

2024 Barbara Knothe Burn Therapist Achievement Award

REBEKAH REISHUS ALLELY, OTR/L



Rebekah Reishus Allely has been a burn therapist for over 39 years and an American Burn Association member for this entire time. She has spent her entire career working in burn rehabilitation at the Medstar Washington Hospital Center – Regional Burn Center, Washington, DC. During this extensive span, Rebekah has been a stalwart and catalyst for the exceptional burn care rehabilitation and aftercare services provided at this institution.

Rebekah’s lifelong commitment to helping others began early in her career when she graduated from Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH where she attained her Bachelor of Arts in Mental Health and Human Services in 1983. Yearning for more knowledge, she immediately went on to get another Bachelor’s Degree in Occupational Therapy from Eastern Michigan University in 1985. Upon graduation and successful completion of her state boards, she accepted a position at Washington Hospital Center at the end of that same year and has been there ever since. Once she embarked on this career path, she never once looked back and made it her mission to elevate the program and more importantly burn rehabilitation to the highest levels. In addition, Rebekah has become a Phoenix SOAR (Survivors Offering Assistance in Recovery) Coordinator further supporting the rehabilitation needs of the burn survivor well beyond her role as a burn therapist.

Rebekah has always excelled as a thorough burn clinician and has been active in presenting and publishing at both the national and regional burn meetings every year since 2014. Moreover, where Rebekah truly shines is in her work with aftercare and reintegration, where her unique ability to motivate and build trusting relationships with her burn survivors serves as critical foundation upon which true emotional and physical rehabilitation can take place. Rebekah has been a conduit for collaboration between her hospital and her burn firefighters. She has singlehandedly created an aftercare program in partnership with the DC Burn Firefighters Foundation to integrate high level survivor activities including adaptive skiing at high elevation in Colorado. She has also been an instrumental program committee member of the revitalization and success of the Northeast Region Burn Conference and dedicated partner with the Phoenix Society’s Annual Meetings.

Moreover, Rebekah has been an advocate for understanding the emotional burden of the burn survivor. As a testament to her enduring skill and passion, she was recently awarded the Alan & Delwyn Breslau Award, the highest distinction the Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors can bestow. This further exemplifies Rebekah’s exceptional skills and underlies her uncanny, grit, determination and passion

which serves as the enduring mark of her character and overall position as one of the most dedicated and committed burn rehabilitation professionals in practice today.