

**Remarks by Donna Hyland**  
**Children's Healthcare of Atlanta**  
**Hope & Will Awards Luncheon**  
**March 23, 2011**

**(After Introduction by Linda Matzigkeit)**

Good afternoon! I am always excited when I see this event on my calendar, because I'm the lucky one who gets to announce the Hope and Will Award Winners of the year.

One of the best aspects of my job is that I get the opportunity to listen to family members talk about how grateful they are for special staff members who made their child's experience at Children's such a positive one.

When parents come through our doors, they are nervous; they are anxious; and most of them are pretty scared, too. Many of them don't have a clue about what to expect, and they just want their child to be "okay." Some of their children are with us for a few hours, but many need to stay longer for additional treatment or to heal. We become their home away from home, and many times, their extended family.

We have such amazing people here in our Children's "family"—everyone goes above and beyond for these kids. So that's why I do not envy the folks who have the difficult task of selecting who deserves this extra-special recognition!

All of you Hope & Will winners have somehow managed to stand out among the rest of your amazing peers. In fact, your peers nominated you all for this award, which means they recognize the difference you make in not only our patients' lives, but in their lives, as well.

As you know, we named these awards after our charming mascots, Hope and Will. These mascots make us smile and represent what our patients need — hope, and the will to get better.

### **(Acknowledge Mascots)**

And now it's my privilege to formally recognize each one of you for all that you do. As I read the names of the monthly honorees from 2010, Hope and Will will hand out a small token of our appreciation.

Our monthly honorees were:

Jacquelyn Cooper

Jeff Eberhart

Kim Favors

Bernice Finch

Kenneth McDowell

Charlie Northcut

Susan Reynolds

Janice Rouille [*pronounced Rule*]

Donna Salters

Daniel Sandel

Nancy Sexton  
Dr. Amber Valentino  
Emily Anne Vall  
Mandy West  
Jill Young-Dickens

Please join me in giving all of our nominees a hand.

**(Lead applause)**

It is now my honor to recognize our 2010 Hope and Will Award  
Winners of the Year.

Since her first day at Children's—21 years ago—our first winner has given more than 100 percent to her job. **Bernice Finch** is a Perioperative Technician in one of our operating rooms, and her colleagues describe her as the “jewel in the OR.” One staff member shared that Bernice is an unofficial leader who nurtures the new technicians, teaching them the precise way a job should be done in a respectful way.

Despite having a lot on her plate, she is patient and never acts rushed. Even when she's the only tech in the OR, Bernice makes sure blood is available, patients are transported safely and that rooms are turned over quickly. She goes out of her way to anticipate the needs of the surgical team and meet them before she is even asked.

Bernice's positive attitude and smile seem to be contagious. Many of her coworkers mentioned how when they pass Bernice in the hall, they just want to hug her because she is always smiling. One colleague shared that just by being around her, she makes them want to be a better person. How's that for a compliment?

Another employee shared how she came to Children's with her daughter who was having an outpatient procedure. Bernice went out of her way to escort her to the right department and was reassuring and so sweet with her daughter. Bernice didn't realize she was helping a Children's employee – she was just doing what she would do for anyone.

Even after all these years, Bernice is an advocate for Children's and has recruited many others to our team, including family members.

She describes Children's as a special place, but she is one of the reasons we are just that.

Unfortunately Bernice can't be here today because she is once again doing what she does best and is caring for a family member. Laura Owen will accept the award on her behalf.

### **(Present Award)**

According to his colleagues, this next award winner is one of the nicest employees at Children's, who always delivers service with a

smile. As an engineer at Children's at Hughes Spalding, coworkers often call upon **Kenneth (Kenny) McDowell** to help solve problems and to fix equipment. He always—and I want to emphasize *always*—responds promptly with a positive attitude.

One colleague shared that Kenny is a shining example of all the Children's Values and that the hospital would not survive without his positivity and diligence.

Another colleague described a perfect example of Kenny's work ethic and attention to detail: During facilities rounding, Kenny noticed that the ceiling tiles were dingy in the Radiology area. He immediately stated, "I will be right back after rounding to change those tiles." She realized he was a man of his word, because when she returned to the area later that day, he was on a ladder fixing the tiles.

Recently, Kenny's commitment to Children's shined through in another way. Everybody remember the Code White in January? Not only did he work during the Code White from Sunday afternoon through late Tuesday, he shoveled the entire parking lot so that our patient families had a safe place to park. For those of you who have worked during that type of situation, you know how demanding it can be. It's people like Kenny who kept Children's running smoothly during those challenging days; and it's people like Kenny who feel they were just doing their job... but Kenny, you did so much more.

On behalf of everyone at Children's, I thank you. Thanks for being a person we can count on. We are truly lucky to have you, Kenny.

**(Present Award)**

Our next winner is described by his team as the “go-to guy.” A Maintenance Engineer at Marcus Autism Center, **Charlie Northcut** comes to the rescue of many of his coworkers, who describe him as reliable, friendly and helpful. Even though he doesn’t wear a cape, he’s considered a superhero among our staff and patients.

No job is too small for Charlie, and he knows the facility inside and out. Recently, a student punched a hole in a classroom wall. Charlie quickly patched up the wall and told jokes and smiled while he did it. One coworker shared that she’s never met anyone who works harder than Charlie and that if he doesn’t know the answer, he knows who does. He is always the first one on the scene to fix a problem and most of the time it’s before anyone else even knew a problem existed. Now that’s dedication.

