



## **CONTACT**

Cate Pardo

651-229-1764 (direct)

651-755-0185 (cell)

[cpardo@gillettechildrens.com](mailto:cpardo@gillettechildrens.com)

### **March of Dimes Honors Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare's Sarah Gutknecht as 2011's Distinguished Nurse of the Year** *Two Additional Gillette Nurses Also Recognized in Annual Celebration of Nursing Excellence*

[Saint Paul, Minn.] – **October 11, 2010** – The March of Dimes Minnesota Chapter has named Sarah Gutknecht, DNP, RN, CPNP, a pediatric nurse practitioner at Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, as this year's Distinguished Nurse of the Year. Gutknecht, who specializes in pediatric orthopedics, is among 15 Minnesota nurses recognized for contributions to their communities and the nursing profession. The organization also recognized Gillette nurses Gail Busch and Jennifer Esser for achievements in two additional categories. Winners were announced at an October 8<sup>th</sup> awards ceremony.

In addition to her work with families at Gillette, Gutknecht travels throughout the world for volunteer work in pediatric care, education and leadership. Passionate about sharing knowledge, Gutknecht mentors nursing students and is a frequent presenter at universities and academic conferences. She is actively involved in national volunteer board positions, including President of the Pediatric Nursing Certification Board and the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners Certification Chair.

Busch and Esser — honored in the Pediatric and Rising Star categories, respectively — were similarly acknowledged for their dedication, compassion and contributions to the field of nursing. Busch, a nurse on Gillette's orthopedics/surgical unit, re-entered the workforce after 20 years raising her children and volunteering as a school nurse. Recognized in the Pediatric category, Busch's leadership, family-focused approach to care, and eager adoption of changes to the nursing profession were cited as reasons for recognition.

Esser, an education specialist on Gillette's surgery team, was named this year's Rising Star for her ambition and dedication to both patients and nursing. A nurse since 2009,

Esser assists with orientation and mentorship of new employees and embraces opportunities to learn, innovate, and problem-solve. In all, 31 nurses from Gillette received Nurse of the Year nominations.

“Sarah’s recognition as Distinguished Nurse of the Year reflects the outstanding contributions she’s made to patient families, her colleagues, and her peers in the nursing community,” says Karen Brill, event chair and Vice President of Patient Services at Gillette. “Exceptional nurses like Sarah — along with her fellow award recipients and nominees — are vital to delivering the highest quality services and best possible care to the children and families who need us.”

Nurse of the Year nominations were submitted by patients, families and health care professionals throughout Minnesota. Awards benefit the March of Dimes’ mission of improving the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. Sponsors of the awards event included Allina Hospitals & Clinics, Children’s Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, Cigna, Fairview Health Services, Essentia Health, Gillette, Hennepin County Medical Center, HealthPartners/Regions Hospital, Maple Grove Hospital, North Memorial, St. Cloud Hospital and SmartTalk ConnectedConversations.

###

### **About Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare**

Gillette, an independent, not-for-profit hospital and clinics, is internationally recognized for its work in the diagnosis and treatment of children and young adults who have disabilities or complex medical needs, such as cerebral palsy, complex orthopedic conditions, craniofacial anomalies, neurological conditions, brain and spinal cord injuries, spina bifida and juvenile arthritis. Gillette provides services to the community in St. Paul, Maple Grove, Burnsville, Minnetonka, Duluth, Brainerd Lakes, and Willmar. Since 1897, Gillette has been at the forefront of medical treatment, technology, education and research for children with disabilities. Gillette’s mission is to help children, adults and their families improve their health, achieve greater well-being, and enjoy life. For more information, visit [www.gillettechildrens.org](http://www.gillettechildrens.org).