New York Federal Executive Board Announces 2012 Employee of the Year Awards

Bronx, New York - The New York Federal Executive Board, representing more than 150 federal agencies and more than 47,000 federal civilian employees, have named their 2012 FEB Award winners. Among the local award winners are James J. Peters (JJP) physician, Jessie Simantov, named the 2012 Distinguished Team Leader of the Year. The 2012 Distinguished Teamwork Award went to JJP staff members, Mr. Yang Zhao, Chief, Medical Media; Dr. Daniel MacDonald; and Andriy Demkiv, IT Specialist.

In the category of Distinguished Team Leader, Dr. Simantov, leader of the James J. Peters Polytrauma/ Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) center, was noted for her creative and collaborative approach to the treatment of TBI. Known informally as the Continued.
“signature injury” of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, knowledge and implications of the injury are still evolving and treatments must be individualized and encompass a wide range of physical, neurological, social and vocational disciplines.

In the nomination for her award, Dr. Simantov was lauded for her efforts to provoke and lead interdisciplinary team meetings. She is credited with prompting meaningful discussions that help members of the clinical team coordinate comprehensive treatment plans. Her focus is broadly dispersed and encourages her team to address multiple patient needs across a broad spectrum of interests, including family, home, educational, vocational and spiritual.

“When it comes to caring for a TBI Veteran patient, Jessie embodies the maxim; It takes a village,” volunteered Dr. Charlene Bang, neuropsychologist and member of the Bronx VA’s Polytrauma/TBI team. Furthermore, Dr. Bang added, “She has created an atmosphere in which difficult issues can be resolved in a diplomatic manner. Team members feel safe to discuss issues, or questions that may arise. Her personal and professional integrity are inspiring, leading to a sustained high motivation among the team members, and exceptionally high standards of care.”

The FEB’s Distinguished Teamwork Award went to Dr. Daniel MacDonald, Director, SCI Dental Clinic; Mr. Yang Zhao, Chief, Medical Media; and Andriy Demkiv, IT Specialist, for their development and implementation of an innovative, user-friendly, software driven, scheduling system. This system will allow a clinical staff member to rapidly locate both present and future dental or medical appointments, the patients’ proposed treatment, and the individual who created the appointment.

“This is a busy medical center and keeping track of appointments and treatments can be complicated by the movement of residents and practitioners to other practices or locations.” Dr. MacDonald explained. “This innovation addresses the problem of maintaining the continuity of patient care, but its true elegance is that it’s universally customizable.”

In keeping with our efforts to maintain our Veteran patients’ privacy, and in concert with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), only medical or dental practitioners directly involved in a particular patient’s care, will have access to the patient’s confidential information. For more information related to this story or the James J. Peters VA Medical Center, please contact Jim Connell, Public Affairs Officer, at 718.584.9000, Ext. 6620.

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