



# Healthcare Heroes



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## 2015 Healthcare Heroes recognized

The healthcare profession is one where acts of heroism often go unnoticed, because they happen every day. Healthcare Heroes do not act for praise, recognition, or job advancement. Indeed, their stories are not always picked up by the local media or communicated outside of their organizations. Rather, Healthcare Heroes are motivated by a desire to make a difference in the lives they touch.

Healthcare Heroes was launched in 2008 to recognize the extraordinary impact that exceptional healthcare professionals have on the healthcare industry and on the quality of life in their communities.

The Seventh Annual Healthcare Heroes

Recognition Ceremony, held on June 30, 2015 at the Toledo Museum of Art Glass Pavilion, recognizes the extraordinary contributions healthcare makes to the quality of life in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Each honoree has received an award for the honor.

Healthcare Heroes has honored five recipients this year, including a Lifetime Achievement Award. To qualify for the Lifetime



Kristian Brown, 13ABC

Achievement Award, a healthcare leader must have left a mark on healthcare through a career (of at least 25 years) of heroic acts, compassion, honor, and integrity that have helped to put our region at the forefront of healthcare. In addition, a collaboration award has been presented to an area healthcare organization.

The Healthcare Heroes exemplify the contributions healthcare makes to the re-

gion.

A hero is usually an ordinary person doing extraordinary things, distinguished for his or her courage or ability. They may also be someone who is a model for others that has performed a heroic deed and/or tirelessly given of his/her time, talent, and expertise to improve health.

A Healthcare Hero could be a physician, nurse, allied health professional, researcher, administrator, educator, or caregiver that has gone above and beyond the call of duty. Healthcare Heroes should demonstrate honesty, integrity, humility, courage, and commitment.

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Who is



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# Heroes

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For example, a Healthcare Hero may be a healthcare professional who exemplifies extraordinary quality and compassionate patient care; is breaking new ground in the healthcare arena through a new advancement, improvement of efficiencies, or through a new initiative; is providing research and is on the cutting edge of clinical research to ultimately improve patient care; is an accomplished healthcare educator that is inspiring the next generation of healthcare providers; is a healthcare leader who exceeds all expectations when it comes to influencing growth and development of healthcare to meet the needs of the community; or is a healthcare provider making a meaningful contribution to community health improvement, including but not limited to increasing access to healthcare for the low income uninsured.

Sponsors for this year's event include: The Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP; Hylant Group; Gilmore, Jasion & Mahler, LTD; and TechSolve. *Toledo Business Journal* is the media partner and Kristian Brown, 13ABC, is the host and emcee for the event.

## Kenneth Bertka M.D., FAAFP, CPHIMS

### Lifetime Achievement Award Chief Medical Officer and Vice President Mercy Medical Partners and Mercy Clinically Integrated Network

While a senior at St. John's Jesuit High School, Dr. Kenneth Bertka spent a month volunteering in the emergency department at St. Luke's Hospital. Being able to blend a love of science and service to others made medicine a natural choice for the Toledo native; the experience at St. Luke's sealed his choice.

Four decades later, Dr. Bertka is a family physician who has cared for thousands of patients and their families in the Toledo area. Dr. Bertka has spent 29 years in service to healthcare in Northwest Ohio, trying to keep a patient-centered focus and to do ordinary things in a more extraordinary way.

Besides continuing to provide direct patient care, Dr. Bertka has held various leadership positions within family medicine nationwide – including an elected position on the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Family Physicians from 2007 to 2010 – and for Mercy Health. He was Mercy's first Chief Medical Information Officer, implementing the region's first computerized physician order entry system across the system's four metro Toledo hospitals in 2004 and 2005.

More recently, Dr. Bertka has been the physician lead for implementation of the patient-centered medical home model of care across all Mercy primary care practices in Ohio and Kentucky. Mercy has more than 100 patient-centered medical home practices recognized by the NCQA, the largest number in any health system



statewide.

Dr. Bertka also has led the development of Mercy's clinically integrated network in northwest Ohio since 2013. The network of more than 480 physicians and nurse practitioners promotes the Institute of Healthcare Improvement's Triple Aim – improving quality and patient service, improving the health of the community, and reducing the total cost of care.

CONGRATULATIONS!

# H healthcare Heroes

**Congratulations to all the 2015  
Candidates and Award Recipients.**

**You are each  
a winner, as your  
extraordinary  
service to the  
community sets  
you apart.**

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## To all our Healthcare Heroes: Your caring spirit inspires us all

True heroes just do it. They don't expect praise or recognition. They give every patient everything they've got every day. And they come back tomorrow to do it all again.

