“2006 Florida Hospitals: A Winning Team of Everyday Heroes”
A Winning Team of Everyday Heroes
Founded in 1982, the FHA Management Corporation, a for-profit subsidiary of FHA guided by a board of FHA members and staff, continues to be devoted exclusively to providing cost-effective services and product solutions to Florida’s hospitals. Our current product lines primarily include hospital coding services, insurance and employee benefit services, printing services, and financial services that include the Medicare Revenue Forecaster product, Medicare 101, UB-92 Billing Manual subscription services, and more.

We have also developed strategic partnerships with local and national companies to provide important services such as group purchasing through Amerinet, hospital retirement plan services by MetLife, contract document management solutions by MediTract, and regulatory and compliance information services by MediRegs, and an “Emergency Department Quick Gains Program” by Ryerson Management Associates (RMA).

FHAMC services are competitively priced and provided by an organization you can trust. The revenue we earn from providing these services is used to support important FHA activities.

For information about FHA Management Corporation services, please contact John Mines, Senior Vice President, FHA Management Corporation
307 Park Lake Circle • Orlando, FL 32803-1107 • (407) 841-6230 • Fax: (407) 422-5948
Lifetime Hero Nominees

Philip Adler, MD
St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital

Lance Anastasio, President/CEO
Winter Haven Hospital

Glen A. Barden, MD
The Watson Clinic
Lakeland Regional Medical Center

John D. Gelin, MD
Citrus Primary Care
Citrus Memorial Health System

John W. Glotfelty, MD
Lakeland Regional Medical Center

Dorothy Graves, RN, MN, FAAN
Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare

Richmond M. Harman, President/CEO
Martin Memorial Health Systems

Patty Hood, RN
Glades General Hospital

Frank V. Sacco, CEO
Memorial Healthcare System

Sisters of Mercy
Holy Cross Hospital

J. Orson Smith, MD
Southern Medical Group
Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare

Tim Strouse, VP of Operations
All Children’s Hospital

Murray H. Todd, MD
North Broward Medical Center

Joseph C. Von Thron, MD
Health First

Mary Weeks, RN
Glades General Hospital

Tereather “Tee” White, Team Leader
Lakeland Regional Medical Center
A Winning Team of Everyday Heroes
For what is done or learned by one class of women becomes, by virtue of their common womanhood, the property of all women.

Elizabeth Blackwell – February 3, 1821-May 31, 1910
First American Woman Doctor
Physician; Humanitarian; Trailblazer
Lifetime Achievement Award

Joseph C. Von Thron, MD
During his five decades full of contributions to the Cocoa Beach area, he and his wife Jane have raised four children, who've all gone on to great accomplishments, with two of them following in their dad's footsteps to become physicians. As busy as he has been during his long career, there's no question Dr. Von Thron puts family first; just ask him about the lengthy long distance phone call so he could monitor the action in a northern college football game quarterbacked by his son!

At 79 years young, Dr. Von Thron continues to serve the community where he made his home 51 years ago. He helped establish Cape Canaveral Hospital as a community hospital where every member of the healthcare team worked together to ensure that the patient’s needs always come first. That is still the hospital’s culture and guiding mission today. He also served as a guiding force for all three of Health First’s hospitals and many other facilities as a member of its Board of Directors.

Without a doubt, Joseph Von Thron, M.D., exemplifies and is deserving of the FHA’s Lifetime Heroic Achievement Award.

Nominator: Larry Garrison, Executive VP & COO
Dr. Joseph Von Thron defines the qualities represented by the Florida Hospital Association’s Lifetime Heroic Achievement Award. In 1955, he made Cocoa Beach, Florida, his family’s home, becoming the city’s first family practice physician and leading the effort to bring a hospital to the beachside communities of the barrier islands. He helped mobilize a door-to-door campaign to collect donations and generate support for the creation of a local tax district that made it possible for the not-for-profit Cape Canaveral Hospital to open in July 1962 along the Cocoa Beach Causeway connecting the barrier islands. His impact changed history, because without his leadership and commitment, it’s doubtful the hospital would ever have been built.

He knew the need first-hand. As a family practice physician, he also delivered babies and many times made a late night drive along the two-lane Cocoa Beach Causeway, headed for the closest hospital on the mainland to deliver a baby there. A wooden drawbridge spanned the river, frequently causing traffic back-ups. Everybody knew “Dr. Joe’s” car, waving him around traffic on the shoulder of the road so he could be first in line to cross when the bridge re-opened.

Dr. Von Thron delivered more than 2,000 babies over the years and once joked that he attended a local church’s Kindergarten Christmas program where he realized he’d delivered Mary, Joseph, and two of the wise men – an honor that not many doctors can claim!

