Auditorium (3:30 p.m.)

#### Friday, May 11:

Certification Tea  
East Tower Auditorium (7:45 a.m.)

S.A.F.E. Lunch & Learn  
East Tower Auditorium (11 a.m. – 1 p.m.)  
Please bring your own lunch.

#### Saturday, May 12:

Ice Cream Social  
Delivered to units/floors (midnight – 2 a.m., noon – 2 p.m.)

Magnet Education and Free Popcorn  
Marketplace & Grille (4 – 7 p.m.)

# Announcements • News Briefs

Research study co-authored by Mercy Cancer Center employee to be presented at national conference



Mercy Cancer Center's Family Risk Program Coordinator Marilyn O'Donnell, RN, BSN, OCN, has been invited to the 32nd Annual

Oncology Nursing Society's Congress in Las Vegas later this month to present the findings of a research study on cancer genetics programs that she co-authored.

The study – which compares the genetic assessment, testing and counseling services offered by Mercy's Cancer Center to those offered by Mercy Cancer Center in Mason City and Alegant Cancer Center in Omaha – provides an interesting overview of cancer genetics programs in the Midwest and how they have grown and evolved.

"The uniqueness and success of these three community-based programs point to exciting pathways in the field of cancer genetics services," Marilyn stated. "We have a quality program here at Mercy that's continually evolving to meet the changing health care needs of patients and their families."

The results of the study have also been printed in the most recent issue of *Oncology Nursing Forum*, the official journal of the Oncology Nursing Society.

## Mercy Volunteer Corps accepting applications

Mercy Volunteer Corps, a lay volunteer program for women and men sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, is accepting applications for its 2007-08 service year. The program offers people over the age of 21 the opportunity to work for a year with underserved populations in a variety of urban and rural settings. While most sites are in the United States, Mercy Volunteer Corps also offers some international placements.

Room, board, medical insurance and a small stipend are provided. Placements start in May for service beginning in August 2007. For more information, please call (215) 641-5535 or visit [www.mercyvolunteers.org](http://www.mercyvolunteers.org).

## Mercy sponsors Livestrong™ "Bike to the Ballpark"

Mercy has partnered with several media and corporate sponsors to present "Bike to the Ballpark" on Sunday, May 13. The event, which kicks off National Bike-to-Work Week, is designed to raise awareness for the Lance Armstrong Livestrong Cancer Foundation and showcase Des Moines' bike trails through a 4.5-mile leisure ride downtown. The ride begins at 9:30 a.m. at Water Works Park, loops around Gray's Lake and culminates at Principal Park for the afternoon I-Cubs game (begins at 1:05 p.m.).

The \$10 registration fee includes an official yellow Livestrong event T-shirt, a general admission ticket to the baseball game and a ticket for a hotdog, pop and chips at the picnic tent at Principal Park. Children are welcome, and pre-registration by Sunday, May 6, is encouraged. For more information or to register, stop by any Bike World location or visit [www.dmcityview.com](http://www.dmcityview.com).

## Baskets raise more than \$2,000 for Mercy Child Life

The annual Mercy Child Life Easter Basket contest raised more than \$2,000 for pediatric patients this year. Employees created 49 gender- and age-specific baskets for a silent auction that took place the week before Easter. The money raised will be used by the Child Life Team to provide programming for pediatric patients and children of adult patients throughout the organization.

Prior to the sale, the baskets were judged by a panel of employees and the winners of each category are: Children's Emergency Center (Ages 0-2); Mercy West Endoscopy (Ages 3-5); Mercy West ENT (Ages 6-8); Tammy Johnson and Mercy College (Ages 9-11); Mercy Capitol ER (Ages 12-14); and Mercy Home Care (Ages 15-17).

## Bristol-Meyers Squibb helps beautify House of Mercy



Last week, nearly 20 Bristol-Meyers Squibb employees participated in the National Day of Caring by beautifying the House of Mercy landscape. Activities included laying mulch, planting flowers and reclaiming the butterfly and vegetable gardens.

"House of Mercy fills a very important need in the community," said sales rep Carol DeBondt. "It's exciting to partner with House of Mercy to provide a beautiful and safe place for women and their children to live."