Often these acts of heroism may seem to go unnoticed. So once a year we take this time to tell our heroes we did notice. We saw the hope you gave that patient who had given up. We saw you hold that patient's hand in the middle of the night. We saw you take extra time to help that patient choose the course of treatment best for them.

Congratulations to our 2015 heroes. You show us the best of what healthcare can be. You keep the promises we make to our patients. In you we see the care we all aspire to.

**Mercy is proud of all that our people do to make lives better here in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan.**





## Congratulations to our 2015 Healthcare Heroes!

Thank you for everything that you do to improve the health and well-being of our communities. We are proud to have you as a part of the ProMedica team.



**Iracema Arevalo, MD**  
ProMedica Memorial Hospital



**Kay Smith, CNM**  
ProMedica Bay Park Hospital



**Howard Stein, MD**  
ProMedica Toledo Children's Hospital



**Suzette Valiton**  
ProMedica Wildwood Athletic Club



**Pierre Vauthy, MD**  
ProMedica Toledo Children's Hospital

## Brian Byrd

### Deputy Chief Toledo Fire & Rescue Department

Toledo Fire & Rescue Department Deputy Chief Brian Byrd not only helps save lives on the job. He is raising awareness about preventable diseases and working to make sure African American men – who typically do not seek primary health-care for themselves – are getting health screenings.

In 2013, Byrd established the African American Male Wellness Walk in Toledo to help promote exercise, as well as encourage men to visit a doctor annually and “know their numbers.” Byrd coordinated 715 health screenings and analyzed the data to show results for blood pressure, blood glucose, cholesterol, body mass index and other categories at last year's 5K walk/run event.

Byrd is chairman for this year's African American Male Wellness Walk in Toledo, which is scheduled for August 15 and modeled after an event in Columbus. He also has been invited to speak in other cities about the Toledo project as events are created nationwide. More information about the National African American Male Wellness Walk Initiative can be found at [www.aawalk.org](http://www.aawalk.org).

As Deputy Chief of Emergency Medical Services and Communications, Byrd provides oversight of all EMS operations and City of



Toledo emergency communications operations; including 911-call taking and dispatching for both police and fire. He also serves as Lucas County Coordinator for the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Emergency Response Plan; proxy for the Fire Chief on the Lucas County Emergency Medical Services Policy Board; and proxy for the Fire Chief on the Lucas County Emergency Communications Board.

Additionally, Byrd is involved in various organizations and initiatives, including the Salvation Army Advisory Board; State of Ohio Emergency Medical Services Board; Toledo Community Coalition, Quality of Life Task Force; community Gang Violence Task Force; and Board of Directors for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwestern Ohio.

## David Pollick M.Ed

### Health Commissioner Sandusky County Health Department

Managing the Juvenile Cancer Cluster Investigation in the Clyde area – all while working with distraught families whose children were sick or dying – has been the most challenging undertaking in David Pollick's professional career. Having children he met pass away during the investigation was especially challenging and frustrating to Pollick, Health Commissioner for the Sandusky County Health Department.

Based on reports from school nurses and family members, Pollick took early action and began an investigation in 2006. Pollick brought in state, federal and academic resources to investigate a statistically significant number of child cancer cases in a small geographic area in eastern Sandusky County.

Cancer clusters are difficult to analyze, and investigations often result in inconclusive findings. While the Clyde cancer cluster peaked by 2009-2010, Pollick believes the investigation's vigilance and thoroughness made a difference. With only one new case reported since 2011, attention caused by the investigation may have halted environmental practices that played a role in the cluster's genesis.

One accomplishment of which Pollick is proud of during his tenure as Health Commis-



sioner is creating and implementing a Community Health Improvement Cycle. While Sandusky County had made some attempt at community health assessment, Pollick proved that the process could be more thorough and scientific, as well as produce results to create a healthier community.

Pollick also worked with the Sandusky County Commissioners to reconstitute the Family and Children First Council, a forum for all local public providers to work together to improve family and child health and well-being. Among Pollick's other accomplishments is managing three successful levy campaigns in Sandusky County after doing more outreach with flu clinics and demolishing blighted residential properties throughout the county.

## Kay Smith MSN, WHNP-BC, CNM

**Director of Women's Services  
ProMedica Bay Park  
Hospital**



When breast cancer was found in a woman without contact information who was examined at an event for underserved residents, Kay Smith worked tirelessly to ensure she was found and offered treatment for the disease. Otherwise, the woman would not have known she had cancer until the lesion was physically evident – and she became very sick.

