

Nov. 14, 2012

NMHS Receives 2012 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

North Mississippi Health Services was named today as one of four U.S. organizations to receive the 2012 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the nation's highest Presidential honor for performance excellence through innovation, improvement and visionary leadership.

In addition to NMHS in the health care category, Acting U.S. Commerce Secretary Rebecca Blank named three other recipients. They are Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control, Grand Prairie, Texas (manufacturing); MESA Products, Inc., Tulsa, Okla. (small business); and City of Irving, Irvin, Texas (nonprofit).

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the award and the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) that supports it. North Mississippi Medical Center, NMHS' flagship hospital, won the Baldrige Award in 2006. NMMC and NMHS hold the distinction of being the only Baldrige recipients in Mississippi. NMMC shared 2006 honors with Mesa, the 2012 small business recipient.

"The four organizations recognized today with the 2012 Baldrige Award are leaders in the truest sense of the word and role models that others in the health care, nonprofit and business sectors worldwide will strive to emulate," said Acting Secretary Blank. "They have set the bar high for innovative practices, dynamic management, financial performance, outstanding employee and customer satisfaction, and most of all, for their unwavering commitment to excellence and proven results."

"We are honored to receive the Baldrige Award as it recognizes 'role model' performance and demonstrates a long-term commitment to focusing on the right things," said John Heer, NMHS president and chief executive officer.

After submitting its application in May, NMHS hosted a site visit by a team of Baldrige examiners in early October. The team visited multiple locations throughout the health care system and interviewed approximately 600 people. They made stops throughout north Mississippi in Tupelo, Pontotoc, Baldwyn, Iuka, Columbus, Eupora, West Point and Hamilton, Ala.

"We had a fantastic site visit," said Karen Koch, NMHS administrator of organizational performance. "The Baldrige examiners were able to understand how fully engaged and caring that our staff and physicians are with our patients and their family members."

To date, more than 1,500 U.S. organizations have applied for the Baldrige Award and there are Baldrige-based award programs in nearly all 50 states. Internationally, the program has served as a model for nearly 100 quality programs. A December 2011 study by Albert N. Link and John T. Scott measuring the Baldrige Program's value to U.S. organizations conservatively estimated a benefit-to-cost ratio of 820 to 1, while a 2011 report by Thomson Reuters found that health care organizations that have won or been in the final review process for a Baldrige Award outperform other hospitals in all but one metric the company uses to determine its "100 Top Hospitals" in the nation (and were six times more likely to be among the top 100).

Bobby Martin of Ripley, past chairman of the NMHS Board of Directors, said, “In addition to being a great honor, this is a great learning opportunity for NMHS. The Baldrige process points out where we are strong and helps identify areas where we can improve our health care organization.”

The 2012 Baldrige Award recipients were selected from a field of 39 applicants. All of the applicants were evaluated rigorously by an independent board of examiners in seven areas defined by the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence: leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis and knowledge management; workforce focus; operations focus; and results. The evaluation process for each of the recipients included about 1,000 hours of review and an on-site visit by a team of examiners to clarify questions and verify information in the applications.

The 2012 Baldrige Award recipients are expected to be presented with their awards at an April 2013 ceremony in Baltimore, Md.

Baldrige Background Information:

The BPEP is managed by the U.S. Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in cooperation with the private sector. It also is a partner in the Baldrige Enterprise, which includes the private-sector Baldrige Foundation, the Alliance for Performance Excellence—a body made up of the 33-plus state, local, regional and sector-specific Baldrige-based programs serving nearly all 50 states—and ASQ, an international organization promoting quality. The program raises awareness about the importance of performance excellence in driving the U.S. and global economy; provides organizational assessment tools and criteria; educates leaders in businesses, schools, health care organizations, and government and nonprofit organizations about the practices of national role models; and of course, recognizes them with the Baldrige Award in six categories: manufacturing, service, small business, health care, education and nonprofit.

Thousands of organizations worldwide use the Baldrige Criteria to guide their operations, improve performance and get sustainable results. This proven improvement and innovation framework offers organizations an integrated approach to key management areas. The criteria are regularly updated to reflect the leading edge of validated management practice.

The Baldrige Award is not given for specific products or services. Since 1988, 93 organizations have received the award.

For more information, including profiles of the 2012 Baldrige Award recipients, go to <http://www.nist.gov/baldrige>.

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