His compassion is legendary, as he made house calls and had regular office hours to see patients on Saturdays and even after church on Sundays. He once invited a very sick 18-month-old girl to stay at his house because he thought her mysterious illness might have been caused by something in the environment at her home. It’s that unwavering commitment to his patients that earned Dr. Von Thron recognition from Good Housekeeping magazine as one of the country’s ten most outstanding Family Physicians in 1980.

Also a leader among his colleagues, Dr. Von Thron served as President of the Florida Medical Association from 1973 to 1974 and as a member of its Board of Governors for 16 years. He was honored by Florida Medical Society Executives in 1993 and received the Florida Medical Association’s highest award in 1994 – the Certificate of Merit.

Dr. Von Thron’s service to his community is unequaled. For 21 years, he was the football team doctor for Cocoa Beach High School. He has served on many local boards of directors and has received numerous local, state, and national honors and awards.

His greatest legacy, the hospital that “Dr. Joe” helped create – Cape Canaveral Hospital – still thrives today as one of three flagship hospitals in the not-for-profit Health First family of healthcare facilities. Dr. Von Thron still works for Health First, seeing patients part-time at its Cocoa Beach Urgent Care Walk-in Clinic, and if he hears that one of his former patients has been admitted to Cape Canaveral Hospital, you can bet Dr. Joe will pay a visit. He also travels with US Today and the Freedom Forum as the consulting physician on overseas visits. His politics are Republican and conservative, but he’s responded whenever he was asked to serve the nation’s healthcare mission, chairing panels for President Ronald Reagan and also for former First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton during her husband’s presidency.
I leave you love. . .I leave you hope. . .I leave you the challenge of developing confidence in one another. . .I leave you a thirst for education. . .I leave you respect for the uses of power. . .I leave you faith. . .I leave you racial dignity. . .I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow men. . .I leave you finally a responsibility to our young people.

(From “My Last Will and Testament”)

Mary McLeod Bethune – July 10, 1876-May 18, 1955
The First Lady of the Struggle
Educator; Humanitarian; Civil Rights Activist
HERO
Marian Bender, RN, MSN
As breast cancer coordinator for Baptist Health in Jacksonville, Florida, Marian Bender, RN, MSN, serves in many roles. She is an advocate, a supporter, a counselor, a hand-holder, an educator, a shoulder to cry upon, and a beacon of hope for thousands of women and their families who are faced with a diagnosis of breast cancer.

After serving as a nurse in a general surgeon’s office and meeting breast cancer patients facing a mastectomy, she decided she could make more of an impact by working directly with breast cancer patients at Baptist Medical Center Downtown and Baptist Cancer Institute.

Soon after joining Baptist Cancer Institute’s Medical Oncology Department, and because of her special compassion for breast cancer patients, Marian was asked to take on a brand-new role: that of Jacksonville’s first and only breast care coordinator. She was allowed to take the job and make it her own – design it the way she thought would best benefit patients and the people who loved them.

Still doing this important job today, Marian is available for women from the time they receive a suspicious mammogram and are referred for more testing, to the breast ultrasound and biopsy. If the patient is found to have breast cancer, and with the patient’s permission, Marian is there for chemotherapy and radiation therapy sessions. She often goes into a woman’s breast surgery, if requested, and is the first face the patient sees upon waking up. She is in the waiting room with worried family and friends, in recovery, making home visits with patients, and setting up resources for women after breast cancer treatment. She makes their follow-up appointments to relieve them of that burden and waits with them to receive good or bad news from their doctor.

Marian takes calls at all hours of the day and night from those who sometimes just need to hear a reassuring voice on the line. Marian makes women with breast cancer feel they are her only patient.

The role of breast care coordinator has become so vital at Baptist Downtown that the concept has spread to Baptist Medical Center Beaches and Baptist Medical Center South, with the addition of two more breast care coordinators. That means that thousands more women will benefit from this unique form of support from an oncology nurse.

To ensure that breast cancer patients have access to quality, timely and compassionate healthcare, she took the initiative to establish a weekly Breast Conference at Baptist Cancer Institute. Comprised of medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, radiologists, pathologists, oncology nurses, and the entire patient care staff, the group reviews every single breast cancer patient’s case to discuss the best plan of care for the individual. Care is coordinated for maximum effectiveness. The care team knows each patient by name because they have spent so much time talking about her case and making sure she is receiving the best care Baptist Cancer Institute has to offer.
Not only does Marian act in a patient care and supportive role for patients, but she is a strong voice for breast cancer prevention and early detection. She volunteers with the American Cancer Society, speaking anywhere that women gather and can be educated about breast cancer, and participates in community breast health screenings. She promotes Baptist Health’s joint program with First Coast News (an NBC Affiliate) and Buddy Check 12, which encourages women to find a buddy and remind each other to perform a monthly breast self-exam and other forms of breast health. As of 2006, the 10th year of the program, more than 700,000 people in Jacksonville have requested information packets and Buddy Check programs are in more than 50 cities across the United States.