That's just one example of how Smith, Director of Woman's Services at ProMedica Bay Park Hospital, has worked tirelessly to provide exceptional care for women regardless of their socioeconomic status. Often that means going beyond the hospital setting to work at health fairs and free clinics, including providing breast exams such as the one funded through a Susan G. Komen grant where the woman without contact information was examined.

Growing up, Smith often stayed with her grandmother to "help take care of" her grandfather, who was terminally ill with cancer. She was 9 or 10 when she decided to become a nurse because she wanted to help people, and Smith is both a women's health nurse practitioner and

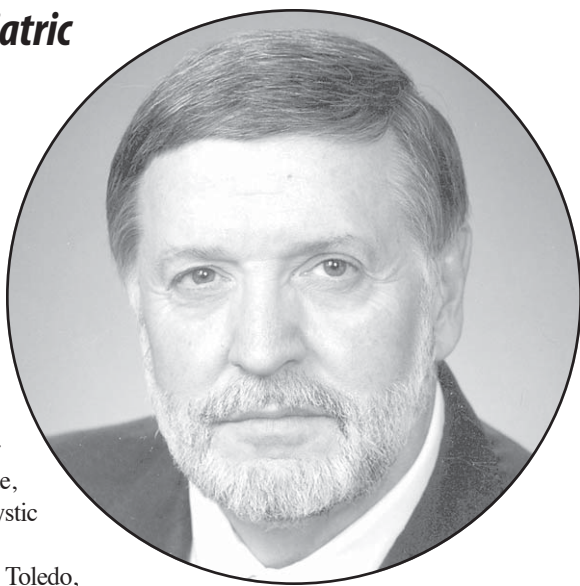
certified nurse midwife.

Helping those who are less fortunate than her has been a hallmark of Smith's healthcare career, during which she learned women don't always know how they will feed their families or get to a medical appointment. Smith has gained an understanding of the diversity and needs in the community while helping people access resources and medical care.

Smith is responsible for coordinating labor and delivery services, midwifery programming, and the community health needs assessment at ProMedica Bay Park Hospital. She also is responsible for midwifery services in Port Clinton and at ProMedica Memorial Hospital in Fremont.

## Pierre Vauthy M.D.

**Medical Director of Pediatric  
Intensive Care Unit  
ProMedica Toledo  
Children's Hospital**



Nearly 40 years ago, when the life expectancy of a child with cystic fibrosis was less than 5 years old, Dr. Pierre Vauthy opened what is now the Cystic Fibrosis Center of Northwest Ohio. Now the Toledo center is a leader in research for such centers nationwide, and the life expectancy of those with cystic fibrosis is closer to 40 years old.

Before the Swiss native moved to Toledo, there was no specialty pulmonary care. Patients with cystic fibrosis and other pulmonary ailments had to go to Cleveland for care and hospitalizations. Dr. Vauthy pioneered the pediatric pulmonary and cystic fibrosis programs for the Toledo area, making many national and international contributions through his research and publications.

An advocate for all children's health issues and leader in patient- and family-centered care, Dr. Vauthy is known for the extraordinary level of dedicated personal care given to his patients and their families. Measured health outcomes for local patients with cystic fibrosis consistently have been above the national average, indicating they are healthier than "average" under Dr. Vauthy's care.

Under Dr. Vauthy's leadership, which has

included many roles with the health system and in pulmonary medicine, ProMedica Toledo Children's Hospital's pediatric intensive care unit has grown from four to 18 beds. He also established the bronchoscopy program at the hospital and has taught the procedure to residents, fellows and pulmonologists from around the world.

Since 1976, Dr. Vauthy has served as a clinical professor of pediatrics at what is now the University of Toledo Medical Center, training numerous pediatric pulmonary fellows who are involved in the care of hundreds of patients with cystic fibrosis nationwide. He also has educated hundreds of medical students and pediatric residents across northwest Ohio in both pulmonary medicine and pediatric intensive care.

# healthcare Heroes

## 2015 Judges Panel

**Randy Dixon,**  
President,  
Toledo Bar Association

**Kyle Grefe,**  
Retired Executive Director,  
Family Outreach Community United Services

**Marie Huff, Ph.D., MSW,**  
Dean-College of Health and Human Service,  
Bowling Green State University

**Clint Longenecker,**  
Stranahan Professor of Leadership and Organizational Excellence in  
The College of Business and Innovation at The University of Toledo

**Karen Mathison,**  
President,  
United Way of Greater Toledo

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# HEALTHCARE UPDATE

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS YOU NEED TO KNOW.

