

SPIRIT ONLINE

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VA Connecticut Healthcare System

May 5, 2004

BRING YOUR CHILDREN TO WORK DAY

Bring your Children to Work Day, a national program sponsored locally by the EEO Committee, was held April 23 at the West Haven campus. More than 30 children, ages 9-13, were introduced to some of the many rewarding careers in health care. The day included tours of Bio-Med, Radiology, Nutrition and Food Service and the Eastern Blind Rehabilitation Service. **Michele Avery** and **Joe Purcell**, event co-chairs, thank all of the services for participating in the program and for the special attention they gave to each child.

The Newington campus hosted Bring Your Children to Work Day April 22. More than 25 children enjoyed tours of Mental Health Service, Lab, Operator's Switchboard area, VA Police, Patient Transportation, Audiology and Physical Therapy. **Linda Jaeger** chaired the Newington event. Special thanks to **Beverly Bell** who prepared a special ziti lunch for all of the children.

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Photo by Officer Ken Muller

*Children at the Newington campus pose for a photo with VA Police Officers (left to right), **Cary Bennette, Don Barrows, Lt. Jim Despietro and Dave Reeser.***

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Events

National Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage Month

May 7
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Staff Dining Room
West Haven

VHA All-Employee Survey
Now through May 14

Director's All-Employee Forums West Haven

(Donaldson)
Wednesday, May 19
9 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
(4th Floor Surgical Conf. Room)
7 p.m.

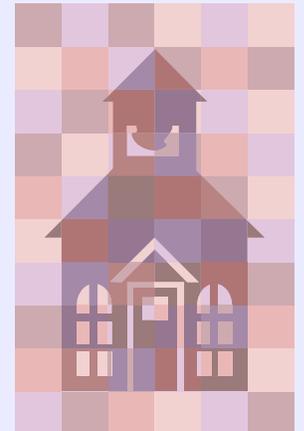
Thursday, May 20 - 3 a.m.
(4th Floor Surgical Conf. Room)

Newington
(Red, White & Blue Rooms)

Wednesday, May 19
1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m.

For more information on these and other events please see *Good Morning VA Connecticut*.

BRING YOUR CHILDREN TO WORK DAY





TOP VA NURSE

Helen Noel, Ph.D., APRN, was selected as the 2004 Department of Veterans Affairs recipient of the Secretary's Award for Excellence in Nursing, the highest award within VA for nursing professionals.

Dr. Noel was recognized for her role in implementing the VA Connecticut Home Telehealth program and for her work as a nurse practitioner in the primary care service line. She provides comprehensive health exams for veterans seeking compensation for service related conditions and was recognized for her efforts in reducing the waiting times for veterans to receive these exams. Dr. Noel serves as a re-

viewer and mentor for VA Connecticut nurse research proposals in addition to her duties as a reviewer for clinical research proposals to the healthcare system Human Studies Subcommittee. To disseminate research findings and improve the image of nursing, Dr. Noel has published works in telehealth and case management. Dr. Noel serves as an assistant professor at the College of Education and Health Professionals at Sacred Heart University and as courtesy faculty for the Yale University Graduate Nurse Practitioner Program. Dr. Noel, a Wallingford, Conn. resident, has worked for the VA for 24 years. The award will be presented to Dr. Noel by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi at a ceremony at VA headquarters in Washington, D.C., May 10.



Town Hall Meeting

Congresswoman Nancy Johnson (R-5th), standing, addresses an audience of veterans at a Town Hall meeting at Saint Mary's Hospital in Waterbury on April 30. Panelists at the meeting included **Rick Randle**, VA Regional Office Hartford director, **Roger Johnson**, VA Connecticut director, and **Commissioner Linda Schwartz**, Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs.



Dear Nursing Staff:

Please allow me to offer my best wishes to each of you as you celebrate National Nurses Week. This year's theme, "Nurses: Your Voice, Your Health, Your Life" truly embodies the critical role nursing professionals perform in the delivery of healthcare. As the largest health care profession, nurses are represented throughout the organization. You care for our veterans at the bedside, serve in administrative positions to ensure a seamless delivery of care, work as instructors for both the clinical and administrative staff members and help to ensure the voice of the patient is heard at the executive level.

I commend you for your dedication to our veterans and thank you for the way you admirably serve in a profession that has not always received the respect it deserves. We, at VA Connecticut, fully realize that a dedicated nursing staff is the key component in providing high quality healthcare. As our nation begins to fully confront the pending nursing shortage, the general public will come to find out what VA Connecticut has known all along – nurses are the backbone of any healthcare delivery system.

On behalf of the veterans we serve and the employees of VA Connecticut Healthcare System, best wishes and thank you.

Sincerely,
Roger Johnson
Director, VA Connecticut Healthcare System

National Nurses Week **May 6 -12**

In recognition of National Nurses Week, VA Connecticut joins the nation in honoring nurses for the work they do.

VA Connecticut nurses were recently recognized for the following awards:

Selected as this year's local recipients of the
Secretary's Excellence in Nursing Award

Helen Noel, Ph.D., APRN (national winner)

Algeria Hunter, NA

Robertson Sheehy, LPN

Elaine Schempp, RN

- New Haven Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing -
Barbara Johnson, RN, MSN; Susan Kancir, RN; Jacqueline Wolf, RN; Suzanne Chaplik, RN, MSN; Providencia Sepulveda, RN; Joanne Machie-Marsh, LPN; Marcia Lutz-Cross, RN; Helen Anne Byrnes, RN; Jennifer Maceren-Mallari, RN, BSN, CNN; Mary Jane Rubino, RN, BSN; Ellen Nicholson, RN; Phyllis Carlson, RN, BSN; Lillian Graciani, RN, BSN; Florence Bertholet, RN, BSN; Joanne Gardner, RN, BSN.

- Nursing Spectrum's 2004 New England Nurse of the Year -
Elizabeth Zariemba-Swat, RN
(one of top three finalists)

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