

Illiana News

“Proudly Serving Those Who Served”



Department of
Veterans Affairs

Illiana Health Care System

January 2012

Building Utilization Review and Repurposing (BURR) Initiative

VAIHCS was one of 34 VA's identified to develop housing opportunities for homeless and at-risk Veterans. This strategy will increase the Department's available beds by over 5,000. VA currently has 15,000 transitional beds available to homeless Veterans.

Culminating two years of work to end homelessness among Veterans, a recent strategic study, the Building Utilization Review and Repurposing (BURR) initiative, identified unused and underused buildings at existing VA property with the potential to develop new housing opportunities for homeless or at-risk Veterans and their families through public-private partnerships and VA's enhanced-use lease (EUL) program. VA permits third-party providers to finance, design, develop, maintain and operate housing and on-site supportive services on a priority basis for Veterans and their families. Under the EUL program, VA retains ownership of the land and can determine and control its reuse.

Mercy Housing was selected for the project at VAIHCS that will support VA's goal of ending Veteran homelessness by providing safe, affordable, cost effective, and sustainable housing for Veterans on a priority basis. The project has 15 acres of land on the Danville VA campus to build 65 apartments (1, 2 and 3 bedrooms) and a community center for homeless Veterans and their families. Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in late 2012.



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mercyHOUSING
Live in Hope

VA ILLIANA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM - DANVILLE CAMPUS
ENHANCED-USE LEASE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
DANVILLE, ILLINOIS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
No. VA-101-12-R-0004

NOVEMBER 4, 2011

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Executive Corner



It is a privilege to serve as your Acting Director during this transitional period until a new Director is selected and on board. I have been the Director at the Indianapolis VAMC since 2008 and before that I was the Associate Director from 2000-2008. I know a lot about VA Illiana Health Care System (VAIHCS) and I am impressed with the talented workforce here that serves our Veterans. VAIHCS has always been a leader in VISN 11 with performance measures which confirms the compassion and quality of care that is provided here.

During this period of transition, I will work closely with Ms. Carranza, Dr. Rozario and Ms. Coe to assure our day-to-day operations and decision making continues to go smoothly. My goal as Acting Director is to help any way I can and also provide fresh eyes and a new perspective as we work through the challenges in a large health care system such as ours.

I look forward to meeting employees and discussing their ideas to better serve our Veterans.

Thomas Mattice
Acting Director

Calendar of Events

National Freedom Day
February 1

National Patient Recognition Week
February 1 - 7

Women's Heart Week
February 1 - 7

Groundhog Day
February 2

Four Chaplains Memorial Day (1943)
February 2

USO Founded (1941)
February 4

Lincoln's Birthday (1809)
February 12

First Medal of Honor Awarded (1861)
February 13

Marine Corps Women's Reserve Created (1943)
February 13

National Salute to Veteran Patients Week
February 13 - 19

Valentine's Day
February 14

President's Day
February 20

Washington's Birthday (1732)
February 20

Desert Storm Ground War Begins (1991)
February 23

Iwo Jima Day Anniversary (1945)
February 23

Kuwait Liberation Day (1991)
February 26

2nd Annual Adopt-a-Ward

With the support of our Executive Management Team, Employee Association and more importantly, YOU, our dedicated staff of VA Illiana Health Care System, our 2nd Annual Adopt-a-Ward was a **HUGE SUCCESS!**

On Thursday, December 22, 2011 (2 days before his big night) Kris Kringle (a.k.a. Santa Claus) arrived from the North Pole. Pulling his IRM sleigh, he spent the day, along with many Illiana Health Care System Elves, as they went to each and every inpatient ward, including our Freedom House, SARP and Lodgers, visiting with our treasured Veterans, and in some cases, their family members, delivering them a token of our appreciation while thanking each and every one of them for their service to our country. He even made a brief appearance in the clinics! Santa encountered and visited with several children (and in one instance, delivered a special video message), and many children at heart along the way. He brought smiles to everybody's face, from the nurses, family members, caregivers, and most importantly, our Veterans.



