

# Gibson City hospital employee named 2014 Rural Illinois Champion

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PEORIA — Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon named Robin Rose, the chief operating officer of Gibson Area Hospital & Health Services, as the 2014 Rural Illinois Champion on March 5 at the 25th annual Rural Community Economic Development Conference in Peoria.

Rose is the first woman to win the award, designed to honor those working to make a difference in rural Illinois. This is the third year the award has been extended by Simon, chairman of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council.

"I am excited to recognize Robin for her hard work and tireless efforts to improve the quality of life in our rural communities," said Simon. "She has gone above and beyond to make sure the residents of her area have access to top-notch health care and services."

Rose joined Gibson Area Hospital & Health Services (GAHHS) as chief nursing officer in 2004 and has been instrumental in the recruitment and employment of physicians for GAHHS and the communities it serves. Under her leadership, GAHHS has increased the number of its rural health clinics to nine, which led to an increase in the number of family practice/OB physicians and orthopedic care.

Also, through Rose's encouragement and support, several local registered nurses have returned to school and are now providing care at various clinics. In collaboration with the hospital's administrative team, Rose has increased services at GAHHS to include a Geriatric Behavioral Clinic, Behavioral Wellness Center, Sleep Disorder Center, Elite Performance Center and orthopedic programs.

Rose has received the Louis Gorin Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rural Health Care and the Jackson & Coker Staff Physician Recruiter Award. Gibson City recognized Rose in 2012 with the Outstanding Citizen of the Year Award.

Illinois residents working to bring about change in rural Illinois communities were considered for the Rural Illinois Champion Award. Themes of service included: economic development and community revitalization, agriculture, education and empowerment, sustainability, public service, community and/or public health.

Past award winners include Norm Walzer, founder of Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University, and Jerry Townsend, who worked nearly 40 years in rural development with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.