# Employee FAQs: Patient, employee and visitor parking

**“How is the growing need for patient, employee and visitor parking on Mercy’s Central Campus being addressed?”**

**Ron Muecke, Mercy’s vice president for Facilities and Support Services, said:**

While it’s a constant struggle to keep up with the demand for parking on Mercy’s Central Campus, and while it’s a challenge to balance the capital needs of space for clinical services and patient care with the need for additional parking areas, Mercy is responding to this issue with a comprehensive plan to address the situation on both a short- and long-term basis.

To begin with, part of the increased need for parking right now stems from the many capital improvement initiatives going on at Central Campus. Construction crews and consultants have been asked to park their vehicles in the lot west of 6th Avenue (in the area formerly occupied by houses). We are also considering surfacing some additional lots that have been cleared of old buildings if operating and capital financing permits.

Until then, Mercy has rented parking spaces for employee parking at the vacant Top Value Food Store lot that is located northwest of Central Campus, and is negotiating a contract with the City of Des Moines to continue to use those spaces after the city takes possession of the lot. We have begun lighting the lot after dark to improve employee safety and operate a continuous shuttle service from the lot to Central Campus.

The shuttle, which operates from 6:15 a.m. until 9 p.m. each evening, also picks up employees and students who park in the new lot west of the Mercy College campus. This lot is well-lit and

has emergency call boxes to enhance safety. Employees parking in either of these lots may also call the FAST Team at any time to request a ride to or from Central Campus.

Finally, Mercy is working with a consultant who specializes in parking improvements to assist us in developing additional solutions to expand our parking spaces on Central Campus. Patient, employee and visitor safety is our primary concern, so we’ve added a new row of reserved parking spaces to the East Tower lot for Neurology patients and we’re considering valet parking for the East Tower entrance. Mercy is also working with the City of Des Moines to add a yellow caution light and crosswalk on University Avenue to improve safety and accessibility for employees who park in the lots north and northwest of Central Campus.



Ron Muecke joined the Mercy Family last October. He has an extensive background in health care facilities management, including more than 18 years of experience in overseeing bio-medical services, food and nutritional services, environmental services, grounds keeping, construction, public safety and leasing physician office properties.

## Kudos from Patients

*Mercy is committed to providing the highest quality patient care available. One way to determine whether or not we are meeting patient needs is to ask our patients about their experience with Mercy. We do this through our patient satisfaction survey.*

*Printed below are excerpts from surveys returned through April 2007. They are intended to remind you that you and your co-workers are truly touching the lives of many people every day, and that the care you provide does not go unnoticed.*

### 8 South

Thank you for showering our mother with kindness and compassion during her stay on your floor. And, perhaps more importantly, thank you for treating her with such dignity. Each of you is truly an angel and we want you to know that the time and effort you put into our mother’s care did not go unnoticed. God bless each of you and thank you for all that you do each day!

### Children’s Emergency Center

Dr. Tom McAuliff is awesome! My three-year-old son still talks about the stickers he left by accident at the hospital that Dr. Tom was kind enough to mail to him.

### 9 South

All the nurses on 9 South – especially Jana Davis and Julie Stevens – were real advocates for me. The staff as a whole was friendly, knowledgeable and positive, and Dr. Gervich was very caring. Thank you!

### Mother/Baby Unit

I really appreciated Jill, who was one of my nurses in the Mother/Baby Unit. She was very sweet and helpful – definitely a great person to have around during my first few days of motherhood.

### Labor and Delivery

My nurse, Becky Smedley, was with me through my entire 12-hour labor. She was amazing – so nice and caring – and I owe the birth of my son mainly to her. I don’t think I would have had the strength for that last push without her encouragement.

## *A Moment of Intention:* Sister Jeanine Salak, RSM, continues her “Journey in Mercy”

### Wear your walking shoes during Employee Fitness Week

May 13-19 is Employee Fitness Week, and WOW 4U would like to encourage Mercy employees to challenge their own fitness levels. On Monday, May 13, try to walk at least 5,000 steps – then gradually increase the number of steps you walk each day over the course of the week with a goal of walking 10,000 steps by Friday, May 19.