I would like to personally thank each and everyone who made this a success. To those services that adopted a ward to those that took the opportunity to think outside the box. Palliative Care received a stocking of treats as well as Beef House Broccoli & Cheese Soup with their lunch (compliments of Social Work Service). Building 103-7 & SARP celebrated with gifts and P\pizza (Recreation & Voluntary Service). Santa delivered blankets, snuggies, pajamas, robes and much more. Without the generosity of all of you this wouldn't have been so successful. Whether it was gifts, individual donations, wrapping, support or assistance, this couldn't have happened without the wonderful employees here at VA Illiana Health Care System, to include a special mention to Monica Allen, Nancy Conrad, and our Mattoon CBOC. This truly is a unified goal of bringing cheer to those valued treasures we call Veterans, our heroes!

Type Auter
DSS Site Manager

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PLANETREE

Planetalk about Planetree

Why volunteer to be an Ambassador?

Ever wonder just what an Ambassador is? What do they do? What is the purpose of the Ambassador Program?

The best way to get these answers is to ask an Ambassador. William Bryant has been an Ambassador now for about one year. He dons his blue vest and assumes his position at the Ambassador desk each morning at 8AM, Monday thru Friday, by the ER door in building 98, where he offers a smile and a friendly greeting to Veterans as they enter the building. William kindly agreed to share his perspective on the Ambassador program with us.

Just like many employees/volunteers, William heard about the program and thought he would volunteer to serve as an Ambassador. The Ambassador program is considered to be a customer service best-practice. William describes his role as to “meet and greet the Veterans (and staff) as they come through the door”. According to William approximately 50% of the Veterans entering the facility request some type of assistance from the Ambassador. Veterans often arrive with their appointment letter in hand, asking where do I find this? William has reference books at his fingertips to help send the Veteran on their way. If he ever needs help with an answer, assistance is just a phone call away. He watches as the CBOC Vans arrive and is quick to offer a wheelchair to someone in need or even personally take someone to an appointment.

William gets back as much as he gives, “every day I come in, I know I’m going to help someone and this reinforces my personal positive drive”. He explained it was one way he could help the Veterans. He stated, “You get to know some of the people, some of the Veterans just don’t have a lot



(Pictured left to right): Veteran Tim Davenport is assisted by Ambassador William Bryant.

of contact with other people and you can tell that they just like to have someone to talk with”. He pointed out that if he were not there, the Veterans would be waiting in line to ask staff members these questions. This saves the Veterans time and frustration.

When asked what prompts him to continue being an Ambassador, he talked about the personal satisfaction that he receives knowing that he makes a difference. I keep coming back because I know that I am appreciated by both the Veterans and the staff.

If you are someone that likes to help people and would like to feel good, knowing you helped someone that day, then perhaps being an Ambassador is for you. You can volunteer as little as 1 hour a month. Contact Rana Shouse, ext. 45270 or Cindy Knee, ext. 43139.

Rana Shouse, RN
Patient Centered Care Coordinator

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Way To Go.....VAIHCS Reduces the Number of Veteran Falls!

One of the National Patient Safety Goals, as determined by the Joint Commission, is reducing the risk of patient harm resulting from falls. A patient fall is defined as an abrupt change in body position in a downward direction that may or may not result in physical injury. A strong fall reduction program exists at VAIHCS in effort to diminish the incidence of Veteran harm from fall while at the facility.

