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BETH ISRAEL-KINGS HIGHWAY DIVISION HONORS EMPLOYEES FOR CARE AND COMPASSION

November 17, 2008 -- Two longstanding employees at Beth Israel Medical Center-Kings Highway Division (KHD) have been cited for their care, compassion and dedication to patient care, announced Chaplain Elaine Chan, who introduced the honorees at a celebration held on October 27.

Rosa Raffaele, Patient Care Assistant (PCA) in Pre-Surgical Testing, is the recipient of the 2008 Wholeness of Life Award from the HealthCare Chaplaincy, a citywide provider of pastoral care. Howard Holuboff, MSW, is the Kings Highway Division's winner of the Care and Compassion Award, presented by Beth Israel's Pastoral Care Department.

"We recognize the tremendous service of two very dedicated staff members at the Kings Highway Division. Rosa Raffaele and Howard Holuboff exemplify the care and compassion that the staff of the Kings Highway Division provides our patients," said Beth Israel President and CEO David J. Shulkin, MD.

Ms. Raffaele has worked at the Kings Highway Division (KHD) for almost two decades, starting as a nurse's aide in 1986 and working her way up to Patient Care Assistant in Pre-Surgical Testing. Her responsibilities include drawing blood, doing EKGs, and "talking a lot to doctors, nurses and patients." The Wholeness of Life Award, presented on Sunday, November 9, at a gala celebration recognizes the dedication of individuals who embody the Chaplaincy's philosophy of caring for the whole person in spirit, mind and body.

"Rosa is hardworking and always does her job well and with a smile," said anesthesiologist Harinath Pillalamarri, MD. Another physician, Ralph Kiriat, MD, a urologist, cited Ms. Raffaele's "marked degree of compassion, understanding and skilled application of knowledge," particularly when faced with difficult challenges. Nurses Madelyn Corbisiero, RN and Mary Dory, RN, praised the PCA's "kind, empathetic approach to patients ... making them comfortable and at ease."

"Her caring does not stop after finishing her workday at Beth Israel," said Rhona Hetsrony, KHD Vice President for Administration. "She also is deeply involved in community activities and serves as president of her block association, the Cummings Brothers Post 1436 American Legion, and the Kings County American Legion Auxiliary. She also volunteers at a VA hospital."

The energetic community activist, who has political aspirations, makes community service a part of her everyday life. "I do this because I'd like to put my best efforts towards raising the quality of life in the Flatbush community," she said. Originally from Virginia, Ms. Raffaele has called Brooklyn home after marrying Frederic Raffaele, her husband of 23 years. They have three grown children and are proud grandparents to Jshiah.

Mr. Holuboff has been a social worker for 30 years and has worked at Beth Israel for 21 of those years. Born and raised in East New York, he has stayed close to his roots for

most of his life. His strong interest in people originally led him to the study of psychology at Brooklyn College, where he earned a bachelor's degree. But after serving as a volunteer at a local hospital, he found his calling in social work.

“Howard is a dedicated and highly professional cornerstone of the Social Work Department at the Kings Highway Division,” said Director Ellen Mullally, RN, MHA. “He is recognized by his peers, colleagues and patients as a knowledgeable, thoughtful and kind facilitator of the increasingly complex healthcare system, deftly navigating to secure post acute benefits and ease transition from acute care for patients and their caregivers.”

Overwhelmed by accolades from the Beth Israel community, the reserve and modest honoree simply said of his award, “I am humbled and honored.” His wife and one of two children attended the awards presentation.

Among Mr. Holuboff's many special talents is the ability to maintain an even keel through “stormy” conditions, and demanding and high-stress work environment, with increasing volume and high occupancy rates and constant attention to length of inpatient stay.

According to co-workers, he is a creative discharge planner, and functions as a complex case manager, never hesitating to get on the phone with insurance companies, physicians, family members, and even manages to soothe irate “customers.”

“Our patients are often quite elderly, and he is capable of communicating effectively with them and often alleviates their concerns within minutes of their first interaction,” said Ms. Mullally.

“We are very proud of Rosa Raffaele and Howard Holuboff – they are most deserving of their respective awards,” said Chaplain Chan. “They are both role models for us all.”