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Compassionate Nursing Celebrated at Blythedale Children's Hospital with DAISY Award

VALHALLA, NY (April 21, 2011) – Maria Marsico, RN, MSN, CPN, received a DAISY Award for Exceptional Nurses at Blythedale Children's Hospital on April 15, in recognition of her extraordinary patient care. Nominated by a grateful patient, Marsico received the national award during a surprise ceremony held at the Hospital that morning.

"As nurses, when a patient, family or colleague takes the time to recognize us not only for our care, but for caring—that is the ultimate praise," said Blythedale's Chief Nursing Officer Judi Peacock, MPH, RN, WCC. "Compassion and caring is at the heart of nursing at Blythedale." Peacock led the ceremony and read excerpts from Marsico's nomination, which was submitted by a young patient who cited Marsico as an inspiration. "She was my first nurse when I got here," the child wrote. "She would not stop trying to get me to try and talk...until my shell cracked and I let her in. She is the best nurse." In addition to the touching words of gratitude, Marsico received an "Exceptional Nurse" certificate from the DAISY Foundation, a daisy pin, and a small handcrafted "Healer's Touch" sculpture made by Shona artisans of Zimbabwe. The sculpture represents the importance of healers, truly fitting to the value placed on nurses by Blythedale, its patients and parents.



From left: Blythedale President & CEO Larry Levine; Maria Marsico, RN, MSN, CPN; Chief Nursing Officer Judi Peacock, MPH, RN, WCC; and Chief Operating Officer Maureen Desimone, RN.

Marsico earned her BSN and MSN degrees from Lehman College and has worked at Blythedale for 18 years. She is a Certified Pediatric Nurse and currently works on the Hospital's Adolescent Unit. Marsico also holds a degree in literature from Fordham University and resides in Armonk, NY.

Rendered speechless by the honor, Marsico took a few moments to find the right words to express her feelings. "That's what means so much to me," she said when she learned the nomination came from a young patient. "As nurses, we are truly the catalysts to a great quality of life," she said.

The celebration of compassionate nursing concluded with Cinnabon cinnamon rolls for the entire unit, courtesy of the company that serves as a DAISY program corporate partner.

Registered nurses may be nominated for a DAISY Award by staff, co-workers, patients or patients' parents and family members. Winners are selected quarterly by an 11-member committee based on a list of criteria including compassionate caring, inspiration of others, resolution of patient care challenges, and establishing a caring presence and healing bond with the patient and family.

The DAISY Award, an acronym for Diseases Attacking the Immune System, is a national program that began in 2001 by the DAISY Foundation in Glen Ellen, California. The DAISY Foundation was started by the family of J. Patrick Barnes who died at age 33 of complications of idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura, a bleeding condition in which the blood doesn't clot properly. Deeply touched by the compassionate care Patrick received from his nurses, the Barnes family created the national DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses to recognize the incredible work that nurses do every day. Focus Brands Inc., makers of Cinnabon cinnamon rolls, and AONE (American Organization for Nurse Executives) are corporate sponsors of the DAISY Awards.

For more information on the DAISY Award at Blythedale Children's Hospital, please contact Blythedale's Chief Nursing Officer Judi Peacock at jpeacock@blythedale.org or 914-592-7555, ext. 593. For more information about the DAISY Foundation, please visit www.daisyfoundation.org

About Blythedale Children's Hospital

As New York's only freestanding, specialty children's hospital, Blythedale Children's Hospital is dedicated to improving the health status and quality of life of children with complex medical illnesses and disabling conditions through superb multi-disciplinary patient care, teaching, research, and advocacy programs. Blythedale's board-certified physicians, nurses, clinical staff (social workers, respiratory therapists, clinical pharmacists, Child Life specialists, etc.) and New York State's largest hospital-based pediatric therapy department (PT, OT and Speech) work together to provide intensive and innovative multi-disciplinary clinical and therapeutic care to help children achieve their medical and rehabilitative goals for independent living, and return to their communities. Blythedale is also the only Hospital in New York State with its own on-site public school district, the Mount Pleasant-Blythedale Union Free School District. For more information about Blythedale Children's Hospital, visit www.blythedale.org

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