In addition, on Wednesday and Thursday of that week, everyone is invited to “Climb the Nine” at Mercy’s Main Campus. A sign-up sheet will be hung in the stairwell on A-Level and on the ninth floor. Employees who sign up at the bottom, walk up the nine flights of stairs and sign in at the top will be entered into a drawing to win some fun prizes.

### Lunch and Learn series

The first Lunch and Learn of May is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15. All employees are invited to meet in the East Tower Lobby (Level B) at 12:30 p.m. to walk the Mercy Mile with Dave Vellinga. Next, Janette Howard will present “Fast Food Nation” on Wednesday, May 16, at noon in East Tower Conference Room 7. Finally, Mercy Starbucks will host a coffee seminar on Wednesday, May 23, at noon in the East Tower Auditorium.

### April activity materials due

April’s WOW 4U activity – “Eat Well, Live Well, Dream Well” – has ended. In order to collect \$15 in WOW Bucks, members must submit all completed materials to the WOW 4U office by Monday, May 7.

### WOW Bucks winner announced

The winner of \$5 in WOW Bucks this week is Kathy Baderstadt, Ambulatory Surgery. Kathy, please call x-38800 to claim your prize.



**This month’s “Moment of Inspiration” column is dedicated to one of Mercy’s spiritual leaders, Sister Jeanine Salak. Sister Jeanine is a Sister of Mercy who has generously given many years of service to the patients, families and employees of Mercy. She concluded her role as a chaplain in the Pastoral Care Department on April 30, 2007.**

“I want to express my appreciation for the assistance, friendship and caring during my years at Mercy,” Sister Jeanine wrote recently. “I trust that all employees will continue the works of Mercy in faithfulness to Mercy’s Mission. I will remember all Mercy Family members in prayer as I continue on my Journey in Mercy.”

As a hospital chaplain, Sister Jeanine offered meaningful contributions to Mercy’s Bereavement Program for

families who experienced the death of a young child and parents who experienced the loss of an infant prior to birth. Sister Jeanine also enjoyed working with staff members in welcoming families from the Yucatan Program, and visits in the early morning with patients prior to surgery were always special for her.

Sister Jeanine’s administrative experience gave her special insight into hospital operations. She recently wrote a letter of support for all caregivers in Mercy’s application for Magnet Hospital Status, served on many Mercy committees and will continue to serve on the board of Bishop Drumm Retirement Center.

Sister Jeanine is a valued member of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas from the Omaha Regional Community – the dedicated group of religious women who founded Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines in 1893.

Sister requests that there be no specific farewell celebration since she intends to be available on a volunteer basis. She plans to remain in Des Moines, and said she will be watching over all from her fifth-floor balcony at Mercy Park.

On behalf of the Mercy Family, we thank Sister Jeanine for her compassion, laughter and guidance. May God bless her with good health and continued joy.



Members of Mercy's DREAM Committee (pictured above) help develop and coordinate diversity programs and services throughout the hospital and the greater Des Moines community. Their work is one of the reasons Mercy was honored with the 2007 Business and Industry Human Rights Award.

## Des Moines Human Rights Commission recognizes Mercy

Mercy was honored by the Des Moines Human Rights Commission as the 2007 Business and Industry Human Rights award winner at the group's 21st Annual Symposium on April 18. The award is given annually to an organization that promotes an effective equal opportunity/affirmative action work environment and devotes resources for the betterment of the community at large.

As one of Des Moines' largest employers, Mercy was recognized for having a diverse Board of Directors (one-third of its members are ethnic minorities and one-half are women); offering free interpretation and translation services to any employee or patient upon request; and providing employees with disabilities access to equipment and services that allow them to enhance their work. In addition, Mercy employs a full-time director of Diversity Services, implements a corporate diversity plan and participates in several community outreach activities each year.