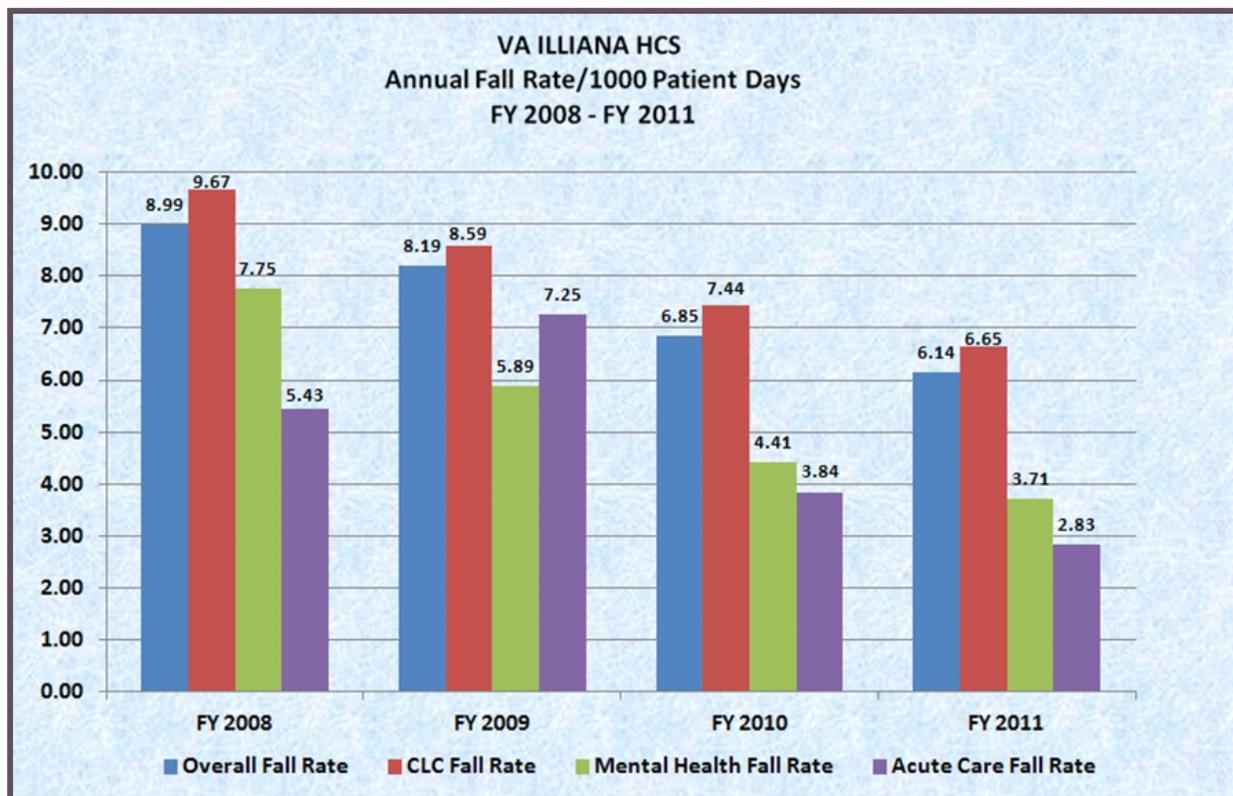
Patient falls are common throughout the healthcare industry and may lead to negative outcomes such as major injuries (ex. hip fracture) and prolonged hospitalization. Over the past 4 years, various facility fall prevention measures have been implemented at VAIHCS. Some of the measures include: review of medications, gait and balance screening, assessment of walking aids, protective devices (hipsavers) and environmental changes.

The VAIHCS facility fall rate for FY11 was 6.1, which was a decrease from the FY10 fall rate of 6.9 and below the target of 8.7. The major injury rate for FY11 was 0.02 and the minor injury rate was 1.9. The Fall Prevention Workgroup meets monthly to review events, identify trends and develop actions to decrease risk and/or eliminate fall events. In addition, 100% of the actions resulting from the fall aggregate review have been implemented.

Just another way that VAIHCS is making care safer for the Veterans we serve!

Congratulations!

*Sandy Hart, RN
Patient Safety Coordinator*



Volunteers bring Holiday Cheer to Veterans and Staff of VA Illiana Health Care System

Madrigal Singers, Girl Scouts, Sweet Adeline's and Employee Carolers serenaded our Veterans. Mrs. Claus and of course Jolly Ole St. Nick are just a few of the volunteers who visited and helped create and celebrate the Holiday Season!

Y Teens from Danville High School helped make the hospital festive by decorating trees, while Master Gardeners filled outside pots with greenery and twinkling lights. Home school students ranging in age from 7 to 18 sponsored their own Christmas celebration that included piano playing, singing and of course cookies and punch. Hospitalized Veterans were able to choose gifts and mail them to a loved one, all courtesy of the American Legion Auxiliary. Gifts for Yanks provided a sweat suit and canteen books to all hospitalized Veterans. Veterans were taken to a Christmas musical at the Masonic Temple provided a tour of area Christmas lights. There were special holiday parties for MICHM, Homeless Veterans and CWT workers all courtesy of our wonderful volunteers. Children of Homeless Veterans were adopted by an American Legion Auxiliary Post who provided new clothing and a toy item for each child. Veterans made gingerbread houses and munched on war gingerbread cookies baked fresh by Volunteers. Individuals, organizations and employees adopting wards provided gifts; created stockings filled with treats and wrapped our Veterans in warmth and love with handmade quilts and lap robes. The Season concluded with a New Years Eve party with music by Bev Wolfe, sausage and cheese trays, party hats and horns and of course a toast with sparkling juice. Our heartfelt thanks to our Volunteers who helped brighten and war the hearts of our Veterans. The memories created this season will stay with us forever and your generosity will provide comfort and joy through the winter months!



