

Westfields Hospital & Clinic's Craig Yehlik Receives WHA Trustee Award

WHA honored Craig Yehlik of Westfields Hospital & Clinic with the 2022 Trustee Award. WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding presented the award to Yehlik on Dec. 19. Yehlik is the New Richmond police chief.

For more than 60 years, the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) has recognized outstanding member trustees, those who excel and make an exemplary commitment to his or her hospital and community.

In presenting the award to Yehlik, Borgerding said, "I have to tell you – we have some great people get nominated for this award every single year, most being recognized for their engagement with and within the hospital. I have to say, I don't think I've ever seen a nominee as revered for their work inside and outside the hospital walls, or the board table, as our recipient tonight."

"In so many ways, Chief Yehlik is exactly the type of person this award is meant to recognize," Borgerding added.

Inside the hospital, Yehlik has served on the Westfields Hospital & Clinic board since 2019. After just one year, he began serving on the executive committee. There he helped guide the hospital's initial and long-term COVID-19 response while also helping the hospital think bigger and more strategic about its work.

Yehlik has been an integral part of the changes Westfields has made to its governing board and realignment of the health partners hospitals within the St. Croix Valley. He has led challenging conversations about COVID-19 vaccines and policies and community safety and well-being.

Within the community, Yehlik has been the New Richmond police chief for six years, and in the department for over 27 years. He has lent his time and knowledge to create family safety night for area elementary schools, as well as the initiative Living Well Together in the community. Yehlik has also been recognized by school leadership, teachers and students for his commitment to helping with behavioral health care solutions between the school district, the police and the hospital. He volunteers his time in various capacities, including hosting community training on active threat situations, participating in "shop with a cop" events and serving as a member of the International Association of Police Chiefs.

When accepting the award, Yehlik shared, "That's a tremendous honor. I was not expecting that...I really appreciate it, hearing the kind words said and some of the things we take pride in here in New Richmond. You know, it takes a village."

As part of his recognition, WHA will donate \$500 to the charity of Yehlik's choice.



Craig Yehlik

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