

2018 LEGENDS AWARD HONOREE
INNOVATION AWARD

Anita S. Vaughn

Nominated by Jenny Nevels

"BUILDING THE CARE INTO HEALTHCARE"



Described as an innovator and nurturer, Anita S. Vaughn has always had a passion for people especially women and children. In her heyday, Anita had aspirations of becoming a commercial artist, but God had her plans for her that were more fulfilling not only to herself, but to all women and children in the Mid-South. Her goals took a swift turn when she entertained the idea of attending nursing school with her friend.

After graduating from the Baptist College of Health Sciences, Anita began her career in healthcare as an RN as she worked tireless nights in the ICU. Her work ethic and genuine care for people led her to become the Chief Nursing Officer at the East Memphis campus of Baptist Memorial Health Care where her dedication for women and children's health sparked. Noticing that there was a need for a facility that was devoted to birthing babies, care for premature babies and ongoing healthcare for women, and alongside over 600 women and a few good men, Anita built the Baptist Memorial Hospital for Women from the ground up and made the one-of-a-kind healthcare facility

one of a handful of women's hospitals across the country. Serving underserved and uninsured women and children, over 5,000 babies are born there each year, with over 75 percent of the families enrolled in TennCare.

"It was the greatest experience in my professional career," said Anita. "I wanted to build a place where both women and children can get the in-depth and thorough care that they deserve."

Another one of her greatest achievements occurred in 2015 when Anita built the Spence and Becky Wilson Baptist Children's Hospital, which is adjacent to the Women's Hospital. Since the transference of pediatric services from the Baptist Women's Hospital to the Baptist Children's Hospital, almost 25,000 young patients have been treated.

Continuing her passion to serve women and children, Anita is a board member of the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis and Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation and works as a part-time consultant fundraising for the Spence and Becky Wilson Baptist Children's Hospital and assisting in development at the Baptist Women's Hospital. She is also a member of the University of Memphis National Alumni Association Executive Board of Directors.

Anita's passion and love for people continues to give her that bright smile on her face and that pep in her step that lights up the room. And, when she isn't being a superwoman in public, Anita finds her comfort in holding her first grandchild in her arms and spending valuable time with her family.

Tootsie Bell
Legends Award Artist



"She Was There"

The title of the piece is inspired by a poem about nurses and their dedication to their fields. When I read it, it was a perfect fit in correlation to Anita's career. When you meet her she has such a warmth and loving light about her. Working with Anita has been a reminder of the importance of hard work and passion. It has truly been an honor to reflect back to her in this piece all that she has given this community.

Jennifer Sharp
Legends Award Writer



Being around Anita can only be described as "uplifting."

It is awesome to see such amazing women that have sacrificed so much for others and did it so willingly, not only for her family and career but for the betterment of the entire city. She was instrumental in putting Memphis on the map for women's health.

I love to see Memphians doing great things for Memphis – Anita is a true example of a great Memphian.