## Premium reimbursement is a costly violation

**Small employers are now “on the clock” to fix this problem or pay heavy taxes**

Information taken from Employee Benefits News

Small employers that reimburse employees or pay directly for all or part of their health coverage have a short window to cease this practice, or they will be subject to an expensive excise tax. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Department of Labor (DOL), and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have each issued frequently asked questions (FAQs) stating that employer payment plans (sometimes referred to as premium reimbursement plans) for individual health insurance coverage fail to comply with the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Employers that violate this rule are subject to an excise tax of up to \$100 per day (\$36,500 per year) for each affected employee.

An employer payment plan is an arrangement in which an employer reimburses employees or pays directly for all or part of the premium for individual coverage. These employer payment plans are considered to be group health plans that do not comply with the requirements of the ACA. An employer cannot reimburse employees for the purchase of an individual market policy, regardless of whether the employer treats the payment as a tax-free benefit or as additional taxable wages to the employee.

*Example:* Company A has seven employees and reimburses each employee for the cost of his or her individual health insurance premium.

Beginning July 1, 2015, the continuation of this policy exposes Company A to a \$255,500 annual excise tax (\$36,500 tax for each of the seven full-time employees), regardless whether the reimbursement to the employees is with pre-tax or after-tax dollars.

**For a Limited Time Only:**

**Temporary Relief for Small Employers**

Earlier this year, the IRS issued Notice 2015-17, which provided transition relief from this \$100-per-day excise tax. In the notice, the IRS recognized that many small employers provide health coverage by paying directly or reimbursing the cost of premiums for individual policies, and outlined the relief as follows:

Small employers with fewer than 50 full-time employees (for at least 6 consecutive months) will not be subject to the penalty for either 2014 or for the period January 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015. This means, however, that small employers are now “on the clock” to fix this payroll practice before the middle of 2015.

All hope is not lost for small employers that have this type of arrangement with their employees. Employers have the right to provide compensation increases to their employees. So long as the employer does not require that an employee use the increase to purchase health coverage, an employer payment plan is not created. The extra pay will be subject to income and payroll taxes. The employee can do whatever he or she pleases with this extra pay, whether that includes or does not include purchasing an individual health insurance policy.

Employers also may forward post-tax employee wages to the health insurance carrier at the direction of the employee. This arrangement should not constitute an employer payment plan.

## Is Assurant Health an ACA casualty?

Parent company Assurant Inc. has said that it will sell off or shut down Milwaukee-based Assurant Health by the end of next year. Assurant Health is expected to post an operating loss of \$80 million to \$90 million in Q1 of this year, following a \$64-million loss in 2014.

“While it is a difficult decision, we believe

they would be strong assets for new owners that are focused more exclusively on healthcare and employee benefits,” said Alan Colberg, CEO of the parent company.

Steven Schwartz, an analyst with Raymond James & Associates, called Assurant Health a “casualty of the ACA.”

**For more information on complying with the Affordable Care Act or how it will affect your benefit plans, please contact us.**

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## Collaboration Award

# Activate Allen County Lima Family YMCA

The 2009 Allen County Community Health Assessment showed that 77% of residents were overweight or obese – and the county also was ranked near the bottom of Ohio’s 88 counties for health behaviors in a national report. Knowing that Allen County’s children might have shorter life spans if current conditions continued, and that economic development efforts were suffering, Activate Allen County took action and is making progress.

The county-wide coalition worked to combat smoking and obesity by promoting healthy eating, active living, tobacco-free lifestyles and high-impact clinical quality services. Activate Allen County is comprised of community leaders from government, healthcare, business, education, social service, public health and faith-based organizations who have set aside their natural competition to focus on improving the county’s collective health.

The 2014 Allen County Community Health Assessment showed that less than 68% of residents were overweight or obese, a marked improvement from the 77% in 2009. Activate Allen County has been awarded sev-

eral grants, including two from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Among Activate Allen County’s successes are:

Establishing a Mobile Produce Market to provide access to affordable produce to residents living more than a mile from a supermarket.

Establishing the Healthy Happens Here corner store program to further ensure residents have access to affordable, nutritious food.

Training 24 people to become Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists.

Assisting 12 workplaces and nine community venues in implementing breastfeeding friendly policies to support, promote and protect breastfeeding.

Establishing the YMCA National Diabetes Prevention Program at the Lima Family YMCA.

Training 55 students at a Youth Empowerment Summit with Youth Empowered Solutions to become leaders in the areas of real food, tobacco prevention and active living.

Helping re-establish the Downtown Lima Farmer’s Market.

Serving children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and their families for 23 years.

**Congratulations to Sr. Suzette Fisher, SND, co founder of Double ARC and current Director of Client Services, for her compassion and expertise.**



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