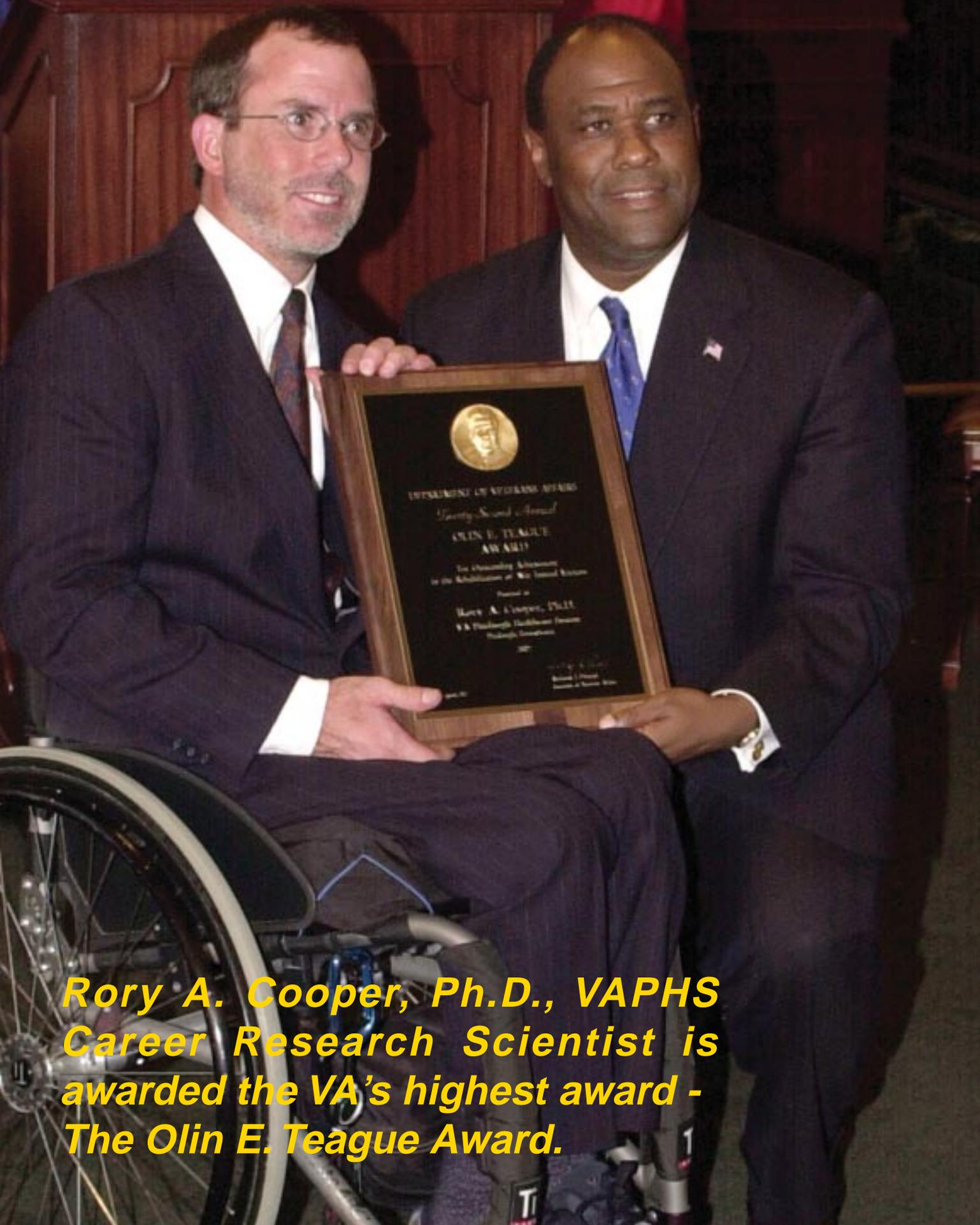


Working Together

Issue Eleven

Fall 2002



**Rory A. Cooper, Ph.D., VAPHS
Career Research Scientist is
awarded the VA's highest award -
The Olin E. Teague Award.**

A Message from the Director

Dear Fellow Employees, Volunteers, Veterans and Friends of the VAPHS,

In this Fall issue of our Working Together publication, the goals of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System for the next year and beyond will be highlighted. Our primary goal and vision will remain constant and clear. We will continue to provide our veterans with the highest quality of care that can be found, improve access and patient satisfaction and become a more efficient organization.

