



Photos by Todd Luck

Cyrus Art Production performers put on a show for attendees at Monday night's AIDS Care Service meeting.

Local people helping to tackle AIDS crisis receive recognition

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

Two individuals and two organizations were recognized with awards from AIDS Care Service, Inc. (ACS) at the its annual meeting on Monday night.

Community members Richard Cassidy and Daughn Eagan were feted for their service to ACS, as were the Northwest Care Consortium and The Chronicle. Outgoing members of the Board of Trustees were also recognized during the ceremony.

"This past year has been an amazing year for AIDS Care Service. Over 5,000 volunteer hours have been logged," commented ACS President Christine Jolly. "There's a tremendous amount of work being done in this community."

Cassidy was given the Friendship Award in appreciation of the many hours he has spent supporting and encouraging ACS clients.

"Richard is an outstanding volunteer," Jolly commented. "He continually advocates for our clients. He does a good job of helping us out and making sure that he is a friend of the organization."

Cassidy, who is HIV-positive and a cancer survivor, said he was "blown away" by the honor.

"I'm honored just to serve; they need so much," he said of ACS. "My drive is to instill and inspire hope in people that are living with HIV/AIDS... I'm just there for them. I know what it's like. A lot of



Richard Cassidy



Daughn Eagan

times, people just want a friend to listen."

Though it is now in remission, Cassidy says he almost lost his battle with cancer. The experience has given him a renewed dedication to helping others.

"Having tasted death and (having) the peace that comes from being brought back from that, I am compelled to share with my brothers and sisters," he declared. "God is bigger than AIDS; God is bigger than cancer."

Eagan, a former member of the ACS board, was honored with the Benefactor Award for her efforts in drumming up support for the ACS food pantry.

"Daughn has done so much for our organization," Jolly remarked. "She's so committed - always advocating for food or actual financial gifts to the organization."

Eagan, who volunteers at the pantry three to four hours per week, says she receives far more than she gives.

"I really just love being

with the clients; they are always so very grateful," she commented. "There are weeks and months where you think, 'I could use that three to four hours for something else.' But then you get there and you realize you're right where you need to be. You leave feeling more blessed than when you came."

The work of volunteers like Cassidy and Eagan are vitally important as HIV infections nationwide continue to occur at alarming rates, said Dr. Scott Rhodes, president-elect of the ACS board.

"One new infection occurs in the United States about every 9.5 minutes. That's over 150 new infections per day," he stated. "HIV ranks number six in causes of death for individuals between the ages of 25-44."

The Northwest Care Consortium's Visionary Award was earned because of its years of providing medical needs and support for those with HIV and AIDS. The Chronicle received the

Advocate Award for its news coverage of HIV/AIDS-related issues.

Artists from Cyrus Art Production (CAP) provided entertainment for the evening, regaling the audience with a multi-media performance that incorporated dance, drama and music. The piece was

centered around HIV/AIDS awareness, according to Founder Duane Cyrus.

"I want to create works that are socially relevant, and HIV/AIDS is something that affects us all," declared Cyrus, who has traveled the world as a dancer. "I've lost many friends and colleagues to the

disease."

A panel discussion on HIV advocacy followed the CAP performance.

For more information about AIDS Care Services, Inc. or to volunteer, call (336) 777-0116 or visit www.aidscareservice.org.



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Baptist nurses like where they work

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center has made the 2009 "Top 100 Hospitals to Work For" list from Nursing Professionals magazine.

"We are indeed honored and humbled by the fact that our nurses feel so strongly about the positive environment we have all strived to achieve here at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center," said A. Patricia Johnson, vice president of operations and chief nursing officer. "Relationship-based care has focused us all, not only on our patients and families, but also on caring for each other as members of a team."

Early in 2008, Nursing Professionals sent a survey to 25,000 randomly selected hospital nurses throughout the country to measure their



job satisfaction. Sample questions asked included: How well does your hospital manage personal training and development? Is your hospital a family-friendly employer? Does your hospital offer flexible working arrangements? Does your hospital promote equality and diversity in your nursing workforce? How strong is the

nursing voice within your hospital on a scale of one to 10?

The Top 100 hospitals are listed alphabetically with no numeric ranking. Other North Carolina hospitals to appear on the list are: Carolinas Medical Center, Charlotte; Duke University Medical Center, Durham; Mission Hospital, Asheville; University of North Carolina Hospitals, Chapel Hill.

This list appears in the first issue of Nursing Professionals, spring 2009 (January). The magazine will be published twice a year, spring and fall (September). Its focus is to serve as a tool for hospitals, the military and corporations to recruit upcoming nursing graduates. With a circulation of 55,000, it will be available at more than 1,000 nursing schools throughout the country.