And even with her busy schedule, she is now working on establishing support groups for Baptist Cancer Institute patients who have been recently diagnosed with breast cancer, as well as those already in treatment and those who are cancer survivors.

A diagnosis of breast cancer can be devastating, but having a loving friend like Marian who is a breast cancer expert by your side throughout the journey can make all the difference in the world in healing, both physically and emotionally.

Nominator: Diane Raines, RN, MSN
I do what I do because I think it is the right thing to do.

Jimmy Carter – October 1, 1924-
Peacemaker
U.S. President; Humanitarian; Public Servant
HERO

Edward Coopersmith, MD, FCCP
Dr. Edward Coopersmith, Pulmonary Medicine (began practicing January 1, 1976), made it his personal mission to help the people of Central America after viewing heartbreaking pictures of lost children wandering through the mud following the devastating results of Hurricane Mitch.

The first medical Mission of Mercy touched thousands of lives with large amounts of donated medicines, medical equipment, and wonderful toys. This Mission has grown into three branches.

Medical Branch – Teams of doctors, mental health professionals, and nurses deliver medicine and treatment to the poor in outlying clinics of the impoverished countries of Central America.

Orphanage Branch – As each orphanage is adopted, we assist in their repair, assure that food and medicine become available, and each child is afforded clothes, shoes, and toys.

The League of Benjamin – This sponsors teenagers in distress, who are involved in gangs brought on by war, extreme poverty, and loss of faith. Sports equipment, counseling, and scholarships to trade schools are part of our commitment.

The 26th Mission of Mercy encompassed two plane rides, miles and miles of bumpy roads in 4x4 trucks, and a nine-hour boat ride up the Coco River. When Edward Coopersmith, M.D., arrived in the small town of San Carlos, Nicaragua, on November 11 at 10:00 p.m., the conditions couldn’t have been worse. However, the reception couldn’t have been warmer.

“The nurse and physician of the town came out to greet us saying, ‘The prayers of our town have been answered,’” says Dr. Coopersmith of this Mission to help the Moskitos Indians in the area. “Two children lay in the hospital suffering from pneumonia and they had run out of antibiotics.”

Along with Dr. Coopersmith came 1,500 pounds of supplies which included the antibiotics desperately needed, not just by the two children with pneumonia, but by many others – especially two other children who came into the hospital the next day. Without the antibiotics, Dr. Coopersmith feels the four children who were most desperately ill would not have survived.

During the trip, more than 1,000 children and 250 adults were seen by the group on their Mission of Mercy. The group consisted of Father John Mullet, a chaplain at Holy Cross; Marianne Flignor, pediatric RN; Layna Harper, a critical care nurse at Holy Cross; and Dr. Nicholas Trujillo, a pediatrician. Working alongside three Nicaraguan physicians with few breaks, the group sought to aid those who came to them in any way possible.

“We gave the children food, toys, sunglasses, other gifts, and vitamins,” says Dr. Coopersmith. “And we also had the opportunity to administer anti-parasite medication to each child as problems with parasites had become epidemic in the area.”

On the last night of the Mission in San Carlos, the workers received the blessing of the poor. In an assembly of the families of the village composed of Moravians, Episcopalians and Catholics, Father Mullet offered a beautiful Mass in Spanish followed by a few more blessings.
“Our tears flowed freely at that time,” says Dr. Coopersmith. “I felt that an Angel was there watching over those children just a few feet away from me.”

Further up river, the group was able to provide first-line medications to a young physician in charge of a health center. At each stop, health centers and hospitals were in need of everything imaginable – nebulizers, glucometers, even batteries.

The group also toured a hospital in Waspam, a larger town on the Coco River. The group left PDRs, other equipment and an abundance of medications with the hospital. While leaving, the young physicians at the hospital voiced their thanks and said countless lives would be saved through their donations.

Looking back on the experience, Dr. Coopersmith says two things stand out in his mind the most. “The blessing and saving the lives of those four children – not a bad exchange for a thousand-mile trip.”

Dr. Coopersmith’s Missions of Mercy and his commitment to the poor have earned him a number of recognitions, including: Humanitarian Physician of the Year (Florida Medical Association), Silver Medallion Award (Conference for Community Service), Humanitarian Award (American College of Chest Physicians), Humanitarian Award (St. Luke Society), and Leading Man Award (Cystic Fibrosis Foundation).

Nominator: Christine Moncrieffe, Public Relations Manager
The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more.

