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As the Director of the NICU, Pediatrics, and PICU Inpatient units, I have had the honor of leading a phenomenal group of nurses that truly excel in providing compassionate patient care. For this very reason, I have been hesitant in the past to nominate any single nurse for a recognition award. After all, it feels like choosing between your own children. However, as I took in the meaning behind the award and read about the spirit of Scott Mercy, the following words jumped out at me and lead to my nomination today. "His warmth, humor, and down-to-earth style helped create a culture that still resonates through our halls." This one line describing Scott Mercy emulates the most beloved Pediatric Intensive Care Nurse to grace our halls at CMC, Cathy Scholtens RNC.

One of my earliest experiences with Cathy was sitting next to her at an annual fundraising event by the Jadyn Fred Foundation, an organization committed to raising money to financially support local pediatric families facing serious health difficulties. An older male child presented at our table with his father by his side to give hugs and to express their infinite gratitude to Cathy for the patient care she provided to them many years ago on CMC's Pediatric unit. This heartfelt scene demonstrates Cathy's lasting impact on families from our Missoula community and exemplifies her commitment to supporting non-profit organizations in our community.

Another example of her commitment to children in our community is Cathy's ongoing donation of all proceeds raised from a self-published book of photography and quotes. Even her photography skills capture Cathy's down to earth style, humor, and love for all things Montanan. The fact that she created this book to support our local Missoula Youth Homes is not unexpected. Cathy is always the first to volunteer for community events such as the annual Kids Fair where she greets and entertains children at the Teddy Bear/Doll Clinic. Most recently, she coordinated a donation of over 2,500 N95 masks through an organization called Third Wave. She single-handedly creates individualized thank you cards for all businesses, individuals, and community groups that donate to our Pediatric unit. Her exuberance for celebration is best demonstrated by her creation of slideshows for all the NICU and Pediatric Daisy Award recipients over the past years, her humorous and inspirational magnet making, her creative YouTube and Facebook videos, and her unit trophies that she created herself and awarded to our Pediatric Unit.

It is no surprise that Cathy is our Pediatric Mentoring Program Champion as she sets the bar for compassion, warmth, and nursing excellence. The following sentiments from her colleagues' best relay the impact she has every day on those around her. In closing, thank you for considering Cathy Scholtens as the next Mercy Award recipient as she is inherently and whole heartedly committed to making our communities healthier while at work and at play

Sincerely,

Pamela Pearson
Director I Inpatient NICU, Pediatrics & PICU