Editor’s Note: On a daily basis, the MercyOne Core Values are demonstrated as we face the COVID-19 pandemic, providing comfort, care and compassion to our patients, their families, our colleagues and our communities. Join in celebrating the following colleagues, nominated by you, and selected as Spirit of Mercy Award winners during fiscal year 2020.

Spirit of Mercy Award winner meets the varying needs of her patients

As a supervisor and critical care paramedic with MercyOne Des Moines Ambulance Service, Jessica Halsted is a professional. From a routine transport to delivering care when minutes count, her manager says Halsted’s commitment to excellence and other MercyOne Core Values are demonstrated and lived in many ways.

When she’s not providing clinical care, Halsted finds other opportunities to care for her patients’ and colleagues’ needs. Her nominator says, “Jessica’s compassion and thoughtfulness for others is inspiring.”

When COVID-19 arrived in central Iowa, MercyOne Children’s Hospital.

Halsted knows healing comes in many forms. Colleagues say she was contacted by a friend after a serious car accident involving children. Jessica went to MercyOne Des Moines Trauma Services and Emergency Care to be with a child until the parents arrived. When the child unfortunately passed away, Jessica was also there to provide support to the parents.

Thank you Jessica Halsted, for your service to others and for living the MercyOne Values for all to see.

Reverence and compassion guide care during COVID-19 pandemic

Hannah Gymer, RN, Labor and Delivery, was selected as a Spirit of Mercy Award winner. Her nominator submitted comments about Gymer’s upstanding character and strengths as a labor and delivery nurse, including:

“Hannah is an excellent nurse who takes care of every one of her patients to the top of her ability. She lives the Mission and Values of MercyOne continuously. Hannah gives the same care to her patients no matter their background or how they may be valued by society. She recognizes the intrinsic value of each life. She treats everyone with compassion and dignity.

“When our unit was preparing to care for our first known COVID positive patient, Hannah was given this patient as her assignment. She was never concerned for herself and said to another colleague, ‘This is why we are nurses. This patient didn’t ask to get COVID, but we signed up to take the best care of her.’”

Congratulations, Hannah Gymer, on the well-deserved honor as a Spirit of Mercy Award recipient.
MercyOne Integrity & Compliance:
“Crossing the line on social media”

Sticky Scenario:
Mack, a MercyOne nurse practitioner, spends time after work in heated political debates with Tony on Facebook. Last night was the last straw: Mack told Tony he wished Tony’s candidate would have a heart attack and drop dead. Mack added, “I’d never want to take care of anyone who supported your guy!” Thirty minutes later, Mack unfriended Tony. The next day, Tony, who had taken a screen shot of Mack’s comment and was miffed at being unfriended, called MercyOne’s Integrity and Compliance Department, expressing concern that one of our care providers was “unhinged.”

Mack is certainly entitled to his own political views. However, his comments about wishing Tony’s candidate ill health and death, and not wanting to care for someone with whom he disagrees politically, are not aligned with MercyOne Values to show compassion and care for all. Comments like these damage MercyOne’s reputation. It would be appropriate to ask Mack to remove his affiliation with MercyOne from his Facebook page. Be assured, MercyOne is not trolling social media to “catch” colleagues. But, from time-to-time, these types of situations come to the attention of your Integrity and Compliance team. In those cases, Integrity and Compliance, with input from management, has to decide if the comments cross the line.

Mack’s comments were made on his personal Facebook page when he wasn’t working and didn’t even involve a patient. However, the MercyOne Corporate Social Media policy (2.67.3) applies to all colleagues when using social media — at work or anywhere else — when the colleague’s affiliation with MercyOne is identified, known or presumed. The policy further states that when using social media, colleagues shall not “engage in illegal activity, activity inconsistent with the MercyOne Standards of Conduct or adverse to MercyOne’s legitimate business interests.” When a colleague’s use of social media is not aligned with the position of MercyOne, the colleague may be asked to remove any reference to his or her employment or affiliation with MercyOne.

TIP: If you endorse products, political candidates, legislation or other businesses online, use this disclaimer: “The postings on this site reflect the individual views and opinions of the author and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of MercyOne.” Also, as we head into the election season, remember MercyOne, as a tax-exempt, charitable organization, cannot endorse or oppose a political candidate. Please refrain from activities at work that might suggest to others that MercyOne endorses or opposes a candidate. Colleagues are permitted to take part in partisan political activities, when done on the colleague’s personal time and with personal resources, and when the colleague is careful not to imply he or she is representing MercyOne in these activities. See Policy 45.01.04, Political Activities Advocacy Statement, for more information.

Society of St. Luke Award
Seeking nominations, Sept. 1-18

MercyOne colleagues are invited to submit nominations for the Society of St. Luke Award. Named for the patron saint of physicians and surgeons, the award is bestowed annually to physicians who practice at MercyOne Des Moines or West Des Moines Medical Centers, or a MercyOne Central Iowa clinic location, in recognition for distinguished work and outstanding dedication to MercyOne’s healing mission. Nominations must be made by colleagues who are not physicians themselves, and be submitted by Friday, Sept. 18, at MercyOne.org/desmoines/stluke.

Have you noticed?

Signage featuring the new brand has started to go up at MercyOne Des Moines and West Des Moines Medical Centers! Installation is still in progress. Check out a couple of the new signs!

New signs include these on the Des Moines’ campus on the corner of Laurel and 5th Ave., and outside the West Entrance.