



Photo by Jonathan Hillenbrand/NorthShore University HealthSystem

Altruistic Behavior

NorthShore University HealthSystem employees have a longstanding tradition of community service.

Countless local and international charitable organizations benefit from the generosity and hard work of our employee volunteers. In recognition of those who give so much to improve the lives of others, the Community Relations Department created the Sharing Spirit Employee Volunteer Awards. For the second consecutive year, the organization presented awards to 10 stellar volunteers who give to their volunteer organization.

“I really believe if every person could take a little of their time and give back, the world would be a better place,” said Matoula Mikos, who works for the Center on Outcomes, Research and Education (CORE) at NorthShore University HealthSystem (NorthShore). She was recognized for her years of passionate

dedication to the United Church of Rogers Park soup kitchen.

A culinary school graduate, Mikos does more than just cook dinner for 80 to 150 people twice a month. Working with donated food pantry supplies can be a challenge, but she creates delicious and healthy meals, supplementing the donated goods with herbs from her own garden, fine olive oil or wine for a sauce. “I never come in and just open the cans,” Mikos said.

Awardee Donna Hacek, an Evanston Hospital clinical microbiology employee, had a yearning to help AIDS orphans in Africa. “For a while I just sent money, and then I thought, ‘I need to send myself,’” she explained. Hacek has now made five trips to Uganda, volunteering with the Juna Amagara Ministries orphanage. This year’s two-week trip was different from her

previous journeys as Hacek led the group’s first medical mission.

Hacek was joined by fellow employee volunteers Kamal Singh, M.D., and Suzanne Paule, a colleague from the microbiology lab, who used their own vacation time for the trip. They traveled with nine bins of donated items to stock the clinic with medicine and equipment for a basic testing lab. More than 400 people were treated at the clinic during the team’s five very-full days of service.

Hacek plans to return next year—hopefully with physicians and other medical professionals willing to donate their time. Africa was ironically the “last place on the face of the earth I ever wanted to go because of all the infectious diseases,” Hacek said. She believes her dedication to the Ugandan children is an inspiration from God. “He put the desire in my heart to minister to AIDS orphans in Africa.”

The following employees also received the Sharing Spirit Award: Magdalena Espino, who volunteers at Iglesia Bautista North Shore; Wendy Gabry, who volunteers with Habitat for Humanity; Barbara Krause, who volunteers with the American Cancer Society, Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS) HealthReach, 4-H and Hurricane Katrina Relief; Tia Morrell, RN, who volunteers with Volunteer Kenya; Peggy Ochoa, who volunteers with Global Health Outreach; Laura Snipes, who volunteers with Northwest Center Against Sexual Assault (CASA); Deborah Taber, Jere Simon, RN, and Barbara Boland, who volunteer with Housing Options; and Alan Wadleigh, who volunteered with Troop 9, Wilmette Boy Scouts of America.

“Award or no award, it’s really vital to our communities to help in some way,” Mikos said. “Everybody has a skill—and it may be something they take for granted—but it can be used to help other people.” ■



NorthShore University HealthSystem employees are committed to helping the communities they serve. Glenbrook Hospital employees and members of the NorthShore University HealthSystem Associate Board recently helped Rebuilding Together rehab a Glenview home. Rebuilding Together is a national organization dedicated to preserving affordable housing by bringing volunteers and communities together to rehabilitate the homes of low-income homeowners. The Glenbrook Hospital Community Relations Department sponsors one home a year with a financial contribution in addition to volunteer labor.