What’s truly unique about Charlie is his rapport with children. He has a laugh that they love. I heard that when they see him, they say, “Mr. Charlie!” and he always remembers their names. They show him their toy or tell him something that’s important to them at the moment. According to one colleague, the kids want to climb on him and hold his hand, and he can always make them giggle. She

shared, “The twinkle in his eyes and the time he spends with them shows how much he loves these children.”

From talking with some of his coworkers, it’s obvious that Charlie regards the Marcus community as family — and that they feel the same way about him.

One of his colleagues explained that he first met Charlie four years ago when interviewing at Marcus. Charlie showed him where to go and who he needed to meet. He shared, “Charlie was my go-to guy then and still is. It’s a privilege to work with him and an honor to call him a friend.”

Charlie represents all of the Children’s Values, but the one that stands out is excellence. Charlie, you are a highly valued member of the Children’s family, and it is my pleasure to present you with this award.

### **(Present Award)**

Upbeat. Encouraging. Thoughtful. Compassionate. Inspirational. These are just a few of the words that describe our next winner. It seems that anyone who has taken one of her classes submitted a nomination for her. **Emily Anne Vall** is a Wellness Fitness Instructor who has inspired many employees to better their lives. She acts as a

cheerleader to those in her Strong4Life group and provides volumes of useful information to help employees achieve their wellness goals.

Not only is she a fun and motivating instructor, she is viewed as a genuine friend to employees. Her encouragement goes beyond the scope of her job, and she often sends little notes to people who are going through a difficult time to let them know she is thinking of them.

Although we offer fitness classes at all campuses, Emily teaches at the Park, and the word has spread. Employees travel from other locations to attend her classes so they can experience her smile and genuine warmth.

Through her instruction, Emily instills confidence in her participants. One person shared that Emily gave her a pep talk, which helped her finish the Iron Girl for the first time.

Emily also leads by example. Achieving her own personal goals — like winning a marathon — inspires others to achieve their goals. I believe your finish time was 2 hours and 58 minutes, which is an average pace of 6 minutes and 48 seconds per mile, right? And you finished ahead of more than 450 other runners? Now, *that* is impressive!

I heard that you pursued a career in wellness to help others, Emily, and that's another goal you can check off your list. You have helped

so many of our employees, and we thank you for being a shining example of wellness at Children's.

**(Present Award)**

Our next award recipient has the formal title of "staff nurse" on 5 West, but she wears so many other hats. **Mandy West** is the Relationship-Based Care champion for her unit and also the champion for the CHOICE Patient Safety and Quality committee. She is passionate about doing the right thing and is a role model to others about what patient care should be. I read one of her nominations that described how Mandy successfully worked with a difficult patient who had behavioral issues. The natural that she is, Mandy gave this patient the attention and compassion she deserved, but wasn't receiving from her home life. Mandy's nurturing really made a difference to how the girl responded to care and behaved throughout her stay with us at Children's. I have no doubt that the girl will always remember Mandy for being there when she needed someone.

Others have taken notice of how Mandy cares for the more challenging and some of our sickest patients. They admire how she shows care and understanding for them all equally. It comes as no surprise that Mandy has earned the respect from her fellow nurses, support staff and physicians. They admire her ability to be a role model, patient advocate and incredible team player.

Another hat Mandy wears is that of an educator. I'm told that she is great with newly diagnosed diabetics and takes the time to carefully explain their plan of care and to update them and their family with any changes. She also rounds with the doctors to remain up-to-date on her patients' care plan.

Mandy's unit staff describe her as being one of the best leaders they've ever had and say that if their child was sick, they would want Mandy as their nurse.

That is the ultimate compliment because we want to treat every child here like they are our own. Thank you Mandy for taking such good care of our patients and your department.

### ***(Present Award)***

Our final winner is described as being a shining example of the Children's way. As an Access Specialist at Cobb Rehab, **Jill Young-Dickens** is the first person patients see when they check in, and she makes them feel instantly welcomed.

Jill is the first one to arrive every day and the last one to leave at night because she wants each patient to have a seamless experience. She greets patients and family members by name and goes out of her way to make sure they have what they need, whether it's crayons, or answers to a question.

Patients and families are excited to see her and always stop and talk with her. They feed off her enthusiasm and encouragement when they are down or tired. Jill's positive spirit also rubs off on her co-workers. I hear she makes them laugh daily—and who doesn't want to do just that?

Her co-workers praise Jill's ability to keep the site running smoothly while juggling many responsibilities. They shared that Jill always maintains a level of calmness, even when the things around her are at a high-stress level. It's apparent to them that Jill enjoys coming in every morning, and it greatly shows in her efforts at work. To quote one of her nominators, "We are so thankful for Jill at Cobb Rehab!"

Jill, we are thankful to have you at Children's.

**(Present Award)**

**(End of 2010 Award Winners)**

On behalf of everybody at Children's, I want to congratulate our winners again. Please join me in another round of applause.

**(Start applause)**

Even if you weren't recognized as an annual award winner, everyone here today should be proud of the positive influence you've had.

You are the best of the best of Children's, and we are proud of your accomplishments. Thank you for everything you do.

**(*End event*)**