Medical Pioneer
Physician; Researcher; Humanitarian
I have worked with Kelley Cowan for over 1-1/2 years now. She is the Child Life Specialist that serves over the hospital’s Pediatric unit and Pediatric ICU. Kelley continues to throw herself into everything she does for our patients. She tries to make every child’s stay more positive and makes sure no one ever says, “I’m bored!” Kelley always has lots of activities planned for the kids, such as baking cookies, craft projects, costume parade around the unit, etc. She even set up Bingo games over the hospital’s cable channel with the patients who cannot leave their rooms due to infection so that they don’t feel left out.

Kelley is always reminding the staff to call her when we have to do painful procedures on the patients, such as IV starts. At times we forget, especially when it is for an infant because we assume that she won’t be able to do anything. But Kelley will come into the procedure room and remind us to dip a pacifier into glucose water and will stay during the procedure holding and comforting the infant.

Once we had an AIDS patient whose family could not visit her often. She spent a great deal of time with her, keeping her busy with crafts and toys, talking to her about her mom when she was sad (her mom died of AIDS a few months before), and asking staff to just go say hello to her because she was so lonely. When the patient was diagnosed with a few months to live, Kelley decided that we were going to throw her an early birthday party (she would have turned 11 in September). Kelley and the patient made up a list and sent out invitations to all the staff, including physicians, RNs, CNAs, RTs, etc. The theme was “Disney Princesses” and Kelley arranged for the patient to be given a Cinderella outfit, complete with tiara and shoes, to wear to the party. Kelley also found a company that puts on princess parties where girls come dressed up like all the Disney princesses. The girls agreed to volunteer their services and come to the party. A princess cake was ordered, MANY presents were bought, and the patient could not wait for her princess party. After the party later that night, Kelley stayed with her and they had a slumber party (the patient had never had one before). They put on makeup, curled hair, did craft projects, and watched movies until they fell asleep. She died the next day.

We get many patients that are frequently admitted to the unit and must stay for weeks of treatment before being discharged. At times, these children become depressed, especially when it is a chronic disease causing their admits. Kelley will remind the physicians to write orders for the patient to leave on pass and get a break from the unit. This past spring, Kelley arranged for some of the patients to go to a baseball game and even included some of the kids that had been previous patients but had recently been discharged.

Kelley also works with families that have a child in our PICU. She will sit down with siblings and explain to them what is going on in terms they can understand and will prepare them for seeing their sibling under extreme conditions, such as on a ventilator. Kelley is also in charge of our unit’s volunteer program and helps out with the hospital’s car seat program.

I wanted to nominate Kelley for this award because I feel she deserves it, for she truly is a hero on our unit. She bends over backwards for our patients and their families to make sure that their stay is a pleasurable one and is continuously trying to improve our unit and expand her role. As the wife of a Marine who is currently overseas, she gives so much of herself, frequently staying overtime, to make sure there is not one tear on our unit!”
HERO

Sharon Jones, RN
To Sharon, being a nurse is not just a job, career path or means to financial security; it is who she is 24 hours a day, seven days a week. She is our hero.

One evening, after working a 12-hour shift, Sharon was 10 minutes into her hour-long drive home when stopping at a red light she noticed the man in the next car was slumped over the steering wheel. Unlike most of us who would have assumed the man was just tired and gone on our way, Sharon pulled over and tried to open the man’s car door, pounding on the window trying to get his attention. Unable to get a response from him, Sharon called 911 for help and with their assistance proceeded to break the car window. Pulling the man from the car, Sharon performed CPR on the street until the emergency response team arrived. She continued to help the team until the man was safely on his way to the hospital. She then called her staff in the ER and “gave report” on their incoming patient. The patient and his family have been back several times to visit Sharon and her staff with their heartfelt appreciation.

Beyond the heroic effort that saved that man’s life, Sharon is an “everyday hero.” A registered nurse who began her career as a paramedic, Sharon is a nurse who loves what she does and cares deeply for people. Her husband, who is a paramedic in another county, called Sharon because he was touched by a small child whose father had suddenly and unexpectedly died while on a vacation here in Florida. The child was alone in the ER in their hometown hospital. Sharon went immediately to the hospital and sat with the child, comforting him, until family could arrive from out of town.

When Katrina hit so devastatingly last year, Sharon and her husband were in the first line of volunteers to drive to Mississippi to relieve ambulance teams, work in a mobile health clinic, and support healthcare workers and victims. She worked 12-16 hour days trying to help victims that were hard pressed to find in the flooded areas and horrible conditions. She speaks about moments of fear like the time when they were helping the owner of a dollar store pack ambulances with anything that would help and a group of youth wielding sticks and bats approached. She speaks about cows and other animals floating in the floodwaters, and about sounds and smells that will remain with her forever.