On pages 4 and 5 of this issue our strategic objectives for the next year are outlined. These objectives support achievement in the following six areas:

- **Quality**
- **Access**
- **Efficiency**
- **Patient function**
- **Veteran satisfaction**
- **Healthy Communities**



Michael E. Moreland
Director

Rajiv Jain, MD
Chief of Staff

Terry Gerigk
Associate Director

Ira Richmond
Associate Director for
Patient Care Services

The VA Pittsburgh Working Together is published for the employees, volunteers, patients and friends of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. To submit articles, editorials, letters or story ideas for possible inclusion, please contact *David Cowgill* at **412-688-6224** or via e-mail: **david.cowgill@med.va.gov**

Editor
David E. Cowgill
Public & Community
Relations Coordinator

Design & Layout
Jean Reiland

Photography
Warren Park
Glenn Hangard

Cover photo by :
Nick Lancaster

Dr. Rory Cooper is presented with the Olin E. Teague Award by Dr. Leo McKay, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs. See article on page 7.



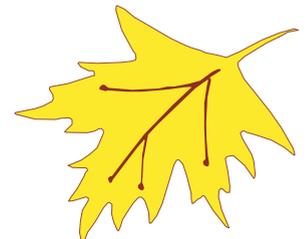
Glenn Hangard

Providing the highest level of quality will always be our most important goal and will be the vision that guides all the other stated objectives. These objectives we have established are ambitious and aggressive and will require the dedication and commitment of all VAPHS staff members. The accomplishment of these objectives will also demand increased use of information technology, the use of state-of-the-art technology for the delivery of health care, and continued enhancements to our inpatient and outpatient care areas. We must also find new ways to make health care more accessible to veterans who live in outlying areas and our four spoke hospitals (Butler, Erie, Altoona and Clarksburg, WV).

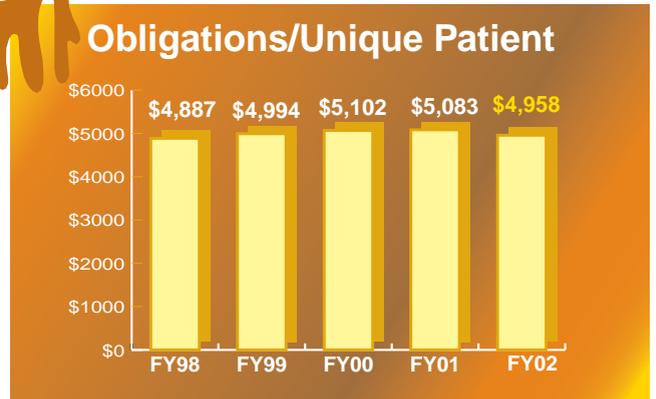
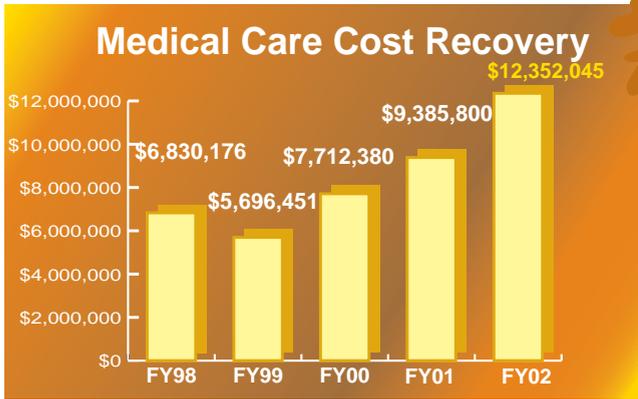
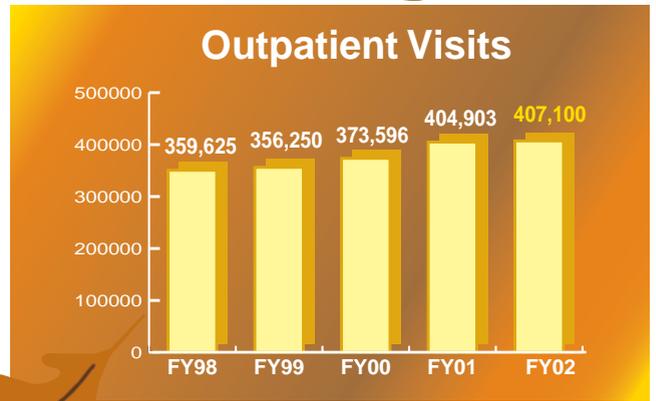
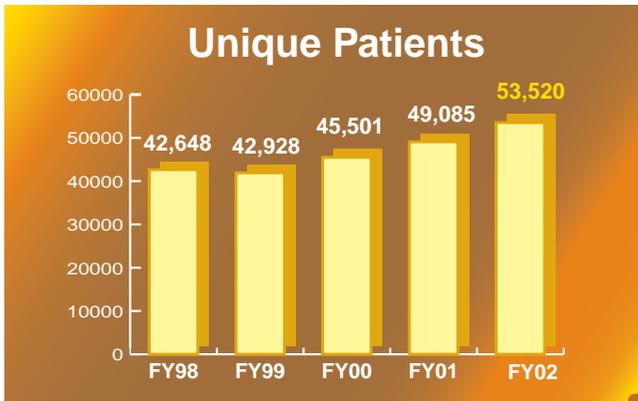
Updates on these initiatives will be highlighted in future issues of this publication and on our web site www.va.gov/pittsburgh. If you would like to receive a copy of our published 2003-2007 Strategic Plan please contact David Cowgill, Public Affairs Officer at 412-688-6224 or via e-mail: **david.cowgill@med.va.gov**.

