

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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ST. PAUL NURSE RECEIVES GUARDIAN ANGEL AWARD NAMED FOR UT SOUTHWESTERN VICE PRESIDENT

DALLAS – Nov. 14, 2003 – Two decades of caring for the sickest of newborns and their anguished families has taught Aziza Young quite a bit about joy and sorrow.

“This line of work can be emotionally wrenching, but the fulfillment I get from being a part of the journey these babies take is a wonderful privilege and a great source of happiness for me,” said Mrs. Young, nurse manager of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at St. Paul University Hospital.

Mrs. Young received the 2003 Cyndi Bassel Guardian Angel Award last night during ceremonies at the Wyndham Anatole Hotel as part of the Southwestern Medical Foundation’s annual Charles Cameron Sprague Community Service Awards dinner.

The award was created by Margot and Ross Perot to recognize nonphysician health workers who consistently go above and beyond the requirements of their jobs to serve patients in exceptional ways. The Perots established the award in 1997 and named it for Cyndi Bassel, vice president for external relations at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, whom they felt exemplified its purpose.

Soon after earning her nursing degree from UT Arlington in 1981, Mrs. Young became the first new graduate ever to work in St. Paul’s NICU. Although positions in the unit are normally reserved for nurses with many years of experience, those who interviewed her recognized a maturity beyond her age and unique aptitude for the job. Five years later she was promoted to her current position.

“These small, sick babies get a part of me like no one else,” said Mrs. Young. “The first time I ever stepped foot in the NICU, I realized that I had found where I wanted to be. It’s a great feeling to go through the day feeling needed and knowing you really can make a difference.”

Mrs. Young also has been a trailblazer in modeling and teaching ethics to hospital staff. Her commitment to ensuring that patients and their families are treated with compassion and

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integrity has spurred the adoption of new guidelines for helping them deal with grief and loss.

“I believe Aziza Young has done more to promote ethics in care-giving than any other person I know,” said Bitsy Henderson, president of the St. Paul Foundation. “Her extraordinary impact in ethics, leadership, and family and staff education has extended far beyond the neonatal intensive care nursery. She is a true St. Paul leader – quietly confident, professionally competent, committed to a team approach, quick to compliment and recognize others, and self-effacing about her own gifts and multiple talents.”

Mrs. Young lives in the Dallas area with her husband of 20 years, Chuck, and their two daughters.

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