

## SPRINGFIELD

## STCC instructor earns national award

A clinical and lab instructor in the surgical technology program at Springfield Technical Community College received the Clinical Educator of the Year Award for 2018.

Instructor Kathleen Sawtelle said she was surprised to hear her name called during the Association of Surgical Technologists conference in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. She was at the conference as a delegate for the organization.

"It's a huge honor," said Sawtelle, of Enfield. "Nominations come from throughout the country. They narrowed it down to six finalists, and I was chosen for the award."

According to the Association of Surgical Technologists website, the award recognizes one clinical educator who has gone above and beyond the call of duty for students. Sawtelle received a \$500 award, a trophy and recognition at the annual conference.

"I am very proud a clinical educator from the STCC community was chosen for this award," said Mary Jayne Rossman, program director and department chair for the surgical



Kathleen Sawtelle holds her Clinical Educator of the Year Award.

technology program. "Kathy gives 110 percent of herself to the surgical technology program here at STCC. We are fortunate to have such a strong advocate for our students."

Said the college's vice president of academic affairs Geraldine de Berly, "We're proud to have faculty like Kathy Sawtelle, who bring a passion for their work into the classroom. She exemplifies dedication and professionalism and is most deserving of this award."

Herself a 1976 graduate of

the surgical technology program, Sawtelle has worked in the field for 42 years. She has been coordinator of clinical education for the program at STCC for the past three years, and has taught at the college for 11 years.

Sawtelle has worked as a certified surgical technologist at Baystate Medical Center for 28 years and on a per diem basis for 10 years.

She previously received the designation of Fellow of the Association of Surgical Technologists, which recognizes surgical technologists who have upheld the highest professional, ethical and moral standards and traditions of the profession.

Surgical technologists are responsible for preparing the operating room and protecting patients from harmful bacteria. They arrange equipment and hand instruments to the surgeon, among other operating room responsibilities.

Sawtelle said she loves her work both in and out of the classroom.

"It's an outstanding field," she said. "It's my passion."