

2008 HCEA Award Winners

Congratulations to these outstanding HCEA members for winning the 2008 awards!

Jean W. Raines Distinguished Service Award

The Jean Raines Distinguished Service Award is awarded to a member of HCEA who has demonstrated outstanding service and support of the organization.

Winner: Linda Kocent

Linda has served HCEA in several capacities, most recently as President and Past-president of the Association. Her organizational and leadership skills have mobilized members and created positive changes for HCEA through the years. Linda's dedication to the organization can be seen in everything from our By-laws to our annual conferences, for which she works tirelessly to help guarantee financial success by serving as the conference vendor liaison.

Linda is the Patient and Family Education Coordinator at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. As part of her role, Linda manages the Family Learning Center in the Connelly Center - a learning skills lab designed to prepare families to master complex skills prior to discharge.

Outstanding Research Award

This award honors someone who advances the practice of healthcare education and has major implications for healthcare educators.

Winner: Melanie Turner

Melanie Turner is a clinician and a leading researcher in the field of Ambulatory Cardiology at the University of Virginia Health System. She has done numerous studies looking at aspects of patient education. Her research is very grounded in real life care and treatment of patients.

Her most recent study looks at the differences between identification of learning needs by female patients and their health care providers. She also incorporated the use of the "Newest Vital Sign" tool to see the impact of health literacy on the study. She and her colleagues are currently working to translate this research into practice.

Prior to this Melanie did a study on the impact of taking blood pressure after sitting for five minutes with one's feet on the ground. The results of the study gained national acclaim.

Excellence in Practice Award - Staff Development

This award recognizes a member of HCEA who has initiated innovation and effective practices, intervention or programs in staff development.

Winner: Amy Vega

Amy has been a faithful member of the HCEA conference planning committee for several years. Her expertise in conference planning and knowledge of nationally known staff development speakers has been very valuable. Amy's commitment has helped HCEA conferences improve and grow each year.

This past year, Amy has also been instrumental in bringing the Academy of Health Care Education Professionals to HCEA. AHCEP speaks for what Amy promotes: Excellence in health care education by supporting ongoing organizational development and leadership. This new program benefits both healthcare education staff who apply for Fellowship and also benefits HCEA by creating new opportunities for our members.

Amy works for the North Carolina Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program where she plans and coordinates educational events for healthcare professionals.

Excellence in Practice Award - Patient/Community Education

This award recognizes a member of HCEA who has initiated innovative and effective practices, or programs in patient/community education.

Winner: Penny Overgaard

While she was the Manager of the Trach and Airway Program at Phoenix Children's Hospital, Penny noticed that there was inadequate documentation of teaching for families whose children had been living with a trach for a long time. She surveyed staff to learn more about this. Staff reported that parents of these children were very knowledgeable and it was a struggle to provide them with fresh information. She also learned that parents resisted changes to the care they had been giving for many years.

Penny worked with parents to identify new learning opportunities. She created a program of quarterly timely topics to be presented. Each topic included brief verbal and written information, and a prize to help families remember the lesson. When they did a program on MRSA, she provided a small bottle of hand sanitizer for the family to keep. She created a single interval teaching record to blend well with this type of programming.

This program increased the amount of education that was offered and provided to these families. It improved Picker scores in both inpatient and outpatient areas. Staff satisfaction around this area of Patient Family Education improved. Staff now approach Penny with ideas for future programming.

Education of the family of the stable, chronically ill patient is something that challenges all educators. Penny addressed it in a creative way and got positive outcomes for patients, staff, and the hospital at large.