

Air Force Gives Active-Duty Nurse Top Props



An active-duty nurse with Scottsdale Healthcare's Military Partnership has been named an Education and Training Nurse of the Year by the United States Air Force.

Lt. Col. Deedra Zabokrtsky, on assignment at Scottsdale Healthcare from the 56th Medical Group at Luke Air Force Base, was recognized for her leadership of the Air Force Nurse Transition Program at Scottsdale Healthcare. Zabokrtsky was selected for the award after being

named a finalist among nurses representing 74 Air Force medical facilities around the world.

The Scottsdale Healthcare Nurse Transition Program prepares new graduate Air Force nurses for active duty by providing valuable hands-on experience in direct patient care under the supervision of nurse preceptors. Scottsdale Healthcare is one of only four sites conducting the program and the largest in terms of participants and facilities. More than 90 Air Force nurses have graduated from the hospital's program.

"The Air Force calls Scottsdale Healthcare 'the premier site' for the Nurse Transition Program," says Zabokrtsky, noting that generals frequently reference Scottsdale Healthcare in briefings as a model for a successful partnership.

She adds that because of the success of the program at Scottsdale Healthcare, whose Shea and Osborn Medical Centers have earned Magnet designation, the Air Force now deems

the designation important when considering civilian sites for the program. Magnet recognition, which is awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, is considered the gold standard for nursing excellence.

At Scottsdale Healthcare since 2009, Zabokrtsky developed an innovative reporting tool for the program as well as led an Air Force-wide group to update the program. Maj. Gen. Kimberly Siniscalchi at USAF headquarters at the Pentagon called her "clearly one of the best officers in the Air Force Medical Services."

"Working with the Military Partnership at Scottsdale Healthcare made this award possible," said Zabokrtsky. "From leadership to nurse managers, preceptors and staff in ancillary services, there has been incredible support. Everyone recognizes that they play a role in preparing our military nurses."

The Nurse Transition Program is part of Scottsdale Healthcare's partnership with the U.S. Armed Forces. Created in 2004, the Military Partnership provides military medical personnel with the skills and experience needed to perform successfully under wartime conditions. More than 1,000 service members have been trained at Scottsdale Healthcare, including Luke AFB and Arizona Air National Guard personnel. Dedicated in January 2011, a 7,500-square-foot Military Training Center at the Osborn campus serves as the hub for the Military Partnership. The center includes life-like human patient simulators, a canine simulator, six emergency/disaster simulation training rooms, and clinical, classroom, office and conference space.

In conjunction with the classes, nurses in the program spend time on units at Shea and Osborn, gaining hands-on clinical experience. As manager of the program, Zabokrtsky is often at Shea to make sure that everything is running smoothly and nurses are getting valuable experience. ■