

Press Release

September 8, 1999

Medical Center And Project Plus Help The Community Read Into The Future

Hackensack University Medical Center recently hosted the Project Literacy US (PLUS) eleventh annual awards reception to recognize those who have made outstanding accomplishments in the field of Adult Literacy.

Keynote speaker, The Honorable Senator S. Gerald Cardinale, stressed the importance of this program for the future of both the individuals and the community. "This program helps each participant attain a sense of accomplishment by teaching them how to communicate and allowing them more opportunities to join the work force."

"More than 40 million Americans have significant literacy problems and in New Jersey nearly half the adults have a literacy issue," said Robert C. Garrett of Convent Station, vice president and chief operating officer at the medical center and honorary chairperson of the event. "We feel it is our responsibility to provide our employees and the community around us an opportunity to become more literate."

Hackensack University Medical Center was also selected to receive honors as the recipient of the Outstanding Leadership PLUS Award for long-term participation in the cause of adult literacy by spear-heading an effective public relations effort through generous donations of service and personnel expertise. In addition, Hackensack University Medical Center continues to successfully sponsor an on-site basic skills and language program, The Open G.A.T.E. Program, for its employees. Carpenter-Certech, Wood-Ridge, NJ; Hausman Industries, Northvale, NJ; Wearbest Siltex, Garfield, NJ; and Titan Tool, Inc., Oakland, NJ all received The Corporation of the Year recognition.

The Distinguished Award of Merit for identifying the need and providing the workforce with the opportunity for improvement of basic skills and language was presented to Transtechnik Corp., Mahwah, NJ; Sunshine Fresh, Totowa, NJ; Sodexo Marriott Services, Montvale, NJ; Estee Lauder Companies, Oakland, NJ; Chase Mellon, Ridgefield Park, NJ; **EVS Metal, Riverdale, NJ**; Lea & Perrins, Fair Lawn, NJ; La Rinascente, S. Hackensack, NJ; Diamond Chemical, E. Rutherford, NJ; and Madis Botanicals, S. Hackensack, NJ.

Special Recognition Awards were also presented to the Bergen Cooperative Library System (BCCLS), the Bergen Sheriff's Department, BestFoods, Holy Name Hospital, and MOHR Retail Learning Systems, Inc.

St. John's Memorial Episcopal Church, Ramsey, was acknowledged for their support of adult literacy when they received the Community Award.

The Open G.A.T.E. Program (Growth and Advancement Through Education) at Hackensack University Medical Center is designed to help employees who are interested in improving their language skills giving them personal growth and advancement while helping the medical center through a more communicative and educated work force and ultimately benefiting the patient through an easier delivery of quality services.

Miguel Macias of Hackensack, environmental services aide at Hackensack University Medical Center and a student in the Open G.A.T.E Program received an award as "Student of the Year" for voluntarily investing his time to successfully enhance his English to better serve the medical center and encouraging fellow workers to do the same.

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