KATHY ANTHONY RECOGNIZED WITH DAISY AWARD

Kathy Anthony, R.N., was recently recognized with Mercy’s DAISY Award. She was surprised with the award at a ceremony Oct. 13 in the Labor and Birthing Unit, with several of her colleagues and Mercy nursing leadership in attendance. Kathy was nominated by her unit director, to recognize her knowledge and expertise and the compassionate care she provides to all patients.

Following is an excerpt from the nomination form: “Her knowledge and expertise in the Labor and Delivery process has provided safe care to the mother and baby for years. Kathy is passionate about her faith and, because of her caring personality, she has shown great compassion not only being a part of delivering a baby that brings such great joy to mothers and fathers, but also her understanding and passion for helping those mothers and fathers who do not get to bring a baby home. Kathy is respected among her peers and the physicians. In addition to advocating and caring for all her patients Kathy also cares for her co-workers.”

DES MOINES SCHOOLS’ PROJECT SEARCH STUDENTS POSITIVELY IMPACT MERCY

Six years ago, Mercy, Des Moines Public Schools, Easter Seals and federal vocational rehabilitation began a win-win relationship known as Project SEARCH. The program matches students with participating businesses. At Mercy, high school graduates age 18 to 21 develop important job and life skills that could lead to future employment.

“Project SEARCH is an important step for students with physical, intellectual or behavioral disabilities who want to work,” says Work Experience Coordinator Susan Hetherington–Ruggles. “Businesses who are part of the program find the students respond positively to the education they receive. Hetherington–Ruggles says 84 percent of students in the Des Moines Public Schools program have found a job, and four former Project SEARCH graduates presently work at Mercy.

Currently, 11 students are part of the Mercy-based program. Mercy Laboratory Director Teri Reiff has a student who works in her department. She says, “We love having the students work with us. They are a big help and perform jobs that free up other lab employees to focus on patient care. Hetherington–Ruggles says the program is always looking for additional work experiences at Mercy.

To learn more about Project SEARCH at Mercy — you can send an email to susan.hetherington@dmschools.org or call Susan at 515-491-1394.
MERCY AND HEALTHY HOMES DES MOINES IMPROVE CHILDREN’S HEALTH

An initiative focusing on improving the health of children by repairing the homes they live in has generated positive results and resulted in renewed funding for 2017-2019.

Healthy Homes Des Moines (HHDSM) is an innovative health prevention program designed to improve health and housing in our community. The initiative is powered by Mercy Children’s Hospital & Clinics and partners in the Des Moines medical community, Polk County Health Department, Des Moines Public and Catholic schools, Polk County Housing Trust, Mid Iowa Health Foundation and Telligen Community Initiative.

The success of HHDSM relies on collaborative efforts between schools and medical providers who identify children who are missing school and making increasing numbers of visits to school nurses, clinics or emergency departments because of breathing issues. The Polk County Health Department uses this information to request a visit to the student’s home, and, in a number of cases, repairs are made to improve the living environment. Following the repairs, families receive cleaning supplies and education to help maintain their houses. As a result of the improvements, students missed less class and made fewer visits to the doctor.

Mercy Children’s Hospital & Clinics Outreach Coordinator Melissa Brunia says the program fits Mercy’s mission. “By working with our medical colleagues in Des Moines we are improving the health of children and our community,” says Brunia. “Programs like HHDSM can be an effective model for other communities. It could also help in determining the role social factors like housing play in a person’s health.”

In the first phase of the program, 137 referrals were made by schools and health providers – including 29 referrals from Mercy Children’s Hospital & Clinics – which resulted in 150 home repairs.