

HEALTHCARE CHAPLAINCY HONORS TWO PIONEERS FOR OUTSTANDING HEALTH CARE LEADERSHIP

Recipients Are Upaya Zen Center Founder, Loma Linda University Professor

CHICAGO, ILL. (March 14, 2017)—HealthCare Chaplaincy Network (HCCN) presented its prestigious Pioneer Award for Outstanding Leadership in Health Care to Roshi Joan Jiko Halifax, Ph.D., founder of the Upaya Zen Center and Institute, Santa Fe, N.M.; and Elizabeth Johnston Taylor, Ph.D., RN, a professor at Loma Linda University School of Nursing, Loma Linda, Calif.

HCCN bestowed the awards during its 4th annual Caring for the Human Spirit Conference in Chicago, attended by professional chaplains, doctors, nurses, social workers, and other health care professionals from around the world. The New York-based global nonprofit organization introduced the Pioneer Award in 2011 as part of the organization’s 50th anniversary celebration.

In announcing this year’s recipients, Rev. Eric J. Hall, HCCN’s president and CEO, said both honorees “have led the way in their respective sectors with valuable insight and commitment. Their monumental efforts to change the status quo have not only helped to transform the health care field, they have helped to improve lives.”

First, on March 13, Hall presented the award to Halifax, just prior to her keynote presentation at the opening of the conference. Halifax is a Buddhist teacher, Zen priest, anthropologist, and pioneer in end-of-life-care who has lectured on death and dying at academic institutions and medical centers worldwide. She also is the director of the Project on Being with Dying, and founder of the Upaya Prison Project that develops programs on meditation for prisoners.

Noting that she has worked in the end-of-life care field since 1970, Halifax said, “I have learned so much from dying people, their families, allied health professionals, and clinicians about the role and importance of compassion in the care of the dying and those who suffer from serious illness. This award is really for those women and men who have generously shared their wisdom and experiences with me.”

Then, on March 14, Hall presented the Pioneer Award to Taylor, who has pursued research exploring the intersection of spirituality, religiosity, health and nursing for the past 25 years. With a clinical background as an oncology nurse, she has written numerous articles, book chapters, and books aimed at helping nurses understand and support patient spiritual health during health-related transitions.

“I am deeply grateful to HCCN for this affirmation, as well as to my family, colleagues, students, research participants, and Providence for their varied, yet vital, support,” Taylor said. “Although it is startling for me to think of myself as a ‘pioneer,’ I am re-inspired by this honor to continue to explore the frontiers of how nurses—the clinicians most frequently with patients—can better provide spiritual care.”

The presentation to Taylor followed a ceremony in which thousands of chaplains from around the world—in person at the conference and via webcast—renewed their commitment to spiritual care. At the ceremony, HCCN led professional chaplains in a communal oath of recommitment to their service, which includes a pledge to “respect the religious and spiritual traditions of my patients, colleagues, as well as my own,” and “practice the art and science of spiritual care in an honorable and ethical manner.”

HCCN’s three-day Caring for the Human Spirit Conference, being held through March 15 at the Sheraton Grand Chicago, has drawn more than 300 in-person attendees and thousands via webcast in 18 countries. Experts in spiritual care, palliative care, oncology, and patient experience have been discussing the latest research and best practices related to the integration of spiritual care throughout health care disciplines and settings. A growing body of research indicates that spiritual support can help positively impact patient experience, medical outcomes, and costs.

About HealthCare Chaplaincy Network™

HealthCare Chaplaincy Network™, based in New York, is a global health care nonprofit organization that offers spiritual-related information and resources, and professional chaplaincy services in hospitals, other health care settings, and online. Its mission is to advance the integration of spiritual care in health care through clinical practice, research and education in order to increase patient satisfaction and help people faced with illness and grief find comfort and meaning—whoever they are, whatever they believe, wherever they are. For more information, visit www.healthcarechaplaincy.org, call 212-644-1111, and connect with us on [twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Photos available upon request.

Media contact:

Carol Steinberg

csteinberg@healthcarechaplaincy.org

212-644-111, ext.121