Teresa Ard
Chief, Voluntary Service



The National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans

will take place the week of February 12, 2012. The Salute is held annually the week of Valentine's Day and is designed to pay tribute and say thank you to Veterans for their service and sacrifices, increase awareness of the role of the medical center and encourage people to visit Veterans and become involved as volunteers. Traditionally, local schools and organizations and individuals create Valentines that will be distributed throughout the week.

A Musical Salute to all Veterans will be held **Sunday, February 12th at 2:00 PM** in the SAR

featuring "The Servant Quartet". Hospitalized Veterans and Veterans from the community are invited to participate. Refreshments will be served.

Tuesday, February 14th at 10:00 AM local celebrities, community leaders, local TV and radio anchors and sports teams have been invited to visit with Veterans.

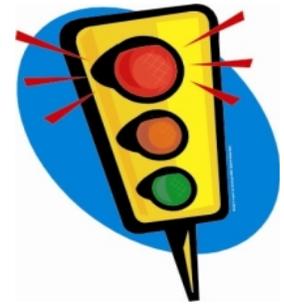
Expect to see volunteer groups throughout the week join us in welcoming to our facilities!

Teresa Ard
Chief, Voluntary Service

Reflections of our Past . . . Provide Directions for our Future!

As a result of the All Employee Survey for 2011 . . .

- ◆ The goal for the West Lafayette CBOC is to improve communication. One way they are improving communication is distributing meeting minutes via email.
- ◆ The Facility Classification Specialist provided training to Fiscal staff to enhance their knowledge of the complex classification process.
- ◆ To increase the amount of recognition and praise, the Mental Health Service is acknowledging their Bravo award recipients at their monthly staff meetings.
- ◆ In order to reduce the amount of time the managers spend in meetings, the Nurse Managers have reviewed and delegated seasoned staff members to attend for the units.
- ◆ Surgical Service continues to offer employees the opportunity to meet one on one with Dr. Murray. They also provide an opportunity to speak out at their monthly service meetings.



Just a few examples of the innovative work being accomplished to better our facility in response to the All Employee Survey!

Mattie Engel

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VA Child Care Subsidy Program

The VA Child Care Subsidy Program is a child care tuition assistance program that is available to eligible VA employees. The purpose of the program is to assist lower income employees in offsetting the high cost of child care. To qualify for the subsidy you must:



- ◆ Be a VA employee (part-time employees are eligible)
- ◆ Have a total family income below \$60,000 and
- ◆ Place your child in a licensed day care, home care or before/after school program
- ◆ Children must be age 13 or younger, however, children with disabilities are accepted through the age of 18.

Additional information can be obtained at <http://va224.va.gov/vachildcare/index.htm>.

The child care subsidy is not paid automatically. To receive this benefit, you must complete and submit an application form.

Contact Tisha Harvey, ext. 45960 or Valli Haines, ext. 44547 in Human Resources to obtain a child care application package.

Homeless Street Sweep

A big **THANK YOU** to VA staff, Jennifer Gerrib, and the staff from the Homeless program for assisting with the coordination of this event.



Karen Boland
Greg Clawson
Jill DeBord
Tracy DeWeese
Erica Dubois
Victoria Dunavan
Willie Dunigan
Leanne Edwards
Mattie Engel
Vicki Goblirsh
Nancy Gouty
Kami Hinkle
Karen Hodges

Tim Jobin
Natalie Ligget
Jaylen Marbury
Shawnette Marbury-Jones
Lacey Martin
Dwight Marxman
Nicholas McFarland
Lisa Miller
P J Phillips
Janet Raspberry
Beth Rohrback
Deborah Rose
Jacob Serd

Emily Sheldon
Doug Shouse
Rana Shouse
Brenda Smith
Gail Sprouls
Nicki Staple
Vickie Westley
Julia Whistler
Julie Wilson
David Zapata
Tammy Zapata

Kodak Moments at VAIHCS



Moving Day for Freedom House Veterans



Annual Blood Drive

On January 12th the VAIHCS Employee Association organized a blood drive with the Community Blood Services of Illinois. A big THANK YOU to the 45 staff members who donated blood.

