St. Mary's presents DAISY Award to nurse Niki Bagwell

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Athens, Ga. – Niki Bagwell, a registered nurse with St. Mary's 3rd Floor Medical/Surgical Unit, received St. Mary's system-wide DAISY Award for nursing excellence on Feb. 19 for providing extraordinary care to a homeless man recovering from surgery.

"Niki immediately identified that we would need an airtight discharge plan, especially given that the weather was cold and wet and the patient had wounds that would require continuing care after discharge," said unit director Amanda Haslett, one of Niki's two nominators. "Niki's passion for this patient was contagious. She both rallied and challenged the entire team. She made us all want to do more."

Technically off duty the day before his discharge, Niki spent most of the day enlisting the help of colleagues to obtain clothing, shoes, a bed in a shelter and arrangements for wound care services at the shelter. She even bought him a multi-day bus pass and taught him how to get a temporary medical pass.

"Niki came to our 3rd Floor Medical/Surgical Unit from St. Mary's Home Health Care and Hospice Services, so she had good knowledge of community resources that could help this patient," said Titus Gambrell, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer. "That knowledge was vital, but it was her personal action and leadership that made a world of difference. We are so proud to have her on our St. Mary's team."

Niki is a resident of Oconee County and joined St. Mary's in 2012 as a hospital-to-home coordinator with St. Mary's Home Health Care/Hospice Services. She came to the 3rd Floor as a staff nurse about seven months ago and is studying to become a nurse practitioner. Her mother and teenage sons came for the award presentation, bearing flowers.

The DAISY Award is an international recognition program that honors and celebrates the skillful, compassionate care nurses provide every day. Inspired by the care delivered to a dying young man, the DAISY Foundation partners with some 4,000 hospitals and schools in all 50 states and 26 nations to honor extraordinary nurses.
At St. Mary's, each DAISY Award honoree is recognized at a public ceremony on their unit. Each receives a certificate, a DAISY Award pin, and a hand-carved sculpture entitled "A Healer's Touch." In addition, everyone on the unit is invited to celebrate the occasion with cinnamon rolls, a favorite of the young man whose nurses inspired the creation of the DAISY Foundation.

Anyone can nominate a St. Mary's nurse for the DAISY Award, including patients, patients' family members, physicians or colleagues. Any nurse in the St. Mary's system – including those at all three hospitals as well as medical group offices – is eligible. The nomination simply asks you to share your story of why a particular nurse is special to you. St. Mary's will honor eight nurses each year. Nomination forms can be obtained from St. Mary's Nursing Administration Office or by calling 706.389.3238.