ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL CHAPLAINS HONORS LEADER IN THE FIELD OF CONTEMPORARY CHAPLAINCY CARE

Rev. Bonnie J. Meyer DMin BCC Receives the Anton Boisen Professional Service Award

Anaheim, CA – The Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) was honored to present its Anton Boisen Professional Service Award this year to the Reverend Bonnie J. Meyer DMin BCC. The award was presented on June 21 during the 2014 APC Annual Conference in Anaheim, CA. Each year, APC recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the field of chaplaincy care through its Annual Leadership Awards.

The Anton Boisen Professional Service Award is named in honor of a pioneer in chaplaincy and clinical pastoral education. The award is given to a board certified chaplain of APC who demonstrates a commitment to excellence in professional chaplaincy and has offered a unique contribution to contemporary chaplaincy care.

This year, we honored the Reverend Bonnie J. Meyer DMin BCC, manager of Pastoral Care and Bereavement at Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids, MI. A leader and innovator, she has advanced excellence in chaplaincy throughout her career.

Chaplain Meyer developed a unique numerical scale to assess the risk of spiritual suffering in hospice patients and introduced it to staff at Hospice of the Bluegrass, Lexington, KY in 2008. Over time, the scale was tested and refined. From the start, it has been part of chaplains’ documentation in the patient medical record. It assists chaplains in determining pastoral needs and frequency of visits, and allows them to provide a spiritual assessment that is quickly and easily understood by interdisciplinary team members.

Chaplain Meyer’s unique assessment tool quickly attracted the attention of various hospice and palliative care organizations, and she began providing workshops and training on the use of the scale. Recently, the EPIC health care software company obtained permission to offer what is now titled the “Meyer Risk of Spiritual Suffering Scale” to its clients. The tool is also available on the member resources webpage of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

In 2013-2014, she served on the APC Standards of Practice Hospice and Palliative Care Task Force and on the Hospice Task Force in 2013. In addition, she was the section leader, Spiritual Caregiver Section of the National Council of Hospice and Palliative Professionals (a function of NHPCO) from 2011-2013. In 2006-2009, she was a board member of Faith in Action.

Chaplain Meyer’s dedicated service is perhaps best known by colleagues on the local and individual level. “She single-handedly encouraged and enabled six of our chaplains to become BCCI board certified in the last three years. She made space, physically and with her time, to coach and give feedback throughout the various steps of certification - going well above and beyond the call of duty,” recalls a colleague. “She avidly supports continuing education for chaplains... and she encouraged our own publication and research.”
With a doctor of ministry from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, IL, Meyer was board certified by BCCI in 2000. Endorsed by the Unitarian Universalist Association, she is an affiliated minister of St. John’s Unitarian Universalist Church, Cincinnati, OH.

About The Association of Professional Chaplains

APC is a multifaith nonprofit organization of chaplaincy care providers endorsed by faith groups to serve persons in need, respecting their individual cultures, identities and beliefs, in diverse settings throughout the world. The association seeks to promote quality chaplaincy care through advocacy, education, professional standards and service to its members. It also certifies chaplains according to established national standards through its affiliate, the Board of Chaplaincy Certification Inc. APC has more than 4,000 members, including professional chaplains serving persons in spiritual need in diverse specialized ministry settings throughout the world, such as hospitals, long-term care, hospice, correctional institutions, the military and mental health. APC members represent over 150 faith groups.

For additional information, visit www.professionalchaplains.org.

Caption: The Association of Professional Chaplains 2014 Anton Boisen Professional Service Award was presented to Rev. Bonnie J. Meyer DMin BCC (right) by APC President Rev. Valerie R. Storms MDiv BCC.