



## Mobile doctor Sandra Parker credits her staff for disaster relief award

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By **Casandra Andrews, Press-Register**



Dr. Sandra Parker

**MOBILE, Alabama** -- □Dr. Sandra K. Parker, medical director at AltaPointe Health Systems in Mobile, has been named the 2012 recipient of the Bruno Lima Award for her work coordinating psychiatry care following Hurricane Katrina and the BP oil spill.

Parker was selected by the American Psychiatric Association Committee on Psychiatric Dimensions of Disasters and Council on Research and Quality Care to recognize outstanding efforts of members who contribute to the care and understanding of disaster victims.

She will accept the award this weekend during a meeting in Montgomery.

"It's really a team effort of all the folks at AltaPointe and the University of South Alabama College of Medicine," said Parker, who is on staff at Mobile's medical school. "It's really everybody working together in the community."

After Hurricane Katrina came ashore in 2005 and left thousands displaced, many people found themselves living on docked cruise ships. At the time, Parker directed a team of mental health professionals who treated those with mental illness affected by the storm and staying on a ship docked in Mobile.

During that time, members of Parker's team worked daily on the ship to decrease mental health crises, and used prevention strategies to help people cope with the disaster.

"What that involved was going to where the people were," Parker said. "We also treated them in their homes and communities."

Beginning in late spring of 2010, Parker led AltaPointe's disaster response efforts after the Gulf oil spill. She played a lead role in bringing community leaders together, said AltaPointe spokeswoman Carol Mann, "to identify needs caused by the disaster and coordinate responses to provide access to psychiatric and medical care to those who need it most."

Dr. Luke Engeriser, director for the psychiatry residency program at AltaPointe, said Parker deserves to be recognized.

“Dr. Parker did a wonderful job organizing our staff and developing innovative ways of treating victims after the oil spill,” Engeriser said. “It really required some creative thinking to best use our resources to provide the best clinical care we could.”

Parker attended medical school and completed residency training in psychiatry at the University of Alabama School of Medicine in Birmingham. In 1993, she began working part time at Mobile Mental Health Center while raising her family. In 1999, she became medical director of the organization that was eventually renamed AltaPointe.

During her tenure, she, along with other members of Mobile Mental Health’s Leadership T □

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