

Recognizing Outstanding Service Excellence



**Kerry Weymouth, M.S.W. and Katie Hennessy, L.C.S.W.
Adult Oncology Social Work**

Erik Fromme, M.D., from Hematology and Medical Oncology, Palliative Care, submitted the following nomination...

A patient from Guatemala was discovered to have metastatic sarcoma. When it was determined that nothing more could be done for his cancer, he stated that he'd like to go home so that his wife and children could care for him. But he was no longer strong enough to travel there by bus and in any case he couldn't afford the ticket. Katie and Kerry managed a minor miracle—they managed to track down the Guatemalan consulate, which happened to be visiting Portland at the right time for help with Visa issues, and they contacted a faith based charitable organization and asked them to pay for a plane ticket for this patient. When that organization's board decided that paying for his plane ticket was outside their mission scope (true), they worked with their contact from the organization to organize other funding. But the patient, who had never flown on a plane before, was afraid to go. He asked if there was any way his good friend could come too. Katie and Kerry went back to the contact who solicited his friends to raise the money so that the patient's friend could go as well. I know I've only got the basic elements here – what Katie and Kerry actually did took weeks of concerted and persistent effort. Where I've listed the successes, I know they also pursued many dead ends. This was a wonderful thing. I was present when the patient came back to OHSU for his last visit. He was silent for a long time, and then he spoke with incredible simplicity, truth, and power about his gratitude for the care he received at OHSU. We tried to preserve his words but, honestly, you had to be there. It was one of the most moving experiences of my career.



Award Recipient - December 2009