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Silver Spring, MD – The American Nurse Credentialing Center recognized Mary B. Edelen, MA, of Vermillion, S. Dakota, as the first recipient of the ANCC Credentialing Advocacy Partner Award. The award was presented at this year's National Magnet Conference™ in Salt Lake City, October 15 – 17.

The Credentialing Advocacy Partner Award is presented to a non-nurse who visibly supports or promotes the value of credentialing (accreditation, certification, Magnet Recognition and Journey to Excellence) in nursing locally, nationally, or internationally. The Credentialing Advocacy Partner Award acknowledges the exceptional service of an individual in promoting the importance of credentialing to the nursing profession, healthcare industry, and patients.

Edelen was honored for eight years of service on the ANCC Board of Directors (2000 to 2008), including service as treasurer (2006-2008). During her tenure on the board she was committed to advancing the profession through her public advocacy of credentialing for nurses and nursing.

To this day, she continues to educate various hospitals on the value of the Magnet Recognition Program or other credentialing services. From her earliest time on the board, Mary eagerly absorbed the advantages of various forms of credentialing and sought to understand what they meant for patient care. Her proselytizing efforts were most apparent during her stay at the Magnet-recognized Avera McKennan Hospital following an accident. There she regularly asked for certified nurses. During the course of her daily activities, Edelen encouraged the nurses she met to seek employment at Magnet facilities.

Edelen was appointed by the Governor as the Director of the South Dakota Historical Society. Prior to the appointment, she served for 18 years in the South Dakota House of Representatives, where she introduced and supported many bills on health care. She currently serves on the City Council in Vermillion, SD, having been elected in 2004. She holds degrees from the University of South Dakota and Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas, and is a member of the South Dakota Nurses Foundation. She is also very active in her community and serves as a board member of many organizations including the local cancer society.

"We are delighted to present Mary with this first award. She has worked as a tireless advocate for the programs and services that enable nurses to grow and prosper in their field," said Debbie Hatmaker, ANCC President. "She has demonstrated the knowledge and wisdom that is essential in advancing the value of credentialing to the nursing profession as well as the general population."

About ANCC

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (ANA), provides individuals and organizations throughout the nursing profession with the resources they need to achieve practice excellence. ANCC's internationally renowned credentialing programs certify nurses in specialty practice areas; recognize healthcare organizations for promoting safe, positive work environments through the Magnet Recognition Program® and the Pathway to Excellence Program™; and accredit providers of continuing nursing education. In addition, ANCC provides leading-edge information and education services and products to support its core credentialing programs.

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