



NEWS RELEASE

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SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH AWARDS PRESENTED

Religious Community Feted on 125th Anniversary

(HARTFORD, Conn.) – Four employees of Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center have been honored as this year’s recipients of the *Sisters of Saint Joseph Awards*, which commemorate the religious community that founded the Hospital.

The awards are presented each year to Saint Francis staff members who have been judged to best exemplify the founding mission and values of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chambéry: “...to be a compassionate, healing and supportive presence to patients, visitors and staff, without distinction.”

This year’s honorees are: **Colleen Desai, R.N., M.S.N., C.E.N.**, Trauma Program; **Linda Dobitsky**, Clinical Gynecologic Oncology; **Timothy Michaels**, Human Resources; and **Ann Waters**, Health Information Management.

“It was in 1897 that the Sisters opened the doors of Saint Francis,” said Christopher M. Dadlez, President and Chief Executive Officer. “Today, we are an

exceptional institution thanks to the legacy instilled in our culture by generations of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.”

This year marks the 125th anniversary of the arrival in North America of the first group of Sisters from Chambéry, France. In 1897, five Sisters opened Saint Francis in the former home of Bishop Michael Tierney at the corner of Woodland and Collins Streets in Hartford’s Asylum Hill neighborhood, with accommodations for 30 ward patients and two private rooms.

Over the years, the Hospital grew, with more than 70 Sisters holding clinical and administrative positions at one time. Today, Saint Francis maintains its connection to its founding religious community with the presence of the Provincial Superior, Sister Dolores Lahr, C.S.J., on its Board of Directors.

“From our beginnings, we’ve always hoped that the spirit of service and hospitality of the community would ignite a fire and passion for service in the hearts of wonderful lay men and women with whom we’ve worked. It has always been our desire to work side-by-side, to partner with others in ministry. When we’ve had to leave a ministry, we know that other good people carry on in our place. The Sisters of Saint Joseph award is testament to the fact that we have planted our spirit, our Charism of hospitality and mission to all people, without distinction. It is a joy to see our Community alive in the spirit of others here at Saint Francis. How proud our first Sisters, especially those who built and administrated the Hospital, would be looking at the Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center family today. Thank you for keeping their spirit, and ours, an integral part of Saint Francis,” said Sister Dolores Lahr, C.S.J.

Founded in 1897, Saint Francis is a major teaching hospital licensed for 617 acute inpatient beds and 65 bassinets. It is the largest Catholic hospital in New England.

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