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Avow recognizes volunteers with Heart of Avow Awards

The annual award recognizes volunteers who go above and beyond

NAPLES, Fla. (May 12, 2023) – Avow recognized volunteers with Heart of Avow awards at its Volunteer Appreciation breakfast April 19. Volunteers are nominated by staff members for demonstrating exceptional dedication to serving the mission of Avow. For this year’s awards, 19 volunteers were nominated.

In 2022, Avow volunteers contributed 8,875 hours of service, allowing Avow to serve more than 400 hospice patients and 200 palliative care patients each day.

“The Heart of Avow award is the most prestigious award Avow confers on a volunteer,” said Jaysen Roa, president and CEO. “It is not based on hours volunteered but on a spirit of giving. This award symbolizes the values of compassion, generosity and selflessness that motivate people to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Avow was established 40 years ago by volunteers, and service remains an essential part of carrying out our mission.”

Heart of Avow volunteer award winners include:

- Bonnie Hart, a dedicated Treasures Resale Shop volunteer who has taken the lead in training new volunteers. Her positivity gives new volunteers the assurance they need to succeed. Bonnie also supports the volunteer services department by conducting annual performance appraisals on clinical and non-clinical volunteers. In this capacity, Bonnie schedules time to meet with volunteers and observe that best practices are being followed. Her service positively impacts patient safety and contributes to the success of all volunteer programs.
- Judy Gaffney, an integral part of the bereavement team, conducts individual and group sessions and makes four-month follow-up calls to the bereaved. She is a compassionate listener, is always willing to help when needed and often makes suggestions to improve processes within the department. She has been very accommodating with her schedule and volunteers almost every day for 5 to 7 hours a day.
- Susan Abreu and her therapy dog, Nanny, provide comfort to patients and caregivers at the Frances Georgeson Hospice House and to the administrative staff at the Lyon Center on Avow's campus, as well as in local long term care facilities. In addition to her service as a Pet Therapy Volunteer, Susan represents Avow in the community by volunteering at many special events. She also supports administrative projects in several Avow departments. Most recently, she called hundreds of patients for a palliative care satisfaction survey and was compassionate and kind as she spoke with each patient.

In addition, volunteers received recognition for years of service with 14 volunteers recognized for one year of service and six volunteers for five years of service. Bessie Joujoura was recognized for 10 years of service, and Glenna Hayhoe, one of the founders of Avow who still volunteers, was recognized for 40 years of service.

About Avow:

Avow was founded in 1983 as Collier County's original, non-profit hospice. Today, Avow's non-profit companies provide palliative care consultations for adults facing chronic or serious illness and hospice care and bereavement support services for children and adults. To learn more about the scope of services provided by Avow, call 239-261-4404 or visit www.avowcares.org.

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