

## **2008 VNA Foundation Super Star in Community Nursing Award: Runner-Up and Finalist Fact Sheet**

*In addition to naming Ronna “Jake” Ellwing of the Special Education District of Lake County the \$25,000 winner of the VNA Foundation’s 2008 Super Star in Community Nursing Award, the Foundation also recognized three other outstanding community health nurses. Named as the 2008 Super Star Runner-Up, Theresa Heaton was presented with an unrestricted \$10,000 cash award - the largest amount given to a runner-up in the award’s history - for her exceptional efforts in community nursing.*

### **Theresa Heaton, MPH, RN**

**Family Health Director, Kane County Health Department, Aurora, Illinois**

- Exceeds the call of duty while advocating for the health of mothers and babies in her community and across the state of Illinois.
- Passionate about improving health for those who are particularly at high risk for low birth weight, premature birth and infant death.
- Instrumental in the development of the Kane Kares Nurse Family Partnership, an evidence-based intensive nurse home visit program that features nurse-family partnerships.
- Founded the Kane County Prenatal Committee, which has resulted in earlier prenatal care, increased developmental screening, and the implementation of pilot screening programs for domestic violence and depression.
- Serves as an executive board member of the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA), chairs both the IPHNA nominations committee and policy subcommittees, and was the previous President of the Illinois Public Health Nursing Administrators (IPHNA).

*Furthermore, two finalists, Ingrid Forsberg and Monica Ryan, received \$5,000 unrestricted cash awards each for their remarkable work as community health nurses.*

### **Ingrid Forsberg, RN, MSN, APRN, BC**

**Advanced Practice Nurse and Health Educator, Mercy-Dunbar High School Health Center, Chicago, Illinois**

- Spent the past eight years expertly addressing the health questions and needs of over 1,500 high school students who visit her school based health center located on the city’s underserved south side.
- Developed a system that required coordinated efforts among health center staff, school staff, students and parents that resulted in a 97 percent increase in school immunization rates.
- Improved student nutrition and reinforced the importance of eating three meals daily through her “Eating Breakfast” project.
- Instituted a pilot study to address and reduce recurrent Chlamydia infections among female students through partnership with Chicago Board of Health.

- Partnered with Curves and New Hope Obesity Program to address the obesity problems facing her student population. Collaborates with teachers on homework assignments that pertain to activity, obesity and nutrition.
- Recently partnered with the Illinois Coalition for School Health Centers (ICSHC) to develop a pilot for a new risk assessment program which aims to improve the documentation and prevention of risks in teenagers across the state. The program remains in the pilot stage for 2008 and hopes to launch in 2009.

**Monica Ryan, DNP, APRN, BC**

**Assistant Professor and Director of Saint Xavier Healthcare Center, Chicago, Illinois**

- Established a university-based, nurse-managed health center at Saint Xavier University in 2005 to serve both the community and student population.
- Provides care to two Saint Xavier campuses totaling over 6,000 students as well as the surrounding community with 50 percent of the population either under or uninsured.
- Plays an integral role in developing partnerships with schools, healthcare providers, governmental agencies and community organizations to instigate change and advocate healthful living.
- Worked in collaboration with Chicago Alderman, Ginger Rugai, to provide screening services and immunizations to ward residents.
- Helped more than 2,000 families access immunizations and health education programs.
- Gives guidance and support for students dealing with physical and emotional crises, both as the Director of SXU Healthcare Center and an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing.

**About the VNA Foundation**

From 1890 to 1995, the Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago employed its own nurses and other health professionals to provide health care to the underprivileged. Since 1995, the VNA Foundation has operated exclusively as a grant making foundation, giving financial support to nonprofit organizations offering home- and community-based care to the medically underserved. In fiscal year 2007, the VNA Foundation distributed 59 grants totaling \$2,083,469 in support of its mission to increase home- and community-based health services for Chicago's medically underserved. Recipients of the grants include a variety of agencies providing health care and health services to the homeless, the working poor and the disenfranchised. For more information on the VNA Foundation, please visit [www.vnafoundation.net](http://www.vnafoundation.net).

*For more information or to schedule an interview with the 2008 VNA Foundation Super Star in Community Nursing Award winner, runner-up or finalists, please contact Beth Kleineman at 630-315-2966 or Kristen Nerad at 630-315-2962.*

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