

# EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR:

## Ernest Hill Jr.

Security Officer

St. Anthony's Medical Center

St. Louis, Missouri



**Ernest Hill Jr. is a man of a thousand talents.** Since joining the Whelan team in 2008, Ernest has demonstrated an exceptional penchant for recognizing problems and responding in a confident, unwavering manner.

“You have to respond in a way that will keep everyone safe and protect the environment that you are there to protect,” Ernest remarks. “It’s about not only reacting to the situation, but being the cause of the solution.” That’s the kind of attitude that so many people admire about Ernest, whose dedication to helping others cannot be understated.

Prior to beginning his career in the security industry, Ernest practiced a variety of martial arts in his youth where he received a black belt in karate and achieved similar honors in Muay Thai. He attended Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Missouri, where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Instrumental Music and a Masters Degree in Educational Administration. While attending college, Ernest became a member of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity where he served as a mentor for programs designed to aid African-American school-aged children and develop their leadership talents. Ernest continued his passion for music into his professional life as a band instructor for schools in the St. Louis Public Schools system. He has mastered a number of instruments throughout his career, including the trombone and the tuba.

“I started my first career as an Instrumental Band Director and Administrator at several different middle schools and high schools,” Ernest explains. “Many people encouraged me to retire early after my teaching career, but I wanted to find a place where I could start a new career. Like teaching, it needed to be a profession where I could establish a rapport with the general community. That’s when I found Whelan.”

Since joining the Whelan team, Ernest has served at many posts throughout the St. Louis area where he has been recognized for his extraordinary commitment to our customers, the team and the organization. In 2013, Ernest acted as a key witness that resulted in an arrest of a bank robber, and played a role in recognizing a suspicious suspect that resulted in an arrest and the recovery of a stolen vehicle. He has also been the recipient of numerous unsolicited letters and compliments from both clients and the general public regarding his friendly smile, professional attitude and exceptional customer service skills.



For these reasons, Ernest has been the recipient of:

- Two Making a Difference Awards
- Two Security Officer of the Month Awards
- Security Officer of the Year Award from Whelan's St. Louis Branch
- Company-Wide Employee of the Year for 2013

In September 2013, Ernest demonstrated his diverse talents by shifting from bank security work to hospital security.

"Working for Whelan at St. Anthony's is unlike any other post where I have worked," Ernest explains. "There are a lot of people that require help at a hospital and I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of their well-being there. I think it's a spiritual experience."

"Ernest is an amazing hospital security officer," writes E. Ingracia, EMT-B ER at St. Anthony's Medical Center. "He conducts himself in a professional manner and has been very courteous to our patients and the hospital staff. He always has a positive attitude and responds to situations rather than reacting. When I see him working, it puts a big smile on my face!"

Along with his career at Whelan, Ernest is an 11-year member of the Jazz Edge Orchestra (trombonist), a 17-piece big band that has played at a number of special programs, concerts, dances, weddings, banquets and conventions throughout the region, as well as Powell Hall — one of the most renowned concert halls in the United States. He is also a devoted family man and enjoys spending time with his daughters, one of which is an Occupational Therapist Administrator and another who is an International Shoe Designer, as well as his two grandchildren.

Ernest, we are honored to call you a member of our Whelan family and to bestow upon you the title of Whelan Security Employee of the Year. In addition, we are pleased to present you with the Warrior's Sword of the Templar Knight — a tempered steel blade with 24K gold etchings and silver plated inlays historically reserved for only the most specially trained, well-equipped and highly motivated fighting forces of the day. This special gift and title are not just testaments to your unbelievable customer service or your incredible responses to serious security-related threats and concerns against our customers. Instead, this honor is about consistency — an incredible testament to a security officer who has continuously embodied our core values throughout his career at Whelan.