Allegheny Health Network Caregivers Honored as 2017 Health Care Heroes

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PITTSBURGH, PA (PRWEB) September 18, 2017 -- Allegheny Health Network’s (AHN) string of standout showings at the Pittsburgh Business Times’ Health Care Heroes awards continues. For the fifth consecutive year, AHN earned more honors than any health care provider in the region at the annual event.

The 2017 AHN honorees recognized during a dinner Sept. 14 at the Omni William Penn Hotel in downtown Pittsburgh included:

- George J. Magovern Jr., MD, received the Career Achievement Award. Dr. Magovern, System Chairman, AHN Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, has built on the foundation established at Allegheny General Hospital (AGH) by his late father, legendary cardiac surgeon George J. Magovern Sr. Throughout a career spanning more than three decades, Dr. Magovern has been a leader in clinical care, research, and education in cardiothoracic surgery regionally and nationally. Under his guidance, AGH has developed flourishing clinical programs in heart transplantation and left ventricular assist device therapy.

- Sarah Homitsky, MD, was honored in the Health Care Provider – Physician category for her work implementing innovative and effective treatments at AHN’s West Penn Hospital for pregnancy-related depression. Dr. Homitsky is medical director of the women’s perinatal psychiatry program at West Penn. To serve women with severe forms of postpartum depression, AHN opened an Intensive Outpatient Program in January 2017 at West Penn Hospital, under Dr. Homitsky’s leadership.

- Raymond Benza, MD, and Mark Caine, MD, were recognized in the Health Care Provider – Physician category for overseeing the care of Joy Lauver, a pregnant woman with pulmonary hypertension—a combination that meant extremely long odds for both Joy and her unborn baby to survive childbirth. Dr. Benza, Medical Director of Pulmonary Hypertension at AGH, worked with his team to map out the best course of care for Joy while Dr. Caine, Chief of Maternal Health Programs for AHN, and his colleagues at West Penn drew up the plan for how best to handle the high-risk pregnancy and, hopefully, ensure the healthy delivery of a baby boy who would arrive 7 weeks prematurely. On March 17, six weeks after Joy was admitted to West Penn and four weeks after giving birth, she and her healthy baby boy, Wyatt, were able to go home. There are believed to be less than 150 known cases worldwide of mothers with pulmonary hypertension giving birth and then both the mother and child surviving after the first 72 hours.

- Deborah McDonald, MSN, RN, earned an award in the Health Care Provider – Non-Physician category for launching AHN’s highly successful Perinatal Hope program. Established in response to the dramatic increase in the number of mothers using opioids during pregnancy, it is the region’s first all-inclusive model for maternal addiction that combines obstetrical care, drug and alcohol therapy, and medication-assisted treatment into one clinic visit. McDonald is Director, Women’s Health Programs at AHN.

“Every day, we see firsthand the amazing work performed by our caregivers, and we are proud to have their efforts and accomplishments recognized by the Business Times,” said Cynthia Hundorfean, AHN President and CEO. “Each of these special honorees, together with the thousands of exceptional healthcare professionals who help us fulfill our mission, truly are among the many heroes who make our communities healthier and better places to live.”
Among the other winners were Deborah Rice-Johnson, President, Highmark Health Plan, for Health Care Executive; Highmark Inc.’s People Able to Lend Support (PALS) program in the Community Outreach category; and Quartet, a company Highmark Inc. has partnered with to connect with patients in need of behavioral health care, for Health Care Innovation.

About the Allegheny Health Network:
Allegheny Health Network (AHN.org), a Highmark Health company, is an integrated healthcare delivery system serving the greater Western Pennsylvania region. The Network is composed of eight hospitals, including Allegheny General Hospital, its flagship academic medical center in Pittsburgh, Allegheny Valley Hospital in Natrona Heights, Canonsburg Hospital in Canonsburg, Forbes Hospital in Monroeville, Jefferson Hospital in Jefferson Hills, Saint Vincent Hospital in Erie, West Penn Hospital in Pittsburgh and Westfield Memorial Hospital in Westfield, NY. The Network provides patients with access to a complete spectrum of advanced medical services, including nationally recognized programs for primary and emergency care, cardiovascular disease, cancer care, orthopedic surgery, neurology and neurosurgery, women’s health, diabetes and more. It also is home to a comprehensive research institute; Health + Wellness Pavilions; an employed physician organization, home and community based health services and a group purchasing organization. The Network employs approximately 17,000 people, has more than 2,800 physicians on its medical staff and serves as a clinical campus for Drexel University College of Medicine, Temple University School of Medicine, and the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine.

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