



ITNS

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Sharon Blaschka Wins the 2010 Transplant Nurses Day Essay Contest

We are delighted to announce the winner of the 2010 Transplant Nurses Day Essay Contest, "What a Difference My Transplant Nurse Makes!" Congratulations to Sharon Blaschka, RN, MSN, NP-C, Nurse Practitioner and Research Coordinator at UCSF (University of California, San Francisco) in San Francisco, California, USA. The winning essay was submitted by Jeanette Forbes McLaughlin of Fremont, California. Sharon was also nominated by Kenneth Newbury of Hanford, California.

The voting process was difficult as the essays were all poignant and meaningful. We acknowledge and congratulate all of the nurses who were nominated with beautiful personal essays.

The winning essay is pictured on the right. As the winner, Sharon will receive a \$100 cash prize and \$100 to apply toward ITNS events or store merchandise.

Again, congratulations to Sharon, her patient Jeanette, and to all of the transplant nurses. Thanks again to the patients for their contributions and participation in celebrating Transplant Nurses Day 2010! •

March 30, 2010
Jeanette Forbes McLaughlin

"WHAT A DIFFERENCE MY TRANSPLANT NURSE MAKES" Sharon Blaschka, UCSF

It is my honor to nominate Sharon Blaschka for the International Transplant Nurses Society award.

I received a liver transplant at UCSF on July 28, 2007. While awaiting a donor, Sharon called me at home one evening to discuss my interest in participating in the A-Wish Study. Her explanation of the value, benefits and service convinced me to enlist in the study. I am very grateful that I did. I decided that if I received a liver transplant, then I would give back to the medical society in the hopes that someone else might benefit. I find that this study and the medical professionals associated with it very interesting and it gives me and my family much confidence. I have lauded the Study to anyone who will listen and encourage others to donate to the Liver Transplant Research.

Sharon has impacted my life and has been invaluable to me and my family. She is readily available to answer, in layman terms, my questions and concerns. She has called me many evenings and weekends on her own time; she even attended my son's funeral and gave me and my family much needed compassion and support during this traumatic time. I have learned so much about the medicines I take and the importance of a healthier lifestyle. Sharon always keeps me focused. She consistently goes above and beyond her call of duty. This is part of what makes her unique.

My visits to UCSF have never been just an obligation and necessity but something that I look forward to due to the upbeat and positive atmosphere at the center which is created by Sharon and her team.

Sharon is the ultimate professional. She is compassionate, friendly, trustworthy, consistent and inspirational. She gives straight talk as to what I need to do, yet always with encouragement and hope. She is an invaluable asset to the Liver Transplant Team.

I believe that Sharon is a stellar Ambassador for the International Transplant Nurses Society and worthy of the honor for which she is hereby nominated.

Thank you for allowing me to share with you the attributes of this wonderful nurse.

Respectfully yours,

Jeanette Forbes McLaughlin

