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Georgia Southern professor honored with Georgia Medical Society Health Care Hero Award

JANUARY 10, 2019

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Georgia Southern University Professor of Health Sciences Janet Buelow, Ph.D., was recently honored with the Health Care Hero Award in the Community Outreach category at Georgia Medical Society's 18th annual Health Care Heroes Awards banquet. The event recognized individuals for their involvement in making health care better in the community.

Buelow was awarded for her leadership and planning efforts for the Department of Defense's 2018 Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) exercise, Operation Empower Health-Greater Savannah. A vast operation that included coordination with the City of Savannah, Garden City, Savannah State University and the military, the public-private initiative served more than 9,000 individuals with 26,000-plus free primary care services, including dental and vision procedures, and veterinary services for almost 3,000 animals. The event exceeded \$4.5 million in cost.

"I'm humbled to receive this award, especially when I consider that I was nominated by a colleague," said Buelow. "This award reinforces to me that the Waters College of Health Professions values not only serving our community, but also providing opportunities for our students to work and learn together. We worked long hours together, planning and managing this event and I consider the award a testament to my wonderful working colleagues. I'm grateful to all."

In 2016, Buelow and Sister Mary-Anne Plaskon, a clinical social worker for St. Joseph's/Candler health system, submitted the proposal to host Operation Empower Health in Savannah. Following a rigorous selection process, Savannah was chosen as the flagship site. Buelow assisted with logistics and served as a member of the planning team for the development of IRT undergraduate and graduate courses. During the nine-day event, Georgia Southern students involved in the courses earned credit and valuable experience assisting patients with registration and providing community referrals for follow-up health care.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving nearly 26,500 students through nine colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.

Georgia Southern public health professor wins prestigious national award

JANUARY 10, 2019

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Julie Reagan, Ph.D., J.D., M.P.H., assistant professor in the Department of Health Policy and Community Health at Georgia Southern University, was recently honored with the prestigious Jennifer Robbins Award for Practice of Public Health Law at the American Public Health Association national meeting.

"Receiving this award is a tremendous honor," said Reagan. "It is extraordinary to receive an accolade from an organization that I admire so much. Through mentoring and guidance from fellow colleagues at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, I feel I have grown immensely as a teacher and scholar. This award, however, not only recognizes my academic accomplishments but also takes into consideration my previous career as a public health attorney. I am humbled and very grateful."

The Jennifer Robbins award recognizes an individual for outstanding dedication and leadership in the field of public health law. The individual's major contributions should have the potential for significant and long-term impact on the field.

The award is named in honor of Jennifer Robbins (1940-1987), a public health lawyer who practiced in the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare and subsequently served as an assistant attorney general in Maryland and principal counsel for the state's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

For the majority of her career, Reagan has worked as a public health law practitioner. Following the completion of her Ph.D., she founded a consulting and research firm devoted exclusively to legal issues related to healthcare-associated infections (HAIs). Working tirelessly to promote mandatory reporting of HAIs she has served as an expert panel contributor on a national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Association of State and Territorial Health Officials advisory committee whose purpose was to advise other states about enacting HAI-related reporting laws.

Reagan has consistently contributed to the research literature in her role as a legal expert in the area of HAI-related laws. Her research contributions have shown that state laws requiring mandatory reporting of HAIs have had the result of decreasing infection rates.

An attorney with over 20 years of experience in Texas and New Mexico state government, Reagan transitioned to academia in 2014. Currently, she is conducting research about state efforts for reducing and preventing drug diversion in healthcare settings. This research involves mapping existing state laws; the legal data will then be used as a source for public health law impact studies.

The mission of Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University is to improve health, eliminate health disparities and health inequities of rural communities and underserved populations globally through excellence in teaching, public health workforce development, research, scholarship, professional service and community engagement.

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Georgia Southern professor awarded the 2019 AANP State Award for Excellence

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Georgia Southern University Assistant Professor Kelly Bouthillet, DNP, has been named the recipient of the 2019 American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) State Award for Excellence from South Carolina. The award is given annually by AANP to recognize outstanding achievement by nurse practitioners and nurse practitioner advocates in each state.

"Receiving this award is quite an honor, as many of the recipients have contributed to the profession in transformative ways," said Bouthillet. "I am extremely honored to be recognized for the work that I have done and to be a part of such an amazing group of individuals. I am humbled by the recognition."

Bouthillet was nominated for the award by fellow AANP nurse practitioners for bringing nurse practitioners from Beaufort, Jasper and Hampton counties together through social media and face-to-face contact.

"We have grown into a group that shares concerns, issues and practice-related information in order to provide health services to our communities," stated Bouthillet. "Additionally, I have been working interprofessionally with the Emergency Medical Services on Hilton Head Island to improve the care of our older patients through education targeted to their care setting and the geriatric population."

Bouthillet will be recognized during the AANP National Conference in June, which will be held in Indianapolis. The event is by invitation only and attendees will include award winners, the state representative, regional directors and AANP board of directors.

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