



## Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation's 2011 Champion in Women's Health Award Recipients

### **Excellence in the area of General Women's Health – Lifetime Achievement Award**

***Mary Starmann-Harrison*** – President & CEO, Hospital Sisters Health System, Wisconsin & Illinois

As former regional president and CEO of SSM Healthcare of Wisconsin, and now president and CEO of Hospital Sisters Health System, Mary Starmann-Harrison is responsible for a multi-institutional Catholic healthcare system of 13 hospitals and numerous physician practices throughout Illinois and Wisconsin. She is a tireless advocate whose passion for health care is her life.

Mary's focus on keeping health care local – serving people close to where they live – is especially important to women who are most often in charge of their family's health care. She helped stabilize and expand health care services in Columbus, Stoughton, Boscobel, Dodgeville and Edgerton. She helped establish the state's only satellite emergency center in Sun Prairie so that families in surrounding areas can receive life-saving emergency care more quickly. In Janesville, where community members were seeking broader health care choices, Mary led the charge to bring a new 50-bed hospital to serve them, even in the face of a challenging economy and a city with high unemployment. St. Mary's Janesville Hospital is now under construction and will open January 2012. In Baraboo, Mary's advocacy has opened the door for advanced breast cancer screening for patients at St. Clare Hospital so they can see a doctor about mammograms results the same day without having to leave and worry about the unknown.

As chair of the Wisconsin Hospital Association in 2006, she challenged all Wisconsin hospitals to ban smoking on their premises. Under Mary's direction, SSM Health Care of Wisconsin's facilities were the forerunners in creating a healthier environment for all, and today 100 percent of Wisconsin hospitals have smoke-free campuses. Mary's leadership has had a domino effect on other health care facilities and on the health of Wisconsinites.

In memory of her lifelong friend, Mary hosts an annual fundraiser for 125 people in her home helping to raise thousands of dollars to benefit the Breast Cancer Recovery organization.

Mary's significant contributions caught the attention of the Governor, who appointed her to the Health Wisconsin Council in 2006. She also currently serves in volunteer leadership for HospiceCare, the Wisconsin Medical Society and the University of Wisconsin College of Nursing.

Mary graduated from Arizona State University with a Masters Degree in Health Service Administration, and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing. She is married to Greg Harrison and has two children, G.B. and Stephanie.

### **Excellence in the area of Cancer**

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**Alonzo Walker, MD** – Director, Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin Breast Cancer Program; Chief, Division of General Surgery, Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

An acknowledged expert in the practice of surgical oncology and a dedicated advocate for educating women about breast cancer prevention, detection and treatment, Dr. Walker long has championed the cause of women’s health. He has worked tirelessly to bring quality breast health care initiatives to underserved women and to reduce health care disparities in Wisconsin. Under his guidance and in cooperation with community groups, the Froedtert & Medical College breast care staff has developed and implemented community outreach programs for women living in Milwaukee’s central city. In 2010 alone, these programs reached more than 4,000 women. In his nearly 30 years of clinical practice, Dr. Walker has passionately shared his knowledge and experience on breast cancer management with professional colleagues at more than 70 lectures, workshops and presentations to international, national and local groups and organizations. He serves as the Medical College of Wisconsin’s principal investigator for trials sponsored by the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project, a nationally recognized clinical cooperative group supported by the National Cancer Institute. He is the former state chair of the cancer liaison program for the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer and has served on boards of local and breast cancer organizations. Dr. Walker has been named by his peers to the “Best Doctors in America” list for the past eight years.

### **Excellence in the area of Cardiovascular Disease**

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**Carol Meils, MD, FACP** – Retired; Former Chief, Cardiovascular Services, Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare - All Saints, Racine

With an unrelenting focus on delivering excellence in heart care and a personal commitment to developing the clinicians that comprise Wheaton’s cardiology team, Dr. Meils is known to bring a true passion for patient care. Her work has resulted in the development of community outreach programs to educate and empower consumers to take control of their cardiac health and wellness. She has advanced the knowledge base of the cardiac profession through original research and implementation of evidence-based protocols that support the work of physicians in patient care. And, after strategically assessing the needs of her community, she helped develop the state-of-the-art Congestive Heart Failure Program in Racine and later in Milwaukee. In her career, Dr. Meils has assumed many leadership roles within the medical community, including director of cardiac catheterization at Wheaton Franciscan - St. Joseph Campus in Milwaukee, director of the Cardiovascular Institute at Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare-All Saints in Racine, clinical assistant professor of medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin and Board member of Physician’s Insurance Company of Wisconsin. The Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Heart Association in 2008, the Journal Sentinel’s Woman of Influence Award in 2005, and the Sacagawea Award in 1996 are just a sample of the recognitions she has received for her leadership and commitment to quality care. She has dedicated her career to furthering women’s health initiatives and educating the public on the dangers of heart disease in women.



