

# **Florence Nightingale Award**

## **Emergency Services Volunteer Receives Highest International Honor**

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Meredith Buck, a multitalented health services volunteer with the American Red Cross Southeastern Pennsylvania (SEPA) Chapter, has won the 2009 Florence Nightingale Medal, the highest international honor that a nurse can receive.

The Florence Nightingale Medal, awarded by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), "honors exceptional courage and devotion to caring for the victims of armed conflict or other disasters, or exemplary services and a creative and pioneering spirit in the areas of public health or nursing education," according to the ICRC award announcement.

A dedicated Emergency Services volunteer, Meredith is one of only three 2009 winners from the American Red Cross, and one of 28 worldwide. Since the medal is awarded by the ICRC, all national societies, including the American Red Cross, can submit nominations.

Meredith joined the SEPA Chapter immediately after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and has since responded to dozens of local disasters and 12 national disasters. She has volunteered as a nurse, a Disaster Action Team responder for two of our five county teams, a responder on national disasters and an instructor for the Emergency Services Department.

Meredith is co-captain of the Disaster Health Services Team, which currently has 126 nurses, nursing assistants, EMTs and other medical personnel who are trained to provide Red Cross medical assistance to disaster-affected clients. She makes herself available to be on-call for response once a week, and mentors new volunteers by offering to be a back-up on-call nurse every other day of the week. Frequently heading to the site of disaster in the middle of the night, Meredith has shown her dedication to the health and safety of Red Cross clients, often placing her own needs on hold so she can serve those affected by disaster.

In addition to her service with local disaster relief, Meredith has been very active on national disasters, traveling throughout the country to serve on disaster relief operations in such places as New York, Colorado, California, Texas, Guam and the Gulf Coast.

Meredith will receive her award later this year in a special ceremony hosted by the national American Red Cross organization.

To view the official ICRC award announcement, click below:

<http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/florence-nightingale-medal-nominations-120509>