Harlem (N.Y.) Hospital Center celebrated National Nurses Week with an awards ceremony May 10 honoring its clinical staff. Deputy Director of Nursing Yvonne Reynolds, RN, EdM, served as mistress of ceremonies for the event during which clinical excellence and achievement awards were conferred to the hospitals’ RNs, LPNs, CNAs and technicians.

Laureen Goodridge, RN, MA, CNE; Denise Soares, RN, executive director; Stephen Lawrence, MA, PhD, deputy executive director; and Maurice Wright, MD, chief medical officer, offered their congratulations and praise to the nursing staff for the incredible work they do every day. “One has to only imagine a world without nurses to see how important you are,” Goodridge said.

She noted the American Nurses Association’s 2012 National Nurses Week theme “Nurses Advocating, Leading, Caring,” was an appropriate fit for her staff. “Caring is a word that is synonymous with nursing. For all the extra care you give, I say thank you.”

During a particularly poignant moment, Wright explained how as a young physician starting his career at St. Luke’s Hospital in New York City, he looked to the nurses to help him through the day. Wright’s mother, a nurse, had advised him to introduce himself to every nurse because they would guide him through.

“I did and they taught me everything,” he said, “Who to see, where to go, and a lot of the time, what to do.”

Keynote speaker Marcia Skeete, RN, PMHCNS-BC, board member and past president of the New York Black Nurses Association, gave her interpretation of what the ANA’s theme means. “Remember those who advocated for you, cared for you and served as a leader to you. They got you where you are,” she said.

She said National Nurses Week is a wonderful way to get the word out to laymen about how valuable they are, but that nurses need to market themselves year-round.

“We should think like Coca-Cola,” she said. “They have the No. 1 soft drink in the world because they never stop bragging, never stop marketing.”

In addition to the clinical excellence and achievement awards, a special award was presented to Mary Coram, a non-nurse staff member, who was named an honorary nurse.


Tracey Boyd is a regional reporter. Send letters to editorNY@nurse.com or post a comment below.
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