



## CURE Magazine Announces Winner of the 2012 Extraordinary Healer Award for Oncology Nursing

May 3, 2012

*Heartfelt essays from patients honor three extraordinary oncology nurses at a reception featuring Golden Globe® and Tony®-award winning actress and breast cancer survivor, Diahann Carroll*

NEW ORLEANS (May 3, 2012) - [CURE](#) magazine announced the winner of the 2012 Extraordinary Healer Award for Oncology Nursing during a special award ceremony at the [Oncology Nursing Society's \(ONS\) 37th Annual Congress](#). The award, now in its sixth year and made possible with financial support from [Amgen Oncology](#) and [Breakaway from Cancer](#), was presented to one of three nurses who were finalists of an essay contest asking cancer patients, survivors and caregivers from across the country to nominate oncology nurses who demonstrated exceptional compassion, expertise and commitment in their patients' fight against cancer.

In front of more than 700 of her peers, Sheila Dropcho, RN, BSN, CCRP, from the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Cancer Center in Indianapolis, Ind., was given this year's Extraordinary Healer Award. Dropcho's extraordinary nursing ability was highlighted in an essay written by her patient Greg Schilling of Greenwood, Ind. Schilling received a stage IV cancer diagnosis shortly after losing his wife of 30 years to cancer as well. Schilling described the days after his diagnosis as "filled with dread" and wrote that he "had no reason to hope at first." That was until he met his nurse, Sheila Dropcho. According to Schilling, "[Sheila] is the epitome of what a nurse should be. She has empathy, compassion and caring that is so genuine and real, I feel it when I see her. She has given me hope on many of the dark days I've had." In addition to bringing Schilling hope, Dropcho has successfully navigated her grateful patient into two clinical trials--the most recent of which has not only stopped his tumors from growing, it has shrunk them by 16 percent.

"Greg outlined a variety of ways that Sheila went above and beyond her duties when caring for him, but ultimately the most impactful thing she gave him was hope," says [Kathy LaTour](#), cancer survivor and editor-at-large of *CURE*. "When we read Greg's essay aloud as we were gathered to select this year's finalist and winner, one sentence stood out above the rest, and that was when Greg wrote in a simple and matter-of-fact manner, 'I'm alive today because of her extra effort on my part.' We knew at that moment that Sheila had everything it took to be recognized as this year's Extraordinary Healer Award winner."

This year's Honorary Mistress of Ceremonies, Golden Globe® and Tony-award® winning actress and breast cancer survivor, Diahann Carroll, spoke to the crowd about her experience with cancer after being diagnosed in 1997 after a routine mammogram screening. Carroll joined *CURE* and the event's sponsors in thanking the oncology nurses in attendance for all that they do on behalf of their patients and then treated many of the attendees to one-on-one pictures and autographs.

"When considering who we wanted to come speak to this year's attendees and join *CURE* in honoring the field of oncology nursing, we knew it needed to not only be a cancer survivor, but someone who could genuinely speak to those in the nursing community," says [Susan McClure](#), cancer survivor and publisher of *CURE*. "Diahann Carroll truly was that perfect fit. Not only was she the first black actress in television history to star in her own series, but in that series, her portrayal of a nurse earned her an Emmy® nomination. That experience, coupled with her own personal story of a cancer diagnosis, made her presence at our event particularly special, and it was apparent that the nurses in attendance were just as pleased as we were that she took the time to join us."

In addition to Dropcho, two other pairs of nurse finalists and essayists were honored at the reception. Mary Heery, APRN, AOCNS, from the Smilow Family Breast Health Center at Norwalk Hospital in Norwalk, Conn., was nominated by Wendy Crowther of Westport, Conn., after Heery showed extraordinary nursing ability upon Crowther's diagnosis just three days before Christmas in 2010. Heery's 30 years of nursing and inherent compassion led her to hand-deliver educational materials to Crowther's doorstep in the middle of the holiday season--and in 16 inches of snow.

Joining Dropcho and Heery was finalist Andrea Solano, RNC, BSN, from the University of New Mexico Hospital in Albuquerque, N.M., nominated by the well-spoken and mature-beyond-his-years, 17-year-old Cesar Quesada, also of Albuquerque. Quesada was diagnosed with a very rare cancer called transitional cell carcinoma at the age of 6 and now, 11 years later and still receiving treatment for his cancer, Quesada was able to join the nurse onstage who inspired him to write an essay based entirely on the many special memories he had with Solano, including attending a country music concert and taking a ski trip, all of which helped him feel more like a typical kid.

Also present at this year's event was Stuart A. Arbuckle, vice president and general manager, Oncology at Amgen. Amgen Oncology and the *Breakaway from Cancer* initiative sponsored this year's Extraordinary Healer Award for the second year.

"Amgen and *Breakaway from Cancer* are enormously proud of our sponsorship of the Extraordinary Healer Award," Stuart A. Arbuckle, Amgen. "We are thrilled to honor Sheila Dropcho for her exceptional dedication to patients and thank *CURE* for recognizing the profound role that oncology nurses play in a patient's journey.

The winning essay will be featured in the summer 2012 issue of *CURE*, a free, quarterly magazine for cancer patients, survivors and caregivers. All three of the finalist essays, photos and videos from the event and a Q&A with winner Sheila Dropcho, will be featured on [www.curetoday.com](http://www.curetoday.com) beginning June 13, 2012. Additionally, the essays, photos and more will be available on *CURE*'s Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/curemagazine>.

### About *CURE* Magazine

*CURE* magazine is a free, award-winning publication from Dallas-based *CURE* Media Group--the national source for cancer patient education. By combining science and humanity, *CURE* helps patients, survivors and caregivers navigate the cancer journey and understand their diagnosis and treatment, while providing tools to cope during and after cancer--ultimately helping them to live the life they aspire to live. Through the magazine, an annual resource guide for the newly diagnosed, books and a new and interactive website, *CURE* provides a wealth of resources for everyone on the cancer journey. For more information, visit [www.curetoday.com](http://www.curetoday.com). *CURE* Media Group is affiliated with McKesson Specialty Health, a division of [McKesson Corporation](#).

**About *Breakaway from Cancer*®**

Founded in 2005, *Breakaway from Cancer* is designed to help empower people affected by cancer. *Breakaway from Cancer* supports the services of four nonprofit organizations: Prevent Cancer Foundation, Cancer Support Community (formerly known as The Wellness Community), Patient Advocate Foundation, and National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship. For more information, please visit <http://www.breakawayfromcancer.com/>.

**About Amgen**

Amgen discovers, develops, manufactures and delivers innovative human therapeutics. A biotechnology pioneer since 1980, Amgen was one of the first companies to realize the new science's promise by bringing safe, effective medicines from lab to manufacturing plant to patient. Amgen therapeutics have changed the practice of medicine, helping millions of people around the world in the fight against cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, bone disease and other serious illnesses. With a deep and broad pipeline of potential new medicines, Amgen remains committed to advancing science to dramatically improve people's lives. To learn more about our pioneering science and vital medicines, visit [www.amgen.com](http://www.amgen.com). Follow us on [www.twitter.com/amgen](http://www.twitter.com/amgen).

**Media Contacts:**

Alexandra Hurd, CURE Media Group  
Phone: 214-367-3506  
Mobile: 970-443-0559  
[alexandra.hurd@curetoday.com](mailto:alexandra.hurd@curetoday.com)

Mary Klem, Amgen  
Phone: 805-447-6979  
Mobile: 805-341-0687  
[mklem@amgen.com](mailto:mklem@amgen.com)

###