

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Date: October 19, 2004

For More Information Contact:

Sheila Mace, Public Relations Coordinator

Phone: 870-612-6070 Fax: 870-612-3248

Email: smacea@wrmc.com

Healthcare Executives Honor Stone County Administrator

Little Rock, Ark - The American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) Arkansas Regents have awarded the 2004 Early Career Arkansas Healthcare Executive Award to Karen Craft, Administrator at Stone County Medical Center (SCMC) in Mountain View. The Regents Award is presently annually to an Arkansas healthcare executive that has demonstrated exemplary leadership. The award recognizes innovative and creative management techniques, organizational advancement, participation in local, regional and state healthcare associations, civic affairs and participation in ACHE programs. The award was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Arkansas Hospital Association recently in Little Rock.

Karen Craft was appointed Administrator of Stone County Medical Center in November 2002. SCMC is an affiliate of the White River Health System. In the two years following her appointment, Craft has served as a mentor, motivator and change agent for the hospital. She has successfully implemented productivity standards, corporate compliance and patient privacy policies. Through her leadership, the hospital has experienced improved financial performance, employee satisfaction and physician satisfaction.

Craft facilitated the formation of a task force of physicians, Advisory Board Members, and employees to study and make recommendations for the future development of the

hospital. The result was the June 2004 groundbreaking for a \$6M construction and renovation project.

The first phase of the project will add a new wing on the north side of the hospital. The addition will expand the capacity for surgical procedures. The new surgical services department will include an outpatient admissions area and waiting room, three preoperative beds, two operating suites, an endoscopy room, four postoperative beds, central sterile facilities, nursing station, and physician and staff support.

Also included in phase one is the addition of 14 semiprivate inpatient beds. Two rooms will create a four bed Intermediate Care unit with a nursing substation between them. Intermediate care is used when patients require a higher level of nursing care and supervision. The capacity of the hospital when the project is complete will be 25 beds, 11 private beds and 14 semi private beds.

Craft is active in the Critical Access Hospital Affiliate of the Arkansas Hospital Association and is a member of the Arkansas Healthcare Executives Forum. Craft is also active in the Mountain View community. She was instrumental in the development of Mountain View's Kiwanis and serves at its first President. She and her husband are members of the First Baptist Church in Mountain View.

Founded in 1933, the American College of Healthcare Executives is an international professional society of 30,000 healthcare executives who lead the nation's hospitals, healthcare systems, and other healthcare organizations. ACHE is known for its prestigious credentialing and educational programs and its annual Congress on Healthcare Management. ACHE's publishing division, Health Administration Press, is one of the largest publishers of books and journals on all aspects of health services management in addition to textbooks for use in college and university courses.