

Botsford grants nurse scholar awards

Botsford General Hospital's continuing work to recruit and retain registered nurses in direct patient care positions has led to the formation of the Nurse Scholar Award program. Four Botsford employees enrolled in RN degree programs during the 2001-2002 academic year are the first award recipients: Roy Boivin, who commutes to Botsford from Canada, and Jennifer Donaldson, Shelly Kuula and Whitney Schwagle, all of Redford.

As unrestricted awards, employees may use the funds to pay any college-related expenses, including tuition, books, travel, living or childcare. The award recipient commits to remain actively employed at Botsford as a staff nurse on an acute care unit for six months for every thousand dollars received. The Nurse Scholar Award program is open to all Botsford employees enrolled in an accredited RN program.

At the award presentation in May, Jennifer Donaldson, a nurse technician who expects to graduate in one year, said, "Finding the money to pay for next year's tuition was going to be tough. This award will come in very handy when I write the tuition check to Wayne State University in the fall... I plan to work lots of hours this summer to save up for my senior-year expenses. Committing to work as a Botsford RN was easy; I'm very comfortable here."

Shelly Kuula, who earned her



Award winners: Margo Gorchow, executive director, Botsford Foundation; Nurse Scholar Award recipients Whitney Schwagle, Shelly Kuula and Jennifer Donaldson; Dr. Eugene Laveroni; and Marge Hesler, Botsford nursing administrator.

RN degree in May from Schoolcraft College, also knows the difficulties of financing a college education. "Now, all the bills are coming due from my last semester. With this award and my earnings from my new promotion to an RN position on Botsford's respiratory unit, I'll be able to handle it."

Kuula is a non-traditional student. She was encouraged to pursue a nursing career by a friend who is a nurse. Kuula ran a daycare service out of her home and then worked for three years as a medical assistant before entering nursing school.

Whitney Schwagle, currently a nurse assistant, began her health care career as an emergency medical technician. Working toward a graduation date of May 2003, she is a nursing student at Henry Ford Community College. "During my year being an EMT, I developed an interest in emergency medicine. My career goal is to work in Bots-

ford's Emergency Department when I complete my RN degree," she said.

Funding for the Nurse Scholar Award program has come from the physicians on Botsford's professional staff, who support charitable organizations with the proceeds from an annual summer golf outing. Last summer, these physicians elected to donate \$25,000 to be used for nursing scholarships for Botsford employees. The Professional Staff has already given word that they will continue to support the Nurse Scholar Award with proceeds from this summer's golf outing.

The public may help to support Botsford's effort to ensure access to high-quality care at their community hospital by donating to the Nurse Scholar Award fund. For further information, contact The Botsford Foundation at (248) 442-5045.

Pain from page C5

psychological, social and other medical issues," said Wright. For 10 years, Wright has worked in pain management, originally spending about half of his time in anesthesiology, and half in pain treatment.

"Over the years I began treating more and more patients just for pain, then this year I decided to join a group that specializes in treating pain," he said.

New attitude

"Tri-County is the first clinic of its kind in southeast Michigan, according to the clinic's president, Dr. Dennis Dobritt, who had for eight years specialized in pain management before opening his own pain clinic last year.

"The situation has been that pain management was always done in a hospital environment, and then in an ambulatory setting. But more and more it's recognized as a legitimate specialty in itself," Dobritt said. "Pain has always been a second-class citizen, but 80 percent of patients come into a doctor's office because they are in pain."

That pain can affect nearly every aspect of a patient's life if it's not treated properly.

"We know that suicide and depression are more prevalent

among people in chronic pain. Marital and family dysfunction, and divorce are also higher. Their whole social system often unravels. It has a snowball effect on their psychosocial selves," Dobritt said.

Valerie Budka of Redford understands pain's impact on her life. At only 45 years old, she has for 10 years been unable to work due to a back injury sustained at work in 1991.

"I went to a neurologist for pain, and had a series of MRIs before I finally had to have back surgery," she said. "I didn't want the surgery, but I was getting a lot of shots and epidurals. But even after the surgery the pain came back."

The pain has been emotionally difficult for Budka.

"It's frustrating because I want to do things but physically I can't. If I think about that, it really gets to me sometimes," she said. "When your back hurts so bad you can hardly get up and walk, it's mentally debilitating. You can't hold down a job or even be a good friend because you just can't promise anybody anything because you're never sure if you're going to feel good or not."

Compounding the problem was resistance from her employer as

well as inadequacies in the way hospitals treated pain.

"My employer was giving me a hard time because they just couldn't believe someone as young as I was could be disabled from pain. I didn't believe it either, but I knew the pain was killing me," she said.

Budka has for several years been treated by Wright for her pain, but previously treatment was hit-or-miss. Often, she became frustrated because she constantly had to repeat her symptoms to new doctors. Further, treatment was often so slow, she could barely even speak by the time she was able to see a doctor for an injection.

But treating pain more effectively has far-reaching benefits.

"If you can treat a patient's pain you not only make the patient feel better, but you reduce their care costs. You can reduce their hospital stays and doctor visits, and their drug costs. They are less depressed and they're happier, and their quality of life is better," Dobritt said.

Tri-County Pain Consultants is affiliated with Grand Rapids-based Michigan Pain Consultants (MPC), one of the country's leading multidisciplinary pain management programs. MPC has 14 locations throughout Michigan.

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OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS

Support group for overeaters meets 7 p.m. every Friday at Providence Park-Novi, 47601 Grand River Avenue, Novi. HelpLine: (313) 438-HELP or (248) 474-9456.

PROSTATE CANCER

"Man to Man" support group for men with prostate cancer will meet 7-9 p.m. Thursday, July 11, Beaumont Hospital, Administration Building, lower-level Classroom 2, 3601 W. Thirteen Mile Road, Royal Oak. Call (800) 328-2241.

Smoking cessation program offered

Beaumont Hospital will offer "Stop Smoking," a four-session smoking cessation program presented by a team of health professionals, including a pulmonary specialist, respiratory therapist and a pharmacist.

Meets 7-9 p.m. Tuesdays, July 9, 16, 23 and 30 in the hospital's Administration Building. First

floor-Medical Quality Program Management Conference room, 3601 W. Thirteen Mile Road, Royal Oak. Fee: \$50. Call (800) 633-7377 or (248) 551-6031.

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