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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SNJPC NAMES 2009 PACERA AWARD RECIPIENT
Atlantic City Nurse Honored for Years of Service**

PENNSAUKEN, NJ—With admiration for a lifetime of service to the pregnant women and growing families of South Jersey, the Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative (SNJPC) named maternal-child health (MCH) nurse Marya Small of Woodbine its 2008 recipient of the Joseph A. Pacera Award for Service to Maternal and Child Health.

The Joseph A. Pacera Award was presented by SNJPC at its April 22, 2009 Annual Meeting. It historically honors an individual or organization making a difference for South Jersey families in the field of maternal and child health care. The Pacera Award remembers Joseph A. Pacera, an SNJPC Board member, community advocate, and healthcare leader who was unflagging, creative, and infinitely devoted in his contributions to maternal-child health care.

“Like Joe Pacera, Marya Small has not sought praise, but her accomplishments continue to inspire those around her to strive beyond their normal routines,” said SNJPC Executive Director Judy Donlen.

Small, a long-time community advocate, made a recent career shift from hospital nursing to providing residential care for clients of the non-profit Atlantic City Rescue Mission.

Atlantic City Medical Center,
City and Mainland Divisions

Cape Regional Medical Center

Cooper Health System

Deborah Heart and Lung Center

Kennedy Health Systems,
Washington Township Campus

Lourdes Medical Center
of Burlington County

Our Lady of Lourdes
Medical Center

Shore Memorial Hospital

South Jersey Healthcare-
Elmer Hospital

South Jersey Healthcare-
Regional Medical Center

The Memorial Hospital
of Salem County

Underwood-Memorial Hospital

Virtua Memorial Hospital
Burlington County

Virtua West Jersey Hospital
Voorhees

(continued)

Marya herself is no stranger to caring for special needs persons. She is a mother to three children, two of whom are autistic and one of whom also has Down Syndrome and has survived leukemia. In addition to being fully involved in their schooling and care plans, she serves on the advisory committees at each of the three schools her children attend.

Marya is also the outreach coordinator for 21 Down of South Jersey, a support group for families of Down Syndrome children. In this position, she serves as an ambassador to families whose children have been newly diagnosed with Down Syndrome, and inspires them to reflect on the beauty and value of their perspective on life.

Her embrace of this outlook resulted in a lecture entitled “Please Don’t Apologize For My Gift,” which she delivers regularly to healthcare workers. She has petitioned national organizations to “find balance” with reflection and thought in its statements and recommendations regarding prenatal screening for Down Syndrome.

The Pacera Award also includes a \$1,000 donation by SNJPC to the recipient’s favorite charity. Marya has opted to divide that amount among the FACES Autism Support Network of Ventnor, NJ and the AtlantiCare Foundation of Egg Harbor Township, NJ, with each organization receiving \$500.

“Marya Small embodies everything the Pacera Award is meant to honor,” said Donlen, “and we at the Cooperative are privileged to recognize her accomplishments.”

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The Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative (SNJPC) is the state-licensed, non-profit, maternal-child health consortium serving the seven southernmost counties of New Jersey. SNJPC programs and services are dedicated to improving health outcomes for mothers and babies in South Jersey. For more information about the Cooperative or its services, call 856-665-6000 or visit snjpc.org.

The Joseph A. Pacera Award for Service to Maternal and Child Health in South Jersey celebrates those who make South Jersey healthier for pregnant women and their children. For 13 years, SNJPC has honored ordinary people (or agencies) whose extraordinary work helps growing families lead healthier lives. The Pacera Award recognizes those doing such work quietly and without expectation. It includes a \$1,000 contribution by SNJPC to a charity of the recipient’s choice.



PHOTO CAPTION: Nurse Marya Small (left) of Woodbine is presented with the 2009 Joseph A. Pacera Award for Service to Maternal and Child Health by SNJPC Board Secretary Lynn Gallagher-Ford. Small was honored for her selflessness, compassion, and commitment to healthy families of all kinds—traits that have defined her professional and volunteer career, most especially in her work with Down Syndrome children.