Sharon is a highly-skilled and trained nurse who always finds time for a hug or a well-placed word of encouragement. She would never consider herself a heroine...but she is....She’s our everyday hero.

Nominator: Mary Weeks, RN
As Tampa General Hospital’s (TGH’s) Trauma Program Manager, Celeste Kallenborn has the responsibility to ensure adherence to State Regulations for our Level I Trauma Center and supervises personnel supporting the inpatient and outpatient trauma services including nurses and mid-level providers. She has fiscal responsibility for the Trauma budget and is responsible for education, performance improvement, the trauma registry, and community outreach initiatives. She is the Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) course coordinator and was instrumental in TGH’s receipt of JCAHO Disease-Specific Certification for the Trauma Center.

Celeste holds a Bachelor of Science in nursing and a master’s degree in business administration. She serves on the Florida Committee on Trauma and is the President of the Association of Florida Trauma Coordinators Committee. Other state-level committee responsibilities include the State of Florida Department of Health Task Force for Trauma Registries, Trauma System Implementation Committee, Injury Prevention Steering Committee, and Clinical Data Guidance Committee. Nationally, Celeste is a member of the Society of Trauma Nursing and the Eastern Association for the Surgery for Trauma 19th Annual Scientific Meeting Planning Committee, Publishing Partner, Critical Care Nurse, AACN, and the National ACEP Violence Prevention Committee. She maintains affiliation with Sigma Theta Tau, American Association of Critical Care Nurses, and Society of Trauma Nurses.

Celeste has demonstrated her leadership qualities at Tampa General Hospital as well as at the national, state, and local levels. She has been instrumental in Tampa General achieving Burn Verification and JCAHO Disease-Specific Certification for Trauma. She manages a diverse Trauma Center staff and participates on seven hospital committees. As a role model, she directs and inspires others on a daily basis, and promotes the development of practical solutions to problems. She created “The Trauma Family Fund” to raise funds to provide hotel rooms, clothing, and other assistance to the families of trauma patients lacking basic necessities. She is devoted to making a difference in the outcomes of trauma patients today and the trauma patients of the future. She has published six journal articles, three literature reviews, and 17 abstract/poster/oral presentations. She has presented multiple trauma prevention lectures to local elementary schools, and has been awarded three state-level grants.

In the area of leadership, Ms. Kallenborn has instituted employee reward and advancement programs, which have gained the loyalty of our entire employee group. She has developed work satisfaction programs which have led to our unit being a very popular work opportunity among nurses becoming qualified for significant advancement, including one nurse who is a candidate for a senior administration position in a national medical organization.

Several programs were neglected and indolent when she took her post with the regional trauma center. She re-invigorated our trauma registry and rapidly brought it up to date and to a point where our registry data could be submitted to the prestigious National Trauma Data Bank. Only 58 trauma centers in the United States have been selected to participate in this activity. She partnered with MoreHealth, a health education agency in our area, to rejuvenate injury prevention programs, which had lain fallow for months and years. She has personally overseen the successful growth of four major injury prevention campaigns and she is now working to objectively and scientifically assess the effectiveness of these programs.
She worked diligently to recruit a clinical psychologist for our unit who identifies and begins early interventions for conditions such as alcohol/drug abuse and posttraumatic stress syndrome. Because trauma care is complex and involves multiple medical specialties and adjunctive services, she pioneered a multidisciplinary conference to ensure that all of the components of care for our patients are integrated and coordinated so that maximum benefit is obtained by the patient.

Celeste Kallenborn, RN, BSN, MBA
Trauma Program Manager
Tampa General Hospital

Nominator: Deana Nelson, Executive VP, Patient Care Services
There must be an effort of the spirit – to be magnanimous, to act in friendship, to strive to help rather than to hinder. (From a lecture given on the day after he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953)

George C. Marshall – December 31, 1880-October 16, 1959
Architect of Peace
Army Chief of Staff; Secretary of State; Recipient, Nobel Peace Prize
A helicopter-turned fireball, an experienced medical crew, a crying infant, and a courageous pilot. These four entities came together in what could only mean a disaster or a story of bravery. An otherwise routine day became what stories are made of for Amund Moe.

As healthcare professionals, we are taught to hope for the best and plan for the worst, and when the worst happens, we count on the training and expertise of our team members. Sometimes their response is the status quo and sometimes it ends with heroism.

For Amund, a Bayflite pilot for Bayfront Medical Center’s Trauma Program, responding to emergencies is his daily reality. At Bayfront, we are all real heroes, performing our job duties to the best of our abilities each day. However, sometimes we are given a test, a challenge, and the opportunity to shine with heroism, or fail at the expense of others. When faced with a critical situation, where a split second would decide the future, Amund chose to shine.