### **Excellence in the area of General Women’s Health**

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***Ellen Schumann, MD, MS*** – Marshfield Clinic, Pediatric Hospitalist, Chief Medical Information Officer and Medical Director for Inpatient Services, Ministry Saint Clare’s Hospital, Weston

As a leader in assuring there are adequate resources and high quality services for women and children in her community, Dr. Schumann serves as an advocate for women by championing educational programming, new service development and unique clinical services to serve the most vulnerable populations of women. She has been instrumental in leading the development of Marshfield Clinic’s Women’s Wellness program, founded on the belief that given information and knowledge, women will make the correct choices for themselves and their families. As medical director of the program, she has guided efforts to build what the women in her community indicated they wanted from their health care provider. Dr. Schumann served as co-director of the BreastCare program, helping the multidisciplinary programs at Wausau Center and Weston center achieve the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) accreditation. She launched Ladies’ Night Out, an ongoing series of education programs designed to empower women with health care knowledge. Dr. Schumann is also the medical director for Women’s and Children’s Services, and provides fulltime call and rounding support for the Marshfield Clinic’s pediatric department. She has worked tirelessly to educate pediatric staff in both clinic and hospital settings to provide the standard of excellence in care. Dr. Schumann was named a Woman of Vision by the Wausau YWCA in 2009.



### **Excellence in the area of General Women’s Health**

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***Mary Lou Ballweg*** – Founder, President and Executive Director, Endometriosis Association, Milwaukee

Mary Lou Ballweg is founder, president and executive director of the Endometriosis Association, the first organization in the world devoted to endometriosis. Credited with “putting endometriosis on the map,” she has overseen development of extensive resources for patients, clinicians, and scientists, including four books, multi-million dollar awareness campaigns, Endometriosis Awareness Month, worldwide affiliates, and literature in 30 languages. With Karen Lamb, PhD, she established the first research registry in the world on endometriosis, now maintained at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) where Mary Lou collaborates on studies. Utilizing the research registries and her contact with thousands of women with endometriosis, Mary Lou led the field in understanding the importance of pain in endometriosis; endometriosis as an immune disease and its relationship to autoimmune diseases, as well as certain cancers; synergistic and holistic treatments, particularly immune-based treatments; and endometriosis as an environmental disease (with potential for prevention). In 1992, she discovered a major causal link in endometriosis – namely, dioxin – research replicated and expanded upon worldwide. Mary Lou has created research partnerships with the NIH and Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and been instrumental in raising over \$27 million for research.

## Excellence in the area of Mental Health

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### ***Susan Conlin Opheim – Co-chair, Prevent Suicide Wisconsin, Tomahawk***

Susan Conlin Opheim became a grassroots advocate for suicide prevention after she became the survivor of her brother Bill's suicide. She is a co-founder of HOPES (Helping to Prevent and Educate Others about Suicide). This organization grew out of her efforts to bring people who are survivors of suicide together to work to save others by providing education about mental illnesses and offering suicide prevention training. Sue is a master trainer for QPR (question, persuade, refer) which is an evidence-based program to teach people how to recognize someone who may be thinking of suicide and how to ask them the right questions about suicide, persuade them to get help, and refer them to mental health services. She led the charge in Wisconsin with the assistance of SPANUSA by collaborating with the State of Wisconsin Department of Public Health, State of Wisconsin Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Mental Health America of Wisconsin, and other agencies to complete the State Strategy for Suicide Prevention. Sue continues in this effort in her role as co-chair of the Prevent Suicide Wisconsin workgroup. She has been involved with the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention as a survivor task force member, is currently working with Safe Community of Dane County to further their efforts in suicide prevention, and is a member of Wisconsin United for Mental Health. Sue's vision is that people will know the warnings signs and symptoms of suicide like the signs and symptoms of heart attack, and that we will have readily available and comprehensive services that people know how to access.