

## Outstanding PH Citizen

### Joanne Sperando-Schmidt

*Awarded to a patient who exemplifies dedication to the PH Community through any combination of the following: raising awareness, advocating for PH patients, participating in fundraising efforts, service to PHA and helping to provide the public with a voice and face of the PH community.*

As a member of PHA's Board of Trustees and co-leader of the Long Island PHA Support Group, Joanne has exhibited dedication to the PH community. Each year, her support group organizes the New York Fun Walk for PH to raise awareness and funds for PH research. Serving as Co-Chair of the Conference Committee and as the Board's Patient Liaison to the Scientific Leadership Council, she also devotes much time and energy to her work on PHA's Board of Trustees. Recently, Joanne testified before a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee as a patient on behalf of PHA. Her energy, intelligence, sparkling personality and great interpersonal skills are a huge asset to the PH community.

**Previous winners:** 2006- Gail Boyer Hayes; 2004- Candi Bleifer; 2002- Shirley Craig and the Stibbs family; 2000- Bonnie Dukart and the Smith family; 1998- Jan Travioli and the Simpson family; 1996- Dorothy Olson and Pat Paton; 1994- Teresa Knazik.

## Outstanding Caregiver

### Joe Haan

*Awarded to someone whose efforts are focused on the needs of a loved one with PH and does what it takes to ensure the patient has the best quality of life possible.*

Joe is always by his wife Cindy's side giving her encouragement and love. When she is feeling tired or sick, he steps up to the plate and takes care of the family so she can rest and recover. He is calm, loving and devoted. Their daughter Samantha says, "My dad is an awesome caregiver to my mom. He mixes her medicine and he does her dressings. But he still has a lot of time to do fun activities. If my dad is right in the middle of talking to someone and my mom needs help, he will rush to go help her. It would make me proud if he got the award."

**Previous winners:** 2006- Christina Puckett; 2004- Linda Rocco; 2002- Jerry Paton; 2000- Betty Lou Wojciechowski; 1998- Harry Olson.

## Outstanding PHA Support Group Leader

### Penny Engel

*Awarded to a support group leader who provides a welcoming environment for patients, families and friends of PH patients; champions and serves PHA by leading local efforts to raise awareness; leads and participates in advocacy efforts and acts as a PH ambassador to the general public.*

Penny is a long-term PH survivor and Support Group Leader who is indescribably generous in giving her strength, heart and energy in helping others with PH – even when her own health

requires attention. Awareness, education and fundraising are priorities for Penny and she is totally committed to keeping her support group on track.

**Previous winners:** 2006- Cheryl Massaro; 2004- Jean Swarc; 2002- Joanne Sperando-Schmidt; 2000-Maribeth McCarthy.

## Outstanding Medical Professional

### Christine Archer-Chicko, MSN, CRNP

#### Penn Presbyterian Medical Center

*Awarded for contributions to the PH community through any combination of the following: participation in advocacy and awareness efforts, service to PHA and providing kind and compassionate care to PH patients.*

Christine is truly an example of a caring, warm-hearted patient advocate in the PH field. She works tirelessly in caring for her patients and serves as a teacher to other medical professionals. Recently, Christine took it upon herself to rebuild a support group after the patient who previously ran it was unable to. She has devoted her life to her patients and asks nothing in return. In turn, they think the world of her. Christine truly embodies the meaning of the word "caregiver."

**Previous winners:** 2006- Daniela Brady, RN; 2004- Eileen Shalit, RN, BSN; 2002- Traci Houston, RN, MS; 2000- Beth Vogel, RN; 1998- Cathy Anderson-Severson, RN, BSN.

## PHA Award for Excellence in PAH Care

### Robyn J. Barst, MD

*Awarded to an outstanding physician who has been most notable in his or her service to PHA and in promoting excellent clinical care, research, education and advocacy on behalf of PH patients. Starting in 2007, this became an annual award. Thanks to an unrestricted educational grant from Actelion, the winner's institution will receive a \$50,000 grant.*

Dr. Robyn Barst recently retired from her position as Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the New York Presbyterian Pulmonary Hypertension Center. She is also retired from Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons.

Dr. Barst has a long and distinguished career as a clinician investigator devoted to the care of patients with pulmonary hypertension. Dr. Barst was one of the original investigators who refined our understanding of PH by conducting the first National Registry of Pulmonary Hypertension. She subsequently served as the principal investigator for the pivotal study which proved the effectiveness of epoprostenol (Flolan) for the treatment of PH.

Dr. Barst also has given countless hours to PHA. She served as the Chair of PHA's Scientific Leadership Council from 2004 to 2006 and continues to be a very influential member.

