

Nurse at Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital wins special award

Written by By: Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent
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While nurses have always been heroes, they have been held in especially high esteem since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of those who has been serving the community for three decades was honored with a DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses Aug. 17.

Lisa Cope, RN, received her award from Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services last month.

DAISY Awards are given to registered nurses who exemplify nursing values of extraordinary compassion, courage and integrity in every situation.

In an interview with the *Sun*, Cope said that the most difficult part of her job is the fact that her job looks different every day, making it difficult to schedule into the future. She might have to inspect a construction project, review a microbiology report, and counsel someone regarding their illness all in one day.

As the Director of the Intensive Care Unit, Curry Graham works closely with Cope. He said she

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wants the best for the patients and staff.

“[She holds] us to task when it comes to infection and control and prevention, making sure that we’re doing what we need to do to be safe and keep our patients safe, and also keeping us up to date on the latest [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] guidelines.”

Cope began her career at RMCHCS in 1989 as a nursing assistant in the Medical Surgical unit. She later received her bachelor’s degree in Nursing from the University of New Mexico School of Nursing. Her family moved to Gallup when she was in second grade, making her an almost lifelong Gallupian.

Cope said she got into nursing to help people and so she would know what to do in an emergency situation.

“I feel really blessed to help people and have always tried to treat other people the way I would treat my own family,” Cope said.

RMCHCS Development Director Ina Burmeister said Cope was not aware that she was going to receive the award. Burmeister said she accepted it graciously, but not before she acknowledged the hard work of her coworkers.

This is the third year RMCHCS has granted the DAISY Award. Previous recipients include Kelly Manuelito, RN (2020), and Dylan Solomon, RN (2019). DAISY Award recognitions honor the work nurses do for patients and families every day wherever they practice, however they serve and throughout their careers—from nursing student through Lifetime Achievement in Nursing. Often DAISY Honorees respond to this recognition with, “But I didn’t do anything special. I was just doing my job.” Cope is no exception.

The DAISY Award is a national program established by the DAISY Foundation in memory of Patrick Barnes, who passed away from ITP (Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura), an autoimmune condition, at the age of 33. Patrick received such exemplary care while in the hospital that the family wanted to find a way to say thank you to nurses around the

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country, because they believed that nurses are truly “unsung heroes.”

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