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State hospital association honors “Health Care Heroes”

Birmingham, Ala. – Seven Alabamians were honored today in recognition of their heroic contributions to health care. Named “Health Care Heroes” by the Alabama Hospital Association, the men and women received their awards at a special luncheon held at the Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham.

The honorees include:

- **Connie Chandler, MD**, a member of the medical staff at Dale Medical Center in Ozark
- **Ray Dunn, RN**, a charge nurse in the Trauma/Surgical Intensive Care Unit at DCH Regional Medical Center in Tuscaloosa
- **Linda Evans, RN, CDE**, director of education at Helen Keller Hospital in Sheffield
- **Donald Henry, RN**, a nurse in the emergency department at Baptist Medical Center South in Montgomery
- **Irene Jones**, telephone network (PBX) manager at Springhill Medical Center in Mobile
- **Carla Thomas, MD**, a member of the medical staff at Stringfellow Memorial Hospital in Anniston
- **Valorie Tucker, CRNP**, a nurse on the Critical Care Transport Team at the University Hospital in Birmingham

Families, friends and co-workers of the winners were also invited to the celebration, which included a video featuring each “Health Care Hero” and special guest speaker Mike Kolen, a former starting linebacker for the only undefeated NFL team in history, the Miami Dolphins.

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The statewide awards presentation came after a preliminary round of competitions held in seven regions of the state. Up to 10 winners were selected in each region, with those winners being entered in the statewide competition. One person from each region was chosen by a group of independent judges as a “Health Care Hero” at the final stage of the competition.

The annual “Health Care Heroes” contest is an effort to honor the dedication of health care workers in the state and to showcase various hospital jobs and related professions in hopes of encouraging students and others to consider a career in the health care industry. The contest was initiated in 2004 as part of the association’s ongoing workforce development efforts, including a Web site designed to provide high school students, as well as their parents and school counselors, with information about careers in health care, www.AlabamaHealthCareers.com.

The Alabama Hospital Association, based in Montgomery, is a statewide trade organization that represents more than 100 hospitals and numerous other health care providers by offering membership services designed to enhance the provision of health care in Alabama.