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## Bayada LPN Finalist for NJBIZ Nurse of the Year

Somerset, NJ, June 28, 2010 – East Brunswick, NJ resident George Kracke, a pediatric special needs home care nurse with over 13 years of experience with Bayada Nurses, was chosen from countless nominees as one of five finalists for NJBIZ Magazine’s Nurse of the Year award. Kracke accepted his honor during NJBIZ Magazine’s 4<sup>th</sup> annual Healthcare Heroes Awards program held on June 25 at The Palace at Somerset Park in Somerset, NJ.

Over 300 people representing health care organizations from across New Jersey came together for this poignant tribute to the dozens of health care professionals who were nominated as “Heroes” in 11 categories.

Kracke expressed a deep sense of pride to be honored for doing what he loves: caring for special needs children in the comfort and safety of their own homes.

“George combines his clinical nursing skills with compassion born of 13 years of home care experience to shine a light of hope for his young patients,” said Rebecca Kahane, area director for Bayada Nurses. “Each day, there are small moments, a smile, a laugh or even a hug, that make him realize that pediatric home care is what he was meant to do.”

Kracke is one of a team of over 12,000 nurses, aides and therapists with Bayada Nurses that cares for children, adults and seniors in the home environment. Bayada Nurses has over 170 office locations in 18 states, including 35 offices serving every county in New Jersey.

Meredith Shaw, whose daughter, Devon, suffers from a neurological disorder that has left her dependent on a wheelchair, unable to speak or do most of the day to day activities often taken for granted, could not agree more. Her daughter has significant challenges, but having Kracke with her makes them seem smaller.

“George’s clinical excellence is matched by his genuine caring,” said Shaw.

Indeed, Kracke, who has cared for Devon for eight years, has become part of the family. On Halloween, he made matching biker costumes and decorated Devon’s wheelchair to look like a motorcycle. He even traded in his nursing uniform for a suit and tie and escorted Devon to her senior prom!

“George is a nurse that puts 110 percent into everything he does,” said Kahane. “I have known him for many years and have grown to respect and care for him. When I needed a nurse for my own daughter, I chose George because I knew she would be getting the best care Bayada Nurses could offer.”

According to Kahane, Kracke is always willing to adapt to his patients and their environment. Whether he is taking a child to school, caring for a child at home or even

escorting a young patient on the school bus, he is always creative and flexible in any environment.

“He embraces educational opportunities designed to enhance his clinical and technical skills. He is certified in caring for children who require a tracheostomy and ventilator to breathe, and a feeding tube to eat,” Kahane explained.

Kracke, while humbled by this honor, is no stranger to recognition. In 2009, Bayada Nurses chose him from among thousands of entries as their LPN Hero of the Year. He accepted this award during a gala celebration at the company’s annual awards weekend in Washington, DC last year.

Kracke’s days spent with his young patients typically start early and last well into the evening, says Kahane. He will attend events for his patients, even if he is not working. He has become a familiar presence at his patients’ birthday parties. What’s more, if a child’s disabilities present a barrier to participating in extracurricular activities, such as the school play, Kracke will don his actor’s hat to take part in the production, providing the one-on-one support his patient needs so that she can shine on stage, just like the other students.

“When George is assigned to a case, we always get a follow-up phone call saying what an amazing job he has done,” shared Kahane. “Perhaps Devon Shaw’s father said it best when he shared that George is not only Devon’s hero, he has become a hero to the entire family!”

For more information on pediatric home care services, call the North Brunswick Pediatric office at 732-418-9546, or the national hotline at 800-305-3000.

*Founded in 1975, Bayada Nurses provides nursing, rehabilitative, therapeutic, and personal home health care services to children, adults, and seniors in the comfort of their own homes. Over 12,000 nurses, home health aides, and therapists work from more than 170 offices in 18 states. For more information, visit [www.bayada.com](http://www.bayada.com).*