In addition to our 2003-2007 strategic goals, this Fall issue of **Working Together** presents features on: Employee Appreciation Week activities; the United Way Day of Caring, Dr. Rory Cooper winning the prestigious Olin E. Teague Award; and, "Performance Vital Signs." It also spotlights the many outstanding achievements and awards that our staff has received in the past quarter.

Michael E. Moreland
Director
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System



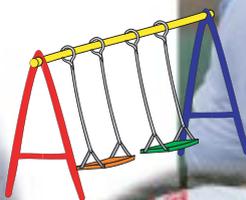
Performance Vital Signs



Prevention Index:	Clinical Practice Guidelines:
FY 00 = 70%	FY 00 = 71%
FY 01 = 79% - Fully Successful!	FY 01 = Exceptional!
FY 02 (Indicators Changed for FY02) -	FY 02 -
Qtr 1 = 80% of all indicators = Fully Successful or Better!	Qtr 1 = 100% of measures = Fully Successful or Better!
Qtr 2 = 100% of all indicators = Fully Successful or Better!	Qtr 2 = 100% of measures = Fully Successful or Better!
Qtr 3 = 100% of all indicators = Fully Successful or Better!	Qtr 3 = 100% of measures = Fully Successful or Better!
Qtr 4 = 100% of all indicators = Fully Successful or Better!	Qtr 4 = 100% of measures = Fully Successful or Better!

United Way Day of Caring

The 12th Annual United Way Day of Caring was held on September 5, 2002. Nineteen VAPHS employees worked with the Hazelwood Initiative to renovate the deteriorating walls of Lewis Playground on Second Avenue in Hazelwood. We can all be proud that the children of Hazelwood will benefit from the hard work of the VAPHS staff who volunteered their time to support the needs of a local community.



Strategic Goals 2003



Sean Scanlon

Quality

- ✦ Continue to exceed the community standard for the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases
- ✦ Implement a fully automated medical record, through increased use of computerized patient record system (CPRS)
- ✦ Test the Bar Code Medication Administration (BCMA) contingency plan annually
- ✦ Improve safety of high risk patients during the admission and interfacility transfer processes
- ✦ Develop palliative care as a model of treatment for nonmalignant disorders
- ✦ Assure assessment of pain among inpatients
- ✦ Maximize space utilization through completion of a master space plan
- ✦ Encourage employee training and development through scholarship program administration
- ✦ Meet the VA standard for waits and delays
- ✦ Assess telemetry demand and increase capacity as needed
- ✦ Optimize the capacity of current primary care teams and specialty clinics
- ✦ Complete compensation and pension exams accurately and on time
- ✦ Provide services to new veterans each year

