

# News Release

---

Contact: John Cappiello  
203-384-3637  
John.Cappiello@bpt.hosp.org

## **Trumbull, Stratford Residents Earn Top Employee Awards From Bridgeport Hospital**

BRIDGEPORT, CT (May 22, 2019) – Nearly 400 employees were honored for service milestones of five to 50 years at Bridgeport Hospital’s Employee Recognition Dinner May 14 at The Waterview in Monroe.

Paul de Regt of Trumbull, physical therapist, Ahlbin Rehabilitation Centers, was named Employee of the Year and Victoria Monks of Stratford, Cardiovascular Services technologist, received the George B. and Alice P. Longstreth Humanness Award.

Linda Podolak, DNP, Patient Care Operations, also of Trumbull, led the list of employees celebrating service milestones, with 50 years.

All the employees on hand were thanked and congratulated by for their hard work and dedication by hospital leaders including Michael Ivy, MD, interim president and CEO; John Falconi, chair of the hospital board of trustees, and Kenneth Lipow, MD, medical staff president.

The Employee of the Year award is presented annually to the staff member who best reflects the hospital’s values of patient-centeredness, respect, compassion, integrity and accountability. Recent comments from a co-worker sum up how de Regt embraces these values.

“Recently, I asked Paul if he would take post-operative range of motion and strength measurements on a patient so we could provide information for the patient to receive a wheelchair,” the co-worker wrote. “I knew the patient could not possibly return to school without the chair and could not afford to fall further behind in his studies. Paul quickly coordinated a meeting with the patient’s family to take the measurements and then went a step further and visited the patient’s home. He also reached out to the surgeon and nurse involved in the case

and arranged for home services. Paul had clear and excellent communication with all members of the care team over the course of three weeks. It is because of Paul that this patient is on track recovering from his surgery and the wheelchair was approved.”

The Longstreth Award recognizes caregivers not only for clinical skill but also for their humanistic approach to treating patients.

“Victoria’s compassion for others is amazing,” says her manager, Diane Rydzy, RN. “She is humble and never thinks of herself as being an outstanding person.”

“Victoria is undoubtedly the most caring person I have ever met in my life,” another nominator writes. “She treats patients, families, physicians and staff like they are the most important people in the world. She is always sure all her patients’ needs are met, whether it’s getting them a warm blanket, helping them get to the bathroom, or getting them a drink or meal. She makes everyone feel like they are human.”

Podolak began at the hospital as a nurse’s aide before completing her studies at the Bridgeport Hospital School of Nursing (BHSN). She held a variety of positions, including staff nurse, nurse manager, critical care and maternal-child health nurse educator, and administrative manager. She joined the faculty of BHSN in the mid-1990s, rising to the post of director and taking part in the transition of the school to a four-year bachelor of science in nursing program at the University of Bridgeport in 2017. She is now a part-time director in Patient Care Operations.

**Bridgeport Hospital**, part of Yale New Haven Health, is a 383-bed acute care hospital (plus 42 beds licensed to Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital) serving parts of Fairfield and New Haven counties. The hospital admits more than 21,000 patients and receives over 315,000 outpatient treatments annually. The Connecticut Burn Center at Bridgeport Hospital is the only burn center in the state and one of only 65 verified burn centers in the United States.