Amund has flown for Bayflite, Bayfront Medical Center’s Air Medical Flight Program, for just over six years and not a day goes by that he isn’t on his toes – ready to face the unknown.

An air medical pilot is an unsung hero whose role in caring for trauma patients is rarely recognized. With a Flight Nurse, Paramedic, blood supply and medications on board for each flight, a Bayflite helicopter serves as a trauma room in the sky. While it is up to the crew to care for the patient, it is the pilot’s job to ensure that the patient and crew arrive safely at the nearest Trauma Center within “the golden hour.”

To Bayflite, reaching a patient within the golden hour is the first key to a patient’s successful recovery. It is the pilot who navigates the skies, landing in a field or in the middle of an interstate to make that golden hour a reality. It has been documented that if a trauma patient receives care within an hour of an accident that his/her survival rate increases tremendously.

Flying as a civilian pilot since 1989 and having logged more than 7,000 hours in the air, Amund thought he had experienced it all. Then, during a routine transfer in August of 2002, he was given his test, the one you prepare for but hope you never have to face. This challenge meant prevailing heroically, or literally going up in smoke.

Fifty minutes into the flight, transporting an infant and crew from Naples to St. Petersburg, lights began to flash in the cockpit and one of the two twin engines began to fail. With the engine on fire and the cockpit lights signaling disaster, Amund made a lightning fast 180-degree turn and called out a mayday to Bayflite dispatch. He quickly landed the aircraft on the closest piece of flat land – a traffic-less stretch of Interstate 275, just south of the narrow Sunshine Skyway Bridge.

Never panicking with a stream of smoke behind him, Amund safely landed the aircraft and the crew and then carried the infant to safety and onto a standby helicopter waiting at the scene. Amund immediately borrowed a fire extinguisher from a nearby truck and attempted to fight the blaze alone.
Four years later, Amund looks back on this experience humbly as just another day in the skies. He says he trained for it and his training took over. He did what he did because that was what he knew he had to do to save his precious cargo – the lives of his crew and their infant patient.

He was trained to make an emergency landing, but it was his leadership and quick response during this event that showed his true heroism. Not once did he flinch or worry that the crew and patient would not survive. He trusted himself and his crew, and knew they would prevail.

To Amund, and all aero-medical pilots, not every day is easy and the skies aren’t always clear and blue. The difference is our pilot takes to the skies every day because he knows Bayflite’s speed is instrumental in the fight to save lives. To those that Amund saved that day and to those that he safely transports every day, he is a real hero.

Nominator: Sue Brody, President/CEO
“Any time you have the opportunity to accomplish something for somebody who comes behind you and you don’t do it, you are wasting your time on this earth.”

Roberto Clemente – August 18, 1934-December 31, 1972
An MVP On and Off the Field
Athlete; Humanitarian
HERO

Jorge Molina, CIS
Jorge had the scariest day of his life last year. Early one morning, days after Hurricane Wilma struck, one of the neighbor’s children awakened Jorge and his family, pounding on the door crying for help. This occurred during the power outage and many residents were relying on generator power. The child stated that her family members looked very sick and requested that Jorge check on them.

After dialing 911, Jorge ran to the neighbor’s home. Concerned that the air was possibly poisoned, he decided to wrap his head with a wet towel prior to entering the house. There he found six individuals, three women and three men. The men were vomiting but were able to exit the premises. The women, including one that was pregnant, were found on the floor, unable to get up. Jorge immediately began to drag them one by one outside the house. One of them, an older female, was unresponsive so Jorge initiated CPR and successfully resuscitated the female. Paramedics soon arrived and transferred the women to Broward General Medical Center for further evaluation and treatment. Jorge continued his compassionate care by driving the men to the hospital’s emergency room. Later, it was determined that carbon monoxide poisoning caused these near fatal illnesses. The generator had been placed underneath a bedroom window and the exhaust fumes had entered the residence – poisoning the family members.

Jorge is a person with a big heart. He risked his life to save his neighbors’ lives. If it hadn’t been for Jorge, the outcome could have been much different. Jorge is not only an asset to the North Broward Hospital District, but to the community as well. The hospital training that he received, including Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Care Life Support (ACLS), provided him the necessary skills to intervene in this crisis.