Access

- ✦ Enhance specialty and inpatient services to meet increased demand from expanded primary care capacity
- ✦ Provide contractual behavioral health support and basic primary care for women in the CBOC's
- ✦ Implement filmless radiology
- ✦ Increase the capacity of the opioid substitution program

Efficiency

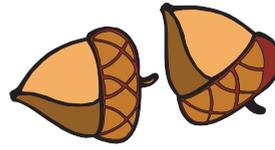
- ✦ Integrate the day treatment and PREP programs
- ✦ Co-locate the Communication Center and the PERC
- ✦ Implement advanced tray delivery and convenience food
- ✦ Develop a pool of intermittent nursing staff to staff peaks in census
- ✦ Reduce employee injuries

The Vision of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System



Sean Scanlon

Veteran Satisfaction



- ✦ Increase the percentage of patients rating VA Pittsburgh inpatient and outpatient health care services as very good or excellent
- ✦ Improve patient involvement in clinic scheduling
- ✦ Improve patient phone access to clinics
- ✦ Renovate another inpatient psychiatry unit
- ✦ Enhance the privacy, functionality, and general appearance of the facilities:
 - ✦ Renovate MICU and SICU
 - ✦ Renovate a vacated clinic area for additional exam room space and hem/onc
 - ✦ Improve the phlebotomy area
 - ✦ Update and expand operating rooms
 - ✦ Improve flow in ECC
 - ✦ Enhance Cardiac Catheterization lab
 - ✦ Update public areas



Patient Function

- ✦ Expand adult day health care
- ✦ Increase the number of patients treated in HBPC and the homemaker home health aid programs
- ✦ Increase the percentage of veterans discharged from domiciliary or a community based residential care program to an independent or a secured institutional living arrangement

Healthy Communities

- ✦ Maintain comprehensive research program with focus on enhancing on-site research space
- ✦ Continue to recruit nationally recognized leaders
- ✦ Complete at least one casualty reception exercise every three years



Sean Scanlon

Director
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

Dear Sir:

The purpose of this letter is to commend an employee of the VA Healthcare System at your location.

Mr. John Ciak is Coordinator of Visual Impairment Service. He arranged for me to have an evaluation at Pittsburgh Vision Service, after which he approved the issuance of several reading aids which have proven to be helpful to me, as a legally blind veteran.

He was making arrangements for my attendance at an Eye Clinic at Lebanon, PA., but I had to cancel those arrangements because of recent hip replacement surgery, and a long period of recovery.

Pending my ability to attend Lebanon, Mr. Ciak has provided me with the use of an electronic reader, which is a great convenience, and much appreciated. It enables me to read my mail very easily. Before, it was a difficult task.

Mr. Ciak, in his cooperation, and willingness to assist in any reasonable way possible, is a credit to the VA Healthcare System, and a reflection of the fine care offered to veterans.

Sincerely
Herbert F. Klug



Dear Director

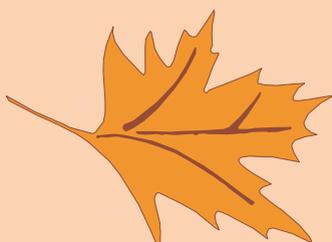
At approximately 0630 24 July, I came to your facility having injured my eye while enroute from Idaho.

Mr. Walter Armstrong was at the admissions desk. Even though I had no VA identification, he was extremely helpful. He extracted my records from Fort Harrison MT, made me an ID card, and arranged for me to be first to see the triage nurse. In the ECC, Dr. Ariel Kroger analyzed my injury as a scratched retina, which he verified with his supervisor, who then called Dr. Gupta in the eye clinic. Despite a very full schedule Dr. Gupta saw me, confirmed the diagnosis, and forwarded a prescription to your pharmacy. Your people there were very efficient and helpful.

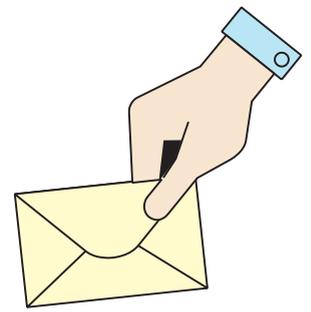
I was very favorably impressed with your staff, not only the ones I mentioned (I hope I got their names right — I wasn't seeing very well), but everyone with whom I came in contact. Without exception, all were obviously dedicated to providing the best possible service to veterans.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely
Martin M, McGeary
Lt Col, USA (Retired)



Mail Bag



Dear Mr. Moreland:

It is about time that this letter of appreciation is written.

