



## FISHER~NIGHTINGALE HOUSES



The Broxson Award was created to recognize the individual on the Wright-Patterson Medical Center staff who most significantly touched the lives of families residing at the Fisher and Nightingale Houses with compassion and support.

The award is named after Dr. Emmet Broxson, Director of the Pediatrics Specialty Clinic, Wright-Patterson AFB Medical Center from 1988 to 1996 and was established by the founder of the Nightingale House, Capt. Gretchen Lizza.

### 2015 BROXSON AWARD RECIPIENTS

## Broxson Award Honors Four Medical Center Professionals

For the first time in its history, an annual award meant to honor an individual who has significantly touched the lives of patients and families at Wright-Patterson Air Force Bases' Fisher Houses with outstanding compassion and support has gone to four people.

The Emmett Broxson Award is named after Dr. Emmett Broxson, who served as director of the Pediatric Specialty Clinic at the Wright-Patterson Medical Center from 1988 to 1996. The award honoring Broxson is the most prestigious recognition given by the houses in honor of the families served.

Colonel Timothy Ballard, 88th Medical Group Commander, presented the awards to the foursome December 10th at the holiday party for the Fisher Houses.

The quartet of the medical care providers was nominated by Monica Patrie, mother of Army PFC Christopher St. Pierre, a 19-year-old paratrooper who was involved in a training accident July 1 in Germany; he fell 150 to 200 feet without his chute opening. The incident left him with multiple injuries, including a broken back and ribs, fractured right foot and shattered left foot. St. Pierre was treated at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, before being transferred to WPMC for further treatment and physical rehabilitation.

The honorees who treated St. Pierre are:

- » Lieutenant Colonel (Dr.) John Powell, Orthopedic Surgeon;
- » 1st Lieutenant Neal Alexander, Pediatric Nurse, Pediatric Flight;
- » Amber Van Hoose, Clinical Nurse, Cancer Care Center;
- » 1st Lieutenant Leslie Whiting, Clinical Nurse/MIU, Inpatient Operations Squadron

"The Broxson Award recognizes those individuals, selected by the Fisher House guests, who epitomize caring and compassion," Ballard said. "This year is unique in that we honor a team. This group of dedicated health care providers not only provided excellent medical care but considered the whole person when selecting treatment. They are a few of the many medical center staff members providing trusted care anywhere."

Patrie said within minutes of arriving in the private plane carrying her son to the WPMC on July 13, Powell greeted them. He already had St. Pierre's medical records translated to English, reviewed his X-rays, and devised a course of treatment.



Army PFC Christopher St. Pierre was seriously injured when his parachute failed to open. The medical team who cared for him at Wright-Patterson has received the Broxson Award. (Contributed photo)

"From when we arrived at the Wright-Patterson Medical Center we received outstanding quality care," Patrie recalled. "Dr. Powell was very patient answering questions and explaining options for treatment and pain management. He checked on my son every day, even on his days off."

"The care at Wright-Patt was excellent," St. Pierre said. "All of the nurses, anesthesiologists and doctors were compassionate and thorough and went above – making sure I was taken care of."

Powell had to reconstruct St. Pierre's left heel and ankle. The infantryman left WPMC in a wheelchair, but is now walking with only a slight limp and can climb stairs. He is anxious to begin running again, he said. He has another surgery scheduled for February at the WPMC to remove the screws and rods forming the internal brace in his back.

"When I think about where my son was in July to where we are now, I attribute so much of that to the surgery and follow-up care he received while he was at Wright-Patterson," the grateful mother said. "I don't think his recovery would have been the same if he didn't have the level of personalized care that he received there."

### **Excellent Nursing Care**

She is quick to point to the excellent nursing care her son received from Whiting, Alexander and Van Hoose. She praised Whiting, usually St. Pierre's charge nurse, for checking often on him and overseeing his pain management. Sometimes Whiting sat with the patient to distract him from his pain.

Patrie credited Alexander with bringing in a TV from the emergency room, obtaining games from the pediatrics department and calling up St. Pierre's personal Netflix account so he could concentrate on movies and games instead of his pain.

"I think these people are very well deserving of this (the Broxson Award)," Patrie noted. "I am sure they have touched many more lives than just my son's. I am pleased to hear that they are being recognized with this award for their outstanding personalized team approach to patient care."

For receiving the Broxson Award, Alexander said, "This particular award is important to me because it came from a patient's family. I don't intend to put down unit awards, but having someone outside of your workplace recognize you without any duty to do so is special. Further, it acknowledges that we were a team. There wasn't one shining star standing out above the others – care was excellent everywhere and above the expectations of the patient.

"PFC St. Pierre is a guy who jumps with a parachute on his back. They don't make that kind of man in large quantities anymore.... Honestly, the humility that his appreciation for us created made caring for him not only easy but a priority," Alexander continued. "I do love my job because it provides for me the opportunity to pay back, to some degree, those who have done so much more than I for my country."

Powell said, "It is wonderful to know that we could have a positive impact on the life of a kid who was injured as badly as he was injured. He is extremely lucky to have fallen from over 100 feet in his parachute and only sustained the injuries he had. He had extremely painful and difficult problems but seems to have some through on the other side with a great result. That is a testament to the care provided to him but more importantly his attitude and perseverance."

"Winning the Broxson Award means a lot," Van Hoose said. "As a nurse, often we don't hear how we can have a positive impact on our patients and their family members. I enjoyed taking care of (St. Pierre). He was a good patient and was thankful for all the care that he had received at the Wright-Patterson Medical Center."

### **About the Fisher Houses**

The Wright-Patterson Fisher Houses are compassionate care facilities for servicemen and servicewomen, and their families, location on Wright-Patterson AFB within walking distance of the hospital. The Houses provide a comfortable place to stay, serving patients and families from all branches of the military receiving active medical treatment at the medical center. The Houses provide a home-away-from-home for families in need. Twenty-one rooms are available.

"It is so nice to know that there is somewhere within walking distance of the hospital that you can go to sleep at night and have a little bit of time to yourself," Patrie said. "There was always food available in the kitchen, a washer and dryer on site, and I was close enough to return to my son's room quickly when needed. The Fisher House was absolutely a lifesaver."

– Amy Rollins, *Skywriter* Staff