Dr. Barst is known internationally for her excellence in treating PH patients. It is obvious looking at the vast number of patients

# Special Recognition

who travel great distances to see her, how widely respected she is. She has earned this respect through years of providing the very best care for patients of all ages and backgrounds. While her patients and their families know how much she has given them, Dr. Barst believes that she has learned and received more from her patients and their families than she is ever able to give them. She intends to remember always the life lessons that her patients have imparted, and to use those lessons as she continues her life of service.

**Previous winners:** 2007- John Newman, MD, and James Loyd, MD; 2006- C. Gregory Elliott, MD; 2004- Michael McGoon, MD; 2002- David Badesch, MD; 2000- Bruce Brundage, MD; 1998- Stuart Rich, MD; 1996- Lewis Rubin, MD; 1994- Walker Long, MD.

## Julie Hendry Memorial Scholarship Award

*Julie Paton Hendry, daughter of PHA founding members, Pat and Jerry Paton, was the first full-time non-patient PHA volunteer. She looked forward to the PHA Conference as an opportunity to meet the PH patients and families she talked with by telephone and email. Sadly, Julie passed away in 1998. Her family established the Julie Hendry Memorial Scholarship Award in her memory to help a non-patient volunteer attend Conference.*

**Kathie Starkweather** works tirelessly to raise money and awareness for PH and PHA services. Her sister Annette, who was diagnosed in 2004, is her inspiration to get involved in PHA fundraisers. Together, the two sisters put together a planning committee to organize the Nebraska “Phenomenal Hope for a Cure,” a silent auction and gala brunch. Kathie hopes that this year’s third annual gala, which takes place every November to mark PH Awareness Month, will beat last year’s fundraising success of grossing nearly \$50,000. Kathie tells us that both fundraising and awareness raising are important, saying that “part of the money raised at the event goes to PHA to allow it to continue the wonderful work it does [for patients,] but the awareness, involvement and participation by those with PH is of primary importance.” The event raises awareness by getting attention on TV, on the radio, and in the newspaper. In 2007, Kathie and her committee succeeded in getting the wife of the Governor of Nebraska and the Mayor of Omaha as Honorary Chairs of their event, which helped generate much media attention and bring awareness to the disease.

**Steve Van Wormer** and his wife, Marina, have been active and committed to the cause since the day their son Lucas was diagnosed with pulmonary hypertension. As an actor and writer, Steve was equipped with the skills and home studio to produce a series of radio PSAs for PHA. Steve also worked to make news in Los Angeles, securing an article in L.A.’s second largest newspaper: the *LA Daily News*. The Van Wormers sought help from their PH doctor and PH community to set up the only pediat-

ric PH support group on the West Coast, the second group for children and their families currently in existence in the country. PHA was able to secure funding to bring Steve’s idea of creating “Video Journeys” to life and are pleased to offer this opportunity at this conference.

“My efforts are a small part of a greater whole in this PH community. Both Marina and I wish to continue this journey and help to build a better tomorrow.”

In January of 2004, **Tracy Zanitsch’s** partner Kathy was diagnosed with PH. PHA staff remembers that when Tracy came to our Minneapolis Conference in 2006, she was a great source of support as a volunteer, signing up to work throughout the entire conference and helping in every way possible. In preparation for Conference, she had bought little memorabilia coins with inspiring phrases on them to give away to people who she felt made a difference — an unexpected “thank you” to staff, Board Members, and volunteers alike. Inspired by the “Special Events” and “Advocacy” workshops at the 2006 Conference, Tracy felt she “found her niche at PHA.” She organized and promoted her *Circle of Friends* letter-writing campaign to 75 friends and family. She also put together packets to contact her representatives in Congress about the PH Research Act and called her Congressional offices. Last year, with co-organizer Cindy Wangerud, Tracy organized the Minnesota PHun Walk for a Cure — one of PHA’s largest and highest grossing Fun Walk in history. In its first year, over 250 patients and supporters came together, raising over \$30,000 for PHA.

“I’m just one person who is trying to make a difference the only way I know how ... by talking with people, organizing things and raising a little money.”

**Previous winners:** 2006- Heather Koczur and Christi Hetrick; 2004- Theresa Kuhn; 2002- Dena Giddens; 2000-Carol Wilson.

## Friends of the Family Awards

### Corporation of the Year

#### United Therapeutics

**Previous winners:** 2006- Encysive Pharmaceuticals; 2004- TheraCom (Caremark); 2002- Actelion Pharmaceuticals; 2000- Gentiva Health Care (Accredo Tx).

### Foundation of the Year

#### TCF Foundation

**Previous winners:** 2006- Oracle; 2004- The Medtronic Foundation; 2002- Dauna Leigh Bauer Foundation; 2000- Ronald McDonald House Charities.