Nominator: Jane Tuthill, Administrator/Product Line Services
HERO

Susan Kathleen Sherer, RN
Susan Kathleen Sherer, RN, and her husband, Nick, made two trips to Mississippi last year after Hurricane Katrina. Both trips they loaded a rented 14-foot truck, their van, and a 5x8 foot trailer with food and a myriad of supplies – batteries, bug spray, water, tents, shampoo, soap, deodorant, diapers, baby formula, and more – that they had collected from co-workers, friends and family to share with the individuals who lost everything. Susan says they “drove until the road gave out.” When they arrived, they found no command post, so they went to a local hospital, then to a shelter filled with about 400 people who had no place to go back to. “Sometimes I just listened to people tell me their stories and cried with them,” says Susan. She helped the Red Cross evacuate a shelter in a school due to illness. She also gave so many tetanus shots she lost count. “We drove in towns and neighborhoods, and helped put tarps on roofs and brought toys and diapers to anyone that needed them.” The towns she visited were Biloxi, Gulfport, and Pass Christian. She and her husband spent the night in their van, and they gave away their blankets when someone had asked if they could have them.

On the second trip, they brought more food and supplies, and she spent time working in a medic tent. They met so many wonderful people, she says, who were so very appreciative. Another service Susan provided was to call loved ones living outside the affected area to alert them that their relatives had survived the hurricane.

Susan has worked at Moffitt for two years and serves as primary nurse in Neuro-Oncology for S. Clifford Schold, M.D., and Marc Chamberlain, M.D. She has worked in nursing for six years and in the medical field for 18 years. Her responsibilities include triaging and managing and educating patients in their care. She also is responsible for the flow of patients through the clinic and making sure her patients have the necessary resources to make appropriate decisions and to obtain assistance with care outside the hospital.
Jeffrey L. Susi, FACHE
Jeff Susi joined Indian River Medical Center (IRMC) (formerly named Indian River Memorial Hospital) in 1998 as its President and CEO. IRMC is owned by the Indian River Hospital District, which leases the hospital to Indian River Medical Center. As part of its lease with the District, the hospital operates in the Sunshine Law, which means that all hospital board meetings are open to the media and public. This results in very public discussions and debates that, for most hospitals, would be conducted privately.

Integrity and honesty
Over the years, Jeff has led the hospital through financial restructuring, a very public and legal conflict with radiologists, three hurricanes, and a controversial lease extension with the District. Straightforward and results-oriented, Jeff has a talent for bringing people together to find equitable solutions. He is the first to help staff move patients to safe quarters during hurricanes or in the middle of the night during heavy ER census. A physical therapist in his earlier career, patient care is his top priority. And he makes himself accessible to patients and their loved ones, offering his cell phone number and letting people know his home phone is “in the book” should they need assistance.

Under Jeff’s leadership, the hospital opened a spacious new Emergency Department on time and within budget despite two hurricanes five months prior to opening. The ED won an architectural award from the Indian River Chamber of Commerce and recently received a Press Ganey patient satisfaction score in the 99th percentile.

A visionary who gets the job done
One of the first activities Jeff undertook when he joined the hospital was to organize a joint meeting of the IRMC board and the District board in 1999. It was there that the decision was made that IRMC should develop a cardiac surgery and interventional cardiology program, with the stipulation it be in affiliation with an already respected, experienced hospital or healthcare system. After years of certificate-of-need applications and legal battles, IRMC was granted approval.

Jeff personally spearheaded probably the most significant medical advancement in Indian River County, if not the Treasure Coast. He began a dialogue with Harry Phillips, M.D., co-director of the Interventional Cardiovascular Program, Division of Cardiovascular Medicine, Duke University Medical School, at a medical conference which sparked the beginning of what has become a momentous affiliation, the first of its kind in Florida. Of all his contributions, the Duke affiliation, which will likely grow into other services in the future, is undoubtedly the most far-reaching and noteworthy. The Heart Center, an affiliate of Duke University Health System, opens this October.

Systems of care including a hospitalist and intensivist program, the formation of a rapid response team, and multidisciplinary rounds are just a few of the other innovations that Jeff has introduced that have enhanced patient care.

Donating time, talent, and treasures
In addition to serving on the Finance Development Committee of the American Red Cross and chairing the Healthcare Division of the United Way, Jeff spends free time coaching youth soccer for his two younger children. (His older son, a physician who is finishing his cardiology fellowship, and daughter, a registered nurse, are carrying on his medical tradition.)
His caring nature reaches out to his hospital family as well. He has donated significantly to the hospital’s Care to Share fund, a program in which employees donate money to help other employees in times of financial need – such as after hurricanes. And he has also made a lead gift toward the hospital’s $50 million capital campaign to build the new ER, Heart Center, and other projects.

A dedicated fundraiser, it was Jeff who initiated the Treasure Coast Wine Festival that has raised nearly $1.5 million for the hospital and the Visiting Nurse Association.

With a vision for transforming Indian River Memorial Hospital from a good community hospital to an outstanding medical center, Jeff and the hospital board recently renamed the organization Indian River Medical Center. This new name reflects what the hospital has become and promises to be – a medical center with advanced technology, a campus of services, and medical expertise equal to what is found at leading academic and teaching hospitals.

