Tamara Balliet Receives ACES Award

Tamara Balliet, Clinical Crisis Coordinator with the Medical Ethics and Palliative Care service of Shadyside Hospital has been selected as an awardee of UPMC’s Award for Commitment and Excellence in Service (ACES) for 2007. Tamara noticed a woman crying in the hall as she was leaving work one evening. She stopped and asked the woman if she could help. The woman was the wife of a patient who had been in surgery and had not received good news. Tamara arranged for the woman to see her husband in the PACU and then stayed with her until her family arrived.

Tamara Balliet with Shadyside colleagues, Elana Gonzalez, Laurie Rhoades, Beth Chaitin, and Kathy Curran

Tamara is a Licensed Social Worker and Certified Massage Therapist. She has over 26 years experience as a social worker in hospitals and hospice care. In her role at Shadyside, she provides ethics consultation throughout the hospital and counseling for palliative and hospice care patients and their families. She is a board member of the Good Grief Center for Bereavement Support. Nominated by their peers, staff members like Tamara reflect the highest standards of excellence that the community has come to expect from UPMC.

UPMC honored the 179 staff members, including Tamara, and one team as winners of its ACES Award at a recognition event at the Omni William Penn in downtown Pittsburgh on Nov. 3. ACES honors staff from across the health system who exemplify UPMC’s commitment to providing exceptional care and customer service.

The Institute Welcomes New Governing Council Member

The Institute welcomes Valire Carr Copeland, MSW, MPH, PhD as a representative of the School of Social Work to its Governing Council.

Valire Carr Copeland is an associate professor in the School of Social Work with a secondary appointment in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. She also is the associate director of the Public Health Social Work Training Program, and faculty affiliate in the Center for Minority Health at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health. She also co-directs the Center for Minority Health's Cultural Competency, Health Literacy, and Participatory Research Core.

Her research and publications have focused directly on minority health and mental health disparities in service delivery, program planning, and treatment engagement for women and children. For the past 3-4 years, she has been conducting research on preparedness for end-of-life care with Dr. Randy Hebert. The focus has been on the preparedness of caregivers for a loved one who is dying. Copeland's current scholarship focuses on culturally competent engagement and intervention strategies and their impact on minority health disparities.