



News in the MSD of Wayne Township

School board vice-president receives Sagamore of the Wabash award



Phyllis Lewis, vice-president of the Metropolitan School District of Wayne Township Board of Education, has received a Sagamore of the Wabash Award. The award was presented to Mrs. Lewis after the regularly scheduled board meeting Monday, January 11.

The Sagamore of the Wabash Award is the highest honor bestowed by the governor of Indiana. It was created during the term of Governor Ralph Gates, who served from 1945 to 1949. The term “sagamore” was used by the American Indian Tribes of the northeastern U.S. to describe a lesser chief or a great man among the tribe to whom the true chief would look for wisdom and advice. Sagamore of the Wabash Awards have been conferred by Indiana governors upon both men and women.

Mrs. Lewis has dedicated her entire life, professionally and personally, to the health and education of children and youth for her community, state, and nation. Her nursing career includes extensive experience as an educator, practitioner, instructor, researcher, mentor, administrator, and consultant.

Mrs. Lewis practiced nursing as an instructor at Methodist Hospital School of Nursing, as a researcher at Regenstrief Institute, and as a family nurse practitioner in a physician’s practice. She was employed by the Indiana Department of Education in 1978 as the first state school health

services consultant until 2012. Her focus was on expanding health promotion and services for children and youth statewide through professional development of and consulting to school nurses.

Elected to the MSD of Wayne Township School Board consecutively since 1968, Mrs. Lewis brought invaluable nursing experience into her role as she contributed to the development of a health and wellness center for all employees, a committee to move to a self-insurance plan for the corporation, and in ensuring the inclusion of a professional nurse in every school.

For her leadership and work, Mrs. Lewis was awarded the Indiana State Nurses Distinguished Service Award (2011), the Maynard K. Hine Medal/Leadership Award (2006), the Emily Holmquist Lifetime Achievement in Nursing Award (2001), Fellow in the American School Health Association (FASHA)(2001), Dotaline Allen Award (1977) and is a member of Sigma Theta Tau.

As a lifetime member of the Indiana University Alumni Association, Mrs. Lewis has served as an Executive Council Representative, and past President of the IU School of Nursing Alumni Association.