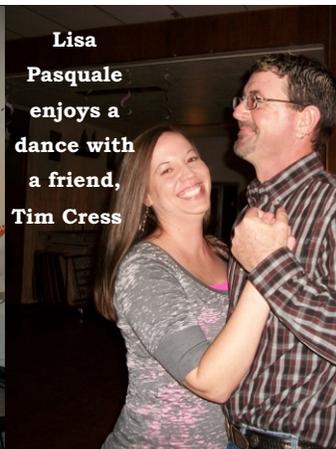
Pictured left to right: Bill Fletcher, Prosthetics & Sensory Aids and Kelli Baker of the Community Blood Service of Illinois.

Drawing blood from Dr. Gurjit Singh is Thurmond Williams of the Community Blood Service of Illinois.

Employee Association "After the Holidays" Party



THE GREYHOUNDS



Lisa Pasquale enjoys a dance with a friend, Tim Cress



Suzi Robinson, Recreation Therapist was the winner of the 50/50 drawing.

L to R: Jennifer Gerrib, Suzi Robinson, Tasha Draper and Kim Hoskins.

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Illiana Safety News

JANUARY 2012, NUMBER 3

Illiana Safety News will be distributed on a quarterly basis to share safety information with VA Illiana Health Care System staff. Questions or comments should be directed to the Safety Office at 45149.

FOCUS- WINTER DRIVING

We all know winter driving can be hazardous. Additional preparations can help make a trip safer, or help motorists deal with an emergency. The following from OSHA provides safety tips to help prevent motor vehicle injuries due to winter weather.

The Three P's of Safe Winter Driving:

» PREPARE for the trip; » PROTECT yourself; and » PREVENT crashes on the road.

» PREPARE

Maintain Your Car: Check battery, tire tread, and windshield wipers, keep your windows clear, put no-freeze fluid in the washer reservoir, and check your antifreeze.

Have On Hand: flashlight, jumper cables, abrasive material (sand, kitty litter, even floor mats), shovel, snow brush and ice scraper, warning devices (like flares) and blankets. For long trips, add food and water, medication and cell phone.

Stopped or Stalled? Stay with your car, don't over exert, put bright markers on antenna or windows and shine dome light, and, if you run your car, clear exhaust pipe and run it just enough to stay warm.

Plan Your Route: Allow plenty of time (check the weather and leave early if necessary), be familiar with the maps/ directions, and let others know your route and arrival time.

Practice Cold Weather Driving!

- During daylight, rehearse maneuver slowly on the ice or snow in an empty lot
- Steer into a skid
- Know what your brakes will do: stomp on anti lock brakes, pump non-antilock brakes
- Stopping distances are longer on snow/ ice.
- Don't idle for a long time with the windows up or in an enclosed space

» PROTECT YOURSELF

- Buckle up and use child safety seats properly
- Never place a rear-facing infant seat in front of an air bag
- Children 12 and under are much safer in the back seat

» PREVENT CRASHES

- Always drive with your headlights on
- Slow down and increase distances between cars
- Keep your eyes open for pedestrians walking in the road
- Avoid fatigue – Get plenty of rest before the trip, stop at least every three hours, and rotate drivers if possible
- If you are planning to drink, designate a sober driver



Tomorrow - your reward for working safely today.

The safest risk is the one you didn't take.

Behind the wheel, anger is one letter away from danger.

Gains

Rosmiro E. Arvizu - Practical Nurse - Nursing Service
Debra L. Biava - Nursing Assistant - Nursing Service
Richard L. Bowles - Neuropsychologist - Mental Health
Paulette Carr - Registered Nurse - Nursing Service
Amy M. Clayton - LPN - Nursing Service
Gwendolyn A. Cottrell - Sales Clerk - VCS
Vickie Jo Crum - Medical Support Assistant - MAS
Constance M. DeGroot - LPN - Nursing Service
Dale M. Drennan - Registered Respiratory Therapist - Medical Service
Timothy A. Graham - Housekeeping Aid - Environmental Management Service
Terry L. Hause - Medical Support Assistant - Medical Administration Service
Andrew P. Hoskins - Program Support - ADPCS
John N. Kocsis - Registered Nurse - Nursing Service
John T. Krainock - Boiler Plant Operator - Engineering Service
Ahsan Mahmood - Physician - Mental Health Service
Justin Marcinko - Housekeeping Aid - Environmental Management Service
Melissa A. Paris - Medical Records Technician - Medical Administration Service
Kevin E. Shade - Supply Technician - Logistics Service
Gail L. Sprouls - LPN - Nursing Service
Thomas W. Tiernan - Painter - Engineering Service
Robert L. Vericker - Registered Nurse - Nursing Service
Jennifer S. Whitlatch - Practical Nurse - Nursing Service
Ella J. Worthington - Student - MAS
David X. Zapata - Recreation Therapist - Recreation Service