### OUR SYMPATHIES

**Michele Bannon**, Mercy West Ultrasound, on the death of her mother.

**Melissa Hartz**, Ruan Neurology Clinic, on the death of her grandfather.

**Hadassah Holl**, Riverside Rehab, on the death of her grandfather.

**Sue LaPlante**, Home Health Care, on the death of her brother-in-law.

**Connie Mitchell**, Mercy/Mayo Family Residency Program, on the death of her father-in-law.

**Larry Noland**, Radiology, on the death of his mother.

**Andrea Reser**, Riverside Rehab, on the death of her father-in-law.

**Tracy Sanburg**, Mercy/Mayo Family Residency Program, on the death of her mother.

**Jeanine Stilwill**, Hospice, on the death of her mother.

**Liberty Tupper**, Hematology, on the death of her father-in-law.

**Stacey Wharton**, Home Health Care, on the death of her grandfather.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO...

**Greg Betts**, ICU, and Tami, on the birth of their son, Jackson Cole. Jackson was born on April 6 and has one sibling – Kylon, 14.

**Jenny Cole**, Purchasing, and Sean Waterman, on the birth of their son, London Sean James. London was born on Feb. 24 and is the first child for the Cole-Watermans.

**Staci Deist**, Phlebotomy, and Shawn, on the birth of their son, Ayden William. Ayden was born on March 28 and is the first child for the Deists.

**Jescica Freundl**, Mercy Capitol Rehab, and Kirt, on the birth of their daughter, Lauryn Charlotte. Lauryn was born on April 17 and has one sibling – Natalie, 1.

**Lisa Marie Hick**, Mercy Capitol 3 North, and William Haven, on the birth of their son, Charles Paul. Charles was born on March 28 and has two siblings – Henry, 3, and Brayden, 1.

**Casey Keeney**, Mercy Indianola Clinic, and Daniel, on the birth of their daughter, Megan Elizabeth. Megan was born on April 6 and has one sibling – Logan, 2.

**Jessica Rogers**, CTSICU, and Jonathon, on the birth of their daughter, Madison Lynn. Madison was born on April 11 and is the first child for the Rogerses.

**Dr. Sameer Yaseen**, Nephrology, P.C., and Ehsan, on the birth of their son, Malik. Malik was born on April 5 and has three siblings – Anas, 8, Manar, 6, and Maryam, 2.

# Mark your calendar

## Health Observances

### May is:

- Arthritis Month
- Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month
- Oncology Nursing Month
- Osteoporosis Awareness Month
- Stroke Awareness Month

### Week-long observances:

- Hospital and Health Care Week (May 6-12)
- Nurses Week (May 6-12)
- EMS Week (May 13-19)

## Saturdays at Mercy: Heart Series

**Saturday, May 18 (10 – 11 a.m.)**

### East Tower Auditorium

During this free informational session about stroke, Dr. Michael Jacoby, medical director for Mercy Ruan Neurology Clinic, will discuss risk factors for stroke, how stroke can be prevented and what to do in the event of a stroke. For more information or to register, please call x-32584.

## Mercy Blood Drive

**Friday, May 25 (9 a.m. – 3 p.m.)**

### East Tower Auditorium

All employees are encouraged to participate in this event sponsored by the Blood Center of Iowa, and hourly prizes will be awarded to donors. To schedule an appointment, visit [www.bloodcenterofiowa.org](http://www.bloodcenterofiowa.org), then click on “Find a Mobile Blood Drive” and “Mercy Medical Center.”

## Excellence Fair

**Thursday, June 7 (10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.)**

### East Tower Auditorium

All units, departments and teams are encouraged to participate in the first annual Excellence Fair at Mercy. Participants will be asked to create a booth that highlights a project which exhibits Mercy’s core value of excellence. Booth creativity is encouraged. Dave Vellinga, Mercy’s President & CEO, will present five “Presidential Excellence Awards” to honor projects with exemplary results. For more information or an exhibitor

application, please contact Megan Jorgensen at x-38384 or [mjorgensen2@mercydesmoines.org](mailto:mjorgensen2@mercydesmoines.org). Registration is due by May 11.

## Bulletin

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**If you are interested in submitting an article or information to be printed in the *Bulletin*, please send it to Erin Kennedy Kurth, Public Relations and Marketing Department, or call 247-3050.**



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