A Hospital Hero
Throughout tumultuous times, during dramatic public forums, and amid media criticism and scrutiny, Jeff Susi has stood steadfast.

The hospital’s new tagline, “The right care – right here,” says a lot about what Indian River Medial Center is and intends to be. And doing the right thing, always, is why Jeffrey Susi should be recognized as a Hospital Hero.

Nominator: Betsy Whisman, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
"Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration."

Thomas Alva Edison – February 11, 1847-October 18, 1931
The Wizard of Menlo Park
Inventor; Genius
I was told about a nurse on my unit, 4 North Tower, who assisted with CPR on an accident victim the night after Hurricane Wilma struck South Florida. Sonia had worked at Broward General Medical Center the day prior, night of, and day after Hurricane Wilma and as she was driving home around 8:00 p.m., a gentleman drove his motorcycle into a fallen tree. She never hesitated to assist with CPR and called 911 for assistance. The roads were very dark and, of course, filled with debris so the victim could not avoid the fallen tree. Sonia did not know what type of damages were waiting for her at home as she had been at Broward General Medical Center, but that never stopped her from stopping to help a stranger. Other staff members drove by and saw her in action, giving CPR. Unfortunately, the gentleman did not make it, but he had an angel with him in his last moments.
[I pledge] before God all that I have, all that I am, all that I can, and all that I hope to be, to the cause of justice and mercy, and patriotism, my country and my God.

Clara Barton – December 25, 1821-April 12, 1912
Angel of the Battlefield
Nurse; Humanitarian; Founder, American Red Cross
Rafael Almonte
Martin Memorial Health System

Thabet Alsheikh, MD
Baptist Hospital
Baptist Health Care

Larry Altier
Lee Memorial Health System

Marian Bender, RN,MSN
Baptist Cancer Institute Baptist Health

Barbara Brown, RN
Florida Hospital

Gloria Cason
Lakeland Regional Medical Center

Julie Clark, RN
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Edward Coopersmith, MD
Holy Cross Hospital

Shirley Courtney, RN, BSN, MS
Wuesthoff Medical Center-Rockledge

Kelley Cowan, CLS
Lee Memorial Health System
The Children’s Hospital of Southwest Florida

Rhodine Elliott
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Heather Facey
Broward General Medical Center

Donna Fischer, RN
Florida Hospital

Dianne Goldsmith
The Villages Regional Hospital

Eileen Griffin, RN
Florida Hospital

Eddie Ishmael
Baptist Hospital
Baptist Health Care

John C. Johnson, President/CEO
Holy Cross Health Ministries

Cindie Jones, RN
Florida Hospital

Sharon Jones, RN
Glades General Hospital

Celeste Kallenborn, RN, BSN, MBA
Tampa General Hospital

Paul Meadows
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Abdul M. Memon, MD
Jackson Memorial Medical Center

Claire Migliorini, RN
The Villages Regional Hospital

Amund Moe
Bayfront Medical Center

Jorge Molina, CIS
Broward General Medical Center

Toriano Morgan
Broward General Medical Center

Barbara Mrye
Lakeland Regional Medical Center

Sharon Pine, LNP
The Town Square
Wuesthoff Health System’s Assisted Living Facility

Rosemarie Reve, RN
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Sandy Seaton, RN, MA
Baptist Hospital of Miami

Andrea Shaffer, RN, BSN, OCN
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute

Susan Kathleen Sherer, RN
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute

Jennifer Shull, RN, BSN, MHA
Florida Hospital Waterman

Darlene Strama, RN
Leesburg Regional Day Surgery Center
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Jeffrey L. Susi, FACHE, President/CEO
Indian River Medical Center

Jimmy Truss, CNA
Leesburg Regional Medical Center Nursing Center

Christy Usilton, RN
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Elaine Wakefield
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Leroy Walker
Broward General Medical Center

Sonia Watson, RN
Broward General Medical Center

Tammy Weidner, RN
Broward General Medical Center

Georgia Wilkerson
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Virgil Wright
Broward General Medical Center

Susan Young, RN
Leesburg Regional Medical Center

Rachelle Zahniser, RN
Coral Springs Medical Center
Congratulations to this year’s Hospital Heroes.

Morrison Healthcare Food Service is the only food service specialist in healthcare and is focused on knowing what is important to running a hospital culinary program. With over 80 years of food service expertise and nearly five decades in the healthcare industry, Morrison enables hundreds of hospital partners to deliver the best in custom service.

As a member of Compass Group, the sole focus of Morrison Healthcare Food Services is feeding patients, visitors, and professional hospital employees.

For more information on Morrison Healthcare Food Services, visit them on the Web at: www.iammorrison.com