Losses

Clarence Abella - Physician - Ambulatory Care
James R. Boyd - Housekeeping Aid - Environmental Management Service
Sherri Hansen-Bundy - Physician - Ambulatory Care
David L. Cozart - Readjustment Counseling Therapist - Readjustment Counseling
Angela Dabney - Equal Opportunity Assistant - Director's Office
Carmen L. Bolden-Day - Program Support Assistant - Surgical Service
Paul A. Gregory - Supervisory Management & Program Analyst - MAS

Margaret J. Griffith - Social Worker - Social Work Service
Michael E. Hamilton - Health System Administrator - Director's Office
Janice K. Jones - Secretary/OA - Director's Office
Warren L. Jones - Housekeeping Aid - Environmental Management Service
Sandra L. Kingery - Teller/OA - Fiscal Service
Linda K. Lindsay - Nurse - Nursing Service
Sandra K. Manus - Program Support Assistant/OA - Ambulatory Care Service
Deborah D. Moody - Physical Therapy Assistant - Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service
Heidi R. Olson - Pharmacist/Clinical Specialist - Pharmacy Service
Shelly L. Ragsdale - Practical Nurse - Nursing Service
Sameul Rayapati - Physician - Geriatric and Extended Care Service
Edward Richter - Social Worker - Social Work Service
Sandra Rogers - Nurse - Nursing Service
Sara B. Runyon - Social Worker - Social Work Service
Matthew Russian - Housekeeping - Environmental Management Service
Richard Russian - Tractor Operator - Engineering Service
Clyde Smith - Painter - Engineering Service
Ronald D. Sparling - Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist - Imaging Service
John R. Thompson - Physician - Mental Health Service
Daniel E. Walters - Nurse - Ambulatory Care
Diana C. Winn - Nurse - Nursing Service

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BRAVO Award Recipients



Dental Service

Donya Cheesman
Julie Putman

Engineering Service

Aaron Cain

Environmental Management Service

James Boyd
Sylvia Wilson

Human Resources Service

Julie Warner

Logistics Service

Susan Nelson

Medical Administration Service

Debra Baker
Judith Miller
Julie Smith

Medical Service

Sylvia Buford
Vickie Dodge

Mental Health Service

Donna Keagle
John Thompson

Pathology & Lab Services

Thomas Morse

PCS/Nursing Service

Kim Broadway
Rebecca Doty
Angela Duprey
Vicki Elwell
Donna Emmons
Dixie Enos
Robyn Fetters
Ruth Hays
Pamela Head
Jeannine Hierman
Erica Johnson
Chris Jones
Christina Kraemer
Susan Lavalley
Tracy Meyers
Audry Morse
Daphne Osborne
Angela Schamberger

Amanda Secrist
Diana Winn

Pharmacy Service

Andrea Winn
Heidi Olson

Police Service

Roger Brushaber
Robert Foster
Aaron Reid

Social Work Service

Katherine Edwards
Damian Foley
Notasha Gavins
David M. Reed

SPD

Julie Wicoff

Surgical Service

Sampath Kulasekhar

Service Pins



35 Years

Cynthia Schomburg
Medical Administration Service

30 Years

Linda Wilson
Nursing Service

20 Years

Olga Arvizu
Nursing Service

Tressa Crook
Mental Health Service

Julie McLamb
Ambulatory Care Service/ACOS

Susan Norman
Fiscal Service

15 Years

Debra Pavlick
Medical Administration Service

10 Years
Shellie Moser
Nursing Service

Deborah Parker
Pathology and Lab Service

Melissa Spady
Imaging Service