Ms. Susan Marshall, NP, RN, MSN, CS, is a caring individual who, in my opinion, performs her job as a behavioral health therapist well above any patient's expectations.

Ms. Marshall has shown patience, empathy, and understanding during some of my most difficult times. She never gave up hope for me and my recovery, when many times hope for me seemed an impossibility.

There are still, as the poet Robert Frost stated in his poem, "Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening," "and miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go before I sleep." It's comforting to know that Ms. Susan Marshall is on this; by my side, and that makes all the difference. Her strength and compassion give me hope.

Thank you Ms. Susan Marshall.

Sincerely
Casey J Kuszaj
Captain, QMC USA

To the Staff of 2 South:

A sincere thank you for the hard work and long hours you folks devote to caring for patients.

My husband and I cannot thank you for the wonderful care my father (Ralston McLaughlin) received while on your floor.

Even though you were extremely busy, you all took time to answer questions and give me updates on Dad's progress.

My father could not have received better care anywhere else. What you do is greatly appreciated as we entrust our loved one's health and care to you,

*Sincerely,
The family of Ralston McLaughlin*

Spotlight On

Winner of Olin E. Teague Award

Rory Cooper, Ph.D.

Rory A. Cooper, Ph.D., Director of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System's National Center of Excellence for Wheelchair and Related Technology and VA Senior Career Research Scientist, received the VA's prestigious annual Olin E. Teague Award for outstanding work with disabled veterans during a special



ceremony in Washington, D.C., on September 18, 2002. The Teague Award is granted to a VA employee, whose achievements have been of special benefit to veterans with service-connected problems. Dr. Cooper is recognized as one of the world's foremost authorities in wheelchair design and technology. The award recognized Cooper's major contributions to the treatment and rehabilitation of paralyzed individuals, including: the design of modern manual and electric powered wheelchairs; the development and implementation of wheelchair standards; promotion of the understanding of secondary disabilities among wheelchair users; persistent efforts to improve the availability of high quality products and services for veterans who use wheelchairs; and improving community integration. His work has led to an improvement in wheelchair quality, ultimately improving the lives of those who depend on them.

Warren Park

Congratulations

Employees with 20 years or more of service!

The employees listed have reached a benchmark in their years of government service during the period **June 1, 2002 - October 1, 2002.**

Name	Service Line	Years
Johnnie McKeever	Surgical Specialty	30
Darwin L. Peeks	Clinical Support	30
Walter Walczak	Community Based Care	30
Gerald Conroy	Clinical Support	25
Mary Lou Ferraro	Critical Care	25
Cathy Long	Facilities Management	25
Emanuel Thornton	Facilities Management	25
Kenneth R. Azzarello	Community Based Care	20
Russell J. Clark	Critical Care	20
David R. Comerford	Patient Care Services	20
Mary DeVaughn	Clinical Support	20
Kathy K. Downey	Medical Specialty	20
Steven S. Lasky, MD	Medical Speciality	20
Dorothy Anne Lipps	Clinical Support	20
Carol McAfee	Clinical Support	20
John R. Mongelluzzo	Patient Care Services	20
Armelia Pollard	Patient Care Services	20
Patricia J. Riley	Primary Care	20
Larry M. Sanders	Police	20
Ruth A. Simonic	Human Resources	20
Lorris W. Staples	Patient Care Services	20
JoAnn M. Szymecki	Patient Care Services	20
Walter Szczepanski	Facilities Management	20
Mark A. Wasik	Behavioral Health	20
Rose Marie Williams	Patient Care Services	20



Employee



Appreciation



Picnics

Mission

The mission of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System is to care for America's veterans; providing excellent health care, training their future providers, and advancing medical knowledge through research.

Vision

Our shared vision is to strive for excellence in everything we do, working together to exceed the expectations of our veterans.



Pittsburgh, PA 15240
1-866-4VAPITT
(1-866-482-7488)

A member of the
VA Stars & Stripes
Healthcare Network

www.va.gov/pittsburgh

Warren Park & Douglas Wagner