



1500 S.W. 10th Ave. • (785) 354-6000
www.stormontvail.org

For more information contact:
Nancy Burkhardt, director
Stormont-Vail Marketing
(785) 354-6927

For Immediate Release

Stormont-Vail Foundation To Honor Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Champion with 2010 Bal Jeffrey Award

(Topeka, Kan., Oct. 22, 2010) – The Stormont-Vail Foundation will present the 2010 Bal Jeffrey Award to Darlene S. Whitlock, TraumaCare Outreach and Prevention Coordinator, at a dinner and program Wednesday, Nov. 3, at the Ramada Hotel and Convention Center. The annual Bal Jeffrey Award recognizes and honors distinguished contributors to health care in northeast Kansas. The award is named for Balfour S. Jeffrey, Stormont-Vail’s longest-tenured board member, who played a major role in the growth of health care for more than 40 years.

Whitlock has made a significant contribution to health care in the region over a long and distinguished career. Throughout her life’s work, she has been a tireless force devoted to improving emergency medical and trauma services in northeast Kansas and beyond. She is widely recognized as a passionate and tenacious advocate on a broad range of safety and injury prevention issues.

Whitlock has logged countless hours as an expert educator/instructor on a wide variety of topics. Through this work, she has touched the careers of many health care professionals throughout the region (and state), and through their work, the lives of countless patients. Her dedication to excellence in the delivery of emergency medical services to victims of trauma was an important factor in Stormont-Vail’s success in achieving designation as a Trauma Center by the American College of Surgeons.

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Add 1 2010 Bal Jeffrey award recipient

Her vast experience includes serving as volunteer regional faculty for Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Basic Life Support and Pediatric Advanced Life Support for the American Heart Association. She is an instructor, and also mentors other educators teaching these vital skills statewide, traveling to rural hospitals to ensure critical lifesaving techniques are practiced even in the most remote communities.

In addition, Whitlock has been a strong advocate on legislative issues aimed at helping all Kansans. Her testimony before House and Senate committees has been instrumental in the passage of laws aimed at minimizing the effects of motor vehicle accidents. She strongly supported expanded use of vehicle restraints, especially child safety and booster seats. She was steadfast in her efforts to make the graduated driver's license law reality, an effective tool that will translate into fewer teen deaths and injuries due to inexperienced drivers.

Former Gov., Kathleen Sebelius appointed Whitlock to chair the State Advisory Committee on Trauma and Secretary of Transportation Deb Miller requested she co-chair the "Driving Force" campaign that ultimately led to significant improvements in highway safety. As a member of the Alliance for Healthcare Group, Whitlock further influences health-related policies and legislation.

Her passion for addressing safety issues extends further. For example, she is actively involved with Safe Kids, an organization that promotes seat belt usage, car restraints and bicycle safety. She frequently visits with school children to emphasize the importance of wearing helmets while bicycling.

In support of Whitlock's nomination for the Bal Jeffrey Award, Dr. Robert Peterson (2001 Bal Jeffrey honoree) wrote, "I know her best as an ER nurse . . . she has always embodied that rare combination of skill and empathy that set apart the few like her."

Tickets for the 2010 Bal Jeffrey event are available by contacting the Stormont-Vail Foundation at (785) 354-6851.

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