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Hawaii Healthcare Heroes Honored

Healthcare Association of Hawaii Pays Tribute to Awardees at Annual Gala

Honolulu – Individuals exemplifying the very best in healthcare were honored recently by the Healthcare Association of Hawaii, the nonprofit trade association for the state’s hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, home care providers and hospices.

Honorees represent all parts of the healthcare spectrum, from direct patient care to executive administration. They work in a range of settings from home health to hospitals. The 18 awardees were nominated by their peers as well as their patients, and included the fifth annual patient-nominated group of five Hawaii Healthcare Heroes.

“Hawaii is among the nation’s top-ranked healthcare systems. This is possible because we have such highly committed, compassionate professionals leading the charge,” said Hilton R. Raethel, the Healthcare Association of Hawaii’s (HAH) President and CEO. “This is their night to shine and for all of us, as a community, to acknowledge how hard they work every day, and why it matters.”

HAH honors the award recipients each year at its Awards & Scholarships Gala. This year eight Hawaii residents studying in healthcare-related fields received a total \$15,000 in scholarships.

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HAH is the nonprofit trade organization serving Hawaii’s hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, home care companies, and hospices. It is the state affiliate for national organizations that include the American Hospital Association, the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living, and the National Association for Home Care and Hospice. Find us on Facebook and Twitter (@HealthcareHAH). Learn more at HAH.org.

Here are the award recipients:

2018 Peer-Nominated Awards

Leadership Award

Dr. Jill Omori
Director, Office of Medical Education
UH John A. Burns School of Medicine

Physician of the Year Award

Dr. Daniel Cheng
Assistant Chief Emergency Department
Medical Director Queen’s Care Coalition
The Queen’s Medical Center

Professional with Heart Award

Sye Chee
Social Services Director
Hale Kupuna Heritage Home (Kauai)

Public Health Award

Christina Wang
Wound Care Director
Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center
(formerly Life Foundation and CHOW –
Community Health Outreach Work – Project)

Rose Ann Poyzer Caregiver Award

Julie Tsuji-Alhadeff
Home Health Aide
Adventist Health Castle Home Care

Advocacy Award

Laura Reichhardt
Executive Director
Hawaii State Center for Nursing

Distinguished Service Award

Divina Padasdao
Full Charge Bookkeeper
Hawaii Care Choices (formerly Hospice of Hilo)

Emergency Manager Award

Richard Kirchner
Director of Facilities & Emergency Management
Adventist Health Castle

Achievement in Advocacy Award

Representative John Mizuno

Legislator of the Year Award

Representative Aaron Ling Johanson

Legislator of the Year Award

Representative Scott Nishimoto

Legislator of the Year Award

Senator Brian Taniguchi

2018 Hawaii Healthcare Heroes (Patient-Nominated Awards)

Hawaii Healthcare Hero

Dr. Christie Izutsu
Nephrologist
Kidney Clinic of Hawaii

Hawaii Healthcare Hero

Valerie Janikowski
Formerly with Ke `Ola Hou `O Lānai Na Pu`uwai
Currently with Arcadia Home Health Lānai

Hawaii Healthcare Hero

Dee Ono
West Hawaii Home Health Services (Hawaii Island)

Hawaii Healthcare Hero

Dr. Rebecca Sawai
General Surgery
Kaiser Permanente Hawaii

Hawaii Healthcare Hero

Lesley Yoshimori
Nurse Case Manager
Family Medicine Clinic at
Tripler Army Medical Center