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Mead Johnson Nutrition and Hand to Hold Announce Second Annual NICU Heroes Award Winners

Outstanding NICU Professionals from Idaho and South Carolina Honored for care of premature infants

GLENVIEW, Ill.—September 24, 2014 — Neonatal nurse practitioner Stephanie Horecky Hall of Daniel Island, S.C., and neonatologist Stewart Lawrence, M.D., of Boise, Idaho, were named the 2014 NICU Heroes Award winners by Mead Johnson Nutrition and Hand to Hold, a national nonprofit Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) parent support organization. Families from 30 U.S. states nominated neonatal nurses, physicians, and other healthcare professionals who helped make a difference for their preterm or medically fragile newborns.

“Neonatal healthcare providers know how the trauma of a baby’s NICU stay can affect the entire family and the very real difference family-centered care can make for parents and their baby,” said Kelli Kelley, founder of Hand to Hold and mother of two preemies. The compassionate care Kelley received, and has also witnessed medical professionals give other parents, is the driving force behind creating the annual NICU Heroes Award.

This year’s NICU Heroes Award honors two NICU health care professionals for their compassion, courage and perseverance to improving outcomes for medically fragile babies and their families. The winners were chosen by an independent panel of NICU health care professionals and NICU parents from around the country. All nominees will receive a copy of the nominating family’s essay, which shares the heartwarming difference their work made for their child or children and family.

Horecky Hall was nominated by Mary Ann Lilly from Myrtle Beach, S.C. Mary Ann Lilly’s daughter Kristianne Elizabeth was born on June 21, 2004 at 26 weeks, weighing only 1 pound, 7 ounces. Kristi was immediately admitted to the Medical University of South Carolina NICU where Lilly, met bedside nurse Horecky Hall. Horecky Hall and Lilly formed an instant bond. Horecky Hall was not only on Kristi’s medical team, she stepped into the role of advocate and caregiver, taking care of baby Kristi, but also her mother and father, as well as her 10-year old big sister Rachel.

“This time in my life so hard, and Stephanie made it better by taking time to explain complicated medical terms, encouraging our family to take care of ourselves, letting me stay by Kristi’s side, and coordinating Kristi’s care with the neonatologist and others,” said Lilly.

During her 20-day stay in the NICU Kristi developed fungal meningitis. She passed away on July 20, 2004. Once again Stephanie came to the hospital and stayed with the Lilly family, taking Rachel with her while Kristi’s parents grieved their loss. “She made the most horrible night a little bit better,” said Mary Ann Lilly.

Sophie Carney from Boise, Idaho, nominated Dr. Stewart Lawrence for the compassionate, professional care he gave to her 25-week-old twins and their family while the twins were in Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center’s NICU for four months in 2013 and 2014. The twins were born after receiving a life-saving procedure

for a rare condition known as “twin-to-twin transfusion,” or TTTS, in which the blood flow through twins’ placental connections becomes unbalanced, threatening both babies in utero. It affects less than 20 percent of identical twins.

“Dr. Lawrence deeply cared for the well-being of our babies, during and after their stay in the NICU,” said Carney. “Dr. Lawrence still made time to sit with us, clearly communicating all of our options and making our family feel like we were an important part of his day.” Dr. Lawrence is a physician with Mountain States Neonatology, an affiliate of Pediatrix Medical Group.

Horecky Hall’s and Dr. Lawrence’s achievements were recognized at the National Association of Neonatal Nursing (NANN) Annual Educational Conference held September 10-13, 2014 in Phoenix, Arizona. Each honoree will be honored at a NICU Heroes Award ceremony at his and her respective hospitals, receiving a trophy, certificate, and a \$2,500 donation in their name to the pediatric healthcare charity of their choice. Horecky Hall’s donation will be given to the Children’s Cancer Research Fund. Dr. Lawrence’s gift will be donated to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. Additionally, each hospital will receive a one-year subscription to the Hand to Hold’s NICU Resource Library, which is designed to provide education to parents during a NICU stay.

Mead Johnson Nutrition partnered with Hand to Hold to create the NICU Heroes Awards to reward the experience, professionalism, support and deep compassion these NICU health care professionals give their patients and their families.

“As a mother to preterm twin toddlers, I was moved by the many inspiring stories of families and healthcare professionals coming together to provide extraordinary care to fragile infants who faced challenging situations during their early days of life,” said Ivonne Monteagudo, senior vice president and general manager, North America and Global Marketing, Mead Johnson Nutrition. “As a world-leading infant nutrition company, Mead Johnson is honored to recognize the dedication of healthcare professionals who perform heroics in NICUs across the country every day.”

“NICU heroes understand that in order for babies to thrive, they must have smart, informed parents who are capable of meeting their child’s needs after discharge,” explained Kelley. “We are grateful for the NICU heroes who reach beyond their job descriptions to provide comfort, understanding and words of encouragement to help parents navigate their NICU journey. Our NICU Heroes strive to integrate parents into the daily care of their baby to ensure they are ready to meet the needs of a medically fragile child after discharge.”

About Mead Johnson Nutrition *Mead Johnson, a global leader in pediatric nutrition, develops, manufactures, markets and distributes more than 70 products in over 50 markets worldwide. The company's mission is to nourish the world's children for the best start in life. The Mead Johnson name has been associated with science-based pediatric nutrition products for over 100 years. The company's Enfa™ family of brands, including Enfamil® infant formula, is the world's leading brand franchise in pediatric nutrition. For more information, go to www.meadjohnson.com.*

About Hand to Hold *Hand to Hold is a community-based, national support program for parents of preemies, babies born with a special health care need and those who have experienced loss due to these or other complications. The nonprofit organization's vision is to enable a network of families to offer support, comfort and understanding to one another, and to provide them with knowledge, information and resources to ensure the best outcome for their children and family. For more information, go to www.handtohold.org.*