

# New Direction

## Nurse practitioner receives board's Job Well Done for January

According to her boss, Michelle Key, Care First Clinic nurse practitioner, portrays all the attributes that one would want in their healthcare provider: attentiveness, responsibility, competence, responsiveness to the patient, compassion and positivity.

That's why Michelle was recognized for a Job Well Done by the Nacogdoches County Hospital District Board of Directors recently.

"Michelle goes above and beyond to make sure her patients are taken care of in a manner that exemplifies all the traits that Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital stands for," said Reagan Moore, director of the Nacogdoches Memorial Professional Group. "She has stepped up during the pandemic and has made sure her patients have information on all the resources that are available to them. She strives to make her patients wellbeing her first priority even if it does not take place in the clinic setting. A recent example: Michelle received information that two of her patients were possibly in danger due to a domestic situation. She contacted authorities for a welfare check and waited in the clinic on the line after office hours to make sure the patients were safe."

Colleagues commented on her efforts and long hours Michelle has worked to better herself, her staff, and her patients and always being willing to help. A patient commented that the care she and her children have received exceeded expectations. "She is so easy to talk to and takes the time to explain things to me. As a new mother that is so important."

She is kind to her work family and takes ownership of the clinic, doing what's necessary to make it run smoothly from making appointments, rooming patients and even cleaning the exam rooms.

Michelle has been with Nacogdoches Memorial since 2005, first in the ER as a tech, then a registered nurse and now a nurse practitioner. We're proud she's part of the Memorial family.



*Michelle Key, center, with some of her work family.*

After an 11-month absence, our volunteers have had their COVID-19 vaccines and are eager to return to work. In the meantime, this week they've been learning to operate a new cash register that arrived in the gift shop while they were home bound.

Volunteers will be covering the gift shop from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday for the time being, then will expand back into waiting areas and front desk duty as our visitation policies transition back to normal.

We're excited to have them back next week, because we've missed them so!



## **Pulmonologists honored with board's December Job Well Done**

At the most recent regular meeting of the Nacogdoches County Hospital District Board of Directors, the group acknowledged the huge debt of gratitude owed to Dr. Binusha Moitheennazima and Dr. Ahammed Hashim for the personal and professional sacrifices they have made to keep the Nacogdoches community safe during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

As the only two pulmonologists on staff at Memorial, both Dr. Binusha and Dr. Hashim have been at the beck and call of patients and staff who need them, putting themselves at great personal risk of contracting the deadly and mysterious disease.

According to the nomination, "they have persevered without hesitation in the many months since the global pandemic began, only taking a handful of days off in the past year. Even during those few days away, they continued to help us fight the fight, making themselves available remotely by phone and computer, continuing to support us in times of need."

As the hospital's only pulmonary specialists, the pair stepped into the lead role of figuring out how best to care for incredibly ill patients, developing protocols and figuring out how to treat an unknown, untested enemy. The hospital has depended on their medical investigative skills and their wise guidance during an unpredictable time.

Not only have they been covering all COVID patients, they've been taking on the burden of many non-COVID patients as well, as many physicians have opted to not come to the hospital during this dangerous time. Knowing they were already in unavoidable peril themselves, Dr. Binusha and Dr. Hashim allowed their friends and colleagues the luxury of staying a safe distance from the hospital campus.

In addition to their medical support, the doctors have also made financial provisions for the hospital during this challenging time, purchasing equipment, supplies, gadgets and other items out of their own pockets, in order to give the hospital, patients and staff the best shot possible at survival against the novel virus.

Though their courage and dedication has been noteworthy during the pandemic, it has been anything but surprising. Both physicians have served Memorial Hospital well in the past. Dr. Hashim worked for years as a hospital district board member and both have served multiple positions in local medical staff governance. Dr. Binusha currently serves in the top medical staff leadership position, chief of staff.

Dr. Binusha's and Dr. Hashim's selfless determination and inspiring passion for the sake of saving lives makes them truly our heroes in these challenging times. They have been brave leaders in our COVID army and we are forever grateful.

## **Bomar social worker garners recognition for Job Well Done from board members**

As the social worker for Bomar Rehab, Stephanie Hutchison is constantly looking for ways to keep families informed in the rehab process and to address concerns they have. She meets with every patient, getting to know them and making sure their needs are known to the rehab team so that any barriers to the patient's discharge home are removed. Stephanie was honored recently by the hospital board for the November Job Well Done.

The board learned about Stephanie's efforts on behalf of a stroke patient who had been the primary caretaker for his handicapped wife and handicapped son. His stroke deficits were severe enough that being the primary caretaker for his family was not realistic. The gentleman had recently moved to East Texas and was afraid that his Muslim background might not be well received in his new community with the assistance he would need. Stephanie coordinated a group of unit employees in making sure the patient had everything that he and his family would need.

Another example was a young spinal cord injury patient with no insurance. Stephanie worked tirelessly to initiate some kind of funding for her and to get her to the Scottish Rites Rehab in Galveston where she would receive the specialized treatment and equipment she needed.

"There are so many times when Stephanie goes above and beyond for our patients and for our team," said Toyia Urbaniak, Bomar Rehab director. "She has a heart as big as Texas and a 'can do' attitude and we are blessed to have her as a part of our Bomar family."

