



## **Sheila Dixon**

*Mayor,*  
Baltimore

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## **Mayor Sheila Dixon Presents First Annual Russo Award**

Baltimore, MD (June 6, 2007) Mayor Sheila Dixon announced that Patricia Letke-Alexander, who runs the Bayview Hospital Care-A-Van, is the winner of the 2007 Dr. Sebastian Russo Memorial Award.

The award was created this year by the Baltimore City Health Department to recognize a healthcare provider who has provided dedicated and compassionate service to low-income individuals and families. The award honors Dr. Sebastian Russo, a Baltimore City family physician known for his tireless and devoted service to his patients. Before his tragic death in 1981, Dr. Russo was embraced by his community, who recognized the value of a physician who made house calls, learned multiple languages to communicate more effectively with patients, and charged only when patients were truly able to pay.

Ms. Letke-Alexander, a Physician Assistant, created the Bayview Hospital Care-A-Van program in 1999. The Care-A-Van is a mobile clinic that provides treatment, prevention, and education with about 2,000 visits each year.

Ms. Letke-Alexander is recognized as a gifted clinician and tireless advocate for her patients. As Bayview Chief of Pediatrics Dr. Michael Crochetti wrote in his nomination letter, "Not only does she provide clinical care, at times, she is the mobile van driver as well as the intake coordinator...She has a profound commitment to the care of the underserved population in southeast Baltimore."

"Ms. Letke-Alexander deserves this honor for her years of devoted service to communities in our city," said Mayor Dixon. "This award reminds us that Baltimore's health system is about far more than buildings and machines."

"The Care-A-Van provides critical outreach to many who have poor access to care in hospitals and clinics," said Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner of Health. "Ms. Letke-Alexander's success can be measured in medical tragedies averted."

The Dr. Sebastian Russo Memorial Award selection process is overseen by a committee at the Baltimore City Health Department.

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