



VNSW Foundation, Inc.

A not-for-profit organization supporting the programs and services of VNS Westchester

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For Immediate Release

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VNSW Foundation Gala Raises Over \$110,000 for High Quality Home Healthcare Services

Community Contributions Enable Sepsis Screening, Education, Early Intervention Tool and Next-Generation Remote Patient Monitoring Platform

Gala Honored Three Leaders in Eldercare

White Plains, NY (May 29, 2019)...Over two hundred friends, colleagues and donors turned out to support the VNSW Foundation, Inc. on May 15 at the Willow Ridge Country Club in Harrison, where individuals and organizations that help care for and improve the quality of life for seniors in Westchester and the Hudson Valley were honored. The gala, emceed by Ken Buffa, Westchester reporter for NBC 4 New York, raised over \$110,000 in critical funds which support the expansion of the organization's services:

Dr. Amy Ansehl, Board Chair, VNSW Foundation, Inc., announced the launch of a new **"Connected Care" remote patient monitoring platform**, which offers real-time virtual visits, health alerts, text and voice communications, and interactive educational tools to further engage patients in their own care, a critical factor in improving patient satisfaction and outcomes. Also launched this month is a **new Sepsis Screening, Education and Early Intervention tool**, which allows clinical teams to screen all patients at home for sepsis, which often afflicts older adults.

The **opening of VNSW's new branch office in Dutchess County** was also announced by **Martin Considine**, Board Chair of VNSW's parent organization, Westchester Visiting Nurse Services Group, Inc. The new branch is in response to the high demand for services in that county. He also announced plans to install a **new, state-of-the-art Electronic Health Records System** to increase the organization's capacity to track and analyze patient data and share outcomes with healthcare partners.

Honoring Leaders in Senior Care

Ageing in America, Inc. and its President and CEO, **William T. Smith**; **Matthew G. Anderson**, President and CEO of The Osborn; and **Gera Looser, RN, Westchester Care at Home**, were honored. In his welcoming remarks, Timothy P. Leddy, President and CEO, Westchester Visiting Nurse Services Group, noted that the evening's honorees each played a critical role in advancing VNSW's mission and supporting Westchester's aging population.

“Most people want to be cared for and age in their own homes,” said Leddy. “Our honorees help make that happen as well as ensure that we provide high quality services to help the seniors in our care live as comfortably and independently as possible. We thank them for their leadership, and for their extraordinary service.”

Dr. Smith accepted the Community Leadership Award on behalf of his organization, which provides funding for initiatives that help seniors thrive, including VNSW’s new sepsis screening tool. Dr. Smith has dedicated his career to the field of gerontology.

Anderson received the Distinguished Service Award for his work and leadership at The Osborn, a continuum of care community for seniors, offering independent living, assisted living, dementia care through the award-winning H.O.P.E. Center, short-term and outpatient rehabilitation, long-term skilled nursing care, and home care.

The Outstanding Achievement in Nursing Award was presented to Looser, whose extraordinary nursing career spans the past 50 years. She spent the last 15 years at VNSW’s affiliate, Westchester Care at Home, where she supervised, trained, and mentored over 200 Home Health Aides and worked closely with family caregivers to help ease their burden.

Personal Stories Highlight VNSW Impact

During the evening, two individuals spoke about how the agency had helped them and their families.

Pat Keegan, District Director for Rep. Nita Lowey, spoke of the professionalism and compassion exhibited by the agency’s staff nurses when caring for her mother. “When we needed someone to care for my 95-year-old mother, VNSW conducted a thorough evaluation of her needs,” said Keegan, a White Plains resident. “We ended up with a wonderful nurse, who not only cared for my mother, but stayed in frequent communication with me and my mother’s doctors. I always appreciated how I could reach my mom and her care team right away.”

Mary Jo Jacobs, Senior Vice President at USI Insurance Services, described how she and her seven siblings all helped to care for her mother, who was diagnosed with dementia, until it became more than they could manage. “VNSW asked such thorough questions and took such care to understand what my mom needed,” said Jacobs, of New Rochelle. “I’m deeply grateful for the care she received. And tonight, I’m in a room full of nurses! I feel so safe and protected. Thank you for what you do.”

The event was emceed by Westchester resident, **Ken Buffa**, **Westchester reporter at NBC 4 New York**, and co-chaired by **Deborah Gogliettino** and **Karen Herrero**, both Westchester Visiting Nurse Service Group, Inc. board members.

Proceeds from the Spring Benefit Gala directly support VNSW’s efforts to provide expanded programs and charitable care for its home healthcare patients in Westchester, the Bronx, Dutchess, Putnam and Rockland counties. Funds also support the wide range of free community health education programs and services that the agency provides to seniors and other populations in the five-county region it serves.

About VNSW Foundation and VNS Westchester

The VNSW Foundation, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, was recently established to support the programs and services of VNS Westchester through charitable outreach activities in the communities served by the agency. Founded in 1901, VNSW is the largest and only independent not-for-profit, Medicare-certified home healthcare agency in Westchester, also serving residents of the Bronx, Dutchess, Putnam and Rockland counties. The agency provides skilled nursing with case management, rehabilitative therapies, medical social work and home health aide services to people of all ages, and offers a wide range of specialty care programs, and free community health education for the public and healthcare professionals. VNS Westchester's services consistently meet the Community Health Accreditation Program (CHAP) National Standards of Excellence for Homecare, and it is recognized for having one of the lowest preventable hospital readmission rates in the region. The agency works closely with other healthcare providers, with its RN Home Health Care Liaisons on-site at over 75 healthcare facilities to aid with discharge planning and safe patient transitions to the home care setting. The agency is based in White Plains, with a branch office in Hopewell Junction in Dutchess County. For more information, call 914-682-1480 or visit www.vns.org. Find VNSW on Facebook at www.facebook.com/VNSWestchester.