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NEWS RELEASE

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Martinsburg VAMC chief nurse earns VA Secretary Award

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. – The Martinsburg Veterans Affairs Medical Center’s Associate Director of Patient Care Services Susan E. George, RN, BSN, MPH, NEA-BC, received the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Award for Excellence in Nursing and for the Advancement of Nursing Programs recently at VA’s Central Office in Washington D.C.

The VA Secretary’s Awards in Nursing Excellence Program was established in 1984 to honor nurses who have demonstrated excellence in delivering patient-driven care to VA patients. Every year the program honors one VA medical center director, nurse executive (NE), registered nurse (RN), licensed practical nurse (LPN) and a nursing assistant (NA).

“Ms. George is a dedicated and compassionate nurse,” said Director Ann R. Brown. “Her outstanding commitment has helped to create a culture of excellence; we are very proud of her.”

Ms. George began her VA career in 1974 when she held staff nursing positions at the Gainesville VA Medical Center in Gainesville, Fla., and the James A. Haley VA Medical Center in Tampa. In 1982, her career switched gears when she accepted a position as the Operating Room Nurse Manager at the James A. Haley VAMC. Ms. George went on to become the Assistant Chief Nursing Service of Critical Care and Operative Services in 1982.

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In 2001, she relocated to the Richmond VA Medical Center in Richmond, Va., as the associate chief of nursing for surgery and special care areas until her promotion to associate medical center director of Patient Care Services in May 2006.

In 2011, under Ms. George's leadership, the Martinsburg VA Medical Center became the first nursing service in VHA and first facility in West Virginia to receive the designation of "Pathway to Excellence" by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. To achieve this recognition, a medical center must provide quality patient care delivery and a commitment to patient and staff safety. She has mentored seven other VA facilities who are striving to achieve this designation. She was recognized with the Nursing Excellence Award for Leadership by the West Virginia Center of Nursing in 2011.

On a national level, Ms. George was instrumental in the development of the computerized surgical documentation tool, which was implemented across the entire VA system as the "surgical package." She participated in the national roll out of the package and continues to be a resource to facilities regarding the use of this computerized documentation tool in surgical areas.

Ms. George endlessly strives for excellence in her field. She has not only been recognized in the nursing field for her compassion and amazing work, but by the Military Order of the Purple Heart for her contributions at the Martinsburg VA Medical Center.

The Martinsburg VA Medical Center mission is to honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. Located in West Virginia, the medical center offers a comprehensive range of services, including internal medicine, ambulatory surgery, audiology and speech pathology, dental, nursing home, nutrition, podiatry, prosthetics, women's health, mental health, and rehabilitation medicine. With a service area of nearly 130,000 Veterans in West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, the medical center operates four VA-staffed Outpatient Clinics in Cumberland, Hagerstown, Fort Detrick, Md., and Stephens City, Va. and three contract clinics in Franklin and Petersburg, W.Va. and Harrisonburg, Va.